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THE LABOUR PARTY'S COMMONWEALTH:

An Analysis of Discourses on Political Community in the 1930s.

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Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The City University
Department of Social Science and Humanities.

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Abstract

This dissertation develops a method for the analysis of political discourse from the work of Foucault which it uses to construct the Labour Party in the 1930s, in a specific relation to the issues of anti semitism and Indian independence. These issues are chosen because they are some of the issues in which a conception of race is posed in the implicit and explicit discourse. The central thrust of the investigation is to establish the ways in which the notion of political community is constructed in these particular discourses, and then assess the extent to which this informs constructions of race. It has been possible to develop a method for 'reading' political statements which asks how a particular position was arrived at, its conditions of formation. Two of the key mechanisms in this are constraint and structuring mechanism. This is a way of designating the factors which limit the range of political possibilities in the issue of statements. Through this method of reading it has been possible to construct the Labour Party as a discoursing institution from the variety of positions offered to it as definitions of particular issues. It has been possible to determine which positions it chose to sanction as official and which it chose to reject. A close examination of official and unofficial statements facilitates a number of comments on the ideological nature of the positions which the Labour Party chose to sanction and those which were unacceptable to it. The Labour Party's definitions of Indian independence reveal its conceptions of commonwealth. As a key institution in defining the British commonwealth it awarded India second class status as a political community, through an independence constitution which did not enfranchise the majority of its population. On the issue of anti semitism the Labour Party revealed itself to be unable to countenance a multi racial political community by posing Fascism and anti semitism as separate issues, the former to be challenged by the Labour movement, the latter to be eased by Zionism. The conclusions consider the extent to which constructions of race have changed and then what might be the contemporary relevance of these historical debates in the study of race.

Introduction.

The central concern of this dissertation is to make a contribution to the theorisation of the emergence of race as an issue in British Politics in the last half century. It is an attempt to consider race as constructed through discourses with specifiable objects. Discourses serve as a focus for investigation without a reduction to some other non ideological factor, or assuming an underlying unity or essence. It is an attempt to explore race as a concept whose objects are ideological and constructed through discourse, that is, the process in which they are spoken of. Race is considered as the product of determinate ideological practices which have their own conditions of existence, which cannot be 'known' either through the sociological study of 'race relations' or as an aspect of class struggle in conventional marxist analysis. In order to conduct this kind of analysis a method for the examination of political statements has to be developed. This takes the work of M. Foucault in discourse analysis as its starting point.

The conceptualisation of race through discourse has taken place in a number of ways. It has been constructed through discourses concerning biology, anthropology, sociology, the colonies, politics, economics, slavery, psychology, law, nationality, community and philosophy to name but a few. Because race is a concept with a multiplicity of constructions, it is necessary for a small and detailed study to focus on only one of these constructions. This dissertation will thus focus on the construction of race through the concept 'political community'.

Political community is obviously only one mode of constructing race, yet it focuses on many issues which are central to race as a concept. In political statements the specification of a community indicates a relation of inclusion or exclusion, and is a prominent feature of many of the debates on race over the last fifty years. Such ideas are still to be found in the debates surrounding immigration and nationality over the last twenty years

in British politics, although definitions of race are constantly changing.

The concept of 'community' in political discourse is central to multi racialism. Terms like 'the Jewish community', the 'Asian community', 'our people', 'the people', the national interest', 'the Indian people' and 'Indian workers' all offer a specification of the composition of various communities in political statements. They all indicate those on behalf of whom a statement is made. Political statements all have a representational function, but may be further defined in terms of the arena in which they are stated. A political statement is also defined in terms of certain constraints and other structuring mechanisms under which it operates. These mechanisms will be elaborated in section 1.7. Political communities may correspond to national divisions, or may refer to divisions within the national political community. Political communities are units spoken of. They are discursive.

This does not automatically address itself to many of the central problematics of inquiries into nationalism. National units are only dealt with to the extent that they are units spoken of in the discourse. At various points in the dissertation Britain and India become part of the discourse and are dealt with as discursive objects, not as pregiven realities. Whilst the study of nation and nationalism through discourse need not result in a reductionism or essentialism, it would restrict the field of investigation to the construction of national political communities. It would be of limited use in the study of race since 'nation' and 'nationalism' are not adequate to deal with divisions within national units and as such do not address themselves to the problematics of multi racialism.

Investigation of the discourses through which political community as an object may be constructed focuses concretely on two political issues in the 1930s, anti semitism in East London (1934-7) and the debates surrounding Indian independence (1930-3). This serves a

double purpose because as well as seeing how race is constructed through the object 'political community' it also allows an investigation into the historical conditions in which early conceptions of race were articulated. I should like to suggest that many of the ideological positions relating to race and the language in which they are currently expressed were developed in the 1930s, even though the conditions in which these discourses were developed no longer exist. The 1930s began to provide a terminology and a theorisation for race issues which persists into the post war debates on immigration and nationality, and which may be found in the new nationality proposals (1980) which retain the category British subject for people who were at one time subjects of the Empire, and in the debates surrounding the idea of multi racialism in Britain in relation to the presence of what were considered non British communities in certain areas.

Such an inquiry does not necessarily imply any link between the present day and the 1930s in terms of economic or political structures, neither does it imply that ideologies have a trans-historical essence. It does suggest that discourses have specifiable conditions of existence which go beyond any present conjuncture, and which may be described and explained.

The specification of a discourse as that which constructs a concept and so is limited by that concept say 'race' or 'political community', can pose serious methodological problems as witnessed in the work of Foucault. To pose such a concept as the central object of a discourse does not deal with the problem of the delineation of discourse. Where does one discourse begin and another end? This question can be avoided by imposing institutional constraints upon the discourse. It is useful to look at an object as constructed in discourses associated with a specified institution. Not only does this avoid methodological confusion but it also allows a knowledge of the institution chosen. This dissertation aims to construct 'political community' by confining its

construction to Labour Party statements, and thus at the same time construe the Labour Party as a discursive, rather than a pre-given, political entity. Thus, it is also possible to enquire - what kind of statements and positions is the party capable of? In doing this it may be possible to arrive at a definition of the party in relation to issues broadly concerned with race without having to impose an essentialist definition of 'socialism' by which to account for the actions and positions of the party. A discursive analysis of the party offers an explanation of how statements were arrived at and the mechanisms of their authorisation. Thus the aim of this dissertation is two fold. It examines how race issues are constructed through Labour Party statements, and how the Labour Party emerges in terms of its responses to race issues. It claims not a general, but a highly specific form of knowledge about both. A form of knowledge about the Labour Party in the 1930s cannot claim to offer a valid explanation appropriate to the present conjuncture but none the less it can claim to offer an explanation of the conditions in which certain statements on race issues were made. Many of the institutional features of the Labour Party described, persist.

In general terms this dissertation deals simultaneously with three basic levels of analysis, the Labour Party as a statement issuing institution, race issues in the form of an analysis of 'political community' and a method for the analysis of political statements.

India

Indian independence became an issue in the 1930s for a number of reasons. As the jewel of Queen Victoria's Empire India was central to many British conceptions of 'Empire' and the multiplicity of peoples whose daily lives were conducted under British sovereignty. There was a long standing connection between Britain and India which took the form of commercial and financial as well as personal links. British people for more than a century had occupied key as well as minor roles in the Indian

civil and security services. British trading, technological and political monopolies had structured the development of India.

The severence of this historic connection was being actively pursued in India by the 1930s. India was in the process of seeking redemption of the various pledges made by successive British Governments, that Indian independence was to be awarded when India was 'ready'. The Viceregal pledges of the nineteenth century were concretised in the Montagu -Chelmsford proposals (1917) and enshrined in statute in the Government of India Act (1919).

It was in this context that Britain, as the colonial authority pledged to cede independence, had to conduct negotiations with India in the 1930s. It was in this context that the Simon Commission was set up to conduct an exhaustive survey of conditions in India and to provide an understanding of the kind of government to which India might be suited. It reported in 1930 after having been met with anti Simon demonstrations over the length and breadth of India. These were in favour of indpendence, but against the kind of investigation the Commission was conducting. By this time the British Government was fully committed to independence. "Anyone who has been in the East will realise the important thing for a Britisher is never to go back on his word, a promise that has been given must be fulfilled ...". (Campbell 2/12/31 Debate on India. Hansard vol. 260 col. 1178). The majority of those engaged in parliamentary politics realised that the obligations of what was referred to as a 'long standing partnership' had to be reconciled with - "The legitimate aspirations of the Indians to take a greater part in their own government..." (Goodman 2/12/31 Debate on India. Hansard vol. 260 col. 1212).

It was with the resolution of this connection in mind that the Round Table Conference was set up in London (1930-31) as a forum for Anglo Indian discussion as to the structure of the Indian constitution. This

was a forum in which Britain aimed to inform herself as to the wishes of the Indian people before she made a pronouncement on the nature of the independence constitution. At the same time (1931) the Statute of Westminster Bill passed onto the statute books. This was to give dominion status to certain parts of the empire, namely Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, the Irish Free State and Newfoundland. The significance of this bill lies in the fact that it marked a transition from empire to commonwealth as it terminated the sovereignty of the British Parliament over these areas reformulating the imperial bond: and because India, though actively seeking independence was excluded from it. The discussions in parliament surrounding the passage of this bill made much of the fact that these were countries run by peoples of European extraction and that India could not be included in such a formulation.

The Statute of Westminster Bill was a recognition of a principle established at the 1923 and 1926 Imperial Conferences.

> "There are autonomous communities within the British Empire equal in status and in no way subordinate to one another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by common allegiance to the crown and freely associated members of the British Commonwealth of nations ..."
> (Proceedings of the Imperial Conference. 20/11/31 Debate on the Statute of Westminster Bill. Hansard vol.259 col.1174.)

Admission to the Commonwealth was the only form in which political freedom had to date, been awarded. India was most likely excluded from this formulation because she did not form an 'autonomous community' nor was she 'equal in status' with Britain. For Britain to exclude India from this formulation at this particular point in colonial history was a re-statement of her political superiority over the colony. The fact that such a notion corresponded to something of a parliamentary consensus was demonstrated in the Labour Party's response to the bill.

> "We shall welcome the time when a greater and greater degree of self government and

self determination can be given to the remaining parts of the empire and to India in particular.
(Cripps 24/11/31 Debate on the Statute of Westminster Bill. Hansard vol.259 col.1186)

A further dimension to the political problem which India was presenting to British administrations by the 1930s was the underwriting of the demand for political freedom by the actions of the Civil Disobedience Campaign which began in India in 1929. It was the result of a protracted political struggle within the Indian National Congress and had varying degrees of success in disrupting aspects of Indian life and providing a problem of social order for the British administration in the colony. The Indian National Congress was the main, but not the only, political institution associated with civil disobedience (see section 4.6.). A number of groups and parties which identified themselves broadly with the aims of 'socialism' as well as Trade Unions became involved in the anti British campaign. Some of the most well known campaigns associated with civil disobedience were the 'no rent' campaign of the peasants, the salt making and spinning activities which were an effective boycott of British products and the picketing of foreign cloth and liquor shops.

The British response to the activites associated with the diverse leadership of the Congress was an extensive use of police and military forces. This was demonstrated by the reports of the All India Congress Committee which document the extent of arrests and police activity in all areas of India. Satyagraha (passive civil disobedience) presented a direct challenge to Britain as a colonial authority and became the unspoken bargaining counter upon which the negotiations surrounding independence were conducted.

Anti Semitism

Anti semitism is a way of describing a series of issues in East London in the second half of the 1930s. Jews were a distinct part of the population there as in

other big cities. As well as being physically distinguishable through dress and appearance, what was spoken of as the 'Jewish community' had a certain autonomy which was constituted through its occupational structure, in some cases separate trade unions, separate living areas, religion, education, language and daily living practices. The 'Jewish community' had its own leaders, the Board of Deputies of Anglo Jewry, and its own labour party, the Poale Zion. On top of this it organised its own welfare system to look after its destitute. All of this was underwritten by a history of religious persecution and the belief by many in Britain that they were a 'race'.

Jewish immigration to Britain had almost ceased by the 1930s. The Standard Jewish Encyclopedia (1966) estimates that the annual average of all migrating Jews declined from seventy thousand in the period 1881-1914 to fifty four thousand in the period 1919-32. Gartner (1973) described the period 1870-1914 "the greatest age of voluntary migration" (p.15). He estimates that 120,000 Jews came to Britain in this period (p.30). Thereafter it rapidly declined. By the 1930s those who studied Jewish immigration to Britain, for example Gartner, did not consider it an issue. Despite this in many cases Jews were spoken of as an immigrant group. They were also uniquely associated with the issues of poverty and social order. In fact these two issues are linked. The condition of Jews, living in some of the worst areas of East London, was a focus for concerns relating to urban decay and degeneration. They had been placed within the eugenicist problematic. Concerns over the condition of Britain in terms of 'racial' health of her stock tended anyway to focus on the poor, and in the case of the Jews poverty was confused with the effects of the importation of poor stock from overseas. Poverty had become, at the turn of the century, an outward sign of racial progress. Many of these concerns were linked to concern for the stability of the social order because poverty was thought to harbour characteristics antithetical to social stability. This particularly focused on the Jewish residents of the big cities as they were the object of racial attacks by

the British Union of Fascists from the early 1930s. Anti semitism focused on public order issues for two reasons. Firstly because Jewish people were the object of personal attacks on the streets and secondly because they were seen to be the reason behind street clashes between the British Union of Fascists led by Mosley, and those who sought to oppose them. This resulted in the Public Order Act (1936) and a re-theorisation of British toleration, liberty and free speech.

In the 1930s the East End of London was a forcing house for social reform as it had been in the nineteenth century. The missions from Oxford and Cambridge as well as the surveys of Booth and Rountree specified for East London a special place in social reform considerations. This was exacerbated in the late nineteenth century by an influx of what were seen as 'pauper aliens'. Indeed, East London had been at the centre of the anti alien agitation which led to the first immigration act in 1905, the Aliens Act (Garrard 1971 p.55). This was supported by Jewish organisations and by resolutions passed at the Trades Union Congress. These organisations and others, were concerned about the standards of the indigenous population and therefore supported the refusal to allow the entry of those without means of supporting themselves. A lobby in support of this began in Britain in 1891 and was based on American legislation which introduced a poll tax for new immigrants, thus excluding the penniless.

Events in Europe of course also played a part in constituting anti semitism as an issue in the 1930s. The rise to power of the Nazis in Germany accompanied by anti semitic activity and the destruction of the German Social Democratic Party gave many in Britain a ready framework in which to interpret the political style and activity of the British Union of Fascists. Indeed the British Union was fast to align itself with the symbols and attitudes of continental fascism. This kind of analysis of events in Europe led the British Trade Union Movement and the Labour Party as well as the Communist Party and others associated with 'socialism' and 'anti

totalitarianism' into confrontation with the British Union and its anti semitic activities.

Finally, anti semitism in Britain must be set within the context of the movement for a Jewish homeland in Palestine. This was a British issue, primarily because Palestine had been a British mandate since the first world war, and because the Jews had been promised a homeland in the Balfour Declaration (1917). This had to be reconciled with the promise to the Palestinians, who like the Jews, claimed they had a historic right to settle in Palestine.

By the late 1920s a special commission on Palestine had been set up under the chairmanship of Sir Walter Shaw which gave rise to concern amongst Jews domiciled in Britain as to the intentions of the British Government in respect of the mandate. This was followed by an investigation into land settlement, immigration and development by John Hope Simpson and became a white paper in 1930 under much political pressure from the 'Jewish community'. In many respects the political problems arising from Jewish persecution in Britain were thought to be ultimately resolvable through Zionism, and thus removable from the British political conjuncture.

These accounts of the 'Indian situation' and anti semitism are just general outlines to demonstrate rather than assert that they were political issues during this period. These are the two main issues which raise the question of race in the 1930s and are the case studies upon which the analysis is based.

CHAPTER ONE

Theoretical and Methodological Considerations

1.1 A Review of Work on the Labour Party.

With the exception of Paul Foot's work on race as an issue in British Politics (Foot 1975) there has been no attempt to examine race in terms of the political policies and strategies of the Labour Party. Foot takes up the Labour Party's relation to immigration issues from the 1950s onwards documenting a shift in official positions from opposition to immigration control of any kind, to immigration restriction in combination with urban aid programmes and the construction of the machinery of the 'race relations industry' in the mid 1960s. His explanation for this apparent reversal in policy (which involved a transformation of the conceptualisation of commonwealth) whilst documented in a most detailed and informative manner, ultimately relies on an interpretation of the Labour Party as pragmatic, lured by the promise of votes for an anti immigrant platform. This is but a variation on the thesis that the Labour Party is necessarily anti black and anti working class because of the strictures imposed on it by its adherence to parliamentarianism. Such analyses interpret all political issues and forces in terms of their necessary correspondence to a set of given class interests of a group of economic agents.

There are numerous other accounts of the Labour Party, but they are not developed in relation to race issues. In fact, with one or two exceptions, accounts of the Labour Party are notable for their inability to address such issues. Such accounts are often extensively empirical and historical, providing a wealth of detail about the development of the party and its institutional structure. The work of G.D.H. Cole is in this tradition (Cole 1969). It is the most detailed account of Labour Party policy, institutions and activity so far produced. Many later accounts are derivative of its wealth of empirical detail. It is a chronological exposition of

events in the development of the central institutions of the Labour Party, as well as the major issues with which it was associated. Its comprehensive approach is demonstrated in its ability, unlike most other accounts, to deal with the issues of anti semitism and Indian independence, issues concerning race in the 1930s. Unlike other accounts it is very tentative in offering an assessment of the Labour Party in terms of the political options open to it. Even in its conclusion, written in 1947, it delicately depicts it as a party of struggle.

> "The note on which I should like to end is one of unquestionable admiration for the good, decent men and women all over the country who have built up the movement by their devoted service... finding their reward in the spirit of good will which has underlain all their striving to build a party strong enough to make a government bold enough to attempt the transformation of this dear land of ours into a home of security and justice for the common man." (Cole 1969 A History of the Labour Party from 1914. p.477-8)

This statement indicates that Cole believed the legitimate sphere of struggle for the Labour Party to be the capture of parliamentary power which could then be used to secure a kind of social justice for the ordinary citizen.

There are numerous accounts of the Labour Party, many of them adopting the same general class approach, but I shall confine my investigations to just two, Miliband's, because he has made an extensive historical analysis, and Pimlott's, because he has taken up the thirties in a fairly detailed manner. The general points made about these apply to many of the other studies.

Miliband's 'Parliamentary Socialism' (1975) is a historical survey beginning with the Labour representation Committee from which the Labour Party was formed in 1906 and ending with the regime of Harold Wilson. His central aim is to recount the consequences of the party's approach to politics throughout its history. His work is an exposition of the consequences, for the working class and the Labour Party, of the latter's adherence to

parliamentary action and rejection of other spheres of political activity. Miliband's central proposition is that the Labour Party failed to bring about socialism, that is, to respond to the 'real needs' of the working class. His account is a documentation of this failure.

> "Of political parties claiming socialism to be their aim, the Labour Party has always been one of the most dogmatic - not about socialism, but about the parliamentary system. Empirical and flexible about all else, its leaders have always made devotion to that system their fixed point of reference and the conditioning factor of their political behaviour".
> (Miliband 1975. Parliamentary Socialism. p.13)

The notion of failure in his account is developed from the idea that the Labour Party failed to represent the working class in terms of the options open to it. He considers that it was offered, by those whom it claimed to represent, radical alternatives to the parliamentary system in terms of political strategies. In this way Miliband sets up oppositions between the workers and their leadership in the Labour and trade union movement. His book is, therefore, an account of the 'betrayal' of the working class by its political leadership, against the background of the increasing incorporation of the Labour Party into the parliamentary system. One of many examples documenting this failure is found in Miliband's account of the events of 1915 which saw the development of the militant shop stewards and workers' movement.

> "The trade union leaders' virtual transformation into agents of the state inevitably offered new opportunities to the militant 'left' which it was not slow to exploit. From the beginning of 1915 onwards, when some eight thousand engineers on Clyde side struck for higher wages, the industrial truce was repeatedly broken in one part or another of the country. The disputes were mainly 'unofficial' and under the leadership of local shop stewards' committees, such as the Sheffield Workers' Committee or the Clyde Workers' Committee. These local initiatives not only fell short of the government but of the bulk of the trade union leadership as well, which is hardly surprising since every unofficial strike constituted a repudiation of that leadership."
> (Miliband 1975. Parliamentary Socialism. p.53)

Miliband, in this statement, is implicitly suggesting that the organised working class possesses a potential 'left' reservoir of revolutionary or at least insurrectionary activity. He documents this theme again in interpreting the events of the General Strike of 1926.

> "In his presidential address to the (Labour Party) conference, the chairman of the party, J. McGrath of the Miners' Federation, was more explicitly hostile to the notion of direct action. Referring to the movement 'that was already afoot to employ the strike weapon for political purposes' he said that this 'would be an innovation in this country which few responsible leaders would welcome... We are either constitutionalists or we are not constitutionalists, if we believe in the efficacy of the political weapon (and we do or why do we have a Labour Party?) then it is both unwise and undemocratic because we fail to get a majority at the polls to turn round and demand that we should substitute industrial action.'..."
> (Miliband 1975. Parliamentary Socialism. p.69)

There are in Miliband's account numerous such examples of the advanced state of the working class in relation to its leadership.

Much of the value of Miliband's contribution is found in the detailed way in which he documents his points with long quotes which allow the reader to assess the statements he is offering and judge whether or not they illustrate a particular point. Instead of asserting the advanced state of the working class in relation to its leadership as many analyses of the Labour Party do, he carefully documents it with statements from labour leaders. His analysis, detailed though it is, does raise one or two problems for the analysis of the Labour Party as a political institution.

In demonstrating that the Labour Party failed in terms of the options open to it, Miliband is arguing against the ever present revolutionary potential of the working class as a fact of political analysis. This revolutionary potential was thought to be indexed in their relative militancy in certain selected incidents as opposed to the positions adopted by its leadership. This interpretation relies on an assessment of political actions

in terms of their nearness to, or distance from, 'socialism' and on one of the main tenets of Marxism-Leninism which considers that the true interests of the working class lies in revolutionary overthrow of the system, and that it is possible for the working class to be aware of its strategic position in terms of revolutionary struggle. Miliband's analysis also assumes a split between the rank and file and its leadership in all political situations.

The claim that there is a permanent split between the leadership and the rank and file on all political issues in the labour movement rests on the consideration that the leadership is an integral part of the system (capitalism) upon which parliamentary action is erected. It was being suggested that the leadership of the working class, therefore, operates under a different system of rules than its membership. The interests of the leadership and the rank and file are therefore in open contradiction. This rests on the assumption that all political action, calculation and ideology must be interpreted in terms of a set of exigencies which reside in another sphere, economics, in which the antagonism between labour and capital is played out. Political forces and issues are being interpreted in terms of their necessary correspondance with the given class interests of economic agents. Such a reduction of a complexity of political issues, processes and strategies to a single set of ever present determinants does not adequately describe the processes which Miliband seeks to explain, it simply reduces them to a single dimension.

It is this reduction which allows an interpretation of working class political action, as distinct from that of its leadership, in terms of an automatic alliance with revolutionary action as the path of its true interests. This takes on the status of a law of political action since every action on the part of the working class is interpreted in this manner. Whilst it is not appropriate to deny this potential completely, it must be pointed out that it is not always possible to assess all political actions and positions in terms of so simple a dimension. This is

apparent in Miliband's work where he is unable to give an account of some areas of Labour Party activity. He is able to deal with what may be thought of as some of the flash points in Labour Party history, trade union militancy during the first war, the post war years of discontent, the shop stewards' movement, the policies of the first Labour Government when it failed to use parliament to implement 'socialism' (something it repeated in 1929), the General Strike, the crisis of capital in the 1930s and the post second world war programme of nationalisation.

Miliband was only able to deal with issues which allowed an interpretation in terms of class interest. He is unable to deal with the demands for political freedom which were coming from India in the 1930s or with anti semitism. Race issues were therefore excluded from his descriptions. It is unfair to accuse Miliband of not giving a complete account of Labour Party history, for he does not claim to have done so - "I must make it clear that I have not tried to write a comprehensive history of the Labour Party, much less the Labour movement" (Miliband 1975 p.14).

It is fair to say that he failed in terms of his own objectives which were to describe some of the major political issues and struggles in the history of the Labour Party, as not even in describing the events of the 1960s is he able to deal with race even though immigration was a major issue from the point of view of the Wilson government. The resulting effect is that Miliband is only able to deal with trade union related issues surrounding wage struggles and labour economic policy. Even his brief examination of what he describes as 'fascism' in the 1930s is in terms of its continental appearance in which its anti labour and anti socialist character is emphasized. The racism implicit in its anti semitic manifestations remains completely hidden in his account. In fact, an account of anti semitism in East London would present a challenge to his central proposition, the inherently revolutionary potential of

the working class. Miliband would then be required to explain why the predominantly working class population of East London engaged in anti semitic struggles. Many similar accounts use the notion 'false consciousness' to explain such divisive action which hinders a progression towards 'socialism'. The behaviour of the Labour Party at the appearance of the British Union of Fascists is related to demonstrate its inability to confront 'fascism' unlike the Communist Party which achieved a degree of mobilisation in the working class.

> "With the Nazis' conquest of power in Germany at the beginning of 1933, the spectre which ever more insistently came to haunt the Labour movement was the spectre of Fascism, and of Fascist aggresssion... The first issue which Fascism raised was that of the Labour Party's relations with the Communist Party; the second was defence."
> (Miliband 1975. Parliamentary Socialism. p.216)

A further problem arises in Miliband's use of the concept 'socialism' in his account. This is related to some of the problems already outlined. Throughout the book Miliband maintains a distinction between 'socialism' and 'labourism'. Labourism is a generalised description of a set of ideological perspectives linked to the position of the Labour Party by virtue of its commitment to parliamentary institutions, but otherwise unspecified. Parliament is presented in his account as the arena in which the interests of the state are served. The interests of the state were thought to be synonymous with the interests of the Capitalist class. Therefore 'labourism' refers to a set of ideologies and practices by which the working class is misrepresented. Miliband constantly confronts 'labourism' with 'socialism' in which he considers the true interests of the working class to be represented. It is one of the aims of this dissertation to break down this category 'labourism' and establish how the Labour Party defined its own particular brand of socialism and what was at stake in such definitions.

Miliband's definition of socialism is never made explicit, although it would appear that he is referring to a system (which serves as an ultimate goal) in which

the relations of production between capital and labour are transformed in line with Marx's 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat'. This assessment of socialism features in his work by virtue of his judgement of strategies in terms of their relation to the interests of the two opposed classes. All of the policies and strategies of the Labour Party are thus assessed in terms of their contribution to a movement in the direction of socialism. Movements towards socialism are those which challenge the power of capital. Parliamentarianism for Miliband was the antithesis of socialism because it involved a complicity with the state as the political agent of capital.

To judge all political positions and strategies in this manner denies a multiplicity of other considerations and effects. Not all considerations can be reduced to the notion of interests, though ultimatley such a calculation plays a large part in deciding on certain political strategies. But even if interests were the only calculation to be made it does not follow that the interests of the working class are unitary. An action which challenges the power of capital may only serve the interests of a section of the working class. The interests of black people and women are not necessarily concurrent with a challenge to capital. If this were to be the measure of the validity of political struggles, then many of those associated with anti racist initiatives would be judged as irrelevant or marginal to the struggle for socialism. This partially explains Miliband's reluctance to deal with anti semitism in the 1930s, choosing instead to examine the struggle between the Labour Party and the Communist Party to represent the working class.

Another problem with Miliband's analysis lies in its inability to produce a description of the Labour Party other than as a completely pragmatic institution. Apart from its ideological adherence to the practices of parliamentarianism, the Labour Party is depicted as being guided solely by considerations of poular appeal or vote catching. This is not unique to Miliband but is a widely held view among Labour Party historians and analysts.

It suggests that the Labour Party does not have any ideological basis, however incoherent, from which it forms positions on various issues. Even a cursory analysis of the statements which Miliband reproduces indicates a set of ideological perspectives from which statements are derived. Such an analysis can only be conducted with the aid of a method of 'reading' statements. Because Miliband does not use a theory of reading he is limited in that he can only interpret the statements of the Labour Party in their literal sense. His descriptions of the Labour Party's policies and strategies are thus somewhat limited in the kind of knowledge they are capable of producing. Pimlott shares this problem. The result is a limited analysis of the Labour Party which confines itself to the official pronunciations instead of being able to assess the range of positions offered to the party from which certain ones were selected as 'official' statements. Because of this Pimlott is only able to describe the 'failure' of what he calls the 'left' of the party because of its inability to offer 'official' pronunciations.

Finally Miliband's analysis makes extensive use of labelling different positions expressed in the party as 'left', 'right' or 'centrist'. This practice is very widespread in descriptions of the Labour Party. Indeed the Labour Party itself has always subscribed to such a division as descriptive of the various political positions with which it is often associated. To describe a position as 'left' or 'right' raises the question - what is it to the left or right of? This presupposes some measurement which is usually unspecified. In some cases this may be an assessment of a position of equilibrium or consensus as a 'centre' position, or, as in Miliband's case it refers both to a notion of consensus within the party and to an unspecified notion of 'socialism'. A position may be described as 'left' if it is considered to be closer to the interests of the working class, that means a challenge to capital, than other stated positions. Miliband's analysis does not

produce an assessment of possible positions because it is only concerned to examine 'official' policy and its relation to the political activity of the rank and file membership.

Despite Miliband's treatment of the 'left' as a fact of existence in Labour Party structures he does not assume it had a unitary appearance throughout its history. He suggests that it has taken one or other concrete institutional form throughout labour history, though his approach tends to suggest that there is an essence underlying these forms.

> "From 1900 to 1932, its main political expression was the Independent Labour Party. When the I.L.P. ceased, in that year to be a constituent body of the Labour Party, it was replaced until 1937 by the Socialist League. In the fifties it found expression in the Bevanite Movement and then in such organisations as Victory for Socialism."
> (Miliband 1975. Parliamentary Socialism. p.15)

Pimlott's book, 'Labour and the Left in the 1930s', is a detailed study of the institutional arrangements and alliances of the left of the Labour Party during the 1930s. Pimlott began by defining the character of essence of the period in terms of two political issues, mass unemployment and the threat of War. Pimlott considered that these were theissues to which an effective Labour Party should have been able to address itself. In doing this he is specifying what the Labour Party should have been doing, championing the unemployed and leading its adherents towards a resistance to war. He adds to this, 'socialism', also a legitimate goal for the Labour Party. The main thrust of his analysis was that the Labour Party was prevented from doing these things because of the behaviour of its 'left' wing.

> "Might the Labour Party in the 1930s have been used as an instrument for aidng the unemployed at home, restraining Fascism abroad, or making a significant step towards the achievement of socialism? The answer of this book is that the opportunities existed but were wasted - partly because of left wing pressures which, so far from encouraging brave initiatives inhibited the party leadership and resticted its room for manoeuver."
> (Pimlott 1977. Labour and the Left in the 1930s. p194)

The main thesis of the book concerns Pimlott's assessment of the impact of the 'left' of the party on official pronunciations. In failing to find a 'voice' in the Labour Party's pronouncements he judges the left to have failed in terms of the opportunities open to it. He sets this against his assessment of the period as an age which favoured 'left' activity by which he means extra parliamentary activity. Pimlott had a different definition of the 'left' from Miliband. As far as Miliband was concerned the Parliamentary party obstructed the cause of the working class, whereas the 'left' presented the possibility of representing their true interests. Pimlott considered that the 'left' had obstructed the true interests of the working class which could only be served through the process of Parliamentary intervention. Pimlott's definition of the working class is less theorised than Milibands. It refers to their immediate interests in struggles against unemployment and for peace. His definition of 'socialism' as the goal of the working class can be provided within the confines of a Capitalist system, whereas Miliband's requires a break with this system.

Pimlott's work is well documented by institutional assessments and descriptions of those whom he designates as 'left'. He provides an account of the Socialist League, the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda, the Fabian Society and the Left Book Club as well as individual contributions by those in the parliamentary party who were associated with 'left' struggles. There is also an account of the movement in the constituencies for a greater representation within the party, especially on the National Executive Committee. This movement is absent from most accounts of the party in this period, with the exception of Cole who is only able to give it cursory treatment.

In setting up certain institutions as 'left' and describing their activities, Pimlott is offering different definitions of leftness. In the case of the Socialist League Pimlott says-

> "But this (Herbert Morrison's public corporation model of nationalisation) was not enough for the League, which demanded nothing less than full industrial democracy. In the eyes of the League the issue was fundamental to the whole socialist idea, and was of deeper significance than mere economic efficiency. 'I believe in political democracy' said Clay at Leicester 'but I don't believe that can become complete until you have industrial democracy.'..."
> (Pimlott 1977 Labour and the Left in the 1930s. p.66)

In the case of the League he was defining industrial democracy as constituting its differences from the Labour Party. This was what constituted its leftness. Pimlott cites many such examples of deviation from the official position of the party and in so doing arrives at a fragmented definition of socialism which owes more to its deviation from official policy than to its actual content. Despite his decriptions of industrial democracy, in the case of the Socialist League, Pimlott ultimately describes as 'left' and 'socialist' actions which are a betrayal of the 'legitimate' purpose of the party. The legitimate arena of action for the party was parliament, not mass action as Miliband suggests.

> "It makes no sense, however, to blame the Labour Party for not doing what it never set out to do. For the reality is not that labour is bad or dilatory or half hearted about radicalising the working class, or has not lived up to the high hopes once placed in it, or any similar formulation. ...The Labour Party has never been a mass movement, still less a revolutionary vanguard. It was founded as, and remains, an electoral machine."
> (Pimlott 1977 Labour and the Left in the 1930s p.196)

As far as Pimlott was concerned representation of organised labour in parliament was the principle upon which the Labour Party was founded. Parliamentarianism could not, therefore, represent a betrayal of its purpose as Miliband suggests.

Whilst both Miliband and Pimlott provide detailed accounts of Labour history, assessments of its effectiveness as a political instrument depend on their analyses of what it should be able to achieve and what its political goals should be. Ultimately both of these writers implicitly offer a definition of socialism by which the

party is measured. Its performance as a political instrument is thus constantly being assessed in terms of a defined essence, which is ultimately reducible to a set of economic exigencies, defined as working class interests in Miliband's account. The method I intend to use in this dissertation avoids that necessity and seeks to represent the actions and policies of the Labour Party in terms of their conditions of existence.

In going beyond the official statements of the Labour Party and examining those offered to it by institutions inside and outside the party, it will be possible to go further than Miliband and Pimlott and offer an explanation of how the Labour Party works as a statement issuing body, and some of the ideological premises associated with certain positions. In this way it will be possible to arrive at a description of the Labour Party not simply in terms of its official positions, but as a diverse political institution in all of its complexity.

In choosing to describe the Labour Party in terms of its own language and definitions of itself it should be possible to avoid reducing its activities to a set of economic interests associated with a class. It should be possible to construe the Labour Party rather then treat it as a predefined entity, as its constructions of political community unfold in the discourse.

1.2 Discourse

The struggles which were taking place in the Labour Party were not so much about the capture of political power as the right to define the central objects and concepts relating to the issues with which the Labour Party concerned itself. The specification of relevant issues was also an important aspect of this struggle.

Discourse is a concept central to this dissertation. Its early development was tied in with the work of Saussure and others in linguistics. The work of Saussure (1966) centred around the functioning of relations

between linguistic signs in a 'language state'. In this context discourse is to do with the relations of words in the linear structure of the language. Saussure conterposes words within discourse to words outside discourse where they have relations of a different kind, an associative relation in memory. Discourse in the Saussureian sense is the investigation of syntagmatic relations in groups of words.

As it then appears in Barthes's linguistic analysis, a discourse is a succession of sentences. Within the organisation of sentences are messages of another kind - "at a higher level than the language of linguistics". (Barthes 1979. Image, Music, Text. p.83) This refers to a system of meaning.

Whilst maintaining an emphasis on 'relations' and much of the terminology of linguistics, analyses of discourse, such as those of Foucault and others, have abandoned studies of the structure of the language itself in favour of a variety of other projects. Foucault's theorisation of discourse hinges on the conception of a discursive formation. A discursive formation can be said to exist, as far as Foucault is concerned, when a regularity between a number of statements can be defined. A regularity exists when there is a system of dispersion between objects and types of statements, concepts or thematic choices. In defining a set of objects, concepts and thematic choices as a discourse or discursive formation, Foucault seeks to establish that such a unity actually exists.

In describing a set of objects and concepts as a single particular discourse Foucault describes a unity of a particular kind. He challenges the conception of unity which has credence in socio-historical analysis, that of a periodisation around certain disparate events, based on a stated organisational principle or underlying unity. Such analyses often rely on a definition of the spirit of an age which can be based on almost any organising principle in an arbitrary fashion. Having defined the spirit or essence of an age a unity is awarded

which is not easily challenged.

Foucault's unities are somewhat differently constructed. He begins with the unities which he says are suggested by history and generally accepted as having an unproblematic existence. He uses psychopathology as an example of a unity which he claims must be interrogated. By what right, he asks, is it claimed that this is a specific field? Rather than dismiss the notion of unities in discourse, he retains it, setting himself the task of constructing unities correctly, that is, in terms of discerning whether its objects and concepts form a regularity which can be defined. In 'Politics and the Study of Discourse' (1978) he sets out the need to establish 'correct' principles of unification as the task confronting him. He calls this the "individualisation of discourse" (p.8). Such a task required the establishment of the limits of discourse, that is, where one begins and another ends. What properly belonged to psychopathology and what to the discourse on medecine?

Foucault suggests certain criteria adequate to the kind of investigation which would result in the individualisation of discourses. The first of these was formation. Foucault suggests that the individualisation of discourses cannot be based upon the unity imposed by the object (see section 1.3) of discourse but by the rules of formation and arrangement of all the objects in a discourse. "There is an individualised discursive formation everytime one can define a similar set of rules." (Foucault 1977. The Archeology of Knowledge. p.9) The rules to which he refers are operations, concepts and theoretical options.

The second of these criteria (Foucault 1978. p.9) is 'transformation' or 'threshold'. This means that a discursive formation can be defined if it is possible to define the condtions which must have been effective together in order that its objects, operations, concepts and theoretical options could be formed.

Lastly, Foucault considered a discursive formation

could be defined through criteria of correlation (Foucault 1978 p.10). That is, the possibility of defining the ensemble of relations which define a discourse and situate it amongst other kinds of discourses and the non discursive context in which it functions. By non discursive context Foucault means institutions, social relations as well as economic and political conjuncture. Brown and Coussins (1980) claim in "The Linguistic Fault: the Case of Foucault's Archeology" that the concept of a discursive formation is at risk because Foucault failed to state its necessary theoretical supports, that is, the statement and the regularity of statements. Foucault's discursive formation is a group of statements, and, claim Brown and Coussins, Foucault does not differentiate the statement from objects specified by linguistics and logic. He therefore leaves an ambiguity about the relation between language and statements. Because of Foucault's preoccupation with the specification of the discursive formation, he made a distinction between what belonged and what was exluded from any particular discursive formation. He was not, therefore, particularly concerned with the non discursive. The non discursive does not have any particular status, either in Foucault's work, or in this dissertation. There is no non discursive reality governing the discourse. Discourses are not signs of something else, a reality behind a document. No general relation exists between external events and discourse. As soon as external events are spoken about, they become discursively organised.

Whilst this dissertation relies heavily on the use of discourse, it is necessary to reject the notion of a discursive formation as Foucault uses it. This is partly prompted by a concern over the validity of dividing discourses up into individual unities and partly because of the use in the dissertaion of what Foucault refers to as the non discursive, in this case institutions. As soon as institutions are spoken of, or enunciated on behalf of, they become discursive. In the discourse surrounding notions of political community, which need

not be a unit of discourse at all but a focal point for a series of discourses, the discourse is necessarily limited by the institutional structures of the Labour Party. Because this dissertation examines statements made by, or on behalf of the Labour Party, it is the property of belonging to the Labour Party which defines the body of statements as well as the two issues specified (Indian independence and anti semitism). The notion of a political community (see sections 1.11, 1.12, 1.13) is posed as a focal point for discussion on these two issues.

The Labour Party is not difficult to define. It is an institution with a label to which individuals and institutions can claim allegiance by submitting to its rules and constitution. The Labour Party is defined in terms of its constitution, but it is also defined through the statements it issues on a host of matters which may have a certain ideological structure or set of limits. As an institution the Labour Party is both discursive and non discursive in that it has an existence as an event in political processes, but it is also discursive in that it constructs itself through its constitution and statements. It is possible to ask - what sort of statements is the Labour Party capable of? It is then possible to describe it in terms of its statements on any particular issue, rather than as a pre-existing reality which is available for description.

It is necessary, given the objectives of this dissertation, to displace Foucault's central problematic, the delimitation of discourses, and use discourse as a tool of investigation of certain objects, concepts and the operation of an enunciating institution which has played a part in British politics and its strategies. Other aspects of Foucault's analysis add to, rather than detract from, the task in hand. Foucault's discourse is not a system of language, nor the formal rules of its construction, but indicates the laws of existence of statements, that which has made them and no other statements possible in their place. He asks - what are the conditions of their singular emergence? What are their correlations with other events, discursive and non discursive? (1977 p28)

Discourse for Foucault (1977) is a combination of things. It is that which it is possible to speak of. it is that which enters the 'domain' of discourse. (1977 p.80) These have what he refers to as "limits and forms of conservation", which means that some statements from various period will disappear without trace, whilst others will remain and are capable of re-use. Those wich are re-used refer to the limits and forms conservations.

Discourse in Foucault's formulation is also to do with the forms and limits of memory. This seeks to establish which are the terms everyone recognises as valid or questionable, as well as the relations between past and present statements. It also refers to the limits and forms of reactivation. Reactivated discourses are those in which discourses are reformed, valued and imported. The question of the limits and forms of appropriation are also valid. This is an analysis of the individuals, groups or classes which have access to certain discourses.

For Foucault, discourses are monuments to be described. They have conditions of existence which can be specified and a practical field in which they are deployed. This formulation of discourse is quite appropriate to the task of this dissertation. Foucault asks - "How is it that one particular statement appeared rather than another?" (1977 p 27). He claimed that -

> "We must grasp the statement in the exact specificity of its occurence, determine its conditions of existence,...and show the other forms of statements it excludes...We must show why it could not be other than it was...how it assumes a place no other could occupy."
> (Foucault 1977 The Archeology of Knowledge p.27)

Foucault's use of discourse had been followed by many others. McCabe (1978 p.31) said it was to do with the articulation of a position, representation and its conditions of existence. Hindess and Hirst (1979 p.7) say it is to do with the construction of problems for analysis. The use made of the term discourse as an

analytic device in this dissertation follows from that outlined by Foucault. For the purpose of this dissertation it may be defined as a method for reading or analysing things spoken of, in this case, by or on behalf of, a political institution.

Discourse manifests itself through statements, and it is through these that the analysis must take place. Things spoken of by the Labour Party in relation to notions of political community refers to a specified field of objects. Discourse cannot be more completely defined without taking up notions such as object, concept, text, statement, position, constraint and knowledge.

1.3 Objects of Discourse

The discourse with which this dissertation deals is delineated by the institutional boundaries of the Labour Party as they affect 'political community'. Community is an object of discourse, but political community is not so much a term from the discourse as an organising principle regulating the discourse. Although it is not being defined as a total discourse or distinct discursive entity, it does appear to be the organising principle for a number of discursive objects; community, nation, India, Jews, citizen and subject to list but a few. These are the key objects of the discourse with which this dissertation is concerned. Objects are characterised by a dual relationship to both discursive and non discursive forms. Objects are defined in terms of both their materiality and their occurance in discourse.

Foucault does not actually offer a definition of objects in relation to discourse, but rather names as examples, objects from the discourse on psychopathology such as hallucinations, speech disorders, etc. These display, in general terms, the duality just suggested. They are capable of being presented to the senses and exist outside of their construction in discourse. In discussing the formation of objects of discourse, Foucault asks - "What has ruled their existence as objects of discourse?" (1977. The Archeology of Knowledge. p.41)

He considers that their emergence as objects of discourse is governed by three considerations, their surfaces of emergence (institutions such as the family) their authorities of delimitation (who names and establishes them as objects) and their grids of specification (for example in psychopathology, the specification of different kinds of madness). This is relevant to the investigation in hand. The surfaces of emergence refer to the Labour Party and its constituent institutions (referred to as a site of enunciation), authorities of delimitation refer to the structure of authorisation of statements in the party and the grids of specification correspond to the different definitions of 'political community'.

Foucault claims that discourse is more than a particular arrangement of objects. "It would be quite wrong to see discourse as a place where previously established objects are laid one after another like lines on a page...". (Foucault 1977. The Archeology of Knowledge p.43). It is not the objects which in some privileged way characterise a discourse but the arrangement of a number of objects.

> "Psychiatric discourse is characterised not by privileged objects, but the way in which it forms objects that are in fact highly dispersed. This formation is made possible by a group of relations established between authorities of emergence, delimitation and specification... a discursive formation is defined (as far as objects are concerned) if one can show how any particular object of discourse finds... its place and law of emergence."
> (Foucault 1977. The Archeology of Knowledge. p.44)

In the light of Foucault's formulation of objects the term will be used in this dissertation to refer to members of a particular collection of objects. It is the particular combination of objects which makes it possible to speak of 'political community' as a set of related discourses, if not a single discourse. It is not a unity with boundaries, it is no more than a focus or organising principle for a series of objects. As such it is both an object and a concept.

1.4 Concepts in Discourse

Concepts are abstract terms by means of which objects are formed, posed or arranged. For example, socialism is a concept which poses a series of concrete objects, depending on a number of things including the orientation of the authorising and enunciating authority, these might be nationalisation, public ownership, or to do with industrial organisation. Some of the key concepts to be encountered will be socialism, citizenship, pluralism, democracy and public order. They are often generalised ways of referring to, and thus orgainising, discursive objects. The concept 'socialism' establishes a set of relations between the objects 'nationalisation', 'public ownership' and so on.

The concepts 'socialism' and 'citizenship' have a particular status in political discourse. In many of the statements examined they are described as 'constiuencies' (see sections 1.11 and 3.4). These are peculiar to political statements and refer to a representational function. A constituency is something being represented by an institution usually on behalf of a 'community' or a special group of people or subjects. There is no contradiction between something being a concept (an abstract organising principle) and a constituency.

Foucault thinks that concepts may be described in the following manner.

> "Theoretical choices exclude or imply, in the statements in which they are made, the formations of certain concepts, that is, certain forms of coexistence between statements... It is not the theoretical choice that governs the formation of the concept; but the choice has produced the concept by the mediation of specific rules for the formation of concepts and the set of relations that it holds with this level." (Foucault 1977. The Archeology of Knowledge. p.73)

He considers that concepts are ways of organising objects in the discourse and are as important in the discourse as the formation of objects. Both (discursive) objects and concepts are formed in the act of discourse. The arrangement and emergence of the collection of objects

and concepts specified, characterises the formation of a discourse centred on political community, as opposed to a collection characterising another set of discourses. The philosophical debates from which many of these concepts come do not have a superior status to the objects, they are just a constituent part of the discourse.

Because concepts provide an ordering of discursive objects by establishing relations between them, they are necessarily absract. This does not mean that they are abstracted 'reality' or have a superior status to objects in the discourse. They do not represent anything other than the organisation of objects in discourse, but because they are ways of organising and establishing relations, they are more purely discursive than objects. Objects may exist in an unspoken of state, they may have no relation to discourse, but concepts are only ways of organising discursive objects and as soon as they organise objects they become discursive. A political community is both a discursive object (it may refer to a specified group of people in the context of representation in political statements for example 'the Indian people' or 'the working class') and a concept as an organising principle for series of discursive objects.

Definitions of objects and concepts are one of the structuring mechanisms (this is taken up later) operating on the construction of a statement. These key concepts, and objects, are defined in the discourse in a variety of ways, they do not have a fixed meaning but are sites of struggle within the Labour Party. To sum up, objects and concepts may be distinguished in the following way. Concepts are abstract and objects have a concrete form in which they appear to the senses, and concepts are more purely discursive.

1.5 Texts

Texts are the documents in which discourses are contained. Foucault claims that the accounts of events and thoughts contained in texts are monuments of the past, and that through a method of interrogation of texts

the past may be made known. Foucault's main problem with texts is the question of their material unity. "Is not the material unity of the volume a weak accessory unity in relation to the discursive unity of which it is the support." (Foucault 1977. The Archeology of Knowledge. p.23). He was concerned that the apparent unity of the text imposed by its material form should not overshadow the unity of the discourse, of which texts form only fragments. Unity was thus a characteristic of discourse rather than text. "As soon as one questions that unity it loses its self evidence; it indicates itself, constructs itself, only on the basis of a complex field of discourse." (Foucault 1977. The Archeology of Knowledge. p.23) Unity for Foucault is interpreted and constructed, it does not just exist to be observed.

A text is also a document through which objects and concepts are dispersed. It is the material form in which objects and concepts may be appropriated; a collection of statements through which the past may be constructed. Texts may be interrogated, but not to establish the truth or falsity of its propositions or to consider how far it produces a certain kind of knowledge; but to offer a reconstruction of voices from the past from which an assessment of their conditions of emergence may be obtained.

In this dissertation the text has no significance other than as the raw material upon which the investigation is conducted. It is the place where the thoughts, ideas and philosophies of the Labour Party were registered. Within the text are contained written statements which were originally spoken but have been recorded in documents and thus preserved. Because of this, the texts available for any period in the past must be seen as fragments of discourses. It would be impossible to capture every piece of a discourse as the researcher only has access to written statements and in some cases to the personal recollections of those involved.

This dissertation constructs the Labour Party in

the 1930s from a variety of texts. It uses records and minutes of meetings. These are verbal statements recorded in a written and probably much abbreviated form. Such accounts come from a variety of institutions within and surrounding the Labour Party. Use is made of pamphlets which are usually extended explanations of a set of political positions or circumstances. Policy documents are also used. These take a different form from pamphlets in that they state quite specifically the need for a certain kind of approach on an issue, or set of issues. They are generally presented with a particular audience in mind. Then there are political resolutions which state a position against other competing positions, defining situations and issues and offering a programme for future action. There are also reports from various institutions associated with the Labour Party giving accounts of their activity and involvement in certain issues over a given time span. These may be annual reports, which in the case of the Labour Party as a whole, represent a collection of reports from all the institutions in the party as well as the proceedings of annual conference. Use is also made of letters between individuals and organisations as well as interviews which result in personal accounts of events and situations. Such techniques can produce accounts which do not belong solely to the central institutions of the party, but represent the views of individuals and groups of individuals within it.

Slightly different from the kinds of texts so far outlined are documents with some kind of official sanction, such as statutory reports issued by the government like the reports on India referred to in chapters four and five. The Labour Party constitution is also a document of elevated status because it sets out the rules under which the party operates. Reports of parliamentary proceedings from Hansard are also used to give a wider perspective to certain debates.

Books written by those active in trying to formulate Labour Party responses to issues also offer fragments to the discourse, as do newspapers and journals. Books, newspapers and journals may be regarded as single texts

because they usually state a set of objectives, a range of issues and are the product of a particular editorial policy. Beyond these considerations the articles within them should be regarded as quite diverse statements, even in the case of those belonging to the same author.

In general any text is the result of a number of constraints and conditions and this in turn effects the kinds of statements which may be contained within it. A text defines possible audiences, propositions and positions. It is also the result of a set of institutional procedures under which it is produced and published. This refers to the rules or practices of institutions authorising the statements. By using these general criteria it is possible to make broad distinctions between different kinds of statements. Different texts are produced by different enunciative sites and have different audiences. These factors condition the kinds of statements of which they are capable. Text and statement are, therefore, very much related.

1.6 Statements and Discourse.

Statements are central to an analysis of discourse. Texts and documents are a mode of conveying statements. Texts appear to have a material unity, although as Foucault says, this should not be awarded any status. A statement on the contrary, does not have the same apparent unity. It is difficult to decide where one statement begins and another ends. Foucault recognised that the statement was the unit of analysis in a discourse but as such it presented a problem of boundaries. Foucault asked, could a statement be the same as a proposition or a sentence?

> "This is not the place to answer the general question of the statement, but the problem can be clarified: the statement is not the same kind of unit as the sentence, the proposition, or the speech act; it cannot be referred therefore to the same criteria; but neither is it the same kind of unit as a material object, with its limits and independence."
> (Foucault 1977 The Archeology of Knowledge p.86)

The statement in Foucault's work may be more accurately described as a function than a material unit.

This functioning refers to that which can be described in its actual practice, its conditions, the rules which govern it and the field in which it operates. This is what Foucault refers to as "enunciative function" (1977 p.88). Foucault's enunciative function is characterised by a number of considerations. Firstly, any statement must have a referent or a relation to that which it states.

> "The referential of a statement forms the place, the condition, the field of emergence, the authority to differentiate between individuals or objects, state of things and relations that are brought into play by the statement itself; it defines the possibilities of appearance and delimitation of that which gives meaning to the sentence...It is this group that characterises the enunciative level of the formulation, in contrast to its grammatical and logical levels: through the relation with these various domains of possibility the statement makes a syntagma, or a series of symbols, a sentence to which one may or may not ascribe a meaning, a proposition that may or may not be accorded a value as truth."
> (Foucault 1977 The Archeology of Knowledge p.91-2)

He is suggesting that a set of linguistic signs may be called a statement if it has a set of relations which ascribe it meaning and may be contended, but is not derived from logic or grammar.

Secondly, an enunciative function exists where a statement has a particular relation with a subject as well as a referential element. By this Foucault means an enunciative subject. "A statement also differs from any series of linguistic elements by virtue of the fact that it posesses a particular relation with a subject." (Foucault 1977 The Archeology of Knowledge p.92). The problem with this formulation is that any series of linguistic elements has a relation with a discoursing subject, and Foucault does not indicate what is peculiar to the relation between a statement and a discoursing subject. In examining political statements, the situation is also complicated by the fact that the author of a statement is not always the same as the discoursing subject which might be an institution. The subject of a statement

is not simply the author of a set of words which can be ascribed a meaning. Foucault points out that there are authorities of formulation which are not identical with individual authors. The subject of a statement for Foucault is a particular function which can be filled by any individual. He also points to the difficulty in establishing the author of a statement, because authors are sometimes doing no more than invoking past positions of unspecified authors.

Foucault suggests that a series of signs can be called a statement if the position of the subject can be assigned.

> "It (subject) is a particular vacant place that may in fact be filled by different individuals; but instead of being defined once and for all, and maintaining itself as such throughout the text, a book or an oevre, this place varies... If a position, a sentence, a group of signs can be called 'statement', it is not therefore because one day, someone happened to speak them or put them into a concrete form of writing, it is because the position of the subject may be assigned."
> (Foucault 1977 The Archeology of Knowledge p.95)

The position of the subject refers to its relation with the statement. Foucault's illustration of this is - "I call straight any series of points that..". In this example the relation of the subject with the statement is that it sets up the definition of a straight line and states it. In this dissertation the discoursing subject is often an institution.

Foucault is suggesting that it is not necessary to define the position of the subject in each statement, but that part of a definition of a statement is that there must be an empty place which could be ascribed a subject. This is a helpful suggestion for a definition of a statement in this dissertation, but in the analysis of political statements this empty position establishes a set of ideological components. For example, in terms of Foucault's definition, the set of signs - "Britain should withdraw from India" is a statement because, the subject sets itself in relation to what Britain should do and it has a set of referents which are capable of attracting

other statements on this issue. But in addition to this it states a position amongst other possible options and offers a definition of India in which British withdrawal was thought appropriate. This is explored later on in the case studies in chapters four, five and six.

The third set of criteria by which a statement is identified in Foucault's deliberations is the existence of an "associated domain" (1977 p.96). This means that statements do not appear in isolation but within a series of other formulations, within which one statement appears as an element. All statements reactivate other statements. Foucault calls this "enunciative co existence" (1977 p.100).

Lastly, a statement must have a material existence. This materiality consists in a voice, a series of signs, a place and a date. This materiality is - "Constitutive of the statement itself: a statement must have substance, a support, a place and a date." (1977 p.101).

In the final analysis Foucault avoids giving a very general definition of a statement. His formulation is instructive in discerning a statement in terms of its enunciative function. It is possible to suggest in the light of his formulation that a statement may be a sentence, though it need not be. It must have a set of referents, and ends when the subject alters its position. The definition of position to be used in this dissertation is somewhat wider than that used by Foucault. Foucault's definition of a position is an empty formulation, it just refers to a place, whereas position must be seen in terms of a set of ideological considerations implicit within it (see section 1.8). This will be more fully explained in the section examining the relation between ideology and discourse.

A statement for the purposes of this dissertation must be defined in terms of enunciative function, that is, it must possess a relation to what it states, it must be given a meaning which is capable of attracting other contending statements in discourse, it must ascribe a position to the subject and that position must have an

ideological component. A single newspaper article for example, by an identified author offers itself as a single statement. But it is not enough to accept that it is such without inquiring into the ideological positions it sets up on any issue. It cannot be a statement unless it poses something as a position. A statement gets its name from its function. It states.

The most important feature of Foucault's analysis in this respect is the line of reasoning to which it leads.

> "It (the analysis of statements) does not question things said as to what they are hiding, what they are 'really' saying...it questions them as to their mode of existence, what it means to them to have come into existence... What it means to them to have appeared when and where they did - they and no others." (Foucault 1977 The Archeology of Knowledge p.109)

Whilst it is of vital importance to be able to define a statement because it is a key feature of discourse analysis, it is just as important to know how to use it once it has been defined. The purpose of examining Foucault's formulations is to develop a mode of analysis of statements. Foucault rightly points out that the question to ask of a statement is what are the conditions of its singular emergence? Statements in this dissertation are the raw material upon which the tools of the analysis are used in order to come to certain conclusions about the method of analysis of political statements, the Labour Party and political community as a concept informing discourses concerning race. The tools relevant to this purpose are developed in this chapter from the work of Foucault.

1.7 Constraints and Structuring Mechanisms.

Constraints and structuring mechanisms do not feature in the work of Foucault. They are analytic devices which address themselves to the question which Foucault poses in relation to statements, their conditions of singular emergence. For this reason they are used as part of a method for statement analysis. Constraints and structuring mechanisms serve a specific function in aiding the provision of a way of analysing political statements. They may be distinguished from each other in terms of the way they

function in the production of statements.

Constraints function to compel. They impose a direction on statements which cannot be ignored. Constraints do not directly produce statements, they produce the conditions in which structuring mechanisms produce statements. A number of constraints may be identified in relation to any political statement or set of statements.

The first constraint which may be identified concerns pledges or declarations on a particular set of issues. These are not just statements or pronouncements, but have a special status which even official statements, such as those described in chapters two and three in relation to the Labour Party, do not have. Pledges are backed by the authority, not of a political party, but on behalf of the office of government. They therefore concern the practices associated with statesmanship. This can be demonstrated by considering, as an example, the repeated pledges of the British Government that India would at some point to be determined, become independent. This is a statement of a very general nature, committing the British Government to a direction, but not a specific set of policies or proposals. Generalness is a characteristic of pledges. The pledges of the British Government relating to India did not commit it to anything other than a direction, a movement towards, rather than away from independence. This is the nature of the compulsion, it does not have a direct relationship to a certain kind of statement and cannot alone, or in combination with other constraints produce a certain kind of statement. Only structuring mechanisms have a direct relation to statements.

Political circumstances form the second constraint on the conditions in which statements are made. The notion of a political situation or a set of political conditions is always subject to definition in the statement in which it is presented. But never-the-less they do act as a constraint in the production of a set of conditions which statements have to take into account. Using India as an example it is clear that however the set of political conditions pertinent to a description of the situation in

India was defined, statements issued to deal with or comment on that situation would necessarily have to take it into account. India may, for example be defined as a situation in which public order had collapsed, or as a country whose people were ready for self determination. Which ever of these was the position expressed it would be necessary for statements which addressed themselves to India as an issue to take account of the circumstances applicable to the situation. Again as in the case of pledges, political circumstances do not themselves specify statements,but ageneral direction, a set of conditions in which statements were made.

Continuity is the third constraint to be considered. Continuity concerns the necessity to link one set of pronouncements or discursive events with those in the past, so as to establish a continuity. Such links may take any form stated. They are not governed by the rules of logic. All that is necessary is to establish one position in terms of past positions. This happens even in the event of an apparent reversal of policy. A contemporary example may be used to illustrate this point. Take for example, the apparent reversal of Labour Party policy on immigration in 1964-5. At one point the Labour Party was officially committed to reversing immigration controls as instituted by the 1962 Commonwealth Immigration Act. But by 1965 it was itself officially instituting tighter controls. Whilst it is not possible to derive the 1965 White paper on immigration issued under the authority of the Wilson Government from past official statements, it is possible to see that the Labour Party was constrained to produce such a statement in terms of its continuity with past statements. This was done in terms of the Labour Party's concern for the welfare of 'immigrant' peoples in Britain and the 'community' relations upon which that welfare was premised. Therefore it was possible to draw a line of continuity through a slight change in emphasis, from support of the unchallenged right of commonwealth citizens to enter Britain, to a selective protection of the rights of 'immigrant' peoples already in Britain to live here free from pressure and

harassment exacerbated by the flow of new 'immigrants'. Thus the Labour Party maintained for itself a set of credentials as the guardian of the 'immigrant' British resident.

Another constraint on political statements concerns the concept of an audience. This refers to the totality of people to which a statement might be addressed, or which might receive a statement. The extent of an audience is partly the product of the site of enunciation (the point from which the statement is made in terms of institutions and authorities). The different sites of enunciation associated with the Labour Party are described in chapter two, the National Joint Council, the National Executive Committee and so on. It is obvious that a statement issued from the central institutions of the Labour Party will have a more extensive audience than one which is issued by a local Labour Party branch. A statement issued in the Daily Herald, for example, has potentially a national or even international audience. Statements are forced to take account of the general conditions produced by the potential audience associated with a site of enunciation. In this respect they must be seen as constraints.

A final constraint operating in the production of political statements is the site from which a statement is issued, the site of enunciation. The main site of enunciation in this dissertation is the Labour Party and its various institutions. The Labour Party has very specific institutional mechanisms for the sanction of official statements, described in chapter two. These can only be varied by changing the constitution. Whilst not producing a particular kind of statement, the way in which the Labour Party issues statements stipulates certain conditions in which statements are made.

The constraints just described, as already stated, do not directly themselves produce certain statements. Constraints are only the beginning in establishing that which made a certain statement and no other possible. Constraints only produce a general set of conditions from

which statements are produced by another process, the structuring mechanism. It is structuring mechanisms which actually produce certain statements in combination with constraining factors such as those just outlined.

Apart from the statement which is being analysed the other statements in a discourse act as a structuring mechanism. Statements are rarely made in isolation, but in the process of a debate, even if the debate is fragmented and the statements issued at an interval of years. Therefore, a statement made in a Labour Party policy resolution, may in fact be a response to a statement concerning a similar issue made in a Parliamentary debate. A statement such as 'India is not yet ready for independence' is a response to the contention that she is. A statement is not the procuct solely of this structuring mechanism, but this in combination with the constraints just outlined above and the other structuring mechanism to be examined below. These are all linked and produce a statement through their combination.

The manner in which a statement is presented also acts as a structuring mechanism. Whether a statement is produced in verbal or written form will condition the kind of statement it is and its conditions of emergence. In general it is possible to say that a verbal statement may be less considered than a written one which may be considered to be more permanent, or the product of greater deliberation. Verbal statements may be made in the expectation of an immediate response, whereas this cannot be true of written statements. This difference is discernable in the parliamentary debates reproduced in Hansard where the debate has its own momentum.

Statements are also structured by their conditions of authorisation. These may be conditions of publication in the case of books or news articles. Conditions of publication refer to editorial policy and the laws of libel. They also relate to the nature of the authorising institution. Statements issued by the Labour Party for example may be issued from any of its associated institutions, but official statements are issued in a particular manner. This is explained throughout chapter two in which the

Labour Party is presented as a discoursing institution accepting certain statements and rejecting others. This is a development of Foucault's (1977 p.75) concept of an enunciative modality. Whilst the Labour Party as a site of enunciation is a constraint because it operates in a particular way the conditions of authorisation are a structuring mechanism because they do not specify particular statements, they do not compel, whereas for statements to be official they have to pass through certain channels. This is more fully explored in chapters two and three.

Voice may also be seen as a structuring mechanism. Foucault uses the term voice to indicate that it is concerned with the right or qualification to enunciate. He poses the question - who is speaking? He considers voice to be an aspect of the materiality of a statement as it is through the process of being spoken that it is given a concrete form. This can be further developed as an analytic device. A voice is the point of delivery of a statement. As such it is necessary to enquire into its identity as Foucault suggests. Its identity may concern an individual or an institution. In political statements this is complicated by the fact that they have an 'on behalf of' identity as well as a voice identity. This is more fully developed in sections 1.11, 1.12 and 1.13 in which the notion of a community is developed.

Most voices in political statements have a dual function in that they speak on behalf of institutions which have a structure of authorisation, and they specify a relation to a community. This can be illustrated by examining the Labour Party. It is possible for an individual, or collection of individuals to be authorised to speak for the Labour Party. But the Labour Party does not exist purely to represent itself. Its reason for existence is that it claims to provide a 'voice' for a specified section of the community. The manner in which this section of the community is defined varies but within a range of specifiable definitions. This is discussed more fully in section 3.4.

This formulation of voice is vital in the reading

of political statements as it goes beyond the fact of the singular emergence of statements and asks not only, who is speaking?, as Foucault suggests, but, what is the identity of the community being spoken for? Such a group is presented as a community because there is some factor by which it can be collectively identified. Voice acts as a structuring mechanism on statements because of its relation to the identity of enunciating individuals or institutions and to a specifiable community.

It remains only to consider briefly the two final structuring mechanisms which produce statements in combination with the constraints and the ideologies which organise the concepts in a position. Positions may be derived from a statement. (See 1.8 and 1.10) These structuring mechanisms are community and constituency. Community is considered in more detail in section 1.11. As already mentioned community refers to a specifiable group of people on whose behalf a position is being stated. As is demonstrated in chapter three, particularly in section 3.4, the Labour Party has a range of possible communities with which it associates in discourses concerning domestic and colonial definitions of socialism. Different Labour Party statements variously specify certain communities, for example, 'the working class' or 'the people' or the 'Indian people' depending on the nature of the statement. These represent different claims by the Labour Party to associate itself with certain communities, as its 'voice'.

Constituency refers not to who is being represented but what is being represented? The main constituency associated with the Labour Party is 'socialism' in its various definitions. Again in discourses concerning domestic and colonial definitions of socialism it is possible to find a range of constituencies. Socialism is a constituency which poses other constituencies, for example public ownership or Indian independence. This may be a set of policies or something more abstract. It is also a concept. Constituencies are usually, though not always associated with a community. There is, however, no

necessary link between certain constituencies and certain communities. If such links exist they are discursively created and are not permanent features of discourses.

Constituency and community are of course closely related to the concept of ideology in discourse. Ideology is discussed in section 1.10 and refers to the manner in which concepts and objects are arranged in a statement and the thinking by which they are linked to produce the conditions in which statements are made. The decision to represent a certain constituency and community in a statement is closely linked to these ideological conditions.

No structuring mechanism produces a statement in isolation. Statements are the product of the effects of all of the structuring mechanisms, including ideological conditions in combination with constraints. The effects of all these link together in the production of a certain statement. Structuring mechanisms, in combination with constraints are the tools which make it possible to specify a statement, which is the unit of analysis in discourse analysis. It provides a way of accounting for the singular emergence of a statement and a method for reading or interpreting that statement so as to construct the objects Labour Party and political community.

1.8 Position.

Foucault does not use 'position' as a tool of analysis. But it is a device which facilitates the analysis of statements in political discourse. Positions may be described as points of intervention in a discourse. One position may give rise to a number of statements depending on the nature of the constraints and structuring mechanisms operating upon them. Positions pose a series of objects in a particular way, and will invariably offer definitions of objects. They are closely related to the ideological component of discourse. Positions are implicit and invisible. They are registered through statements, and may be deduced through a 'reading' of statements. For example an examination of the statements made in relation to the issue of political freeedom in India indicates

that a number of positions can be identified. These are broadly the following. Britain has the right to remain in India. Britain should withdraw from India immediately. Britain should withdraw from India in the future at an appropriate time.

Each of the positions outlined lends itself to a variety of expressions through statements. The statements in which they might be contained are produced by the considerations outlined above, audience, conditions of publication and so on. A distinction should be drawn here between an object and an issue. Though they are in fact closely related, an issue is more than an object. It refers to the political possibilities surrounding an object. India is a discursive object, but it is also an issue because it has become a focus for a series of positions in the course of a political debate. Even more, it has become an issue of issues, that is of struggle for competing definitions of an issue.

1.9 Conjuncture.

Conjuncture is a convenient methodological device in discourse anlaysis because it avoids a periodisation of history by means of arbitrary criteria. It does not allude to a 'spirit' or 'essence' but allows the pin pointing of a moment in time and an examination of the influences brought to bear upon it without ignoring the fact that any point in time is the result of a set of historically constituted conditions of existence. It does not require a specification of dates to have a particular significance, it is just a point of time upon which a multiplicity of forces converge. The period examined in this dissertation may be thought of as a conjuncture.

1.10 Ideology and Discourse.

Ideology in this dissertation has been accorded a particular status because of its relation to the formation of a position. It is therefore necessary to be more specific about the relation between ideology and discourse.

Important developments have taken place in the theorisation of ideology since Althusser's formulation of it as an imaginary relation to the real in the notion of an ideological state apparatus (1971 p.127-184). Paul Hirst (1979 p.72) maintains that Althusser retains this distinction through his insistence on distinguishing ideology from science. Thus, however much Althusser attacks the idea of ideology as falsity in his later work he ultimately retains it as an unreality. Hirst claims that his conceptualisation of ideology as lived relations in the concrete forms of institutions, ultimately relies on a unitary conception of ideology in the ideological state apparatuses, their unity residing in their association with the interests of the ruling class in the reproduction of capitalist relations (Hirst 1979 p.50). His theorisation of ideology is, then, in the last instance reductionist. Is a non reductionist theory of ideology possible? Is it possible to operate with a conception of ideology which is not reducible to capitalist relations or indeed any other factor?

In pursuing an analysis of discourse it is possible to retain a conception of ideology as such, as collections of ideas clustered around certain positions. Ideology does not have any existence outside of the realm of discourse. It cannot have, for it does not belong to the realm of non discursive objects. It is a way of organising and presenting objects in the discursive field. In this respect it has something in common with concepts. Because it is confined to the realm of discourse it does not follow that ideology does not have a materiality. It has a material existence in the form of statements which are modes of expression of positions, and the product of specifiable constraints. Ideologies have a further materiality in that not only are they contained within statements, and may be appropriated through a method of reading, but they are contained in discourses produced within the confines of institutions. All political statements bear a relation to some kind of institution.

In looking for ideologies relating to 'racism' it is therefore appropriate to look at immigration legislation

or at the policy of political parties. A search to specify the ideologies relating to race is a very wide one, and in the case of this dissertation it has been narrowed down to 'political community' as a focus for analysis, and to see if it can add anything to conceptions of race available during the 1930s. It is a mistake to characterise ideology as a general property or capacity. Although it certainly exists in all discursive forms it does not have generalisable charactersitics, but a specificity which may not even be generalisable as for instance 'racism' except as a way of organising a certain class of objects of discourse.

Foucault rightly points out that ideology is an element of discourse, but not a privileged element.

> "To tackle the ideological functioning of a science in order to reveal and modify it is... to tackle not the formal contradictions of its propositions but the system of formation of its objects, its types of enunciation, its concepts, its theoretical choices. It is to treat it (ideology) as one practice amongst others."
> (Foucault 1977 The Archeology of Knowledge p.186)

Ideology may be seen as an aspect of discourse. In the construction of positions, made apparent in statements, ideology is one of the considerations. In reading ideology from statements it is necessary to specify all of the constraints and structuring mechanisms outlined above which operate on the formation of statements. It is then possible to reduce a number of statements to another set of constraints and structuring mechanisms which are not those imposed by the statement of positions. These are partly ideological and partly constitutional, produced by the rules which govern the operation of an institution. Such institutional structures are not just technical mechanisms, but are at least partly the product of past ideological considerations. In asking - what produced this and no other position? - the way is opened up to speculate on the ideological conditions of its formation. Technical or constitutional constraints in the formation of ideologies are dealt with in chapter two which contains a description of the ways in which the party operates as

a statement issuing body. It also attempts to speculate on the nature of the ideological limits of the party which condition the acceptability of certain positions.

Ideological considerations are active in the formation of positions, but they also inform the specification of discursive objects and concepts. For example 'socialism' as used by the Labour Party may have a number of meanings upon which ideological considerations act as structuring mechanisms. Ideological considerations are also active in relations between a voice and a community. This formulation does result in a negative definition of ideology as a non constraining and non institutional factor in discourse analysis. Its positive side is that it is active in the formation of positions, objects and specifications of community and constituency.

1.11 Community: Some General Considerations.

Community is a term often rather loosely employed to designate, as a unit, a collection of people with a specifiable group of characteristics in common. Communities are often spoken of as being based on geographical, class or cultural criteria, 'the Asian community', 'the working class community', 'the East London community'. These all rather loosely refer to the idea that there is a group of people which can be referred to collectively.

The sociological study of community has tended to by-pass all but the vaguest of definitions in favour of the empirical findings which proceed from such a formulation. The theoretical development of notions of community has not really taken place in sociology. As a sociological concept, 'community' refers to structures of human bonding. Sociology has attempted to distinguish communities from other social groupings by considering the extent to which bonding is voluntary and dispensible, or obligatory and rooted in the very existence of a group. The sociology of community has attempted to establish a community's existence by defining the nature of the webs of interdependencies which define it as a single unit of collective existence. In the case of sociology which

claims to specify 'ethnic' communities this is often done in terms of life style, dress and physical appearance, religion, economic and political alliances.

A level of integration and homogeneity is the basis for specifications of community. Descriptions of these are often no more than hinted at, much less established, and rely on the establishment of an empirical distinction between 'community' and 'society'. To constitute a community, a group must be distinguished from the rest of society for a particular set of reasons. In fact a distinction between community and society is no more than a distinction between a national community (society) and another specified community (ethnic group for example).

The national community, or society, is based on notions of organic solidarity found in the work of Durkheim. Solidarity was a condition necessary for the existence of the social unit as a whole. A community in sociological analysis must be distinct enough from the rest of society to form a cohesive unit, yet integrated enough to still form a part of the 'organic' unit, the national community. The national political unit or community is indexed in the commitment of its constituent parts to at least common legal and political structures.

The collective existence of a specified group as a community is the claim of a sociological discourse. In the introduction, the description of anti semitism as an issue was partly constructed upon the distinctiveness of Jews as a population category. Jews were an element of the population in East London, and various claims were made to describe them as a community. They are an example of a political community constructed through political discourse. Political communities (communities in the process of being represented) are discursive.

The discursive community is a much wider concept than that constructed sociologically. It allows for a definition of community in any way the voice, representing it, considers appropriate. Because community may be defined in many ways, it does not

necessitate a distinction between society and community, because community may refer to a national community as well as to any other specified community. In the discourses under investigation communities are variously defined as 'Indians', 'workers', 'Jews' 'East Londoners' to name but a few. These claims are not made abstractly, but in relation to particular political issues and constituencies.

For a political community to appear in discourse it must have three basic properties, a collective and specifiable identity a range of constituencies and a voice. If a community did not have a collective identity of some sort it could not be represented in a debate because there would not be a way of referring to it. Communities are represented in terms of a set of positions, with which they are identified in the course of a political debate. It is this sharing of a political position which defines it as a collectivity. This identification may have an institutional identity for example the Indian National Congress was thought by many to represent the Indian people. But that does not preclude it from also representing a smaller community, for example, the 'common people' of India. Communities must be distinguished from institutions. Institutions are the political representatives of communities, their voice.

It does not follow that the relationship between a voice and the community it represents is a simple one. A community may be the subject of more than one voice. It is not uncommon for there to be rival voices claiming to represent a single political community. The relationship between a community and its voice is partly to do with the rights and qualifications of a particular voice to represent a specified community in its enunciations. The establishment of right takes place through a description of the population category or community in question. This is illustrated in various Labour Party descriptions of 'the working class' as

its particular community. In this context, working class is not only a population category but a set of necessary characteristics and conditions in which it is established as a unit requiring representation. Having established the conditions in which a community is capable of representation, the voice will then establish its own relation to the community in question. That is, it sets out the reasons why it and no other institution is the natural or logical tool of representation. This usually consists of an insistence on a special understanding of the conditions of existence and interests of a particular community. A relation of closeness to or empathy with a particular community is often established in support of such a claim. Most claims to represent, contain a description of the community in terms of an assessment of its needs.

In many cases the claims made by a voice to represent a community are based on a certain kind of reasoning. The voice may claim to be a part of the community in question or claim special knowledge of it because of a particularly close association. Because of this closeness it may claim a privileged understanding of the community's position in terms of a set of interests. In view of this kind of reasoning, the voice, which has a place in the arena of politics from which it may represent the community, will translate the perceived needs of the community into the language and strategies of political practice.

In the case of the Labour Party the voice is claiming to have a special status in relation to both the community and the political arena. It would be a mistake to reduce the voice to the community, as it is clearly its position relating the two spheres of knowledge which constitutes it as it is.

The discourses constructing political communities are informed by other discourses. Pluralist sociology has offered an interpretation of community which is in turn informed by other discourses developed in

political philosophy. Such discourses are central to the two case studies in this dissertation. The debates surrounding Indian independence describe India as a plural community as a way of accounting for its underdevelopment. The question central to deliberations about the efficacy of awarding independence was the possibility of India's transformation into a single national political community. This transformation was a condition of colonial freedom in which the achievement of nationhood was the established formula. Independence without nationhood was inconceivable. This theme is developed in chapters four and five.

In the anti semitism case study, political community is posed differently. The nationhood status of Britain was not at issue. What was at issue was the extent to which Jews formed an autonomous political community in Britain which presented a challenge to the national political community, and whether they should be awarded a territory in Palestine. This all depended on the extent to which they were constituted in discourse as 'our people' or as 'alien people'.

1.12 Community in Pluralist Sociology.

Conflict between the national political community and the communities within the political unit is the main problematic of pluralist sociology. Much of its theoretical development took place within social anthropology and in relation to the withdrawal of colonial rule, which anyway formed the practice against which social anthropology was developed. Although pluralist sociology post-dated colonial practice and colonial freedom in India, it undoubtedly formed a body of statements which came out of the lessons learned in awarding independence.

The construction of community in pluralist sociology is inseparable from the problematic of social order. Kuper demonstrates this in his introduction to 'Pluralism in Africa'.

> "Changes in their structure are often accompanied by violence and bloodshed, as in the many internal wars during the past generation from the time of the Hindu Muslim conflict in India ..."
> (Kuper 1969 Pluralism in Africa p63)

This concern for social order most certainly featured in the debates surrounding Indian independence and anti semitism.

A plural society is one in which communities were thought to possess a certain degree of autonomy from the society as a whole. At a philosophical level this refers to a toleration of more than one principle of existence within a single entity. Beyond this most general formulation sociological assessments of pluralism have defined it in a variety of ways. Kuper says they are societies with "Sharp cleavages between different population groups brought together within the same political unit." (Kuper Pluralism in Africa p3). Stability in such societies, claimed Kuper, was "precarious" and threatened by "sharp cleavages" (p7).

Furnival was one of the first theorists to develop a pluralist perspective. This was done in relation to the problems posed by the withdrawal of colonial rule. He wrote of plural societies - "Society as a whole comprises separate racial sections, each section is an aggregate of individuals rather than a corporate or organic whole." (Furnival 1948 Colonial Policy and Practice p306). The organic analogy quite possibly is derived from the tradition of sociological analysis developed from Durkheim and others who claimed that societies were natural entities and that certain divisions threatened their stability. As far as colonial practice was concerned, Furnival considered pluralism might be rectified by integrative practice.

> "The fundamental problem...(is to) transform society so that it shall be capable of independence and thus capable of framing its own institutions in its own way without having the machinery of Western political organisation imposed upon it by a foreign power...First...building up a common social will, and then enlightening this common

social will, so that the people will gradually be brought to do of its own accord those things which of necessity it must do, for therein alone lies perfect freedom..."
(Furnival 1948 Colonial Policy and Practice p506)

Furnival's definition of pluralism rested on the absence of common will. Societies lacking in common will lacked a common purpose, direction and community of understanding. Common will is a concept borrowed from discourses on political philosophy. This theme was also taken up by Furnival in another of his works.

"In a plural society there is no common will except possibly in matters of supreme importance, such as resistance to aggression from outside. In its political aspect a plural society resembles a confederation of...provinces, united by treaty or within the limits of a formal constitution, merely for certain ends common to the constituent units and, in matters outside the terms of the union, each living its own life."
(Furnival 1939 Netherlands India p.447)

It would appear that Furnival was offering a minimum definition of common will in a society of an extreme plural structure. He is indicating a point at which it might cease to be appropriate to refer to an entity as a single society.

Will is a philosophical construct, which Furnival considered to be built upon another principle, economic needs. He reduced his anlaysis of societies in their complexity to this single dimension.

"Every political society...builds up...its own civilization and distinctive culture, its own ethos; it has its own religious creed or complex of creeds, its own art - and its own conventions in the daily round of life: part of this large process is the building up of a system of informal education: by which each citizen, quite apart from all formal instruction is moulded as a member of that particular society, and develops social wants...all cultural needs have an economic aspect because they find organised expression only as economic wants, as demand.."
(Furnival 1939 Netherlands India p.449)

All social will was thought to manifest itself as economic demand in the market place. Although that was not their only manifestation, it was through such structures alone

that the most plural societies were co ordinated.

> "For there is one place in which the various sections of a plural society meet on common ground - the market place; and the highest common factor of their wants is the economic factor...individuals of all sections have in common...the economic motive, the desire for profit...the natural law of the survival of the fittest in the economic world."
> (Furnival 1939 Netherlands India p.449)

This is a restatement of discourses developed in relation to the principles of social Darwinism, Adam Smith and Malthus. The community at the national level existed as a productive unit through which social demand could find expression. Such a society resulted in a restricted form of citizenship. A restricted form of citizenship became a well established colonial formula, as will be demonstrated in the case of India.

> "In a plural society, then, the community tends to be organised for production rather than social life; social life is sectionalised, and within each section of the community the social demand becomes disorganised and ineffective, so that in each section the members are debarred from leading the full life of the citizen in a homogenous community; finally the reaction against these abnormal conditions, taking in each section the form of nationalism, sets one community against the other so as to emphasize the plural character of the society and aggravate its instability, thereby enhancing the need for it to be held together by some force exerted from outside."
> (Furnival 1939 Netherlands India p.459)

In the debates surrounding Indian independence, membership of a plural society was considered to be an obstacle to attaining a full, national citizenship.

Furnival's contribution to pluralist theory falls within what is referred to as the "conflict model". (Kuper and Smith 1971 p.10) This is based on the belief that conflict was the inevitable outcome of a plural social structure in which the imposition of a single structure was only possible through the domination of one plural element by another. Furnival's theorisation of pluralism would appear at first to be less rigorous than that of Smith and Kuper who attempt to establish the conditions necessary for the development of plural features in a society. But

his use of 'common will' as a philosophical description of colonial societies provides valuable insights into the nature of plural societies, even though it does not provide a way of empirically distinguishing the plural from the heterogeneous social structure. Plurality is firmly placed in the field of under development. The development of such societies was thought to be dependent on the provision of another principle for the organisation of demand, for example federation or nationalism.

The equilibrium model of pluralism offers a conception of community which is radically different from that of Furnival (Kuper and Smith 1971 p.7). It usually refers to heterogeneous societies rather than plural ones in which divisions are more radical. Equilibrium pluralism is often called 'political pluralism' and produces an all together more stable political structure, often referred to as a 'liberal democracy' (Kuper and Smith 1971 p.7). In such societies pluralism is a feature of the political structure, where competing interest groups form a stable political feature. Such a structure provides a divided political elite which will carry with it the 'will' of the people represented as citizens. The result is an integrated political community based on consensus rather than repression. Such a model of heterogeneous societies serves not only as a description of Western political systems but was offered as a model for colonial freedom.

Furnival did not really manage to make a firm distinction between pluralism and heterogeneity. A plural society in Kuper's work is one where there is no sharing of basic institutions and is characterised by diversity and cleavage. He claimed that societies in a situation of 'culture contact' threw up new cultural patterns which were not reducible to either of the parent cultures from which they were developed.

Smith, like Kuper, worked broadly within the confines of Furnival's conflict model. He developed the notion of culture as an important factor in a pluralist analysis. He defines cultural pluralism as the practice of different forms of compulsory institutions such as kinship, education,

religion and economy. In this context culture refers to a complete way of life. Smith tried to isolate the minimal conditions necessary and sufficient to constitute pluralism and the manner in which they operate to sustain the social cleavages constituting pluralities. One of the dimensions of this distinction lies in the status of the members of societies.

In non plural societies the nation is coterminous with the community and its people are citizens.

> "The nation is usually a single inclusive corporate group whose members, or the majority of them - share common traditions, institutions, history and ethnic identity. In the nation state, the state is the derivative political expression of the nation's cohesion and unity. The members of the nation are the citizens of the state, which provides all with equal representation, protection and regulation." (Smith 1971 in Kuper and Smith Pluralism in Africa p.32-3)

In a plural society the communities are not the same as the nation and the people are subjects.

> "In a plural society the mass of the people are not citizens but subjects and the state, instead of being the collective political expression of the inclusive aggregate is merely the external political form of the dominant coporate group." (Smith 1971 in Kuper and Smith Pluralism in Africa p.33)

Smith considered that plural societies could be distinguished from heterogeneous societies because the former were divided along the lines of basic social institutions such as kinship, education, government, law, cult and economy. Non plural societies were those in which divergence took place at the level of secondary institutions such as economy, education, occupation and religion. There appears to be some overlap in this formulation as education and economy appear to be distinctions of both kinds of society. Smith's division between secondary and basic institutions, ultimately relies on a distinction between public and private spheres of activity. This is derived from Locke's conception of public and private property and is a speculative philosophical concept. It would appear from this that Smith is suggesting that public domains of cultural

practice constitute a plural society whereas internal or private divisions amount to heterogeneity.

> "In the structural context of a plural society, each corporate section develops sectionally specific institutions, organisations, and procedures that constitute its distinctive public domain...If these social sections are also segregated spatially, as is often the case, then the public domain of either unit enjoys corresponding freedom from external competition or immediate internal challenge." (Smith 1971 in Kuper and Smith Pluralism in Africa p.52)

Many plural theorists have attempted to provide definitions of pluralism based on empirical criteria. In this task, many of them rely of philosophical notions of community derived from the discourses surrounding political philosophy. Community in these discourses was theorised in a rather abstract way. This was demonstrated in Furnival's use of "common will" as well as various distinctions between subject and citizenship (1939 p.447).

1.13 Community in Political Philosophy.

Community is central to the speculative enquiries of political philosophy in its attempts to investigate the first forms of human collective, or social, existence. It is in discourses concerning political philosophy that enquiries into the original state of human social bonds have been investigated.

Maine, in common with others, suggested that the primeval social bond consisted of blood ties of familial relations.

> "The commonwealth is a collection of persons united by common descent from the progenitor of an original family...all ancient societies regard themselves as having proceeded from one original stock...holding together in political union. The history of political ideas begins, in fact, with the assumption that kinship in blood is the sole possible ground of community in political functions. It may be affirmed then of early commonwealths that their citizens considered all groups in which they claimed membership to be founded on a common lineage." (Maine 1965 Ancient Law p.76)

These blood relationships, in Maine's formulations, were

extended through "legal fictions" or mythical accounts of lineage. (Maine 1965 p.77). This was succeeded by "local contiguity" as a principle of reckoning the extent of a community (Maine 1965 p.78). Groups who lived in contiguous territories began to see that fact as a basis for a level of collective existence. After the blood ties imposed by nature, existence in the same territory became a basis for community. This was the first condition of community in political functions and was not based on blood ties. With this, Maine suggests, the concept of the individual replaced that of familial obligation in civil law and community became to be based on a 'social contract'. "Nor is it difficult to see what is the tie between man and man which replaces by degrees these forms of reciprocity in rights and duties which have their origin in the family. It is contract." (Maine 1965 Ancient Law p.99)

This position, like that of other political philosophers, was based partly on abstract conceptualisations of the nature of human social organisation, and partly on a speculative anthropology developed in an evolutionary perspective. Rights to territory and property were established by the right of first occupancy and purchase. Blood ties and territory were the first ways in which the identity of a community was established.

> "Original citizens of a commonwealth always believed themselves to be united by kinship in blood, and resented a claim to equality of privelege (by immigrants) as a usurpation of their birth right."
> (Maine 1965 Ancient Law p.28)

For Locke, the concept community, or the possibility of collective existence, documented man's exit from the state of nature. This represented a deliverance from man's original condition of isolation in the Hobbesian 'state of warre'. Like Maine, Locke's community began with conjugal society (1970 p155). This, he considered, fell short of a definition of political society, or political community.

> "No political society can be, nor subsist, without having in itself the power to preserve

> the property, and in order therein to punish the offences of all those of that society, there, and there only is political society. Where every one of the numbers hath quitted his natural power, resigned it up into the hands of the community...The private judgement of every particular member being excluded, the community comes to be umpire, and by understanding indifferent rules and men authorised by the community for their execution decides all the differences that may happen between any members...
> it is easy to discern who are and are not in political society together. Those who are united into one body and have a common established law and judicature to appealto with authority to decide controversies between them and punish offenders are in civil society one with another."
> (Locke 1970 Of Civil Government p.159)

For Locke, a group of people became a political community upon subjecting themselves to the same collective authority, a set of powers non reducible to the individuals of which the community was composed.

The reason why individuals chose to subject themselves to this collective authority was to enjoy the benefits of property and security.

> "...it is not without reason that he seeks out and is willing to join in society with others who are already united, or have a mind to unite for the mutual preservation of their lives, liberties and estates, which I call by the general name - property."
> (Locke 1970 Of Civil Government p.180)

It was this desire for security and property which provided the community of interests upon which political community was based in Locke's formulations. The authority of this community was established in the act of contract itself. This took place between individuals and the collectivity of individuals, and certain powers were ceded to the community. As Althusser (1972 p.129) points out this act takes place as though the parties to the contract pre existed the act of contract itself, whereas logically, as the community was constructed through contract, it cannot have. Thus the community is both formed by and pre exists the act of contract.

Montesquieu also saw the establishment of civil society as produced by a conjunction of wills, but

considers that the desires for property and security are too complex to be the first considerations of human social existence. Nourishment and sex, rather than the desire for collective existence in Montequieu's formulations was what drove individuals into community. "The idea of Empire and domain is so complex, and depends on so many other notions, that it could never be the first which occured to the human understanding." (Montesquieu 1949 The Spirit of the Laws p.4) For Montesquieu laws were the authority under which societies were constructed. Laws were thought to reflect the disposition of the people for whom they were intended. Laws were thus a form of social or general will. They were thought to be a universal characteristic of collective existence.

> "Law in general is human reason, insomuch as it governs all the inhabitants of the earth: the political and civil laws of each nation ought to be only the particular cases in which human reason is applied."
> (Montesquieu 1949 The Spirit of the Laws p.6)

Sovereignty in Montesquieu resides in the operation of law over the community.

Hobbes's formulation of community is in some respects similar to that of Locke. The establishment of commonwealth was a departure from a 'state of warre' for individuals, and their unity into one body, "civitas", the generation of "Leviathan", "our peace and defence". (Hobbes 1970 Leviathan p.89).

> "The essence of commonwealth...is one person of whose acts a great multitude, by mutual covenant one with another have made themselves everyone the author, to the end that he may use the strength and means of them all as he shall think expedient, for their peace and common defence...this person is called soveraigne... and everyone besides his subject ...men agree amongst themselves to submit to some man... a political commonwealth."
> (Hobbes 1970 Leviathan p.90)

Rousseau takes up this conception of sovereignty. If the sovereign is the embodiment of the community, then he suggested, it was indivisible from its constituent parts, the subjects. Sovereign and subject are but two

parts of the same relation, they are the community. "The total alienation of each associate together with all his rights, to the whole community..." (Rousseau 1973 The Social Contract p.174). Sovereignty was simply thought to be the exercise of the general will of the subjects. The general will was the common interest of the community as a whole. "Take away from these same wills (of individuals) the plusses and minuses that cancel one another and the general will remains as the sum of the differences..." (Rousseau 1973 The Social Contract p.185).

Right in political deliberations was thought to be based on an assessment of the general will of the community. Sovereignty is no more than the expression of general will and thus the right by which government is exercised.

These theories of sovereignty are in many ways an abstraction from Machiavelli's Prince which was a manual on how to maintain sovereignty once acquired, rather than a justification of it. Machiavelli, as Foucault points out, does not attempt to define sovereignty as much as give instructions as to how it might be maintained. The sovereignty of the Prince was thought to owe more to divine right than the consent of the subjects. Sovereignty was considered a product of the ability of the prince in the arts of conquest and subjection.

> "Those who by valorous ways become princes ...acquire a principality with difficulty, but they keep it with ease. The difficulties they have in acquiring it arise in part from new rules and methods which they are forced to introduce to establish their government and their security."
> (Machiavelli 1920 The Prince p.47)

Foucault points out that in the case of the Prince, sovereignty was being exercised over both subjects and a territory. These were, he considered, the founding principles of sovereignty. Although sovereignty is carefully defined in terms of the exercise of collective authority in political philosophy, ultimately, it comes down to the exercise of the laws of the sovereign.

Ultimately, claims Foucault, the concept of sovereignty is tautologous. It is no more than the exercise of sovereignty itself. Foucault points out that this concept of sovereignty was subject to transformation from its sixteenth and seventeenth century usage. The notion that an art of government could be derived from a theory of sovereignty was assumed and built on. Sovereignty was given an institutional and juridical form in the eighteenth century.

Along side this devloped the apparatus of a disciplinary society with its schools, factories and other disciplinary institutions. Foucault claims (1979) that the modes of organisation of the disciplinary society and the transformed notions of sovereignty survived to exist along side what he refers to as a "Governmental Society" (Foucault 1979 p.13). Foucault claims that there has been no substitution between a society of sovereignty, disciplinary society and governmental society, but that all three coexist and have as their target the population and its security. This development affects the further transformation of a concept of sovereignty as a part of this triangle.

By governmental society, Foucault means three things. Firstly -

> "the ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflection, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power, which has as its target, population, as its principal form of knowledge political economy and as its essential technical means apparatuses of security."
> (Foucault 1979 Governmentality in Ideology and Conciousness p.20)

Secondly it was presented as something which was attaining a pre eminance over sovereignty and discipline which had resulted in the formation of a series of specific state apparatuses pertaining to government. Thirdly the development of the administrative state from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries onwards.

The major concepts defining community in the accounts

of political philosophy are general will, sovereign and contract. These are heavily used in pluralist sociology and add to the various empirical definition offered. It must be pointed out that the use to which pluralist sociology puts these concepts is somewhat different to the ways in which they were developed in political philosophy. This difference hinges on the distinction between community and society. Political philosophy treats these as two aspects of the same empirical reality. A society was thought to be a community of individuals represented in the form of the sovereign, or collective authority. These concepts are ultimately subsumed beneath the apparatus of the state, which claims to exercise sovereignty, or general will. In other words, society and community are identified as a single unit.

The idea of a multi racial society, like the other divisions which have been made within pluralist sociology require a multiplicity of sovereigns, and a division of the general will into separate communities. Thus, for example, in a multi racial society, a particular community will be associated firstly with its immediate sovereign and secondly with the sovereignty imposed by the society as a whole through its legal and political structures. A divided sovereignty would be unthinkable in political philosophy.

> "Sovereignty, for the same reason as makes it inalienable, is indivisible; for will either is, or is not general; it is the will either of the body of the people, or only a part of it. In the first case, the will...is an act of sovereignty and constitutes law: in the second it is merely a particular will."
> (Rousseau 1973 The Social Contract p.183)

Political philosophy is a theorisation of a particular kind of community, the nation. It was unable to theorise the division of the national unit into smaller parts in the way pluralist sociology has done. By examining the discourses concerned with political philosophy and the discourses of pluralist sociology it is possible to assemble many of the ideas pertaining to community. As the various discursive communities constructed by the

Labour Party are examined, it must be remembered that the discourses just outlined inform these divisions and the principles underlying them.

1.14 The General Aims of the Dissertation.

The set of analytic devices outlined in this chapter developed from the work of Foucault are presented as a method for conducting a discursive analysis of certain political statements, those identified with the Labour Party. The key features of this analysis are the statement, the text, constraints, structuring mechanisms, voice, community, constituency, audience, site of enunciation and the conditions of authorisation of statements. These provide a method by which the statements of the Labour Party on certain issues can be read.

Using this method of reading it should be possible to construct the Labour Party as a statement issuing political institution, in a specific relation to the concept of a political community. Political community is a notion which will be developed in the course of the dissertation and is a discursive concept. It is suggested that political community as a focus for a series of discourses informs the concept of racial divisions in use at this time. A number of levels of analysis will be simultaneously conducted. There is the organisation of statements in their explicit terms, an analysis developed from Foucault, the production of the notion of a political community, other terms which may or may not have appeared in the text, for example race, and my conceptions of political discourse.

The next chapter will deal with the Labour Party as a site of enunciation, one of the constraints in the discursive analysis. It will examine the way in which the party operates as a statement issuing institution before going on to consider what sort of statements it has issued to define socialism in chapter three, India in chapters four and five and anti semitism in chapter six.

CHAPTER TWO

The Central Institutions of the Labour Party:

Discipline and Disaffiliation.

This chapter sets out to describe the manner in which the Labour Party operated as a site of enunciation. It was pointed out in chapter one that the site of enunciation defines both the audiences of a statement and, in combination with other constraints and structuring mechanisms, actually produces the statement. This chapter confines itself to an examination of central institutions, although some of the local enunciative sites are pointed out in chapter six in which their relation to central institutions is examined.

The constitution of the Labour Party is influential in defining the manner in which the Party is able to operate as an enunciating or statement issuing body. The constitution of the Labour Party affects the kinds of statements which can be made and the ways in which they are issued on behalf of the party, their conditions of authorisation. The constitution stipulates the rules under which the party must operate. These appear as a set of technical considerations, but must be seen as a combination of technical conditions and the results of past ideologies enshrined in a set of rules.

The Labour Party as a site of enunciation with specifiable conditions of authorisation, is not a monument to be described, as much as a site of struggle over certain key definitions. At any time a wide range of statements and positions may be attributed to the party. These do not particularly attach themselves to certain central institutions rather than others. Indeed there appears to be no relation between certain institutions and a particular kind of statement or position associated with a specifiable set of ideological assumptions. Never-the-less some statements are taken up by authoritative enunciative institutions and other

remain unofficial. This chapter attempts to distinguish which were the authorising sites of enunciation and which were not. Why certain statements were accepted as official and others rejected.

During the period under examination it is possible to distinguish struggles to exclude certain positions, not just from official pronouncements, but from being associated with the Labour Party at all. An examination of these struggles such as those with the League of Youth, the Communist Party and the Independent Labour Party, make it possible to distinguish which positions were excluded from the party and the mechanisms by which this was achieved. This process of exclusion is important because a discursive analysis of the Labour Party takes account of the range of statements associated with it. If certain statements are excluded then this changes the discursive definition of the party. As far as this dissertation is concerned the Labour Party has no pre-specified essence, but can be constructed through an analysis of its statements. In this manner it is possible to establish its ideological diversity as a political institution. The distinction between official and unofficial statements is taken up in chapter three and in the three chapters dealing with the case studies on India and anti-semitism.

The 1930s appears to have been an important period in which the Labour Party was active in defining its ideological limits as a political institution, by stating which positions did or did not belong to it as a statement issuing body. It was a period in which it established the limits of its eclecticism. These were defined and redefined throughout its history. Some local branches disaffiliated, the Executive Committee of the League of Youth was disbanded, Mosley and the New Party and MacDonald and the Labour Nationalists were expelled, the Independent Labour Party decided to disaffiliate and there were renewed warnings about the dangers to the Labour movement of Communism and Communist related organisations. These struggles were all part of the

wider struggle to define the Labour Party and the issues with which it should legitimately be concerned.

Cole depicts this period as crucial in the Labour Party's development. The 1930s were, without doubt, important to the Labour Party, in that it was a period in which it developed a particular organisational structure as well as a set of policies on a wide range of issues. It is important that this is not depicted as a process of linear development up to the present day. All that is being examined in the 1930s are the features of the Labour Party in terms of its organisational structure as part of a conjuncture. It must be seen as part of a process of struggle to define the party which does not admit a concept of progress. However, Cole's description does give an idea of the state of the party during the 1930s in terms of the extent to which it was able to develop policy and organisational features.

> "The Labour Party itself (in 1914) save in one or two very special constituencies had posessed practically no local organisation of its own: it had relied for its electoral work mainly on the local Trades and Labour Councils and on branches of the Independent Labour Party, and most of its M.P.s had been retained primarily as Trade Union nominees...in practice it owed nearly all its seats to Liberal support and had been, up to 1914...an obedient satellite of the Liberal Government. By 1918 it had created at any rate the rudiments of an organisation of its own in the great majority of constituencies and had begun on the task of building up an individual membership in competition with the socialist societies, which thus found their status within the party profoundly altered... The adoption of 'Labour and the New Social Order' as the master statement of the Labour Party principles involved a radical break with the Labour Party's past, for it committed the party to a definitely socialist objective and thus converted it from a loose federation of socialists and Trade Unionists to a Socialist Party with Trade Union Support."
> (Cole 1969 A History of Socialist Thought Vol. 14 part 1. p421-2.)

This chapter will examine the mechanisms by which the Labour Party acted as a site of enunciation for the issue of statements, and the conditions of authorisation of statements. It will not really take up the question

of what sort of statements it was capable of at this stage. Chapter three looks at struggles to define socialism, chapter four and five struggles to define India and chapter six the manner in which statements took up anti-semitism. The tools of analysis developed in chapter one are the means by which this is undertaken. There does not appear to be any contradiction between those who were being represented by the Labour Party and those eligible to engage in struggles on their behalf. It was probably the party's long term aim that these two communities would, at some point, be the same.

2.1 The Conditions of Membership.

The constitution had the status of establishing the technical structure of the Labour Party. None the less, it was negotiable rather than a permanent feature of party organisation.

> "The existing constitution, or any part thereof, may be amended, recinded or altered or additions made thereto by resolutions carried on a card vote at an Annual Party Conference, in the manner provided in the Standing Orders hereto. Notice of resolutions embodying any such proposals must be sent in writing to the Secretary at the offices of the Party, as provided in the Standing Orders." (Labour Party 1929 Constitution and Standing Orders. p7)

In defining those eligible for membership, the Labour Party was defining its community and those who might legitimately be its political representatives. Members fall into one of two categories, individuals or affiliates. Labour Party membership had a federal structure as even individual members were linked to the party through Constituency Labour Parties. It was incumbent on individual and affiliated members to accept the constitution, standing orders, "programme, principles and policy" (Labour Party 1929 p2) of the Party and, if eligible, be a member of a Trade Union. In order to affiliate to the Labour Party a Trades Union had also to be affiliated to the Trades Union Congress. The General Council of the Trades Union Congress was thus responsible for policing this definition of eligibility

in terms of Trades Union practices. Other affiliated members were also those who belonged to the Co-operative and Socialist Societies as well as professional organisations which have "interests consistent with those of other affiliated organisations." (Labour Party 1929 Constitution and Standing Orders p.2).

In defining a group of people in this way, the Labour Party is defining its community, a group of people on whose behalf it was operating as an institution with a representative function. But it was also defining those who were eligible to participate in struggles on behalf of this community by stipulating membership of certain institutions as a condition of Labour Party membership (for example Trades Unions) and in also stipulating certain constituencies, for example co-operativism and socialism. These are very abstract and general definitions of constituencies. Trades Union struggles cover a wide range of constituencies but were none-the-less strategic to definition of Labour Party members.

The Labour Party Constitution links a community with a set of policy constituencies as well as abstract constituencies. Adherence to the objectives and programme of the party were a condition of membership. The party's objectives were partly organisational and partly informed by certain ideological commitments. The organisational objectives of the Party centred around the need to develop and maintain itself as a force in Parliament. This also indicates an obvious ideological orientation, a decision to operate within the practices of Parliament rather than outside of Parliament, and to - "Co-operate with the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, and other kindred organisations, in joint political or other action in harmony with the Party constitution and Standing Orders." (Labour Party 1929 Constitution and Standing Orders p.3). And thus -

> "To secure for the workers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry, and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible, upon the basis of the common

ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange, and the best obtainable system of popular administration and control of each industry or service." (Labour Party 1929 Constitution and Standing Orders p3)

Also-

"Generally to promote the Political, Social and Economic Emancipation of the people, and more particularly of those who depend directly upon their own exertions by hand or by brain for the means of life." (Labour Party 1929 Constitution and Standing Orders p3)

These policy objectives are the key to a general definition of a programme which relies heavily on action in Parliament. Such an organisation of production, distribution and exchange would constitute a programme in favour of a certain community of which the Labour Party could claim to be the voice. This community is variously referred to as the 'people' or the 'workers'. This was qualified and made a little more specific by adding that the kinds of workers and people being spoken for were those who depended directly on their labour for the means of life. That is those who did not own property in the form of capital and who lived on their labour rather than on profits or rent.

The objectives of the party were not just domestic and national. The community of the party was not just the national labourer. The spheres of activity of the Labour Party may be describe as 'domestic', 'international' and 'dominion'. Internationally the Labour Party was pledged to -

"Co-operate with the labour and socialist organisations in other countries and to assist in organising a Federation of Nations for the maintenance of Freedom and Peace, for the establishment of suitable machinery for the adjustment and settlement of international disputes by Council action or Judicial Arbitration, and for such International Legislation as may be practicable." (Labour Party 1929 Constitution & Standing Orders. p3)

As far as the Dominions were concerned its stated objectives were -

> "To co-operate with the Labour and Socialist organisations in the Dominions and Dependencies With a view to promoting the purposes of the Party and to take common action for the promotion of a higher standard of social and economic life for the working population of the respective countries."
> (Labour Party 1929 Constitution and Standing Orders. p3)

There are important differences between these two spheres of activity. It was thought legitimate to promote the purposes of the party in the dominions, but not elsewhere. Dominion in this contex refers to the colonies and is in line with the party's view that the Empire should be transformed into a commonwealth of dominions. A definite policy statement is being made in the constitution as far as the dominions were concerned, in favour of the promotion of higher standards of social and economic life, on lines similar to those followed by the party domestically. Internationally, it was in favour of a general statement of its orientation towards 'peace and freedom' to be maintained through the mechanisms of international forums for negotiation.

The communites referred to in these two statements are very different. The Labour Party does not claim an international community, but merely to co-operate with organisations with communities and constituencies similar to its own. Yet it extends its community beyond national boundries to include the 'working people' of the dominions.

This stated responsibility for a particular colonial community and constituency is amply registered in a number of forms in the Indian Labour and Trade Union movement. The influence of the British Labour Party on the Indian Labour movement is documented below. The Labour Party aligned itself to a certain section of the Indian National Congress, those who associated with the political position of Gandhi (see section 4.6). Communications between the Indian National Congress and the British Trades Union Congress indicate that the Indian National Congress was both interested in

developing institutional alliances with its own trades union movement and in obtaining advice on how this might be organised.

> "As we supply information whenever asked for and even advise trade unions here, it is necessary for us to be in posession of exact information about conditions abroad and to be in touch with their Labour organisations. We could supply the information about India labour..." (Labour Research Department of the Indian National Congress 5/6/29 Letter to the British Trades Union Congress.)

Letters from the Tata Iron and Steel Company and the All India Railway Federation to the Indian National Congress's Research Department during 1929 congratulate it on taking an interest in labour issues and supplied various pieces of information.

The British Trades Union movement offered to train Indian trade unionist in the 'correct' principles of trades union practice. It was also instrumental in defining bona fide or legitimate trade unionism in India, in competition with the British Communist Party. The definition of legitimate principles was being played out over the split caused in the Indian Trades Union Movement over the issue of whether or not Indian trade unionists should attend the Round Table Conference in London. (see chapter five) In 1929 at the annual conference of the All India Trades Union Congress there was a basic disagreement over trade union representation at the London conference, which led to the formation of the Trades Union Federation as a split from the All India Trades Union Congress.

All of this suggests that the Labour Party, in competition with the Communist Party, was active in encouraging the Indian movement to develop in a certain manner. Both of these parties were anxious to suggest the correct principles of labour and trades union action as organs of struggle. Both had influence with different sections of the Congress, a politically diverse movement (see section 4.6) which was trying with varying degrees of success to align its dual constituency of nationalism

(in struggle against Britain) and trade union struggles. The influence of the thinking and general orientation of the British Labour movement is further documented in the minutes of the Executive Committee of the All India Trades Union Congress (April 1929) which contain the suggestion that its affiliated organisations were interested in starting a fund for "political objects". This was very much in line with earlier movements in the British Trades Union movement which had set up the Labour Party as its political wing.

Numerous examples of links between the British Labour Party and the Indian Labour movement exist. The British Labour movement frequently sent personnel to India on fact finding missions to investigate the conditions of Indian labour, and the British Labour Party and Trades Union Congress acted as the 'voice' of Indian labour in making representations to the National Government on numerous occasions during the 1930s. The Labour Party ensured that the Indian Trades Union Federation gained a place in the Indian delegation at the constitutional Round Table Conference and on the Joint Parliamentary Committee set up after the failure of the Round Table Conference to find a constitutional settlement for India. All of this is documented in the correspondence between Indian and British Labour leaders, and may be found in the files of the All India Trades Union Congress and the Trades Union Federation.

In addition to this kind of intervention, the British Trades Union Congress offered to train Indian trade Unionists in Britain, in the practices of their particular style of organisation.

> "The Council (Trades Union Congress General Council) think that the proposal they now make would have more profitable results as the native would be able to use our methods to greater advantage...they (Indian workers) of course understand the mentality of the Indian people...The period of training required is about three years. The industries they have in mind to start with are railways and iron and steel. The first six months might be spent in the Trades Union Congress offices

> here dealing with general information in regard to the British Trade Union Movement... special emphasis being place on the two industries concerned...The next two and a half years could be spent in the service of the unions... They should be two young reliable and conscientious trade unionists from societies affiliated to your Federation and they should be willing to give a guarantee that when they return to India they will continue to work and give service to the Trade Union Movement..."(General Council of the Trades Union Congress 15/2/38 Citrine letter to Joshi.)

This led to the fostering of contacts between the Indian Trades Union Federation and the British Labour movement, as evidenced in the strike bulletins sent by the Federation to the British Labour movement, indicating the particular style of political activity of the Federation, and its differences with the rest of the Indian Trades Union movement.

> "Membership...the Federation shall consist of bona fide trade union organisations affiliated in the manner prescribed...
> Affiliation...Any bona fide trade union organisation subject to the following exception shall be entitled to make application to become affiliated...Exception: No trade union organisation which is, or is known to be communistic or whose aims, objects or methods of work are, in whole or in part, the same as or similar to those of communism, or which is, directly or indirectly affiliated or connected with an Indian or foreign organisation which is communistic..."
> (Trades Union Federation 1929 Constitution.)

The prime definition of bona fide activity in this context was a lack of contact with communism. This was certainly very much in line with the official position of the British Labour Party and Trades Union Congress which used the label 'communist' as a short hand way of designating a number of methodological and ideological differences with the communist Party (see section 2.8). The documentation of the Trades Union Federation indicated that by Communism, it was referring to the use of the general strike as a political weapon as well as the fact that the Trades Union Federation was prepared to take part in constitutional negotiations with the

colonial government, whilst the communist-supported Trade Union Congress in India was not.

It is useful at this point to reflect on some of the main points from this chapter so far, and in particular on the usefulness of two of the analytic devices developed in chapter one, community and constituency. As indicated in section 1.7 these operate as structuring devices which help constitute the ideological conditions in which statements are made. What contribution have community and constituency made to the analysis of statements? They have made it possible to comment on who and what the Labour Party claims to represent. The Labour Party discursively constructs that of which it is the political representative, and part of this is a reference to a community.

The Labour Party defined its community in terms of domestic policy to include those who were workers "by hand and brain" (1929 Constitution p3). This refers to those who rely upon their labour, whatever form that may take, to provide the means of life. The Labour Party's community does not therefore own any other means of making a living, such as capital. This is a wide definition, which was more closely defined by the stipulation that the Labour Party's community should also be members of trade unions and thus believe in the collective power of organised labour. Trade union membership was strategic to a definition of the Labour Party's community. As far as international issues were concerned, the Labour Party had no community, although it did have a constituency, if a very general one, "freedom and peace" (1929 Constitution p3). It would co-operate internationally with those who shared this constituency.

In the dominions (dominion was a terms used by the Labour Party in this period to designate areas which were still colonies as well as those which had acceded to dominion status as 'equal partners' in the empire) the Labour Party's community was an extension of its domestic community, the "working population" (1929 p3).

This is further demonstrated by its intervention in the Indian Trades Union movement.

The Labour Party's main constituencies set out in its constitution were general and abstract, Trade Unionism, Co-operativism, Socialism, and Parliamentarianism. It is likely that these allegiances inform official positions adopted by the Party, although all of these constituencies require definition. It is also likely, that each of these constituencies pose a range of possible definitions. The constitution qualifies these formulations slightly by stating that its aims were the "political, economic and social emancipation" (Labour Party 1929 Consitiution p3.) of workers and securing an equitable distribution of goods in the common ownership of production. Again, these are vague formulations which could take a number of policy forms.

The use of community and constituency has made it possible to make certain observations about the discursive construction of the Labour Party from the statements set out in its constitution which would not otherwise have been possible. It provided the beginings of a method for interpreting texts. The notion of a site of enunciation also facilitates such an interpretation. Breaking down the party as a statement issuing body into its central institutions and examining the functions of each makes it possible to build up a picture of how the Party operates in the sanction of statements as official. It is to this that the rest of this chapter addresses itself.

2.2 The National Executive Committee.

In order to establish the conditions of authorisation of statements by the Labour Party it is necessary to examine some of its key enunciative institutions. An examination of the conditions of authorisation of statements gives an indication of what may be called 'official' statements and of how the party as a whole operated as a site of enunciation.

Official statements were those issued by the

National Executive Committee of the party or passed by the conference. Between conferences the National Executive was the constitutional head of the party. The composition of the executive was stipulated in the Standing Orders. For the purposes of nomination its twenty three places were divided into four categories. Twelve were nominated by the trades unions, one by the socialist, co-operative and professional organisations, five by the constituencies and five by women members from all affiliated organisations.

Because of the strategic position of the executive within the party as an authorising body and a clearing house through which all party business passed, the proportions in which various organisations were represented was in itself a site of struggle. Throughout the 1930s the constituencies waged a struggle within the party to increase their representation on the executive in the light of their increased numerical importance within the party. This quest for a greater voice in party affairs on behalf of individual members, culminated in a victory at the 1937 conference where a sucessful bid was made to increase the constituencies representation on the National Executive committee from five to seven seats. This struggle was at least partly a stand against the enormous influence of the trade union vote both on the National Executive committee and at conference. Constitutional wrangles over the size of the voice awarded to certain sections in the party was becoming established as a feature of Labour Party history even in the 1930s, and was a way of defining other issues. These struggles represent bids to define the objects and areas of struggle with which the party should concern itself.

One of the functions of the National Executive Committee was secretarial work. It dealt with all the correspondence addressed to the party from outside institutions as well as institutions within the Labour movement. An examination of its documentation reveals that much of its correspondence was from constituency

parties and affiliated organisations, and were requests for advice and information on a range of issues. Often these were asking for guidance on party policy and practice, but there were also requests to the executive to intervene in local disputes. The executive was also indirectly responsible for the secretarial work surrounding the annual conference; the compilation of agendas, the processing of resolutions and the multitude of other tasks involved in conference organisation.

Perhaps one of the most important functions of the National Executive Committee was in the formation of party policy. The National Executive discharged its policy making functions through the auspices of its policy committee. Policy was actually formualted in the policy sub-committees and then passed on to the executive through the policy committee which co-ordinated this aspect of the executive's work.

Although the executive was in a good position to suggest which issues ought to go to the appropriate policy committee for consideration, pressure for certain issues to be considered may have come from a number of sources. The unions, the constituencies, the parliamentary group or a lobby from one of the socialist societies might petition the executive for the development of policy on certain issues. In response to this kind of pressure, or of its own accord, the executive defined the issues upon which policy sub-committees should be set up, and appointed the appropriate personnel to staff them. Members of policy sub-comittees were usually from the Labour Party or 'experts' brought in, who were sympathetic to the Labour movement, for example Keynes. Indeed, these committees tended to produce experts in certain areas. Leonard Woolf's expertise in foreign and colonial policy was much developed through his contribution to policy sub-committees.

Whilst the policy sub-committees were a permanent feature of Labour Party organisation, the issues to which they addressed themselves varied. Committees were frequently set up to deal with certain issues and then

abandoned when the issue resulted in a party policy statement. A comparative analysis of the nature of policy committees during the 1920s and 1930s reveals something about the state of development of policy in the party in the 1930s, as well as its ideological orientation towards a certain kind of issue as the basis for policy deliberations.

Throughout the 1920s the following issues were the subject of policy sub-committees: army and navy pensions, education, industrial policy, international affairs, local government, public health, temperance policy and trade and finance. These were the policies the Labour Party was offering as a way of realising its constituencies. The sub-committees' output for 1932-4 was described under the following headings: economic reconstruction, social reconstruction, the constitution, general reports on issues described as 'socialism' and foreign and imperial policy.

A number of differences between the two periods may be discerned. Temperance and public health were, in the 1930s no longer prominent issues. This shows a shift away from the old concerns of liberalism and social reform towards what may have been regarded as the causes of such issues, the social and economic structure. Also the reports of the 1930s were becoming more specific. Instead of 'industrial affairs', 'industrial reorganisation' become an issue. It is likely that by the 1930s there was an increased attention to the details of policy which would be required when the Labour Party become the government, and a body of policy to offer to an electorate which presented a credible and realistic assessment of the requirements of government, as well as the requirements of socialism. Foreign and imperial policy did not appear in the 1920s reports of policy making. It is possible that this represents an extension of the range of issues with which the party was able to deal by the 1930s. The accounts of Woolf (1947 p6.) indicate that the Labour Party was a little hesitant in applying its definitions of socialism, so rooted in

social and industrial reorganisation, to foreign and imperial relations. Discussions of Labour Party 'socialism' are the subject of chapter three and therefore receive only cursory attention in this context.

There is some evidence to suggest that the policy making activity of the party, as indexed in its policy reports, both declined in the 1930s and became more systematic. In 1920 over two hundred and fifty reports, pamphlets and memoranda were submitted from the policy sub-committees to the executive. In 1924 this figure was two hundred and thirty seven, in 1925 it was a hundred and seventy, in 1929 it was sixty. By 1930 the total number of reports was no longer listed in this way. This may be related to a change in emphasis in policy sub-committees towards more detailed policy, or to the increased activity of groups such as the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda and the New Fabian Research Bureau which worked on the fringe of the party offering policy blue prints.

In any case by 1931 the system of policy making was systematised with the appointment of a policy committee by the National Executive Committee to co-ordinate new policy statements with the existing body of policy statements. This committee was appointed by the National Executive Committee and comprised both members of the executive and experts co-opted by them.

> "In 1931...it was thought that the stage had been reached in the formation of party policy, rendered necessary the appointment of a single body composed of members of the National Executive Committee who could survey already accepted policy with a view to supplementing or elaborating...This method has been highly successful."(National Executive Committee 1935 Report to Annual Conference. Annual Reports of the Labour Party. p18)

The policy committee was the institutional mechanism through which a continuity of party policy, was assured.

By 1934 the Labour Party was able to boast of its accumulation of policy statements.

"The foregoing statements represent a body of

> doctrine and policy which no other political party can show... (the) party has worked out in considerable detail...what its policy on major national issues actually is, and how it proposes that policy should be carried into effect...to translate actual policies into heads of Bills." (National Executive Committee 1934 Report to Annual Conference. Annual Reports of the Labour Party. p19-20)

In the final analysis all reports produced in this manner were channelled through the National Executive Committee which decided whether to issue them in the form of policy statements to be ratified by a two thirds majority vote at conference. Such statements could then be considered official policy. The National Executive Committee thus occupied a privileged position in this authorisation process.

As far as the constituencies were concerned, the National Executive Committee discharged its responsibilities as a focus for the party through the National Agent. The National Agent was directly responsible to the National Executive. It was the task of this office to report on the application of the Constitution and Standing Orders of the party in all areas of local organisation, thus ensuring its operation as a single party. The work of the National Agent was conducted through Local Agents. The office of the National Agent was one through which a two way process of communication was enacted. Local parties were kept informed about the decisions made by the central institutions of the party, and the National Executive Committee kept itself informed of the kinds of activity which existed locally. It was through this mechanism that the executive exercised its function in deciding whether or not to endorse Labour Party candidates for election. The National Agent was an institution through which the party centrally policed the label 'Labour Party' as a way of describing the diversity of political thinking and actions existing in local constituencies.

The National Executive Committee also functioned as a focus for the semi-autonomous bodies in the Labour Party, the Women's Section and the League of Youth.

These organisations had their own conferences and organisational structure, yet were accountable to the executive for their actions. The nature of this accountability and the limits imposed upon autonomy are examined in the section which describes the National Executive Committee's disbanding the executive of the League of Youth.

The National Executive Committee was also the institution through which the international relations and obligations of the party were channelled. It received communications, on behalf of the party, from Labour organisations in the colonies and from international bodies such as the Labour and Socialist International, the Disarmament Campaign and the continental Social Democratic Parties.

Finally, the National Executive Committee kept in touch with some of the technical aspects of party organisation, such as financial and publicity and propaganda work. It did this through the reports of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Propaganda Committee.

2.3 The National Joint Council.

The National Joint Council existed before 1930 as a forum for dicussion between the Labour Party and the trade unions. In May 1930 it was reconstituted in an effort to provide an institutional expression of the unity of the Labour movement. In 1934 it was renamed the National Council of Labour. It was a body consisting of thirteen seats of which the Trades Union Congress was given seven, the National Executive Committee three and the Consultative Committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party three. As such it was a forum for arbitration between the three major enunciative institutions in the Labour movement.

The formation of the National Joint Council was a bid to provide a single voice in place of three voices on questions considered to be of national importance. The function of the National Joint Council was to-

> "Consider matters affecting the Labour Movement as a whole, and make provision for taking immediate and united action on all questions of national emergency. Endeavour to secure a common policy and joint action, whether by legislation or otherwise, on all questions affecting the workers as producers, consumers and citizens." (National Joint Council. 25/11/31 Minutes.)

Workers were the community of the National Joint Council. It was claiming to be their voice. Because it was claiming to be the collective voice of the Labour movement it could claim to represent workers in all aspects of their lives. This is an added dimension, as neither the Labour Party nor the Trades Union Congress could alone claim to represent this group completely. The representation of producers was the community of the Trades Union Congress and the representation of workers as citizens was the tasks of the Labour Party. By linking the political and industrial wings of the party the National Joint Council could claim a more comprehensive set of constituencies and communities.

The unity of the council's constituency was first challenged by the Parliamentary Labour Party in April 1932 in a bid to protect its enunciative autonomy.

> "There are matters upon which it will be necessary to preserve a definite trade union or Labour Party point of view. Under certain circumstances...the Labour Party Executives may feel compelled to pay some regard to industrial or political expediency." (Parliamentary Labour Party 26/4/32 Report to the National Joint Council. Minutes.)

This appears to be a bid by the Parliamentary Labour Party to preserve for itself a greater authority, unchallenged by the National Joint Council, in relation to the constituency to which it was the closest, Parliamentarianism. The constituency of the Parliamentary Labour Party was to guide 'socialism' through the mechanisms and practices of Parliament. It wanted, therefore, to maintain for itself the right to a position which was not necessarily shared by the General Council of the Trades Union Congress or the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party, and which was able to

respond to "expediency" rather than be tied to joint policy decisions.

The National Joint Council was more than an institution on which the collective voice of the Labour movement was expressed through a process of arbitration. It was also the institution where an arbitration of issues, or generalised objects, was being negotiated. Each of its three constitutive institutions made a bid to define, through its reports, the kinds of issues it thought required the authority of the collective voice of the National Joint Council.

General patterns may be discovered in the reports submitted by the three institutions. The Parliamentary Labour Party gave a report of events in Parliament. The reports it submitted in 1931 indicated an emphasis on matters of fiscal policy (especially taxation and import duties), the state of the nation's economy, the budget, employment, armaments, the international situation and colonial issues. Its community was the representation of labour in Parliament, and as such it had access to the process of government, a position from which it was able to inform the rest of the movement. In fact the Parliamentary group was both informing the movement of its activities and opening itself up to criticism and petition from the National Executive Committee and the trades unions, to represent particular positions in the process of Parliamentary debate. The National Joint Council was the main institution besides national conference through which the Parliamentary group was accountable to the executive. The National Joint Council was obliged to report to the executive. It should be noted that the Parliamentary group was conditioned in its representations by the processes of Parliamentary debate and procedure. It is unlikely that whilst in opposition the Parliamentary group would often be able to take the initiative and introduce issues for Parliament's consideration.

Like the Parliamentary Labour Party, the National Executive Committee reported issues to the National Joint Council which arose from its particular sphere of activity.

The executive submitted reports from the policy sub-committees working under its direction. In November 1931 it reported on fiscal issues (mainly finance, taxation and trade) the reorganisation of industry and the nation's economy, unemployment, international and colonial issues. These are virtually the same as those of the Parliamentary group but are the product of different kinds of conditions.

The National Executive Committee operated as an authorising institution with a different audience from the Parliamentary Party. Its audience was ultimately the Party as a whole, whereas the Parliamentary Party's audience was potentially wider and not necessarily confined to the Labour Party. Whilst its community was the same as that of the Parliamentary Party, as mentioned earlier in this section, its constituency was not as close to the structures imposed by Parliament. This was particularly true when the Labour Party was in opposition. Also a Labour member of Parliament was required to represent a group of people living in a specified geographical area. (This is the way 'constituency' is used in political discourses, rather than the way it is used as an analytic device in this dissertation). The community with which the Labour Party constitutionally associated itself (see section 2.1) and his or her own conscience.

The input of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress into the National Joint Council gives an indication of its sphere of activity and the range of issues appropriate to its constituencies. Whilst the parliamentary group and the executive shared to some extent a range of issues, those of the Trades Union Congress were quite distinct. This difference is partly accounted for in the location of pressures on the congress. As the voice of the trades union movement, it was petitioned by trades union branches and trades councils to make a particular kind of intervention in its discussions with the other sections of the Labour Movement.

In general the Trades Union Congress was concerned with issues relating to employment and unemployment. In November 1931 the Congress made it clear that it expected the Parliamentary group to push for a shorter maximum working week in it's deliberations on the Children and Young Persons Bill, and for a forty hour working week for adult workers. As well as these issues of a domestic character, the congress was concerned that the resolutions of the International Labour Organisation conferences regarding working conditions and length of the working day be implemented in the British Parliament. In addition to this it was also concerned to report on the International Disarmament Conference and the trial of the Meerut prisoners (presented as Trade Unionists) in India. As with the Labour Party, the constituencies of the congress extended beyond Britain to include organised labour in the colonies. It was acting, during this period, at the request of the Indian Trade Union Federation, as it's agent in Britain. This interest in Indian issues may be compared with the Labour Party's interests which were wider and included not just Indian trade unions but the independence constitution, poverty and repression as well as aspects of nationalist struggles.

These are just a sample of the kinds of issues which were fed into the machinery of the National Joint Council. Out of this came certain statements backed by the authority of the Council. An examination of the issues for 1931 indicates that the Trades Union Congress dominated in the struggle for enunciative control in the National Joint Council. This is demonstrated in the statement issued by the Council on India in the form of a pamphlet called 'Meerut: Release the Prisoners' (1933). Whilst this combined the fears of the Parliamentary group and the National Executive Committee over the independence constitution and the negotiations through which it might be achieved, Meerut was defined as a trade union struggle, rather than as a nationalist one. This is more fully explained in chapter 4.6.

The Meerut issue may be seen as an indication of

the Congress's enunciative domination on this particular issue. It cannot be concluded that in all instances the Trades Union Congress dominated the Council as Pimlott (1977 p.19) suggests. In order to establish whether or not this was true it would be necessary to examine the output of the Council on all issues and compare this with the input of its three constitutive institutions.

2.4 The Parliamentary Labour Party.

The method of selection of parliamentary candidates was stipulated in the constitution of the Labour Party, and demonstrates the nature of the links between the constituencies, the parliamentary group and the National Executive committee. Candidates were selected by the constituencies in co operation with the executive. Selection was restricted to those who were party members and who undertook to conform to the "Constitution, Programme, Principles and Policy of the Party" in "seeking to discharge the responsibilities established by parliamentary practice" (Labour Party 1929 Constitution and Standing Orders p.6). In General Elections candidates were obliged to give prominence to the manifesto of the party (written by the National Executive Committee) in the election address. This required a degree of agreement between the candidates and the official policy of the party. Non Labour Party members were excluded from candidature.

Despite this kind of institutional link with the party as a whole, the position of the parliamentary group offered a certain autonomy. This autonomy was partly constituted by the nature of its enunciative function, and partly by its site of enunciation. Its enunciative function was separate from that of the National Executive Committee. The National Executive Committee enunciated on behalf of the party as a whole, under the authority of conference to which it was accountable. Officially it also enunciated on behalf of the parliamentary group, though not in practice. The function of the parliamentary party was to enunciate on policy issues selected by government, or by the party as a whole when the Labour

Party was the government. It functioned somewhere in between the party as a whole and the requirements of parliamentary government.

The National Executive Committee and the parliamentary group operated from different enunciative sites. The National Executive Committee operated from party head quarters with the authority of the party behind it. The parliamentary party enunciated in the parliamentary arena, where from autumn 1931 it was the official opposition, a position it affirmed in the 1935 General Election. The Labour Party remained out of office until it joined the war time administration.

At first it appears that because the executive and the parliamentary group operated from different sites there was a division of labour between these two important central institutions. This is not, however, the case. Both were actively formulating and enunciating positions and defining objects and issues on behalf of the Labour Party. This was a source of conflict between the two institutions and a usurption of the function of the National Executive Committee as the constitutional head of the party between conferences. The operation of the parliamentary group in so-public an arena was a threat to the executive. This autonomy was defended by the parliamentary group on the grounds that it was necessary in order for it to operate effectively as the voice of the Labour Party in the legislative process. Its intervention in parliament was necessarily an arbitration between the strictures imposed by the legislative process and parliamentary practices, and the expression of Labour Party positions. It claimed that the mechanisms of parliamentary procedure prescribed the range of political possibilities.

There was also another condition operating on the parliamentary group, its relationship to its community, those which it claimed to represent. The Parliamentary group was required to represent the Labour Party's community as set out in the constitution, those who lived by means

of a wage. In addition to this, as members of parliament, they were also required to represent a second community being elected to represent a geographically defined constituency. In this case the word constituency is being used in its usual sense in political discourse to refer to a body of electors in a parliamentary division. A member of parliament was required to express the "will" of his or her electors as well as the community of the Labour Party defined in its constitution. The definition of community offered in the Constitution is used in this case because it was the definition which the members of the Labour Party were required to accept as a condition of membership. It is possible that this dual community led the parliamentary group into conflict with the executive over whose interests were being represented in any particular position.

After the 1931 General Election the Labour parliamentary group was reduced to forty-six seats, a position it improved a little in the 1935 General Election. In 1931 it was to form the official parliamentary opposition with most of its leading figures, including Henderson who was party leader, excluded from parliament. Lansbury became leader of the party in the House of Commons. Thus for most of the 1930s the Labour Party had two leaders, one in parliament and another outside. The struggles which took place in this period between the parliamentary party and the National Executive Committee were not empty power struggles, but bids to define the Labour Party's objectives and strategies,

It might be useful at this stage to comment on what the theoretical mechanisms set out in the first chapter have been able to offer to the material examined so far. It has become apparent that the Labour Party as a site of enunciation is made up of a number of smaller enunciative sites. So far the National Executive Committee, the National Joint Council and the parliamentary party have been examined. Others are examined later in the chapter.

Each of these enunciative sites has fairly distinctive conditions of authorisation. The National Executive Committee may enunciate on behalf of the party as a whole, that is, it may state positions as official between conferences and has the advantage that executive backed resolutions at conference were usually sucessful. Ultimately it was accountable to the Party as a whole through the Annual Conference. The Parliamentary Labour Party was not condtioned by the need to express official party positions. Individual members of parliament had licence to state personal opinions and to even abstain from voting in line with party policy on matters of 'conscience'. The conditions of authorisation of statements made by the Parliamentary Labour Party were partly a product of its complex representative function outlined earlier in this chapter. The conditions of authorisation of National Joint Council statements were a combination of the conditions in which statements from its three constituent organisations were made. The statements presented to the National Joint Council by the General Council of the Trades Union Congress were authorised by the unions making up the congress. It was open to any one of these institutions to dominate in terms of the kinds of statements which were issued on behalf of the movement as a whole. In the example of enunciative domination given in section 2.3 the Trades Union Congress's statement took precedence over those of the other institutions.

The different sites of enunciation may also be distinguished by using the concept of an audience. As set out in section 1.7 audience is a constraint upon the general conditions in which statements were made. The audience of the National Joint Council was both the political and industrial wing of the movement. This may be extended depending on the statement. It is possible that the statement on the Meerut prisoners also had an audience in India. The National Executive Committee's audience was the party as a whole, although it may on occasions have extended beyond that to other political

organisations in opposition to the Labour Party, for instance the Communist Party as well as the Tory and Liberal parties. The audience of the Parliamentary Labour Party was potentially wider than this as it primarily located its statements within the parliamentary arena.

Finally these sites of enunciation may be distinguished from each other in terms of their stated functions as 'voices' of particular communities and constituencies. The Trades Union Congress was primarily the voice of the organised Labour movement, its unit of organisation was the trades union branch. The National Executive Committee was the voice of the party as a whole, and the representative of workers who relied on their labour power to produce the means of life. The precise identity of communities and certain constituencies varied with the statements being issued. The Parliamentary Labour Party was the voice of the Labour Party's community as set out in its constitution, its electors, the individual consciences of the members of parliament and when in government, the nation.

The Labour Party Conference was a most important site of enunciation. It was both the sovereign institution of the party, its collective voice, and a forum where a diverse range of positions were arbitrated and policy offered to be sanctioned as official was decided upon. It was, along with parliament, the forum where the most dissent from official positions was voice. It is therefore possible to gain an idea of the range of positions within the party on any issue by examining its documentation. In constructing the Labour Party in terms of its range of enunciations the Labour conference provides a rich source of material.

2.5 The Labour Party Conference.

The Annual Labour Party Conference had a delegate structure through which its members were represented. All affiliated bodies were entitled to send delegates in proportion to their membership. Conference was both

the sovereign body of the party and the arena in which the 'voices' in the party were able to find expression. As such it was able to accomodate, subject to the limitations of a delegate structure, the diversity of positions which existed within the party at any particular time. An investigation of the party's response to particular issues demonstrates that whilst it may be attributed a single official position on an issue, a diversity of positions were on offer, and the selection of one position as official implies a range of ideological and other conditions surrounding this apparent 'choice'.

Amongst the delegates were trade union representatives. Because the Labour Party shared the trades union movement with the Communist Party, at least some of the trades union delegates to the conference would have been Communists. Members of socialist societies such as the Independent Labour Party and the Social Democratic Federation, Fabians and representatives from the women's section and local constituency parties sent delegates to conference.

The structure of the conference, as set out in the constitution, imposed a certain number of conditions on it as a site of enunciation. For example, resolutions offered for the agenda were not to exceed three from any one affiliated organisation. Conference was not allowed to discuss any business which did not appear on the agenda or from the Conference Arrangements Committee. In addition to this it was most likely that many of the resolutions discussed were composites, a process which may have compromised some of the positions expressed. It was also possible that some of the resolutions submitted were not selected for discussion, and that even those discussed were subject to constraints of time. Conditions on the site of enunciation possibly effect the kinds of voices which may be articulated, and indirectly, the representation of certain communities or constituencies.

The conference began with the Chairman's Address. The Chairman was selected from the previous conference.

A review of conferences for the 1930s indicates that chairmen assessed their tasks differently, but nonetheless there was a general pattern inscribed in this office. Most began with an assessment of the work of the party over the past year. This generally focused on the central institutions, and in particular on its parliamentary work. A comparison between the written reports of the parliamentary party, the National Executive Committee and the Chairman indicates his reliance on a conformity between these three institutions in defining the issues facing the party.

The National Executive Committee and the Parliamentary Labour Party submitted written reports on their work over the year to the conference. This provided the delegates with the opportunity to question the validity of this work on behalf of the movement. This was the mechanism through which the executive was accountable for its actions to the party as a whole.

The majority of conference time was spent on resolutions. This was the method by which party policy was made or sanctioned. Once a resolution had been passed by conference it was constitutionally debarred from the conference agenda again for three years except in cases where the executive considered it necessary to reconsider the party's position. Subject to this condition any delegate could, on behalf of an organisation, put forward a resolution as a bid to define party policy on a particular issue. The National Executive Committee also had to use this method to sanction its policy reports.

The number of resolutions moved by the executive at conference varied throughout the 1920s and 1930s. In 1920 it offered three, in 1924 five, in 1927 nine, in 1930 none, in 1932 five, and in 1936 four. All were passed. It was in fact, rare for any resolution to be defeated, with the exception of Independent Labour Party (I.L.P.) resolutions which were quite frequently defeated. In 1930 the I.L.P. lost three resolutions.

The success of the majority of resolutions indicates that there may have been some sort of negotiation with the National Executive Committee prior to the conference about the kinds of resolutions which were acceptable.

The proportions in which the various kinds of organisations submitted resolutions varied. In 1920 the unions proposed five resolutions against four from the constituency parties and three from the executive. In 1924 the unions proposed three resolutions, the constituencies one and the executive five. In 1930 the constituencies and the unions increased their activity, the unions proposing seven resolutions and the constituencies six. That year the executive did not offer any resolutions to conference. In 1933 the activity of the constituencies reached a peak when they successfully proposed fifteen resolutions, against five from the unions and two from the National Executive Committee. By 1936 the activity of the constituencies had declined and they offered only four resolutions, the same number as the executive and the unions. Theoretically any institution which was a constituent part of the Labour Party could offer resolutions as definitions of party issues, objects and policy. In practice, resolutions as statements of policy were subject to a number of structuring mechanisms.

An examination of certain statements which were offered as resolutions indicate what these might be. Take for example, statements offered to the conference on India in 1931 on behalf of the National Executive Committee.

> "This conference reaffirming its belief in the right of the Indian people to self government (exact wording of the 1927 resolution of the executive passed at the conference) is convinced that the Round Table now assembled in London offers a unique opportunity of establishing this right in a most effective and certain manner through negotiations between the British Government and the representatives of all sections of the population in India. It expresses the hope that all members of the conference will co operate to this great end with a single minded desire

to inaugurate a new era of friendship between Great Britain and India upon the basis of free co operation and consent of the Indian peoples."
(Lansbury 1931 Resolution on India. Labour Party Annual Reports. p.215)

This demonstrates that once the Labour Party had established a policy position through conference, it was anxious neither to abandon the position or the terminology in which it is expressed. Thus a certain continuity was established between past and present statements.

The voice being expressed in this statement was that of the Indian people as a single political community. The constituency associated with this community was independence, reason and right. The audience was the Labour Party as a whole through the delegates who also constituted the conditions of authorisation of these statements. It is possible that this statement originated in the Imperial Advisory Committee under Leonard Woolf, which was set up to consider such matters and then report to the National Executive Committee. This statement expressed an orientation towards a promptly negotiated settlement in conference with Indian representatives. This was a position the Labour Party would not abandon. Even after the failure of the Round Table Conference it continued to support negotiation with India despite much criticism from within the party for the Joint Select Committee on the Indian Franchise which replaced the Round Table as a forum for negotiation.

In 1932 the National Executive Committee again offered a definition of the Indian situation which may be seen as an elaboration on its 1931 position.

"This Conference reaffirms the right of the Indian people to choose the form of government which they consider to be in harmony with their national aspirations (the 'right to self government' in 1931 has become the 'right to choose a form of government' in this resolution) and profoundly regrets that the government should have abandoned the policy of consultation and conference with representatives of all sections of the Indian people... Through a general resort to rule by Ordinance

through a policy of intimidation, wholesale internments and imprisonments (This is taken directly from an Imperial Advisory Committee document of 1932 which was critical of the methods of the National Government in dealing with the situation in India, although the words 'intimidation' 'internments' and 'imprisonments' were not part of this document and were thus, presumably, added by the executive). In a return to the autocratic and tutorial methods of constitution making, the good work accomplished during the last three years has been undone. (This was a quote from the 1932 Imperial Advisory Committee document). The Conference considers that we should take steps to convince the Indians that the British Government has not departed...from its avowed policy of establishing a responsible Federal Government with such Provincial Assemblies as may be decided upon (The Federal solution to the Indian issue was implicit in the structure of the first Round Table Conference and the result of the Report of the Indian Statutory Commission in 1930)...an amnesty for all persons not guilty of crimes of violence (a provision inserted in the Joint Council statement on Meerut). The Conference further calls attention to the intolerable and unjust delays involved in the Indian criminal procedure as revealed in the Meerut conspiracy case, and calls for an immediate reform of this procedure. (Statements like this were frequently made by local party branches, trade unions and the Parliamentary group.) In view of the report of the Whitley Commission on Indian Labour...to promote the growth of trade unionism."
(Lansbury 1932 Resolution on India. Labour Party Annual Reports. p178)

The voice and site of enunciation in this statement remain the same as in the previous conference resolution. The community being spoken for however, was more closely specified. It retains its relation to a community composed of the entire population of India, yet makes special mention of the Meerut prisoners and Indian labour as special communities. The resolution's ideological orientation was still towards a strategy of consultation rather than repression, but the Labour Party begins to add other points which offer an indication of the institutions from which various demands were being voiced. Instead of just demanding Indian independence a more concrete demand for a federal structure was expressed.

The Labour Party's interest in the conditions of Indian labour, and the improvement of its conditions through trade unionism was evidenced in its association with the Whitley Commission on Indian Labour 1931 (see section 4.7). The criticisms of the Indian judicary expressed in the resolution come from the Trades Union Congress, which from the evidence suggested by its correspondence was being petitioned by its membership to take action on the Meerut issue.

This statement expresses a definite position on India and comes from a number of sources rather than being completely defined by the executive, although there is evidence to suggest that the executive did impose certain ideological structuring mechanisms upon statements which appeared as resolutions.

The contention that the executive imposed certain ideological conditions on statements offered as resolutions, can be demonstrated by comparing the resolution on India for 1932 just outlined with one proposed by the Independent Labour Party in 1930 and seconded by Bath Labour Party. This resolution was rejected by the conference.

> "The Conference extends greetings of solidarity to the Indian people in their struggle for political and economic freedom, recognises their right to full self government and self determination, including the right to independence, welcomes the development of a mass movement in India to secure these rights and expresses the hope that this movement will develop into a mass struggle against landlordism and capitalism. The Conference regrets that the Labour Government did not, in its early stages a) Accept full reponsible government...b) Release the Indian political prisoners...(and) strongly condemns the severe repression with which the Civil Disobedience Movement has been met. The Conference calls upon the Labour Government to end the function of serving as the policeman of imperialism by withdrawing immediately all repressive measures in India, liberating the political offenders and opening up negotiations..." (Brockway 1930 Resolution on India. Labour Party Annual Reports p216).

The first difference between these two positions is the site of enunciation. Although they share the

party conference as a site, one statement came from the executive, a privileged site in Labour Party statements which was strategic in policy enunciations. The other was authorised by the I.L.P. The community being represented was the same in both cases, workers, and the Indian people as a whole in their quest for independence. The only difference was in the I.L.P.'s concern for political prisoners which carried no qualification about crimes of violence. Also the I.L.P. statement will have been issued under different conditions of authorisation than the executive statement.

As far as the ideological differences were concerned the two resolutions use very different concepts. The key concepts defining the constituencies in the I.L.P. resolution were 'struggle', 'solidarity', 'mass struggle', 'landlordism', 'capitalism' and 'imperialism'. The key concepts in the resolution of the National Executive Committee were 'consultation' and 'responsible government'. The I.L.P. concepts reveal a different ideological orientation both in its assessment of the situation in India and the strategies through which that situation could be removed. The I.L.P. were suggesting that the situation in India may be descrided by the concepts landlordism, capitalism and imperialism. This was removable not through consultation processes leading to a responsible independent Indian government as the executive suggests, but through mass struggle on the part of the Indian people.

The I.L.P. mentioned the Civil Disobedience Campaign as a factor in the political analysis which the National Executive Committee ignored in favour of the Meerut issue which it defined as a trade union struggle, thwarted by the injustices of Indian judicial procedure. Both resolutions contained a criticism of the handling of the Indian issue, but the I.L.P. was criticising the Labour Government's methods and the National Executive Committee was criticising the methods employed by the National Government.

The basic position being expressed in both

resolutions was the same. Both called for a rapid movement towards Indian independence, but diverged in terms of the strategies considered necessary to achieve this.

The 1932 policy statement on India just described was overridden by another in 1933 moved by Leyton Labour Party. This will be examined because it demonstrates a further development of Labour policy on this issue, and because it was the result of a negotiation with the National Executive Committee. The files of the executive contain the original resolution as submitted by the Leyton party. The motion as it arrived at conference had been changed in a number of ways. This demonstrates that the executive found certain statements unacceptable in a resolution on India.

> "This Conference condemns the British Government's resort to, and persistence in a policy of internments and imprisonments (originally 'naked terrorism' was added to this list) which has led to the use of the armed forces of the crown against the civilian population. The Conference also protests against the Government's repudiation of pledges repeatedly given by recent governments...the new constitution of India should be negotiated in consultation and agreement with the representatives of the Indian peoples. (The following was deleted at this point 'The imposition of a constitutional plan which is not only unacceptable to India, but is not based on any democratic principle or calculated to lead to the political or economic emancipation of the masses'). The Conference reaffirms the policy of self determination and self government for India accepted at the various party conferences. (At this point the original resolution condemned the Round Table for its failure to achieve a solution acceptable either to the Indian people or the Labour Party), and declares that the party whether in office or opposition will continue to do its utmost to promote the work of constitution making on the basis of equality with, and in consultation and conference with all sections of the Indian people. (This last sentence replaced the wording 'to make its own constitution through the medium of a democratically elected Constituent Assembly with full powers to formulate that constitution'). The Conference

> demands from the government the immediate release of all prisoners not guilty of crimes of violence. (The violence qualification did not appear in the original resolution but was added by the executive)....The Conference demands the immediate release of the Meerut prisoners in view of the partisan injustice of their trial and the imprisonment they have already suffered, (taken from the National Joint Council statement on Meerut), asks that they should be granted adequate compensation and condemns the use of the mechinery of law for the supression of trade union and working class organisation. The Conference deplores that even after the lapse of four years no action has been taken on the report of the Whitley Commission...and appeals to the government of India to promote labour legislation in co-operation with the leaders of the Indian Trade Union Movement." (Leyton West Labour Party 1933 Conference Resolution on India. Labour Party Annual Reports. p228)

By examining what was added to and omitted from the original resolution it is possible to draw out the ideas and concepts to which the executive objected and those which it found acceptable. It objected to the description 'naked terrorism' as a way of referring to the activity of the British Government in India. It also insisted upon the stipulation that it was only in support of those Indian not guilty of violence in their political activities. It rejected the suggestion that the constitutional arrangements so far suggested did not effect the 'emancipation of the masses' and the suggestion that the Round Table Conference had been a failure. It insisted on upholding both negotiation as a method of settling the Indian constitution (which it was defining as one of the key issues in the Indian situation) and Britain's position as the authority awarding colonial freedom. It was not in favour of Indians settling their own constitution, but only aiding Britain to fulfill its colonial resonsibilities in framing a constitution for India.

The examination of the Labour Party Conference in this section indicates that it was quite possible for a number of institutions, local party branches and trade union branches to make sucessful bids to define Labour

Party policy and official statements. This is true of any issue. Indian independence was chosen in this case because resolutions concerning this are relevant to the Indian case study. In order to be acceptable to the National Executive Committee, bids to define policy appear to need to conform to certain ideological conditions. A closer examination of what the National Executive Committee accepted and what it rejected in the conference resolutions on India make possible a number of comments on the sanctioning of positions in conference statements.

As indicated earlier in this chapter, two identifiable ideological elements in the classification of political statements are the communites and constituences with which a statement associated itself. There are other abstract principles but these are the most accessible. It is possible to begin to define the differences between what was acceptable and what unacceptable to the National Executive Committee by examining these structuring mechanism.

The communities acceptable to the National Executive Committee were the Indian peoples as a whole and political prisoners interned by the British Raj as long as they were not guilty of crimes of violence. It rejected a bid by the Independent Labour Party to define its community as all political prisoners. The constituencies acceptable to the executive were independence to be achieved through a strategy of negotiation with India. It did not accept the I.L.P. formulation which suggested that independence was to be achieved through a strategy of 'mass struggle'. In this case differences in constituencies are not wide enough to specify the differences between what was acceptable to the I.L.P. and what was acceptable to the executive, as both were in favour of independence. But the strategies by which those constituencies were to be realised do. The executive favoured negotiation rather than mass struggle. Other communities supported by the executive were trade unionists as defined in the Whitley Commission (see section 4.7), and British Indian citizens as

indicated in its limited defence of the Meerut prisoners (see section 4.5 and 4.2).

Next, the Daily Herald, the Labour Party's newspaper will be considered in terms of its operation as a site of enunciation and conditions of authorisation of statements. Its functions were quite different from the central sites of enunciation already examined in this chapter.

2.6. The Daily Herald.

The Daily Herald was the Labour Party's newspaper and its point of access to its widest audience. At the 1931 conference it was reported that the paper had a daily circulation of one and a quarter million. Editorial control was autonomous in the sense that it was subject neither to the intervention of the National Executive Committee nor the rigours of party policy except in the broadest sense. Bevin took over the editorship in 1931 and in fact complained that the party centrally did not make more use of it as a propaganda instrument.

> "They are not receiving sufficient facilities for government publicity or from the head office of the party, for general party publicity, and they (the management of the Herald) had expressed the hope that means would be provided for closer association in order to utilise the paper for propaganda purposes and deal more effectively with the government proposals."
> (Bevin 24/4/31 minutes of the National Executive Committee.)

The Daily Herald was described by the National Executive Committee as the "authentic voice of the Party" (1931 Report to Conference). Who did it think was represented by this authentic voice? - "the trade union and socialist point of view" (1932 Report to Conference). The main function of the Daily Herald was the reporting of industrial news from what it considered a trade union view point.

The Daily Herald had a far wider appraisal of issues than the Labour Party in general. For example in its coverage of Indian affairs it gave detailed accounts of

the Civil Disobedience Campaign, the movements of the Viceroy in India and many aspects of Indian life and industrial affairs. Party policy on the other hand, dealt with a much narrower range of issues, confining itself to the conditions of Indian labour and the state of development of trade unionism, the Meerut prisoners and the constitutional settlement. The Daily Herald could not possibly have followed party policy, for it was required to comment in areas where there was none. It was required to produce a commentary on a diversity of issues as they presented themselves as 'news'. Yet at the same time it had to do this within the general framework of a Labour Party point of view. Whilst its coverage of issues was wider than party policy, the Herald did not appear to challenge party policy.

2.7 The Institutions of Party Discipline.

The two major institutions for the maintenance of discipline within the party in this period were the Organisation Sub-Committee and the Joint Committee on Party Discipline. From the activities of these two organisations it would appear that 1931 was a year in which the Labour Party was both establishing the limits of its political toleration and scrutinising its relations with those institutions which were its close political allies. In the early part of the 1930s it was defining itself as a party both institutionally and ideologically.

The institutions under which this was being conducted were set up and controlled by the central institutions of the party. Both reported directly to the National Executive Committee. Before examining the various splits and confrontations which took place within the party, it is important to understand the institutional mechanisms through which discipline was administered.

It was the job of the Organisation Sub-Committee to consider disciplinary issues and then pass its recommendations on to the National Executive Committee whose job it was to decide on the appropriate action

to be taken. The activities of this committee demonstrate that only certain aspects of breaches in party discipline came to the attention of the executive. For example, the construction of the disciplinary machinery was such that it focused on Members of Parliament and Agents who were indirectly responsible for ensuring that local branches operated within the framework of official party statements. The disciplinary apparatus was focused on certain institutions in the movement rather than on others.

The Organisation Sub Committee focused on the activities of the local Agents. This was mostly a response to complaints from local branches concerning divergence from official policy at branch level and depended on the willingness of local Agents to co operate. This is made clearer thoughout chapter six, when over the issue of anti Fascism many East London Labour Parties defied official policy and attended confrontative demonstrations. Such branches were unlikely to have been reported to disciplinary committees unless there was an active and vociferous lobby in a local party in favour of adherence to official policy. The Organisation Sub Committee was the mechanism through which the central institutions of the party supervised the implementation of party policy and practice in the local branches. The case study on anti semitism demonstrates the difficulties for the central institutions in ensuring that party policy was implemented in East London.

It was through the Organisation Sub Committee that the National Executive Committee kept in touch with its semi autonomous institutions such as the women's section and the League of Youth. It was thus in a position to ensure that the general ideological orientation of these organisations was in line with official party policy.

This committee also focused its attention on the policy sub committees of the National Executive Committee in order to ensure that they were fulfilling the purposes for which they were created. As indicated in section 2.2

policy sub committees were set up for very specific purposes. The Organisation Sub Committee provided a critical commentary on the operation and conclusions of these committees and reported to the National Executive Committee.

Finally, the Organisation Sub Committee acted as an arbitor in intra-institutional disputes within the party.

This brief description of the functions of the Organisation Sub Committee serves to illustrate that disciplinary considerations were structured in such a way as to spotlight the activity of certain institutions rather than others. The policing of the ideological limits of the party such as was undertaken by the National Executive Committee must be considered in the light of the operation of this and other disciplinary institutions.

The Joint Committee on Party Discipline was formed in April 1931 to supplement the activities of the Organisation Sub Committee on disciplinary issues. It was set up to focus on institutions excluded from the terms of reference of the Organisation Sub Committee, mainly the Parliamentary Labour Party.

The terms of reference of the Joint Committee were set out in the following way:-

> "Various breaches of Standing Orders governing the relation of individual members to the party as a whole have been reviewed... Our people in the constituencies look to the members of parliament to conduct their parliamentary activities as to bring honour to the party and promote our claims for a clear majority in the House of Commons whenever it is found necessary or desireable to appeal to the electorate. Recent events have shown that there is a steady sense of loyalty in the constituencies which we would do well to emulate. The Committee feels that the latitude allowed under the existing Standing Orders.... which in the main has satisfied the Parliamentary Labour Party for many years should be acceptable to all our members and the Committee appeals to all concerned for a fuller measure of loyalty

in the future."
(National Executive Committee April 1931 Minutes).

This implies that some found the Standing Orders restrictive. The establishement of the Joint Select Committee in the last few months of the Labour Government before it fell in the Autumn of 1931 may be seen as a bid by the National Executive Committee to control the enunciative autonomy of the party in parliament and bring it into line with the rest of the party.

It was in consultation with this committee that the executive suggested a revision of the Standing Orders under which the parliamentary party operated.

> "i) Any member who has conscientious scruple on any matter of Party policy shall be free to abstain from voting.
> ii) In the case of Private Member's Bills or motions which do not raise any question of Party policy, or on which the government or the Consultative Committee or a party meeting has come to no decision, members be allowed an entirely free hand.
> iii) Members should take the fullest advantage of the opportunity at Party meetings of raising questions of party policy concerning which they may have doubts.
> iv) Divisions should not be called except when the whips have been informed and the leaders in charge have given their approval.
> v) In cases affecting Party policy it may be decided to give members a free hand ... any member taking part in such a debate should make it clear that he is expressing only a personal opinion. Members who are speaking should take special care to refrain from attacks in their speeches on other members of the Party ... It has always been the practice whilst in opposition that all amendments of any substance ... should pass through a committee of the party."
> (National Executive Committee. June 1931 Minutes.)

This amendment of parliamentary Standing Orders represents a redefinition of the conditions under which the party in parliament operated. The result was a tighter control on the range of positions which Members of Parliament were able to express. Members were also compelled to vote in line with party policy except where none existed and no directive was given.

The first meeting of the Joint Committee was dominated by two issues. The first was the disciplinary action taken against Members of Parliament who had been absent, or voted against the Government in 'important decisions'. These turned out to be the Representation of the Peoples Bill and Army and Navy Estimates (defence expenditure). These were judged to be matters of fundamental principle. The second issue was the problem posed when a Member of Parliament's membership of an organisation presented a clash of interests with party policy.

Even these stricter definitions of the party which were attempts to more closely specify its enunciative function allowed the possibility of representing a multiple community as outlined in section 2.4. In addition to this a great deference was paid to matters of 'conscience' and allegiance to other organisations.

The next five sections in this chapter deal with a variety of institutions with which the Labour Party came into conflict. These were different kinds of conflicts because the institutions involved had different kinds of relations with the Labour Party. The Independent Labour Party was an autonomous organisation with its own Conference and organisational structure. It was affiliated to the Labour Party and as such was subject to its constitution and standing orders. Section 2.9 examines the struggles in which the Independent Labour Party disaffiliated from the Labour Party, and the ways in which their differences were expressed. The Communist Party was completely autonomous, but constantly sought alliances with the Labour Party in one form or another. Mosley's New Party began by setting itself up within the Labour Party because some of its original key members were Labour Party members. They were expelled. The Labour Nationalists were also Labour Party members. They too were expelled. Finally, the League of Youth was a constituent part of the Labour Party. It was brought into line with official policy.

In the case of each of these struggles the Labour Party was forced to state its differences with the appropriate institution. In so doing it was defining itself. The next five sections look at how it did this.

2.8 Relations with the Communist Party

The Labour Party officially established its distance from the Communist Party through technical or institutional mechanisms. This principle was firmly established in the appendix of the Constitution and Standing Orders which quoted resolutions from conferences going back to 1924 in which the position of the Labour Party vis a vis the Communist Party was set out under the authority of conference. It was:- "That the application for affiliation from the Communist Party be refused." (Labour Party 1929 Constitution and Standing Orders. p.11) By the 1925 conference it declared that:- "No member of the Communist Party shall be eligible to become a member of any individual section of any affiliated local Labour Party, or be entitled to remain a member." (Labour Party 1929 Constitution and Standing Orders p.11). By 1928 it had been declared by conference that:-

> Affiliation to the Labour Party implies general loyalty to the decisions of the Party Conference and debars affiliated organisations and their branches from promoting or associating in the promotion of candidates for public authorities in opposition to those of the Labour Party."
> (Labour Party 1929 Constitution and Standing Orders p.11)

These pronouncements effectively prohibited Labour Party members at local and national level from sharing political platforms by 1929 with:-

> "Members of political parties not eligible for affiliation to the Labour Party, including the Communist Party, or any individual who opposes constitutionally selected Labour candidates."
> (Labour Party 1929 Constitution and Standing Orders p.11)

Thus, the Labour Party constitutionally defined its boundaries to exclude the Communist Party and any

one else who stood against Labour candidates in any kind of public election. This establishment of institutional and technical boundaries was just a way of expressing other, ideological differences, for which the label Communist Party became a symbol. In establishing itself as the voice of the trade union movement the Labour Party had to displace the Communist Party. The struggles which took place between the two parties in the 1930s were about the authority to enunciate on behalf of the Labour movement. Each claimed to represent the interests of workers as a community more closely.

Many of the officially expressed objections of the Labour Party to the ideologies and strategies of the Communist Party focused on the trade union movement and the right to define legitimate principles of trade union activity. In the National Joint Council report to the 1933 conference the Communist Party was accused of "attempting to disrupt the trade union movement". (National Joint Council 1933 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.18). This was a reference to the belief that the Communist Party urged its members to become Shop Stewards in order to discredit union officials by sending out circulars challenging their ability to represent the workers. Many of the official objections posed to Communist work in the trade unions centred on its strategies and the use of conflict in the place of conciliation.

> "The first objection to these bodies is that they mean a diversion of working class efforts in our own movement in Great Britain ... Our people, the rank and file, many of them who ought to be concentrating their efforts in the development of the trade union movement ... and the Labour Party ... are not concentrating on the real work in hand."
> (Shinwell 1933 Annual Reports of the Labour Party. p.146)

This statement made on behalf of the executive makes an implicit reference to two points of divergence with the Communist Party. In the first place the Communist Party was the representative of a slightly different

community than the Labour Party. The Communist Party's community refers to workers as a class whatever their national associations. Workers were those who had a particular relation to the processes and means of production, rather than those who lived by means of their labour. The second point of difference with the Communist Party was in terms of purpose and strategy. The Labour Party considered that trade unionists should be directing their activities towards the development of their instruments of representation, the Labour Party and trade unions. It suspected that the class-struggle strategy of the Communist Party led trade unionists into conflict with their representatives and was, therefore, a diversion from the proper practice of trade unionism and the political strategies appropriate to it.

One of the principal objections to the Communist Party was its association with Moscow. The dangers of this association were spelled out in the Labour Party pamphlet "The Communist Solar System" (1933). This pamphlet, rather than set out the Labour Party's political objections to communism, relied on an understanding that the Communist Party was an influence which undermined the legitimate work of the Labour Movement. It pointed out that the Communist Party in Britain was but a satellite of Moscow, and as such a point of access to Britain for Russian influence. It was stated in the official pronouncements of the Labour Party (1933 p.21) that national Communist Parties were but focuses for Comintern intervention in the affairs of nation states. Communism was thus synonimous with a kind of foreign invasion. This is more fully investigated in section 6.7

> "The Communist International may be regarded as a central fervia of like association with a number of similar bodies each of which being dark itself is indebted to the sun (Moscow) both for light and heart."
> (Labour Party 1933 The Communist Solar System p.22)

Officially the Labour Party beleived that it was a focus for Communist Party attacks because of its strategic position within the Labour movement. Pollit

was reported to have said "We shall crush them in our embrace" (Labour Party 1933 The Communist Solar System p.5). This attack was thought to be rooted in the Communist Party's dislike for the democratic methods to which the Labour Party subscribed. The Labour Party's position on this was captured in the slogan "democracy versus dictatorship" (Labour Party 1933 Annual Reports p.217). Which was a way in which the Labour Party officially sought to distinguish itself from the Communist Party. These differences are one of the subjects of chapter six.

The threat which communism posed to democratic political institutions was thought to be amply documented in the case of Germany where it was considered that both communism and Nazism posed equal if distinct threats to trade unionism. It was believed in Labour Party(1933)[1] circles that the entry of the German communists into parliament, in an effort to bring about its destruction, was responsible for the rise of militarism and the dangers presented to political and civil liberties. The link between fascism and communism was made by reference to their styles of activity and rooted in their anti parliamentary character.

Throughout the 1930s the Labour Party issued warnings about the dangers associated with the infiltration of individual communists into the Labour Movement. The application of the Communist Party to become affiliated to the Labour Party was turned down at the 1924, 1925 and 1928 Labour Party Conferences, as were invitations in the 1930s to form a popular front against Fascism.

The Labour Party's official objections to the Communist Party extended to all those campaigns which it considered to be fronts for Communist Party activity. The links between the Communist Party and its supposed 'front' organisations were established in terms of their personnel and methods of political activity. From 1925 onwards the Labour Party began issuing what were known as 'black circulars' containing lists of

proscribed organisations with which local branches were instructed to have no contact, even though the aims and programmes of some of these organisations would not have been inconsistent with membership of the Labour Party. By 1933 the list of proscribed organisations included the Workers International Relief, National Labour Defence, League Against Imperialism, Meerut Prisoners Relief Committee, Friends of the Soviet Union, The Anti War Movement, The League of Militant Atheists, Guild of Militant Co operators, The Labour Research Department and the Relief Fund for the Victims of German Fascism.

2.9 Relations With the Independent Labour Party.

The circumstances in which the Labour Party began to distinguish itself from the Independent Labour Party were produced by the Labour Party's revision of its Standing Orders which governed the manner in which Labour M.P.s might operate; and a demand from the I.L.P. conference that its parliamentary group undertake to represent I.L.P. policy in parliament. This resulted in a clash between the Labour Party which was being increasingly strict about the statements of Labour Members of Parliament, and the I.L.P., whose conference was demanding that its policy be represented by the I.L.P. group in parliament. Because the I.L.P. group in parliament came under Labour Party Standing Orders there was an inevitable clash with the Labour Party. This situation was the result of increasing national and international pressure on the I.L.P. to establish its differences with the Labour Party. International pressures were implemented through the League Against Imperialism, an organisation built to support anti imperialist struggles and considered by many in the Labour Party to be under communist influence. This organisation was highly critical of the colonial policy of the Labour Government. James Maxton who was a member of the British section of the League and a leading I.L.P. member was being called upon by the League to define the difference between the Labour Party and Independent Labour Party on a range of issues pertaining

to colonial policy.

In addition to being prompted to define its differences with the Labour Party and assert the policy set out in "Socialism in our Time" and "Internationalism in our Time" (the major statements of I.L.P. policy) in Parliament, which meant a challenge to the Labour Party, the I.L.P. was quite possibly disillusioned with the mode of operation of the Labour Party. The possibility of a speedy movement to socialism when the Labour Party managed to form a government in 1924 and again in 1929-31 was quickly discredited in I.L.P. circles. The I.L.P. was also denied a voice in policy making in the Labour Party. In 1930 it had three resolutions defeated at Labour Party Conference. This was the only avenue open to it in policy making, apart from the possibilities posed by its single seat on the National Executive Committee. The I.L.P. must have realised by 1931 that it was unable to have much of an impact on the policy and strategy of the Labour Party.

This particular combination of circumstances led the I.L.P. into defining its differences with the Labour Party at a time when the "policy of the Labour Party was quite left" (Brockway 1977 Interview.) and therefore more acceptable to the I.L.P. The I.L.P.'s request for a debate with the Labour Party in which their political differences might be established was met with the response that the issue to be settled was whether or not the I.L.P. was prepared to instruct its parliamentary group to operate under Labour Party Standing Orders. As with the Communist Party, the Labour Party insisted in defining its differences in a technical way through references to the Constitution and Standing Orders.

Brockway (1931 Annual conference) considered that the two parties had differing fundamental views. He was of the opinion that the Labour Party, having been elected to Parliament should have boldly presented a 'socialist' policy by which it could stand or fall electorally, rather than:- "Seek to maintain office and do all it could for the working class under the circumstances." (Brockway

1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.174).

A further criticism of Labour Party strategy came from Maxton (1931 conference) who complained of the pace at which the Labour Party was approaching "socialist objectives" (Maxton 1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.179)

> "Both of them (Clynes and Morrison) seem to me to visualise socialism still as something in the dim and distant future and that it is still possible to maintain the capitalist system in the same kind of being, while by small instalments, you insert a socialist fabric in the middle of it .... The people are prepared to respond to a call to working class power now."
> (Maxton 1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.179).

Brockway suggested in "The I.L.P. and the Crisis" (1931) and "Socialism with Speed" (1928) that the I.L.P. stood for a mass movement of workers organisation outside parliament in industry, where it stood for worker control, as well as supporting the Labour Party demand for higher working class living standards.

The major differences between the Labour Party and the I.L.P. lie in the speed with which socialism was to be brought about as well as some differences in what socialism consisted of. In addition to this there was also a critical difference in their respective spheres of operation. The Labour Party was centred on parliamentary activity and found certain kinds of extra-parliamentary activity questionable, whereas the I.L.P. professed an adherence to mass action. This was a point at which the I.L.P. shared certain strategies with the Communist Party.

The split which occured between the Labour Party and the I.L.P. came at a time when the I.L.P. required more freedom to express itself in parliament than the Labour Party was willing to allow. Whilst the I.L.P. did not appear to have deep policy divisions with the Labour Party it required the freedom to criticise its operation in parliament. The National Executive Committee of the Labour Party claimed in its report to conference, that

it did not want a "party within a party" (National Executive Committee 1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.300).

The vote in the I.L.P. in favour of disaffiliation from the Labour Party was by no means unanimous. Two hundred and forty one were for disaffiliation at the conference and one hundred and forty two were against. Many would have preferred to stay within the Labour Party and many in the Labour Party would have preferred the I.L.P. to remain affiliated. In many cases on a local level the two continued to co operate. In 1935 at the Labour Party Annual Conference the delegate from Holderness Labour Party stated that the local I.L.P. branch had been very helpful and that there was much co operation between them locally. None-the-less the I.L.P. disaffiliated in July 1932 after much correspondence with the Secretary of the Labour Party.

2.10 The League of Youth.

The history of the League of Youth is marked by its development from a series of small organisations in 1924, and its struggles with the National Executive Committee for the funds necessary to develop an organisational structure of its own.

When the League was founded the Labour Party officially, was clear about its function. It was to act as a recruiting mechanism whereby young people could be enticed into the Labour Party. It was to organise certain recreational and entertainment facilities to appeal to the youthful wing of the Labour movement, and to organise political education. It was quite specifically not to "deal with matters relating to the constitution or policy of the Party." (National Executive Committee. 1936 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.170)

In 1929 the League won the right to hold its own conference and elect its own Executive Committee which was to act under the authority of the National Executive Committee of the party. Also in 1929 it won the right to

increase its upper age limit from twenty one to twenty five years of age. This had the effect of increasing the age overlap with the parent party as the league took members from fourteen, and the Labour Party from sixteen. It was accepted that the league was, to some extent, providing an alternative to the party. Many of the struggles around the league focused on the age limit. There was much discussion at party conference about the need to lower the age limit. It was recognised that the most active of the league's membership was at the upper part of the age limit and resisting joining the party, making the league into an alternative. At the 1931 conference of the Labour Party the League of Youth moved that the age limit be raised to thirty, but this was defeated.

By 1931 the league had established its right to send representatives to local Labour Party branches. In 1933 after a struggle with the National Executive Committee for funding, the League was allowed to employ a National Organiser. By 1934 it had persuaded the executive to allow one of its representatives onto the National Executive Committee and had also won the right to attend Labour Party Conference. Both of these arrangements were in an ex-officio capacity which meant they did not include the right to vote. The League of Youth had also by this time, set up its own journal, 'New Nation'.

Not only was the league engaged in a struggle to build up its organisational structure, it was also trying to establish an enunciative function for itself within the party. At the 1936 conference of the league, a proposal from the National Executive Committee suggesting a reduction of the age limit to twenty one was rejected. In addition to this the conference went on to demand that the league's journal, the New Nation be given editorial autonomy, including the right to criticise party policy as laid down by Labour Party Conference. The League also made a bid for the right to determine its own policy on all issues, irrespective of party policy. This represented an institutional challenge to the ideological

orientation imposed on the party as a whole. This conference also voted in favour of increased autonomy for its executive. This represented a challenge to the sovereignty of the National Executive Committee.

In addition to these institutional challenges to the Labour Party, this conference of the league made a more directly ideological challenge by voting in favour of a united front of youth organisations in response to a request from the Communist Party. In view of the Labour Party's repeated warnings about the dangers of communism and joining alliances with the Communist Party, this was a direct challenge to official policy. The kind of united front which the Communist Party was suggesting was regarded as a plot orchestrated from Moscow.

These were the incidents which led the National Executive Committee to report later in 1936 that it had disbanded the Executive Committee of the League of Youth, suspended publication of the 'New Nation' and assumed the responsibility for calling the next Annual Conference of the League itself. The National Executive considered that its action was intended to restore the league to its original constitutional position in the Labour Party.

2.11 The National Government and the Labour Party.

The resignation of the Labour cabinet in the Summer of 1931, prompted by the publication of the report of the May Committee which recommended a package of cuts in public expenditure in line with pre-Keynesian economic orthodoxy, led to the formation of the National Government in which several prominent Labour Party members served. The most eminent of these were McDonald and Snowden. The result was that a number of Labour Party members became Nationalists in the National Government which was an alliance of political elements. The National Executive Committee considered that membership of the National Government was inconsistent with membership of the Labour Party. This decision was duly endorsed by the conference.

> "Party members who support the National Government: The National Executive Committee has under consideration the position of the members of

> the Labour Party who have associated themselves with the formation of the so-called National Government, and have instructed me to convey... a copy of a resolution adopted by it on Monday September 28th ...'That members...of the Party who have supported the new National Government thereby cease to be members of the Labour Party'... It was strongly felt that no distinction could be made in the attitude of the National Executive Committee to the actions...leading to the threatened anti Labour combination from that shown in the establishment of the New Party by Sir Oswald Mosley earlier in the present year..." (Henderson November 1931 Circular on the National Government.)

Henderson's argument rested on two considerations. The first was the precedent set by the expulsion of the New Party. The second was a concern for the threat posed to the Labour Party constitution by certain key members placing themselves under the authority of the National Government as a combination of political influences not under Labour Party authority.

These arguments were supported at the 1931 conference when the National Executive Committee reported on the expulsion and asked for party approval for its actions. Instead of outlining its differences with the Labour Nationalists, the executive issued a statement on the importance of party unity. This was outlined in the chairman's address to conference.

> "Never was unity more essential. We have too many uncontrolled sectional or individual interests in our ranks at present, and it requires some magnetic influence or policy to bring them into a complete unity. We are not a coalition, we are a single movement. Loyalty with reservation is not enough...I have no desire...to stifle freedom of opinion or to prevent protest against any action... by the National Executive of the Party, or by the Labour Party in Parliament. But protest and criticism should be made within the Party Constitution and inside the Party walls. When protest has been lodged and a decision has been arrived at by a majority, the very least we must expect is that the minority will loyally abide by the decision..." (Conference Chairman 1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.158)

The Labour Party did not outline its ideological differences with the Nationalists until it issued a joint

manifesto with the Trades Union Congress. In this it claimed that the National Government was "a government of persons acting without the authority of the people" (Trades Union Congress, National Executive Committee and Parliamentary Labour Party 1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.5). Further-more this report claimed that the Government was -

> "Determined to attack the standard of living of the workers in order to meet a situation caused by a policy pursued by private banking interests...It is an attempt to reverse the social policy which, in this country, has within limits provided for the unemployed, the aged and the sick...It is irrevocably committed to serious cuts in unemployment benefits...cuts in public health and education (it has united) the entire Labour movement to determined opposition..."
> (Trades Union Congress, National Executive Committee and the Parliamentary Labour Party 1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.5)

The closest the Labour Party got to defining its differences with the Nationalists in its own ranks was through its defence of working class living standards upon which the National Government was mounting an attack. In line with the Keynesian influence in the Labour Party policy machinery, the statement went on to criticise the National Government for its financial orthodoxy.

2.12 Mosley and the New Party.

Although the New Party was used as a precedent when the Labour Nationalists were expelled from the Party, the only reason officially given for the expulsion of the New Party was that it had stood against the Labour Party in elections. Mosley and his supporters were therefore posing a constitutional threat to the Labour Party by standing against it. This represented an implicit renunciation of the authority of the Labour Party. The Labour Party again in this instance, chose to establish its differences with the New Party in 1931 in terms of technical or constitutional rather than ideological issues.

2.13 Conclusions.

Examining the struggles in which the Labour Party engaged with the Communist Party, the Independent Labour Party, the Labour Nationalists, the League of Youth and the New Party, it has been possible to determine the manner in which it defined its differences with these institutions. What appears to have been at stake, as far as the Labour Party was concerned, was its right to maintain its enunciative sovereignty. It was not prepared to allow within its ranks, those who did not subscribe to the conditions of authorisation of statements within the Labour Party, in which the National Executive Committee had a privileged position through its influence on conference and right to enunciate on behalf of the party between conferences. The Labour Party was maintaining its right to police the conditions of authorisation of statements. This partly explains its relations with the Independent Labour Party, the New Party, the League of Youth and the Nationalists. If these had been allowed to both remain in the party, and maintain their right to authorise statements, they would have presented an enunciative challenge to the Labour Party challenging its right to authorise statements.

It almost seems as if it did not matter whether these institutions challenged the kinds of statements which the Labour Party wished to make; although they most certainly would have done or they would not have bothered to challenge the Labour Party's way of issuing and authorising statements. There would have been little point in challenging the Labour Party's conditions of authorising statements unless it was to establish the right to disagree. The Labour Party demonstrated that it was not prepared to tolerate those who were not subject to its constitution and Standing Orders by which it demanded that all members subscribe to its policy, principles and programme as a condition of membership.

Apart from challenging the institutions described in the last section on the grounds that they usurped the enunciative sovereignty of the party, the Labour Party did

in some cases state its differences with some institutions in terms of principles or ideologies. This was certainly true in its relations with the Communist Party which did not present an enunciative threat. Recognising that it shared the trade union movement with the Communist Party, the Labour Party insisted that it more closely represented the interests of trade unionists through its twin constiuencies of conciliation (rather than conflict with trade union leaders) and democracy as represented in its orientation to the methods of parliament.

The Labour Party also defined its differences with the Labour Nationalists ideologically. The Labour Party defined its community in its condemnation of the National Government as workers, the sick, the old and the unemployed (see section 2.11). It claimed that the Nationalists were misrepresenting this community because they did not take as their constituency the living standards of these people, choosing instead to represent a constituency which concerned itself with financial orthodoxy.

Finally this chapter also demonstrates the manner in which the Labour Party operated as a site for the enunciation of statements and their conditions of authorisation. It demonstrates that whilst it is possible for statements to come from a variety of sources and be accepted as official, it is necessary for them to conform to certain ideological conditions. The notions of community and consitutuency have made it possible to draw out certain of these ideological conditions. Because of this it provides a method for analysis of Labour Party statements in terms of the structuring mechanisms which produce them. By looking at the communities and constituencies of a statement it is possible to make comparisons with other statements and begin to establish some of the differences between official and unofficial statements, a recurring theme in this thesis.

Because this dissertation is an analysis of Labour Party statements, it is important to establish the manner in which they are authorised, how they are voiced and where they come from. The next chapter will examine the

ways in which the Labour Party defined socialism, and which of these definitions was acceptable as official policy.

CHAPTER THREE

Labour Party Socialism

Chapter two examined the manner in which the Labour Party worked as a site of enunciation, a place from which statements were issued. It looked at the various claims made on behalf of the Labour Party to defined its communities and constituencies, that is, who and what it represented. These are important to the whole of this dissertation which focuses on the way race issues were posed by and on behalf of the Labour Party and the extent to which they were informed by notions of political community.

Chapter three takes up another theme important to the case studies in this dissertation, socialism. Socialism was the Labour Party's key constituency. It is general, abstract and problematic as a concept. It poses a range of other constituencies and strategies by which they might be achieved. Socialism is problematic because it has no simple range of definitions associated with it. It is constructed in the statements issued by the Labour Party and its members. Socialism was what the Labour Party stood for and a focus for a number of competing definitions. It is the aim of this chapter to give an outline of the ways in which it was constructed, and how these constructions informed statements on foreign and colonial relations.

Definitions of socialism as statements of what the Labour Party stood for are part of the ideological structuring mechanisms which produce statements of a particular character. On whatever the Labour Party pronounced, it was required to offer an approach which could be called 'socialist'. Once the manner in which the Labour Party works in issuing statements (see chapter two) and the range of definition of socialism associated with the Party has been established, it will be possible to examine the structuring mechanisms producing specific statements on anti semitism and India in the light of

this.

Socialism is a concept which organised and defined a series of discursive objects for the Labour Party in the 1930s. Many of the statements made by the Party were claims to define socialism. These claims were, in some cases, made in terms of policy definitions, for example public ownership. In other cases claims were more philosophical and concerned issues such as democracy.

Most definitions of socialism offered by the Labour Party described the situation in Britain. These will be referred to as definitions of domestic socialism. But it also developed and offered policy and philosophical definitions of socialism in international relations. Both domestic and international definitions of socialism are the subject matter of this chapter. The examination of socialism offered in this chapter is to replace Miliband's 'labourism'. This is something which he sees as a permanent and uniform essence in Labour Party deliberations, to be measured against his definition of socialism. Definitions of socialism are important to the examination of Labour Party statements as they shape the formation of objects and concepts in the discourse and thus act as a structuring mechanism on statements.

Socialism was the key constituency with which the Labour Party identified itself as a political institution. This was a claim asserted throughout the party's history. The Labour Party does not state in its constitution that it is a party of socialism, yet it did define itself in terms of parliament, trade unionism and co-operativism. It broadly states its policy in the constitution in terms of the representation of workers in pursuit of a more equitable allocation of society's resources. This may be seen as a very general bid to define socialism, to which it repeatedly stated its adherence at successive conferences. For example in 1931 under the heading of a "General Resolution on Policy" Clynes moved the following resolution at party conference:-

"This Conference re-affirms its conviction that socialism provides the real solution to the evils resulting from unregulated competition on the one hand and the domination of vested interests on the other, and presses for the extention of publicly owned industries and services conducted solely in the interests of the people."
(Clynes 1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party. p. 176)

By the 1930s the Labour Party was firmly associated with socialism. Socialism was the basis of its claim to represent a new force in British parliamentary politics distinct from Liberalism and Toryism.

3.1 Policy Definitions of Socialism: Public Ownership.

There were two major areas of Labour Party policy which may be described as policy claims to define socialism. The first was welfare policy and will not be dealt with except as a local issue in East London (see section 6.2). The second was public ownership. Public ownership of certain areas of the economy in conjunction with financial control was a key element in Labour Party policy claims to define socialism. A definition of socialism offered to the Labour Party by the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda provides a good example.

"We cannot set out upon the task of construction (of socialism) as long as the key portions of the economic system remain in Capitalist hands. For that reason, we must begin by taking effective control of finance into our own hands. The complete socialisation of the great banks - including the Joint Stock Banks as well as the Bank of England - is an indespensible first step towards Socialism. The banks will rule us and thwart our endevours, unless we make their power firmly our own. But, if we have full control of the financial machine, we will gain therewith the power to reorganise industry; for the depressed industries are everywhere in pawn already to the banks.
With finance under our authority, we must set out on a thorough-going policy of industrial reorganisation."
(Bevin E. Cole G.D.H. Pritt D.N. 1931 For Those Over 21 Only p.1).

One of the factors operating on this statement was the function of the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propoganda as a site of enunciation. The Society had a particular relationship with the Labour Party. It offered policy statements. As shown in chapter two Labour Party policy came from a number of sources. The Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda as a site of enunciation did not constrain its statements in the same way as the statements of the Labour Party were constrained to be pronounced as official by certain institutional mechanisms. Founded at the same time as the New Fabian Research Bureau (February 1931) the two institutions worked closely together. The New Fabian Research Bureau offered its considerations of socialism to the Labour Party in the form of reports. Neither institution sought affiliation to the Labour Party or played a direct part in party politics. Cole considered, the New Fabian Research Bureau would be - "able to plan ahead with less regard for immediate expediency or the current state of the party or Trade Union sentiment." (Cole 1969 The History of the Labour Party from 1914. p. 282). It was the job of the Research Bureau to translate socialist thinking into concrete legislative forms. This was set out in a series of letters found in its files for 1931. It was the job of the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda to diffuse the research findings of the Bureau in pamphlet form, to establish small active branches to undertake educational work in the Labour movement as a whole, and to offer information and assistance to local Labour Councils.

Both the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda add the New Fabian Research Bureau had an orientation towards policy rather than the vague statements on socialism so often made by the Labour Party since it was set up in 1906. Both were anxious to offer their services to the Labour Party.

> "we are always at the disposal of the Labour Party in any educational or propaganda work in which we could be of assistance. Should there be any specific piece of research

work or statistical work which you may require done we are always ready to work in any way we can, and I want to assure you that you can always rely on the assistance and co operation of this office in any work you may do."
(Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda May 1932 Letter to Middleton)

The community of which the statement of the Society for Socialist Inquiry on public ownership was claiming to be the voice was the working class. "We must fight the working class battle henceforth on the plain issue of Capitalism versus Socialism and on the basis of an immediate Socialist policy." (Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda 1931 'For Those Over 21 Only'. p.1). The working class was the community to be represented and socialism was its general constituency. The Labour Party represented certain constituencies on behalf of specified communities.

The National Executive Committee's report "Socialism and the Condition of the People" published in 1933, a key statement of Party policy in this period, was an attempt to define socialism as something produced by planning in industrial and fiscal policy. In this respect it would appear to subscribe to the definition of socialism offered by the pamphlet, "For those over 21 only" prepared by the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda. Moving the acceptance of the report on behalf of the executive at the 1933 conference Arthur Greenwood defined the report's conception of socialism in the following manner.

"It sets out our socialist objective. It explains how we must enlarge the sphere of public ownership and control. It explains that the sector of industry and trade which may for the moment be left in private hands, must toe the mark of public responsibility that even when industry is to be left for the time being in private hands it must become re organised with a view to ultimate absorbtion by the state."
(Greenwood. 1933 Annual Reports of the Labour Party. p. 156)

Public ownership and public accountability for private industry was only one side of the definition of

socialism being offered in this resolution. The other was to do with finance, banking and investment. Dalton moved acceptance of the finance side of "Socialism and the Condition of the People".

> "... the National Investment Board must be regarded as one of the most essential of all the instruments for state planning, occupying a very central position in the machinery we are seeking to build up for bringing about a planned socialist economy in this country, and that in particular we have got to use the National Investment Board as an instrument for determining not only the total amount of long-term credits which should be given, but also the direction and distribution of the long-term credits as between different industries...
> In a sentence what we ask you to accept is this, that the existing organisation for the supply of short term credits shall be merged, amalgamated into one publicly owned and controlled Banking Corporation... they should, although not fused with the Big Five and the others in this banking corporation, none the less in future carry out their deposit banking business under licence issued by the government.... they would be expected to take their part..... with the carrying out of the National Economic Plan on which the next Labour Government must embark."
> (Dalton 1933 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p. 172).

Public control of finance was thought to be an integral part of any socialist policy of public ownership. Even so the National Executive Committee did not as is demonstrated in its statement, attempt to include all industry into its framework of public control, but accepted that certain areas would remain in private hands. The site of enunciation and conditions of authorisation of statements made by the executive were examined in chapter two (see section 2.2). The community of which this statement claims to be the spokesman is the producer, consumer and more generally, the citizen. This marks the division of the individual into a specialisation of functions and capacities similar to that of Cole (see section 3.5).

> "We want that new system, first in order to ensure to the producer all the elements of a decent standard of life, and to give to the producer some share in the industry

> in which he works. We want industry to give to the producer the maximum not only in wages, but also in leisure. We want industry, in the second place, to yield to the consumer the lowest possible prices compatible with the satisfaction of the interests of the producer... Thirdly, we want this new system in order to give the citizen the certainty that he is free from the domination of economic dictatorship that has robbed democracy of its opportunities in the past."
> (Greenwood. 1933 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.156).

Socialism in this statement was the constituency of a plurality of communities in which the producer was prioritised, as the community represented by the definition of socialism as public control of certain aspects of finance, industry and services. The interests of the producer were posed in terms of a planned distribution of resources.

This position was not without its critics. Other, competing definitions of socialism were offered at this same conference. Hobson, the conference delegate for Hemel Hemstead Labour Party suggested that "Socialism and the Condition of the People" (1933) was a capitalist rather than a socialist policy. He said, during the debate which followed the moving of the resolution:-

> "Our other criticism in general is that there is no correlative improvement in the condition of labour arising out of this banking consolidation system, and therefore we feel that the time has come when we must really face the main issue of whether we are going to carry through our programme by our industrial power or rely on the purely illusory powers involved in finance. Moreover we say that it is not merely formal control of banks which is required, but an actual change in the structure and methods of the banks, ... It is a grave departure from Socialist theory to take under our control banking as it is now carried on... However able and disinterested the Boards may be, the work they are going to do from the point of view of socialism is bound to prove illusory, in fact quite as illusory as the London Transport Board has turned out to be from our point of view... The report is not a socialist document at all; it is a proposal to make the industrial world

safe for the capitalist investor instead of making the world safe for labour." (Hobson 1933 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p. 157).

The main thrust of this statement was to suggest that the National Executive Committee had got things the wrong way round in prioritising finance capital, as a constituency, and taking over banking in its current form. Hobson was arguing that conceptions of socialism should subordinate finance to industrial needs under a measure of public control.

> "I want therefore to ask Conference definitely to declare that finance must not be the governing factor in our Socialist programme, but that finance must be brought into subjection to the industrial programme, and the only way to do that is by the form of democratic control of industry." (Hobson 1933 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.158).

This statement was claiming that a legitimate definition of socialism should represent those who live by means of their 'labour' rather than any wider category, and should concentrate on public control of industry under some kind of system of public accountability. Hobson was suggesting that socialism amounted to a constituency priority of industrial reorganisation in which finance was the servant of industry and not the other way round.

The two policy definitions of socialism just examined were contested by a definition offered at the same conference by Stafford Cripps on behalf of Bristol East Labour Party. Cripps considered that such definitions were secondary to an immediate strategy for the implementation of socialism. He defined socialism through the mechanisms necessary for its achievement. These were the abolition of the House of Lords, the passing of an Emergency Powers Act to give the government the authority to socialise key industrial and financial institutions immediately, a revision of the machinery of government in the House of Commons and an economic plan for industry, finance and foreign trade to end the present system and abolish unemployment and poverty. This implicitly aligned

itself to the same constituencies and communities as the last statement, but considered also the position of the poor and the unemployed as an additional community.

Of these three claims to define socialism the one proposed by the National Executive Committee's policy report "Socialism and the Condition of the People" (1933) was accepted by the Conference as Labour Party policy. This meant the acceptance of the constituency of public control as a definition of socialism. Public control in this statement was limited, leaving considerable resources in private hands, although it was proposed to make private industry publicly accountable. It also involved state control of existing financial structures to facilitate planning and investment. Its community was a plurality of functions and capacities; producers, consumers and citizens. In this formulation, the producer was prioritised and citizens would have new political freedoms, relieved of the strictures of an economic system in which they had no authority.

The acceptance of this definition of socialism meant the rejection of the other definitions offered. The two opposing claims examined shared a constituency and community. Both considered that industrial reorganisation should be a priority constituency into which financial structures should be fitted, and that the nature of finance appropriate to Capitalism should be brought into line with socialist objectives. Cripps's definition of socialism varied from Hobson's in that he thought that the strategy by which public control should be instituted was more important than the details of what should be done. He thought that the machinery of government was not appropriate to the task of establishing socialism.

The London Passenger Transport Bill, examined in section 3.2. demonstrates the kind of policies the Labour Party actually instituted to fulfil its policy definitions of socialism as public ownership.

3.2 Public Ownership: The Labour Party's London Passenger Transport Bill.

The Labour Party had whilst in government, made a limited attempt to implement certain policy definitions of socialism. The London Passenger Transport Bill (1930) is an example of this. The implementation of the Bill provided a site of struggle for competing definitions of socialism as "Socialism and the Condition of the People" did in 1933.

Public ownership as an issue lent itself to a variety of political and ideological orientations. It was Baldwin's Liberal administration which had set up the Central Electricity Board as a public corporation. The London Passenger Transport Bill which gave control of passenger transport to the London County Council was established along similar lines. The Labour Party officially, claimed that this was a socialist policy. The New Statesman pointed out that in fact it was little more than an advance on Liberalism.

> "In practice the policy of the Labour Government was actually less advanced than that adopted by the official Liberal Party... When the (Labour) government introduced the Coal Mines Bill it not only did not offer to nationalise the mines it did not even nationalise mining royalties though that had, for many years, been an accepted item of Liberal policy."
> (7/11/31 The New Statesman p.564)

As a site of enunciation the New Statesman had a particular relationship with the Labour Party. Founded in 1913 by Sidney and Beatrice Webb and a group of fellow Fabians, it also stated an adherence to socialism.

> "It was not and never has been the property of any party nor the slave of any dogma. It has opposed reaction and stagnation and advocated political, social and industrial reforms on the lines of constructive socialism. The Nation (amalgamated with the New Statesman in 1931) on its side has a distinguished history and has won and maintained a wide reputation for its vigorous radicalism.)
> (21/2/31 The New Statesman p. 564)

The New Statesman asserted for itself the right to

comment on matters of a 'socialist' character. Its contributors were well known political thinkers and writers, including for example, J.A. Hobson and J.M. Keynes who were Liberals and Stafford Cripps and G.D.H. Cole who were in the Labour Party.

The London Passenger Transport Bill set up a single controlling authority to manage the system of public transport in the metropolitan area, defining socialism according to the New Statesman in the following way.

> "But London's traffic services are not to be nationalised or municipalised in the sense which used to be attached to these terms. Neither the London County Council nor any federal union of municipal authorities is to control the management.... Mr. Herbert Morrison rightly holds that so difficult an administrative task cannot properly be assigned to a body consisting of delegates from a number of separate authorities.... The management is accordingly to be trusted to a small body of full time commissioners, chosen on account of their technical and business capacity, and accorded in matters of judgement, a wide freedom from any form of political interference. Parliament will always be able to interfere with them by fresh legislation... the idea is to leave them as free as is consistent with protecting the public interest to manage affairs in their own way."
> (11/10/30 The New Statesman p.5)

This comment from the New Statesman was in favour of the Labour Party's approach to the Bill and its definition of socialism. Its definition of socialism favoured autonomous management with Parliament retaining an ultimate if rather remote kind of control in the name of the public. Parliamentary control was the only measure of public accountability built into the Bill. The key issue was posed not as ownership or control of transport services, but efficient administration. In fact the administration of the Board and its form of funding were considered by the New Statesman to be its most important features. The Board raised its own capital from private sources with the government as guarantor of the interest. Thus it was not necessary for the state to find the funds to establish the Board. Both the New Statesman and official

Labour Party policy were of the opinion that such a measure represented a feasible form of socialism, at low cost to the tax payer. The community being represented was the public as a whole through the authority of Parliament. There was no reference to the workers as a special community. This was just an extension of the political representation of the public into industrial affairs which had hitherto been in private hands.

The Bill's critics offered other definitions of socialism in place of this one. At the 1931 conference a trade union representative from the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers offered a more carefully worded policy definition of socialism.

> "In the first place, the movement - again both politically and industrially - has advocated for many years the nationalisation of essential industries. Nationalisation, in our opinion, has not meant mere public control, or turning things into public utility services... It is certainly not socialism. It is not even nationalisation... There was not a page or paragraph (in the Bill) which gave protection or representation or recognition of the unions of any of the workers employed."
> (Bromley 1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p. 172-3).

This statement concluded by saying that the Bill did not amount to socialism but a security measure for capitalism. Bromley was offering a definition of socialism rooted not in public control or nationalisation, but in trade unionism as a privileged constituency, and organised labour as a privileged community.

The claim that socialism meant not just public control exercised through parliament, but worker control was also made by the representative of the Transport and General Worker's Union at the 1931 Labour Party Conference.

> "We felt, in supporting 'Labour and the Nation' (1928 a major statement of party policy) that when we were voting for the transference of private industry, either to public ownership or to some form of public utility association similar to this, that we were also voting for the principle, not simply of control by the other people, but of some measure of control being exercised by the industrial workers themselves."

(Clay 1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.173)

The ideological orientation towards worker control under public ownership was an important element in Cole's exposition of Guild Socialism, more fully examined in section 3.5. These positions sought to identify industrial control as the key element in socialist thinking, displacing many of the political issues onto the ground of economic and industrial policy at the point of production. These were to some extent, policy claims, although they were also blue prints, rather than detailed plans for specific industries. It was in this area that Cole made a significant contribution to Labour Party pronouncements writing in a variety of journals as well as for the New Fabian Research Bureau.

Public ownership was the single biggest policy claim of the Labour Party to define socialism, its claim to represent a special constituency in Parliament, in the 1930s. Although welfare was also an important issue. Despite that, the Labour Party's conception of public control was a limited one, which did not really challenge the kind of public Corporation set up by Baldwin's Government in the Central Electricity Board. In the London Passenger Transport Bill, public control meant no more than public accountability, administered through Parliament. It did not attempt to implement any form of worker participation in the control of public transport, and in fact posed the public in general as its community with no reference to workers. The Bill rejected the claims made by its opponents in the Labour movement, that public control alone did not amount to socialism, but that public control in combination with a degree of worker representation in the service, did.

Referring back to the analytic devices developed in Chapter one to be used to examine statements such as the London Passenger Transport Bill, this section demonstrates clearly the need for constituencies to be fully defined. For example, many definitions of socialism

in terms of policy uphold the need for public ownership and control as constituencies. But as this brief examination of the debates surrounding the London Passenger Transport Bill demonstrates, public ownership and control as constituencies can have a number of constructions.

In presenting any particular construction of public ownership and control, the Labour Party is accepting certain definitions of socialism and rejecting others. In so doing it associates with certain constructions which it authorises as official. In examining constructions of socialism which belong to the Labour Party it is possible to discern a variety of definitions, few of which become sanctioned as official policy. It is just as important to comment on what is rejected as what is accepted. The range of acceptable and unacceptable definitions of socialism show the eclectic nature of the Labour Party as a discoursing institution with a range of ideological perspectives.

The next section looks at some of the more philosophical or abstract claims to define socialism made on behalf of the Party.

3.3 A Review of Some of the Philosophical Claims To Define Socialism

The philosophical claims to define socialism are those which deal not just with policy but with more general principles and abstractions. Many of the policy statements examined in this chapter so far were also making claims of a more philosophical nature. For example statements on public ownership also offered a definition of the constituency and community on behalf of whom the claims were being made. Philosophical claims are informed by the discourses on liberty and political philosophy outlined in the first chapter. (see section 1.13).

There are two key concepts which may be said to organise the philosophical discourses in which socialism was being defined. These are community and democracy.

Definitions of community contained in claims to define socialism represent an attempt to describe those on behalf of whom a statement is being made. This chapter is not an attempt to define an authoritative construction of community but to review some of the definitions offered to the Labour Party and to demonstrate the variations from its constitutionally defined constituencies and communities discussed in section 2.1.

Partly because socialism was also the province of the Communist Party, the Labour Party has taken care to establish its particular orientation towards socialism. It has done this by establishing itself in a democratic as opposed to a totalitarian mode of socialism. In making this distinction many definitions of democracy have been offered by and on behalf of the Labour Party.

An analysis of socialism through its philosophical discourses as they focus on the key concepts democracy and community, focuses on a third concept, citizenship. Citizenship is constructed in these debates because it refers to membership of a community (the national political community) and the possibility of representation through the mechanisms of democracy. Some of the suggestions of the qualities necessary for citizenship will be examined in this chapter, although the opportunity for closer scrutiny is presented in chapter five when the possibility of Indians becoming citizens in their own right leads to a series of political debates about the necessary qualities of citizenship.

3.4 Socialism's Constituencies and Communities.

Positions offered to the Labour Party to define its community appear to emphasize two particular communities, the poor and the worker. Definitions of these communities vary. Any policy claim may contain a definition of one or other or both of these. Whilst these two communities represent competing claims to define socialism's constituencies they are often both used and one awarded a certain priority.

'Workers' and 'the poor' are capable of a number of constructions. Workers may be defined, as they are in the Labour Party Constitution, as those who live by their labour rather than any other means; they may be defined as the organised trade union movement or as a class. The poor may be thought of as the mass of the people who are not rich, or as a particularly under-privileged section of workers. Which of these two communities was represented by the Labour Party, was a site of struggle to define socialism, and the Labour Party as its instrument. This conflict was demonstrated by Stafford Cripps's discussion in a New Statesman article on the future of the Labour Party.

> "Socialism has largely been, and still is widely considered to be the creed of the 'Under dog', trying to wrest justice and a share of the good things from those who now largely monopolise them, and thus govern and rule the life of the common people."
> (Cripps 3/9/32 The New Statesman p. 255)

Cripps went on to argue that supporting the "under dog" was not an adequate definition of socialism. He argued that it was time for the Labour Party to make bolder moves in the pursuit of socialism.

> "The Labour Party has undoubtedly suffered in the past from its repeated attempts to bring amelioration to the lot of the working classes within the capitalist system. These efforts have led many people to regard its aim as being organised State charity rather than a fundamental change of the whole economic system. An undue insistence upon the importance of the amount and the administration of unemployment benefit, old age pensions, workmen's compensation and similar matters has tended to mask the far more important features of the party programme. The failure of such expedients to either bring about Socialism or to make the capitalist system tolerable has now been fully demonstrated and it is essential that the party in its approach to the electorate, should place the fullest emphasis upon its economic programme of co - operation, planning and control as an alternative to the present basis of financial and industrial organisation."
> (Cripps 3/9/32 The New Statesman p. 255)

This statement challenges the legitimacy of poverty as the constituency of the Labour Party and suggests that

the Labour Party support a policy of financial and industrial reorganisation. This was a challenge to definitions of socialism as the protection of the under-privileged. It was suggesting that the Labour Party define socialism in terms of policies which challenge the central structures of capitalism, rather than insist on a slightly more equitable system of distribution, on the grounds that poverty was an unacceptable way of being human.

Cripp's definition of socialism demanded a reorganisation of industry and finance. This was in fundamental opposition to Lansbury whose consituency was a socialism prioritising the poor, in demanding welfare benefits rather than industrial and financial reorganisation.

The specification of these two competing communities as the beneficiaries of socialism were premised on competing policiy definitions. The poor were thought to be represented in the implementation of welfare policy and organised labour in general in the process of industrial reorganisation. The key concepts in Cripp's statement are economic planning and co operation and control as opposed to state welfare for the poor.

The examination of a statement on behalf of each one of the two communities outlined (workers and the poor) allows them to be further defined. Lansbury's parliamentary speech on unemployment in 1931, and a statement in the New Statesman in the same year on the future of the Labour Party provide an illustration of definitions contained within the constituencies labelled 'poor' and 'worker'.

Lansbury speaking in a parliamentary debate on unemployment prompted by Cripp's question to the National Government on the same issue, dealt with unemployment by outlining the Labour Party's policy of public control and planning. In so doing he was suggesting that the workers were the Labour Party's special constituency. To illustrate his point Lansbury began describing the

evils of unemployment and in so doing began to describe the general condition of the 'ordinary people' shifting his definition of the Labour Party's community sharply to its poorest section. This demonstrates how Lansbury's community priorities differ from those of official Labour Party statements. On this occasion it appears that as leader of the Labour group in Parliament, Lansbury began by stating his support for one of the main communities of the Labour Party in relation to issues such as unemployment and public ownership. He quickly reverted however to the community of which he was a prominent spokesman in this period, the poor.

> "The question of housing the people, of providing decent accomodation for children and parents, is one of the most urgent and one of the most important this House can tackle. Anyone who has had anything to do with any of the poorer districts of London knows that while it is perfectly true we have cleared slum areas and built some fine estates, it is equally true that we have not made provision for the people who live on very low wages or poor relief or anything of that kind."
> (Lansbury 10/12/31 Hansard vol 260 col. 2107).

Lansbury's definition of the poor described them as those who lived on the lowest wages and in the worst housing conditions. He presented them as a discursive community on the basis of an appeal to human compassion, and because they shared the experience of deprivation. "A few words about rents.... Listen to this. Nine people in two rooms. Nine people in one room..... Slums have been talked about for the last century." (Lansbury 10/12/31 Hansard vol. 260 col. 2106).

Whilst no particular unity should be attributed to Lansbury's statements, this position is consistent with much of his writing. He was one of the foremost exponents of the continuity between socialism and christianity in this period. The christian themes of love and brotherhood were perhaps the basis of much of his socialism which he described as a "faith". Indeed, the Labour Party (1981) still officially describes socialism as a 'faith' in its membership application form.

"We require courageous christians in our political life more than ever today. For since this moral driving power is essentially designed to influence political decisions, its creation and its growth must impinge directly on political thought and action. Christian principles must be made to permeate public opinion, ... and those principles must be related to the social and economic problems of the movement."
(Lansbury 1945 Towards Christian Democracy, p. 9)

This christian concern for the underdog was underwritten by an emphasis on poverty and social welfare which came from Lansbury's orientation towards the plight of the people in his East London constituency.

"My aim has always been to strive to raise the standard of life of the people, and in company with my friends in the Labour Movement, to do my best to assist those in need of help within the borough council, poor law and other organisations ...."
(Lansbury 1930 - 4 Personal papers. vol. 30)

Lansbury's community in these statements appears to be a double one, the ordinary people and the poor. The constituency he wanted the Labour Party to represent was a standard of living which was acceptable to his humanitarian sentiment. He was presenting a notion of humanity at a philosophical level, in terms of a way of life with certain acceptable standards of existence. He explicitly rejects the division of this humanity in classes.

"... the star of hope which is co operation Each for all and all for each ... we must anihilate all distinctions ... we must abolish class distinction ... which enables man to be accepted as superior to his fellows."
(Lansbury 1934 My England p. 20)

The notion of a human brotherhood, undivided by class is also expressed in a number of his other texts. (1930 - 4 vol. 10 Personal Papers, 1934 p. 203, 1945 p. 12 and p. 49) Lansbury presents the notion that there are standards of life involved in being human.

The dividing line between Lansbury's two communities was probably considered a fine one. The poor were those unable to work, hence Lansbury's stress on the evils of unemployment, and the ordinary people were those who

lived by the sale of their labour rather than any other resource, in line with the community defined in the Labour Party Constitution. Low wages and unemployment were presented in the debate on unemployment in which Lansbury spoke, as the causes of poverty. He was responsible for presenting a picture of a community of 'decent folk' rendered poor by the injustices of the social and economic system.

Claims to present 'workers' as the community of the Labour Party were numerous. The following statement contained in an article in the New Statesman has no particular status in this respect, but offers a particular definition of workers as a class.

> "In the first place Labour is like all other parties, a 'class party'. That is to say that its basis must rest upon the trades unions and working classes, just as the basis of Conservatism and Liberalism, in the days when they were clearly divided, rested on the division between landed aristocracy and gentry on the one side and the industrialists and shop keepers on the other.... But to say that the Labour Party, like other parties, has a class basis, is not, of course to say that it does not need and will not obtain the adherence of many people who do not come from the working classes."
> (7/11/31 The New Statesman. p. 564).

This defintion of the Labour Party's community as a class with a trade union structure, also included a claim to represent those who did not come from the working class. In many statements asserting the importance of the 'workers' to the Labour Party, the trade unions were given a privileged status. Bevin and Citrine were two of the key Labour Party figures associated with this kind of position by virtue of their trade union links. During the second Labour Government they sat on McDonald's Economic Advisory Council, and were concerned to voice the position of organised Labour in the context of the Labour Party's strategy to reorganise industry and financial policy, in a bid to define a particular kind of socialism.

An examination of statements made by and on behalf

of the Labour Party claiming 'workers' or the 'poor' or both as its communities, shows them generally to make reference to a third constituency, the national political community. Indeed the Labour Party's ability to offer itself as a party of government must be premised on some kind of claim to represent the nation as a whole rather than just a particular section of it.

Lansbury was an exponent of the ability of the Labour movement and the Labour Party to represent everybody in Britain.

> "We in the Labour Movement must throw down all barriers and call into our ranks men and women of all trades and classes. There is a place for them all. They need us to save them from the poverty with which the present day threatens them. These are the classes from which the Blackshirts hope to gain support from the old gospel of divide and conquer."
> (Lansbury 1934 My England. p. 203)

This claim to represent the national political community made by Lansbury was based on the consideration that the national community was really a single political body which could be represented through the structures of government. For Lansbury (1945 p. 12) national unity extended to an international unity, the unity of mankind, which was a common theme in his statements. This conception transcended national barriers encompassing notions of the 'brotherhood' of man and a belief in a human essence which was everywhere the same.

The statement in his 1929 election address - "God has made of one blood all the nations of the earth" was tempered by some of the considerations of political philosophy concerning the existence of a national political community with a will which could be represented, and represented by the Labour Party.

If the nation was a single body, it is legitimate to ask what constituted its division into worker and employer and into rich and poor? The division made by Lansbury and others in specifying the poor as a priority community in definitions of socialism reflect divisions

in the allocation of resources in the political community. It follows that the adoption of the 'poor' as a special community may be an attempt to re-establish a unity in the national political community, threatened by the inequalities built into the capitalist system, which produced two nations in Britain, rich and poor. Lansbury (1945 p.10-11) indicates that socialism (which he calls practical religion) is the method by which social injustice could be removed.

The same is true of the statement in the New Statesman claiming the 'workers' as a special community of the Labour Party. The claims made on behalf of this community for a larger degree of worker control may be interpreted as a claim to establish a particular place for them in the community in relation to those who controlled their lives through the industrial process. Even many of the claims to represent workers as a class are only claims to reconstitute the national political community on a basis of some kind of equality. These are distinct from those class theories which required the dictatorship of the working class.

Claims to represent the community at a national level in Labour Party statements are based on a particular conception of the 'Socialist Commonwealth', so frequently a key conception in Labour statements (see section 3.5). The notion of a commonwealth requires a conception of the general well-being of the community as a whole. The claim of the Labour Party to be the best representative of this collective well-being lies in its ability to represent the entire community through a programme which places an emphasis on those factors which prevent some kind of equality. Equality is, of course, an empty formulation which was specified in different ways. This amounts to a claim to be the best or closest representative of the general will of the community as a whole, and a dual notion of sovereignty, in that certain discursively constructed communities relate to the party as a sovereign and through the party to the community or society as a whole. This is a formulation informed by some of the central principles of political philosophy

set out in the first chapter (see sections 1.11, 1.12 and 1.13).

The notion of a socialist political coummunity, with its insistence on equality is guaranteed by the existence of the Labour Party as an instrument of representation. Whilst the Labour Party was claiming, like all other national political parties, to represent the political community as a whole, it was also offering descriptions of how it would re - constitute that community. The Labour Party was offering the electorate a slightly different kind of society, constructed around conceptions of social justice. In achieving this society, the Labour Party required the allegiance of sections of the national political community, rather in the manner of a sovereign, in order to assert what appears to be a partial representation of the community, for example, workers or the poor. A political force, offering itself for national election on a programme which emphasizes the needs of a particular section of the community is making a bid to redefine that community and the political 'will' which it generates.

The conceptions of social re construction associated with the Labour Party on the basis of some kind of equality, which is incidentally, a general formulation open to a number of competing interpretations on behalf of different communities, may be sharply contrasted with many of the claims to re - construct society through the reformulation of the political community by the representation of workers as a class, made on behalf of the Communist Party. The representation of the working class by the Communist Party was a task which required the working class to enter into mass struggle with capital rather than a search for parliamentary representation even by a party which would weight its political community in favour of workers. The community of the Communist Party was different from that constructed by the Labour Party. The Communist conception of a socialist community based on classical Marxism - Leninism amounted to a struggle to establish a dictatorship by and on behalf of the working class where capitalism was supressed and obliterated, rather

than accorded a particular place in the community and the general will. The general will of the Communist Party was based on a transfer of power to waged labour which would then become the community represented through a particular kind of government, under which every one becomes a worker.

The struggles to which Lenin refers in 'What is to be Done' are more than proletarian struggles. Lenin claimed, and his work informed the positions adopted by the British Communist Party re - enforced by the influence of the Comintern, that spontaneous proletarian struggles were not capable of more than trade union consciousness, which was ultimately rooted in bourgeois ideology. He therefore stressed the necessity for there to be links established between struggles based on a revolutionary theory. Popular Front approaches to political struggles (such as those described in section 6.7) were based upon this line of reasoning, rather than an opportunistic alliance of communities in struggle.(Lenin v. 1. 1972 In Marx, Engels, Lenin On Historical Materialism. p.384 - 392)

The Communist Party's conception of a society was one in which everyone became a worker, and poverty was controlled through wage levels. This involved the creation of a society in which workers were the only political community. It was fundamentally different from the society of the Labour Party which was constructed around competing claims to define equality in which a plurality of discursive communities co-existed with disadvantaged communities being awarded a privileged position.

3.5. Socialism's Democracy.

Recogintion that the Labour Party shared its claimed socialism, as a focus for defining its policy, philosophy, community and constituency with the Communist Party, led it to distinguish itself from the Communist Party on a host of issues. One of the key issues on which it did this was democracy. Whilst the Labour Party was not

slow in offering definitions of its differences with the Communist Party, it had to concede that the main thing shared by these two institutions was a claimed community. Cole recognised this and its implications. Each considered that its constituencies more closely represented workers as socialisms community.

> "In the decade immediately after the first world war the centre of interest from the stand point of socialist thought was the struggle between social democracy and Communism for the allegiance of the workers throughout the world."
> (Cole 1961 History of Socialist Thought. Vol.4 part 1 p.1)

As well as sharing to some extent a community Cole recognised that the Labour Party and the Communist Party also shared certain policy definitions of socialism, but did not share a conception of a socialist society or the strategies by which it might be achieved.

> "However sharply divergent Communism and Social Democracy .... may be in their philosophies and methods of action it is undeniable that they do have certain common elements - for example the advocacy of public ownership and control of the essential resources and instruments of production and a belief in the historic succession of the working class in bringing about the transition from Capitalism to public enterprise."
> (Cole 1961 History of Socialist Thought. Vol.4 part 2 p.848).

Cole's specification of the divergence of the two parties in terms of their philosophy and methods, provides a useful starting point for a discussion of Labour's conceptions of 'socialist' democracy. Democracy provides an organising principle for many of the Labour Party's definitions of itself as distinct from the Communist Party.

Democracy was characterised in terms of its qualities as a method and its philosophical orientation towards socialism in Labour Party statements. Durbin was one of the most prolific writers on democracy in this period, and this section will draw upon some of the statements in his work. A Labour candidate in 1931 and

1935, he was finally elected to parliament in 1945. Throughout the 1930s he worked with Cole in the New Fabian Research Bureau. Gaitskell said of his work in the foreward to Durbin's book (1940 p.7) that it was influenced by Woolf, Cole and Keynes. As far as Durbin was concerned democracy was the guarantee of the socialist commonwealth.

> "If by socialist Commonwealth we mean a society in which a large measure of social justice has been established through the instrumentality of a planned economy then I believe that the democratic method is an inherent part of socialism and cannot be separated from it."
> (Durbin 1940 The Politics of Democratic Socialism. p.235)

In Durbin's formulations, democracy was contained in the political institutions of government which were "responsible to and replacable by the people" (1940 p.32). This responsibility for, and responsiveness to, the people as an expression of their common will was guaranteed as a method by the existence of a legal political opposition in parliament which was ready to take over the task of government as soon as the government of the day no longer represented the will of the people. "... democracy in my sense is the only institutional framework within which the spontaneous emotional unity of the nation is possible ..." (Durbin 1940 The Politics of Democratic Socialism. p.245) Democracy was characterised as the method through which the expression of the general will of the national political community was most closely expressed.

Durbin considered the formulations of democracy by J.S. Mill to be "Something like a final form" (1940 p.244). In fact his conception of democracy as a method of political representation does not represent an advance on the conception of liberal democracy outlined by Mill. It only differed in its philosophical alliance with socialism. Durbin's conception of socialist democracy was a classical liberal conception of democracy with a broad definition of socialism in terms of social justice

and equality of distribution tacked onto it.

Socialism as defined by Durbin amounted to:-

> " ... the belief that that greater equality in the distribution of income and property can be combined with economic efficiency only in an industrial system that is centrally controlled. By Socialism in the broader sense I shall mean the more complex conception of social justice."
> (Durbin 1940 The Politics of Democratic Socialism. p.32)

This offers a definition of socialism through policy claims broadly in line with others already examined. It also defines socialism in terms of a conception of social justice. What then, does he mean by social justice? A just society was one in which all "cause for sighing and weeping" (1940 p.235) have been removed. This must be a reference to the kind of human hardship produced by poverty and rectified by redistribution, welfare and economic planning. As these were part of policy definitions of socialism a natural alignment between democracy and a social justice definition of socialism was being suggested.

Socialism through democracy was not claimed by Durbin as a universal property of human political organisation, but as rather a selective principle linked to a concept of development. Democracy was seen by Durbin as a psychological disposition on the part of people. " .... democracy is the epiphenomenon of a certain emotional balance in the individuals comprising a nation ... the kind of personality that, in my view, alone makes democracy possible." (Durbin 1940 The Politics of Democratic Socialism. p.241) Durbin set his discussions about democracy against a background of communism and what he claims were its anti democratic methods and philosophy. He goes on to equate communism with barbarism. He considered it to be founded on the emotions "hatred" and "terror" (1940 p.151) as opposed to the principles and practices of co operation upon which democratic systems were based. This notion of co operation (1940 p.43) appears to have been borrowed

from the discourses on political philosophy examined in sections 1.11, 1.12 and 1.13 in which the human faculty for co operation was considered responsible for man's exit from a state of nature and conflict.

Cole's definition of democracy had a different emphasis from Durbin's.It was rooted, through the tradition of Guild Socialism from which he came, in a mode of organisation of production. Unlike Durbin's definition it was not so narrowly placed in a concern for liberal political democracy. Cole considered that individuals could only be partly represented through liberal parliamentary traditions and methods. He thought they could be more fully represented through their participation in all spheres of life, as groups defined by a common purpose. His conception of democracy was thus, highly pluralistic and dispersed. Representation, Cole (1961 p.25-6) considered, must be specific and functional rather than general and inclusive. It was not confined to the sphere of politics. Political rights, in Cole's assesssment were of little use unless accompanied by a conception of democracy which pervaded the organisation of the working day.

The policy claims associated with this claim to define democracy were those which demanded not just certain measures of public control in industrial organisation, but a large degree of worker control at the point of production.

> "But they (Guilds) held that the community should entrust the actual management to the workers by hand and by brain engaged in each type of undertaking and that Social Democracy would be a sham unless the workers became self governing in their daily work as well as through the possession of political rights."
> (Cole G.D.H. 1961 History of Socialist Thought. Vol.4 part 1 p.454).

Guild Socialism, at its height in the 1920s when the building guilds were in operation, had declined as a movement by the 1930s. Never-the-less its conceptions of industrial democracy informed the debates of the

1930s in which policy and constituency were vital issues for the Labour movement.

Cole's conception of democracy was premised on the existence of two basic communities. One represented the people as a whole at the level of the state and may be called the national political community. The second represented the workers at the point of production. The two communities were differentiated by their functions in representation. The representation of workers effected a more specific representation in addition to their general representation as subjects of the national political community. People were thus represented in terms of a plurality of capacities and functions which behaved as interdependant specialities coming together to make up the political - industrial whole. This dual representation was thought to allow a more completely democratic representation of the political community.

Assessments of communism were important to the construction of notions of democracy in Labour Party discourses, as in many cases they were constructed against a notion of 'totalitarianism' which was thought to be a central principle of communism. (see for example Durbin 1940 p.151). In this process the Soviet Union played two distinct roles. Some positions portrayed the Soviet system as a demonstration of all that was worst in communism. (see Durbin 1940 p.218). Other positions portrayed the Soviet Union and communism as two separate issues. (see Cole 1961 p.7).

Durbin's analysis of communism was conducted in terms of the emotions inspired. In this respect he aligned communism and fascism in opposition to democracy. Totalitarianism versus democracy became a short hand way of referring to such debates within the Labour Party. This position was very much associated with Labour's objections to the political alliance referred to as the 'popular front' and is taken up in chapter six (see section 6.7).

"Hatred has been made into a religion by these two extreme political groups (fascism and communism) of our time. The social objectives of the fascist and communist movements may differ but the emotion on which they both depend for their strength is the same - hatred - and the method of their government and the tone of their society is the same - terror - ... It is therefore necessary to ask of any body of political thought what emotion of set of emotions does the acceptance of this doctrine justify."
(Durbin 1940 The Politics of Democratic Socialism. p.151)

Durbin considered that this particular assessment was illustrated by recent history in the Soviet Union.

"It is twenty years since the Communist Party gained undisputed power in Russia. Still the victims tramp down to death. There is no end to the suffering, the river of blood flows on. For those of us who live in greater and happier lands, this is not the way. To those who really seek a better social order - and are not merely seeking in political action relief from the explosive violence of their own natures - I would say with assurance: this is not the road."
(Durbin 1940 The Politics of Democratic Socialism. p.218)

The two main implications contained in this statement are that Russia has an inferior status to nations characterised as democratic, and that communism in Russia was rooted in the psychological disposition of the people as a political community. Violence was thus characterised as an individual and collective property of human behaviour reflected in a method of government as the expression of a general will.

Woolf considered that whilst communism had its roots in some of the "finest political motives" (1967 p. 19), the practical application of these motives in Russia had been responsible for "the torture and killing of hundreds and thousands of human beings." (Woolf 1967 An Autobiography of the years 1919-39 p.19). Russia had, therefore, managed to distort these fine philosophical principles. Woolf's position is one of the few statements, apart from some at party Conference, which offered any

kind of support, however limited, for communism, on the part of the Labour Party. There was a strong anti communist tradition in the Labour Party which did not always extend to a criticism of the Soviet Union.

Cole (1961 p.3) expressed a position which, whilst deploring the evils of communism, supported the Russian revolution as an advance for Russian workers whose conditions of life were a vast improvement upon those of the Tsarist regime. From the statements made at conference it would appear that this position had quite a credible support base in the movement. (see, for example 1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.230-1).

> "Working class sympathy with the Russian revolution remained a very lively sentiment among the masses of persons who rejected the communist doctrine.... even the Social Democratic and Labour leaders who were the most vehement in their denunciations of communist dictatorship and in their operation of the principle of Parliamentary democracy ..... were careful to disclaim hostility to the new Russia, to urge the governments of their own countries to take no action against it."
> (Cole 1961 History of Socialist Thought. Vol.4 part 1 p.2.)

Cole's support for the Soviet Union, was based on a belief that whilst communism could not offer anything to the more advanced nations, it had helped the Soviet Union develop from a semi feudal system to an industrialising nation in which the workers had been able to make a series of gains in terms of wages and conditions. This implies that communism may, in some cases, be a stage in the development towards a better kind of society based on a democratic political order.

Totalitarianism was presented by Cole, Durbin and Woolf as a mode of organising a political community which was inferior to democracy in terms of the quality of the society it produced, and the kind of citizenship associated with it. The next section examines conceptions of citizenship advanced in definitions of socialism.

3.6 Socialism and Citizenship.

Underlying the claims on behalf of socialism to construct or define its constituencies, communities and conceptions of democracy, are implicit claims to also define the nature of citizenship. Discussions surrounding the participation of the Labour Party's communities, in the national political community as its member citizens, emphasized the need for education. The mechanisms of democracy were thought to place a heavy burden on citizenship. This was at least one of the considerations underlying the Labour movement's orientation towards worker and adult education.

Durbin's conception of democracy required individual members of the political community to be capable of choosing a government. He considered that because individuals had different views, democracy required them to submit to arbitration, in order that a consensus or general will could be arrived at. Social democracy required the participation of disadvantaged sections of the community in order that a 'just' society might be achieved. This placed a particular responsibility on the Labour movement to ensure that its community was able to participate in democratic processes.

Cole's conception of democracy produced a multiplicity of citizenships or a plural membership of the political community. Individuals were expected to participate in the organisation of their every day life in all of its aspects and at the work place as worker citizens. They were also expected to participate at a more general level as citizens of the national political community represented at the level of the state. In this respect their general interests as citizens were represented. Durbin's conceptions of democracy and citizenship only concerned themselves with this narrower form of political representation.

These constructions of citizenship may be contrasted to that which was constructed for India in its independence

constitution. As demonstrated in sections 5.14 and 5.16 citizenship was debased when awarded to India.

This is an appropriate juncture at which to sum up some of the philosophical claims to define socialism made in Labour Party statements. Philosophical claims to define socialism are not distinct from policy claims. Socialist policy represents a translation of some of socialism's abstract notions into a form in which they could become law through the processes of parliament. Laws are the mechanisms by which social, political and economic institutions can be organised. There would be little point in a philosophical definition of socialism which could not be translated into a set of concrete proposals for the alternative organisation of society. There was considerable disagreement in the Labour Party about what constituted a socialist policy just as there was disagreement about what constituted the philosophical foundations of socialism, its ideologies.

As indicated in the sections on policy claims, communities, discursively constructed, are an important ideological element in defining socialism. Claims to define policy revealed two communities associated with the Labour Party, workers and the poor, the latter having a relationship to a notion of the 'people' or the 'common people' as described by Lansbury. Section 3.4.. revealed a further community, the (national) political community as a whole. This theme is also taken up in section 3.6. when citizenship as a constituency constructed in the name of socialism is examined. As is demonstrated in the statements examined in this chapter, the communities of the Labour Party were subject to a fairly limited and specifiable range of definitions. In determining why the Labour Party issued a particular statement as opposed to any other, this range of possible communities and their range of possible definitions is of great value.

An examination of philosophical claims to specify socialism as a constituency led the Labour Party to state a range of constituencies which may be seen as definitions

of socialism. Two key constituencies in these statements were citizenship and democracy. If the Labour Party distinguished itself from the Liberal Party by its association with socialism, it distinguished itself from the Communist Party by its association with democracy. Democracy was a way of stating the Labour Party's adherence to a range of possible definitions of socialism. There were few claims to define socialism's democracy on behalf of the Labour Party in this period of the early 1930s, and those offered by Durbin did not offer any advance on the conceptions of Mill. All that was different about the Labour Party's democracy was its alliance with socialism.

It was Cole who presented a challenge to this definition by suggesting that classical liberal conceptions of democracy in terms of Parliament were partial; a fuller form of democracy being produced when individuals participated in the organisation of their lives as workers as well as citizens. Consequently Cole's conception of citizenship as a pluralistic function in terms of particular capacities, was different from that of Durbin's which was defined in terms of parliamentary representation of the constituency socialism.

When socialism is defined in official statements, in a specific relation to the issues raised in the case studies on India and anti semitism, it is possible to recognise some of the definitions of socialism's democracy, presented in the statements of Durbin in this chapter. Whilst not wishing to reduce an interpretation of the Labour Party to the dimension of its parliamentarianism, as Miliband does, conceptions of democracy in defining socialism as a set of policies capable of implementation in parliament do structure Labour Party statements.

This chapter, so far, has shown that it is possible to pin point a range of possible communities and constituencies by examining some of the policy and philosophical claims made by the Labour Party to define socialism. This refers to socialism in Britain. Socialism took a

slightly different form when defined in relation to colonial and international issues.

3.7 Socialism and International Relations: Some General Considerations.

The early sections of this chapter offered some definitions of socialism which were relevant to the domestic situation in Britain. The rest of this chapter will be concerned to establish what socialism meant in terms of international and colonial relations, and the extent to which these were informed by domestic constructions of socialism.

The reason why foreign and colonial relations are being discussed, is both to demonstrate that socialism had a dimension which was not solely focused on Britain, and because the most extensive case study in this dissertation concerns the manner in which the Labour Party constructed the problems posed by Indian independence. Before considering socialism's empire, which became its commonwealth, it is useful to examine some of the ways in which socialism was defined generally in connection with colonial relations.

Unlike domestic definitions of socialism, colonial and international relations were constrained by the necessity of a bipartisan approach. International relations forced the government of the day to pay attention to statesmanship and the continuity which it imposed. International relations were necessarily the product not only of statesmanship, but an arbitration between statesmanship and socialism. The definitions of socialism in international relations constructed in the remainder of this chapter must be considered in the light of this constraint.

Because socialism was constructed in a relation to domestic affairs over which the Labour Party, when in government, could legislate, this presented problems to the Labour Party in the field of international relations, in identifying itself as a force for socialism. Policy claims to define domestic socialism focused on welfare

and public ownership of certain key areas of the economy. At a more philosophical level these contained claims to define socialism's communities and constituencies, and the forms of democracy to which socialism was suited. How are such definitions to be applied to the field of international relations?

The set of policies referred to as international relations is a way of indicating all that was not to do with the internal affairs of Britain. In fact foreign and colonial policy referred to under this heading, are conceptually distinct. This distinction is structured by two considerations. In the first place colonies were not yet nations in their own right. Dealing with their affairs did not require Britain to deal with another government only a department of British Government. Because of the jurisdiction of the British Government over the colonies it was possible that definitions of socialism in colonial relations could at least take their starting point from domestic definitions of socialism to be implemented through policy and programme. Secondly, the two areas of policy may be distinguished because, as mentioned in section 2.1., British socialism claims directly to represent communities and constituencies in the colonies, where as any relationship established with workers from non colonial countries was mediated through the workers organisations of that country. The Labour Party could only claim to directly represent British and colonial labour.

Although there were other attempts to define socialism in international relations, the work of Leonard Woolf must be considered as a most important contribution. Woolf's contribution to these issues was certainly the most consistent and extensive over twenty years of party policy making. Woolf's contribution was partly structured by his practical background as a colonial administrator in the Ceylon Civil Service. As early as 1914 he was writing for the Fabian journal 'Nation' on international affairs. He said of himself in this period:- "journalistically at any rate I had become an authority" (Woolf

1961 An Autobiography of the Years 1904 - 1911. p.111). He also points out that at that time there was no body of theory exploring the politics of international relations. Woolf was part of its formation.

Evidence of his strategic position in the formation of not just the Labour Party, but British Government policy, is demonstrated in the use of Woolf's paper 'International Government' (1916) by the British delegation at the Versailles Conference in 1919, at which the League of Nations was set up as an international peace-keeping force. Woolf's central concern at this time was the setting up of an international body to arbitrate in disputes between nations.

Virtually the entire foreign and colonial policy of the Labour Party during the 1930's bore the imprint of his thinking and formulations. In 1917 Woolf was invited by Sidney Webb to become the secretary of the policy committee in the Labour Party set up to deal with international and imperial questions. This was part of a general initiative to establish for the Labour Party, a set of policies and theories upon which it could draw when taking office. After the first war the committee split into two, the International Committee and the Imperial Advisory Committee. Woolf was the secretary of both for over twenty years. Woolf (1969 p. 169) says of his work in this period, that it occasionally influenced the Labour Party on important issues.

Perhaps more significantly he was responsible, in the operation of the committees, for the education of an entire generation of Labour Party members who became experts on various aspects of foreign and imperial affairs. These included Charles Roden-Buxton of the famous anti slavery family and chairman of both committees, Sir John Maynard who was a retired servant of the colonial service and succeededBuxton as the chairman of the Imperial Advisory Committee, Norman Leys of the Kenyan Public Works Department, Drummond Shiels who became Under Secretary of State and Arthur Creech Jones who became Secretary of State for the

Colonies. Their expertise and experience informed Labour Party approaches to international relations in its first major and prolonged period of office after the second war.

This appraisal of Woolf's contribution does not represent an assertion that his work or the statements he produced contained some kind of discursive unity. They did not, but they should be considered against this background because it informed those statements. It was one of the factors which was responsible for their appearance and formation.

3.8. A Socialist Approach to Colonialism: A Look at Policy and Philosophical Claims.

The existence of an empire and the need for it to be embraced within a socialist frame of reference was not unproblematic for the Labour Party. How was a definition of the 'colonial encounter' described by Brockway (of the Independent Labour Party and later, the Labour Party) as "The exploitation of one people by another" (The Colonial Revolution p.13) to be reconciled with any of the definitions of socialism examined in the sphere of domestic relations? Was the Labour Party the reluctant heir of imperialism or was it fully implicated in the administration and development of the empire and the conceptions upon which it was based?

Many in the Labour Party considered that the colonial bond was incompatible with socialism and were anxious that it should be quickly dissolved.

> "Did we go into India because India wanted us? We went there not for the salvation of India, not for India's good, but for Great Britain's good. We are an imperial country and India offered us markets and wealth that could not be given by any other country. What is the use of saying we have freed India from famine and given her justice and peace when all the time we have been thinking of the commercial domination of Britain and not of India's good."
> (Buchanan 3/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1356)

Others (see 1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p. 216) protested that whilst they were not imperialists the empire 'existed' as a reality which could not be ignored but which would have to be dealt with. Indeed it was this 'reality' which the Labour Party administered briefly in 1924 and again from 1929-31. Speaking of this administration (1929-31) at Labour Party Conference, Wedgewood who was Secretary of State for India, outlined the difficulties of administering India in line with party policy.

> "But I want you to remember that here is one man standing, with a bureacracy 6,000 miles away with a minority in parliament, a man who, for all his faults is striving zealously and tirelessly to carry out the programme of emancipation, which is the programme of the Labour Party."
> (Wedgewood 3/10/32 Annual Reports of the Labour Party. p.179-80)

Wedgewood's statement suggests that a socialist colonial administration was hampered by the parliamentary situation of the Labour Government. He later in the same statement complained of the lack of responsiveness of the Viceregal administration in India to socialist definitions of policy. In fact the Labour Party's administration of India as a colony brought much criticism from its members and the alienation of the Independent Labour Party which was directed by the League Against Imperialism to define its differences with the Labour Party on colonial issues. (see section 2.9. which documents the I.L.P.'s split with the Labour Party).

What then should a socialist colonial policy look like? The analysis of the development of policy on India in section 2.5 already provides some clues. In general these policy statements sanctioned by conference based their claims upon three elements. The first was a concern for the well being of the Indian people, especially the poorer sections who comprised the majority. The second was a concern for the workers and the development of a trade union structure. These two may be seen as developments from domestic conceptions of socialism.

The third was a demand for independence. This varied a great deal in terms of the speed with which it was demanded and the conditions which might accompany it. Never-the-less it represented a policy claim that at some point the empire should cease to exist. These three elements can be seen as claims to define socialism in relation to colonial issues and can be found in many statements on the empire.

A number of claims to define socialism in colonial policy were being put foreward along these lines as early as 1928 in 'Labour and the Nation,' one of the early policy statements of the Labour Party, issued as a pamphlet. Its main policy declarations included the following. Land distribution in the empire:-

> "A Labour Government should urge the various states concerned to co operate in a survey of land resources of the British Commonwealth, with a view to subordinating the private use of land to the general interests of a scientific redistribution of the population within it, and to securing, by improving the cultivation of its land, increased supplies of food for the population and of raw materials for its industries."
> (Labour Party 1928 Labour and the Nation p.50)

This statement contains a policy shift from private use of land to a form of public ownership followed by redistribution of the population depending upon it for survival. This may be seen as an application of the principles of domestic socialism to the field of colonial relations.

The second major policy contained in this statement concerned the development of an industrial labour force through migration from the land and training.

> "Migration and training schemes are part of the policy of the Labour Party. A Labour Government would see that reliable information was available for intending emigrants and would establish centres in which suitable training for their new life could be given them. It would use the machinery of the Commonwealth Labour Conference, through which Labour in Great Britain is already in close touch with Labour in the Dominions, to establish a full measure of supervision

and control over their prospects and conditions."
(Labour Party 1928 Labour and the Nation. p.50)

This policy amounted to the creation of an industrial workforce out of a rural, peasant, workforce. In general terms a development towards an industrialised economy was one of the cornerstones of statements on colonial socialism. This was seen as part of a development upon which independence would be based, in which a labour force would be established and protected in much the same way as in Britain. Industrialisation and independence were presented as part of the same process in the debate concerning India.

This statement also contained as policy, an affirmation of commercial links between the colonies and Britain.

"A Labour Government would provide facilities for overseas producers in the marketing of their produce in this country with a view to establishing prices and eliminating unnecessary intermediaries, whilst it would co operate in the control and cheapening of the transport of food supplies to Great Britain."
(Labour Party 1928 Labour and the Nation p.50)

The statement suggests that such a relationship would be to the mutual advantage of both colonies and the mother country. In fact it represents little more than a restatement of a very traditional colonial relationship with the addition of a certain amount of control and price fixing.

Labour and the Nation also demonstrated that sections of the Labour Party considered that the welfare of colonial peoples, especially in the face of exploitation by the mother country, was also an important aspect of a socialist colonial policy.

"The Labour Party views with grave concern the appalling evils produced by capitalist exploitation in certain of the tropical and sub tropical parts of the British Commonwealth of Nations. It holds that the welfare of indigenous races, their economic prosperity, and their advancement in culture and civilization, must be the primary object of colonial administration, to which all other interests must be rigorously

subordinated."
(Labour Party 1928 Labour and the Nation p.50)

Welfare in this statement was tempered with a concern for advances in ways other than those associated with industrial development. This was also part of a demand for independence. This statement represents a re-statement of the prime object of colonial administration, placing the prosperity and advance of colonial peoples ahead of all other objectives. This statement also places "indigenous races" in an evolutionary framework by expressing concern for their "advancement in culture and civilization."

The demand for independence was a feature of most, but not all, Labour Party statements on colonialism. A socialist colonial policy required the end of the colonial relation, its dismantling. Assessments of the speed with which this should be done and the conditions under which it should take place varied enormously.

> "it will take steps, therefore, to transfer to the inhabitants of these countries without distinction of race or colour, such measure of political responsibility as they are capable of exercising, while imperial responsibility for their government will be maintained during the period preceding the establishment of democratic institutions."
> (Labour Party 1928 Labour and the Nation p.50)

In this particular statement the demand for independence depended on an assessment of a people's ability to be self governing, and the possibility of establishing democratic institutions through which independent government could be exercised.

The position being expressed in this particular statement has an orientation towards development, industrial and cultural, in creating a situation where a certain amount of political freedom might be awarded through democratic institutions. Whilst this process was in operation, an emphasis was to be placed on the welfare of the people, especially workers, underwritten by certain redistributions of material resources and the maintenance of links with Britain in which Britain served as a model of development and a market for raw materials.

One of the most obvious structuring mechanisms operating on this statement is an interpretation of official domestic definitions of socialism and conceptions about the requirements for nationhood. This statement was also constrained by the need for continuity in official Labour Party pronouncements. The Labour Party had long been stating its support for a particular kind of independence coupled with the need for advance, land reform and protection of the worker and the poor. This statement is also structured by its key objects and concepts which give it a particular ideological orientation. The key objects in this position were industrial labour force, trade with Britain, emigrant labour force, industry, and land distribution. Its key concepts are development, culture and civilization, welfare and political responsibility.

The statement was further structured by some of the philosophical claims it was making to define socialism in colonial affairs. The Labour Party was defining itself as the representative of various communities. The statement examined also contains a reference to a number of constituences. At various points in the statement, the Labour Party was claiming to represent the people of Britain who were to benefit in terms of cheap food transported over from the colonies, the colonised people as a whole against the evils of capitalist exploitation, the colonised poor in need of land, and the workers, or potential workers, in the colonies. These four communities are often represented individually or in groups in socialist definitions of the colonial situation. Ultimately the emphasis in this statement is on colonised people as a whole and the possibility of their development towards nationhood, and the severence of the colonial bond.

Many positions expressed in Labour Party statements on colonial issues were a focus for conflict over which communities the Labour Party should represent. Some considered that British communities should be prioritised over colonial ones. Such debates often focused on issues

in which the interests of British and colonial workers were opposed. This is amply documented in the Indian case study. Even in considering colonial issues alone, there were often conflicts over which communities should be prioritised, the people as a whole in the quest for independence, or a particularly disadvantaged section of the people.

Many Labour Party statements make reference to a fifth community, the Commonwealth, as a form of association between Britain and her dominions. Perhaps a key element in Labour Party statements concerning the colonies was the ultimate disappearance of the empire and its relations of subordination between coloniser and colonised. This did not necessarily require the destruction of the empire as an association of British subjects, but its transformation into a new kind of relationship. Many in the Labour Party (see for example Lansbury 1931 Hansard vol. 1260 col. 1393) expressed the desire that the empire be transformed into a Commonwealth of free peoples living as autonomous nations. For this to happen it was necessary for them to be awarded the status of nationhood, as the basis for participation in a new kind of relationship with Britain. Lansbury was one of the foremost exponents of this socialist commonwealth. In relation to India, he expressed the wish that independence should be the basis for a new association with Britain, a partnership.

> "..... whether she will or will not become a partner in the British Commonwealth of nations, her answer will be yes, but the choice must be hers. The words 'self determination' mean this or they mean nothing." (Lansbury 3/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1393.)

Woolf was also an exponent of the greater community than that of individual nations, as part of a conception of an international society.

> "It is no longer a world of isolated units moving majestically along in their own orbits, it is a world of states, nations and peoples closely interrelated parts of a vast international society with its own economic and political organisation." (Woolf 1933 Imperialism and Civilization. p.116)

Woolf, in fact, was making reference to a greater conception of society, as one including all nations in which a socialist commonwealth would be just the beginning. The socialist commonwealth represents a limited form of international brotherhood and co operation. It was premised upon the need for a development on the part of the colony, variously expressed in terms of the need to develop culture and industry to a point where it was fit for nationhood.

Lansbury, like Woolf, saw the Commonwealth as the beginning of a greater federation.

> "I am a firm believer in the union of British Dominions. I have great faith that India will become one of the foremost partners, that together with her we will start on the road to the federation of the world .... We have to substitute comradeship, brotherhood and co operation in place of domination and imperialism and in dealing with our Indian comrades remember that India is their country, their motherland which they love as we love Britain."
> (Lansbury 3/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1397.)

In this statement Lansbury was making a claim to define the new qualities on which the socialist Commonwealth would be based. He was making a claim to distinguish it from the old conception of the empire by making reference to the human emotions upon which it would be based. This represents an extension of the principle of nationalism which Laski defines as an "essentially spiritual quality", a "sense of kinship which binds men into oneness" emanating from "traditions created by a corporate effort". (Laski 1967 A Grammar of Politics. p.219)

The socialist Commonwealth was an extension of many of the qualities of nationhood and nationalism. It was partly constructed through a common sharing of government, and other close ties with the imperial mother country, and partly through a belief in the unity of all nations. Such notions were developed by extending the discourses concerning political philosophy, developed in sections 1.11, 1.12 and 1.13, as the practice of

community within nations, to include the practice of community between nations.

Durbin warned of the possible conflicts that could arise when communities were brought into conflict with each other.

> "If the common good is only felt to reach the limits of a racial or geographical, or a social group, there will be no force in this recognition of a limited common good within the group to prevent the use of force outside and on behalf of it."
> (Durbin 1940 Democracy and Socialism in Britain. p.43)

Durbin is suggesting that the principle of collective welfare must extend beyond the community to embrace wider groups and ultimately the totality of nations in order to overcome the destructive aspects of human existence. The maintenance of civilization and its possibilities was constructed around a conception of community more inclusive than that of the nation or even the commonwealth. It was to such conceptions of community that socialism's international or foreign policy addressed itself.

3.9. Socialism and Foreign Policy.

The difficulties presented by attempting to apply the principles of domestic or even colonial socialism to foreign policy were enormous. Woolf commented upon this difficulty in the following way.

> "Between socialism and a wide field of domestic and imperial affairs the relation is obvious, direct and immediate. The Government, provided it has the power through a parliamentary majority, can nationalise the mines or transport, or control investment and so give the control of the means of production and distribution to the community and eliminate private profit ... It can implement socialism imperially by starting a great scheme for growing ground nuts in East Africa through a public corporation or by nationalising cotton growing in the Sudan ... None of these things is true in the international field. The relation between socialism and questions of foreign policy is nearly always

remote and obscure."
(Woolf 1947 Foreign Policy: The Labour Party's Dilema. p.5)

In foreign policy, where socialism could not be constructed upon the reorganisation of production and distribution, or a belief in the right of all peoples to national self determination, the Labour Party found certain difficulties in establishing a style.

Although Woolf had been working on foreign policy for the Labour Party since 1917, this difficulty had not been resolved by 1931 when the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda held a discussion to decide whether there was a "Distinctively socialist point of view on foreign policy, guided by definite principles". (Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda 1931 Report on a Discussion of Socialist Foreign policy p.1). Cole, Attlee, Dalton, Gaitskell and Bertrand Russell played a prominent part in this discussion, which centred on the debate about whether the interests of the working class were best served by an unreserved policy of peace, or whether it was legitimate to defend places where advances in working class interests had been made, as in the case of Russia. The institutions on which the discussion focused were the League of Nations and its International Labour Organisation. In the course of this discussion the central principle by which foreign policy was assessed was the interests of the working class. This was not true of all assessments, and involved the construction of a set of constituencies which could be demonstrated to implicate an improvement in the lives of workers.

Woolf considered that socialism was to do with the distribution of wealth in the community and foreign policy was to do with the relations between foreign states and their governments. So there was a level at which international strategy was beyond the realms of socialism. Never-the-less numerous attempts were made within the Labour Party to define at least general principles, by which it might be guided in the discharge

of its duties in foreign policy, in which it was required to participate as a potential party of government.

It is possible to discern two general principles around which many Labour Party statements defining an appropriate foreign policy were centred. These are co operation with Labour and Socialist organisations in other countries, and above all a commitment to peace. There came a point in the 1930s (around 1933) when these two principles came into conflict, and it became necessary, at least in terms of official policy, for there to be an arbitration of the point at which socialism and its democracy were defended against fascism, with armed force. This was the point at which the Labour Party decided officially to defend socialism and democracy against its destruction, and joined in the war effort, defining freedom and democracy, rather than peace, as the workers constituency.

The Labour Party has, throughout its history maintained these two strands of ideology. They have surfaced in different issues and in different conditions at many different times. The point at which socialist conceptions of 'civilization' were to be defended against the 'barbarity' of totalitarianism, begs an assessment of which is the greater barbarity, war or the destruction of socialism's democracy. This equally applies to the case of Germany in the 1930s and 1940s, and to the Soviet Union after the second world war.

The 1930s cannot be characterised as a whole in terms of official Labour policy and thinking. A change in emphasis occured, prompted by the failure of the Disarmament conference, and Germany and Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations. Anti Fascism replaced pacifism. Statements outlining Labour's foreign policy included support for the Labour and Socialist International, the League of Nations, the International Labour Organisation, disarmament, peace and anti fascism.

Support for the Labour and Socialist International

in which the Labour Party participated with social democratic parties from other, usually developed, countries demonstrated a measure of internationalism. This was further evidenced in its association with the International Labour Organisation of the League of Nations. This was a forum for the discussion of labour conditions in all countries in which the Labour representatives from the colonies were encouraged to participate. It acted as a pressure on national governments for the implementation of improved labour conditions. It was an international alliance of workers within a greater alliance of all nations, represented in the League.

It was perhaps its support for the League of Nations which was the basis of Labour Party policy in this period. Woolf (1936 p.28) said that the "Labour Party has always stood officially for the League system". (Woolf 1936 The League and Abyssinia p.28). As early as 1915, writing for the 'Nation' he spoke of the necessity for an "international authority to prevent war". (Woolf 1964 'An Autobiography of the Years 1911-18 p.186). The League was the incarnation of collective security, a guarantee that future wars were impossible because of its ability to arbitrate between nations in dispute. Writing in 1933 of the League, he said:-

> "The Party is right in renailing its policy more firmly to the mast of the League, because the League system is, at the moment the only available instrument for ensuring peace."
> (Woolf 1933 Political Quarterly. vol.4 p.517)

He was, even in 1936 after the failure of the League to prevent the Italian invasion of Abyssinia, quite specific about its purpose:-

> "The League of Nations is not a super state..... It is an organisation of existing states for certain, specific purposes .... It was consciously and deliberately created in answer to a world wide demand, and to make certain specific changes in the pre war system of inter state relations, to substitute for the claims and pretensions of sovereign states to seek to settle things by war the right and obligation to have disputes settled

peacefully."
(Woolf 1936 The League and Abyssinia. p.7)

As far as Woolf and many others were concerned the primary task of the League was the maintenance of peace by the method of settlement of disputes through negotiation. Bevin thought this alliance of nations should be built on a more concrete basis than a general desire for peace. He suggested that it be the instrument through which a pooling of national resources could be affected. It could then be the basis of a greater efficiency in world production and co operation.

It should be emphasized that even though the focus of Labour foreign policy was the peace and collective security offered by the League system, there were also statements which considered the other kinds of alliances Britain should make in foreign policy. Some were in favour of a neutrality in the face of Russian and American power blocks. Woolf (1947) was in favour of an alliance with America on the basis that there was a greater amount in common between Britain and America than Britain and Russia. Bevin (1938) was in favour of an alliance into a "united states of Europe" an alliance which Woolf supported in the post second world war period. This was to avoid having to ally with either Russia or America, and gave a more local collective basis to security inside the greater aims of the League system. Bevin was in favour of a European alliance with an economic base, produced by the pooling of the European nation's colonial resources. He believed this would provide a material basis for collective security, rather than relying on the faculty for human co-operation as Woolf's notion of collective security in the League of Nations did.

> "The great colonial powers of Europe should pool their colonial territories and link them up within a European Commonwealth, ... such a European Commonwealth, established on an economic foundation, would give us a greater security than we get by trying to maintain the old balance of power ... It would make a direct drive towards a United States of Europe which would give her a chance to live adequately."
> (Bevin 1938 The Record p.154)

At a more philosophical level the League of Nations was a bid to define socialism in terms of an international system of co operation as discussed in the context of the socialist Commonwealth. It was the incarnation of Durbin's "practice of community" (1940 p.180) as an index of civilization. Socialism and peace were rooted in the negation of the Hobbesian state of "warre". The ability of the human race to live collectively was underwritten by that property of humanity which had allowed civilization to take place at all. It was upon the possibility of human co operation that a conception of society was constructed. Unless this principle was extended to the human race as a whole then the security of any of its units, national and otherwise, would be threatened. National collective existence, which was accorded a special status, would not be possible unless guaranteed by collective existence at an international level.

In this context the League must be considered to be a "trust on behalf of civilization", the construction of an "international society" (Woolf 1933 Imperialism and Civilization p.132-3). This was why the question of peace was so central to conceptions of socialism in foreign policy. The totality of mankind in the face of its destruction became a single community and the guarantee of the continued existence of all communities. Man's capacity for collective existence, for Durbin, (1940 p.186) was what distinguished him from all other forms of life. The ability to live in a society was thus considered an integral part of the human condition. National collective security, through the mechanisms of an international body, was thus presented as the logical extension of the principles of human nature.

It was a matter of debate whether the continued existence of this collectivity, or its democracy and standards of civilization was more important. Attlee was of the opinion that collective security should be armed. "The only war like act of the Labour Government must be international policing." (New Fabian Research

Bureau. 1934 Report of a Discussion on the Labour Party's Foreign Policy in the Immediate Future p.2-3). Laski provided a formulation with which many similar assessments agreed when he said that ultimately "Civilization is either international or it is worthless." (Laski 1966 A Grammar of Politics. p.226).

If it is being suggested that the possibility of collective existence is one of the highest principles of civilization, this begs the question of whether the organisation of civilization in terms of a democratic frame-work was not an even higher one than peace in these debates. It is quite possible that these debates consider a particular organisation of the human community, such as existed in Russia, outside a definition of civilization. Any defence of democracy would then amount to a defence of civilization itself, which is not the breakdown of the international human community, but the breakdown of democracy in certain nations.. If this line of reasoning is followed, then the defence of democracy amounts to the defence of civilization itself. These are some of the arguments which the Labour Party invoked in its claims to support the collective security of the human community as a whole, in its backing for a foreign policy which encouraged arbitration between its national units. Labour's internationalist outlook in foreign policy was firmly based on the national unit. One of the most important facets of Labour ideology therefore rests on the definitions of democracy and civilization which are being referred to.

These arguments are particularly pertinent in the examination of colonial policy with its emphasis on the development of nationhood and the socialist Commonwealth. Here definitions of democracy and civilization are being expressed and arbitrated as the philosophical requirements of independence linked to the possibility of development. These will be more fully explored in the chapters on India.

3.10 Conclusions.

This chapter has examined the principal constituency of the Labour Party, socialism. It has shown, by using the mechanisms constituency and community, that socialism is subject to numerous constructions. These constructions define the Labour Party as a statement issuing, or enunciative institution. The Labour Party can be defined both in terms of the multiplicity of positions and statements it tolerates within its institutional framework, set out in the constitution, and constantly re-stated in its policy formulations. It can also be defined in terms of the relations between the statements which it sanctions as official, and those which it finds unacceptable. All statements offered to the Labour Party to be sanctioned are bids to define the positions with which the Labour Party should associate itself.

Socialism, in its many constructions, is an important element in all Labour Party statements. Because it was the Labour Party's claim to a distinctive approach to British politics, it was presented in every statement as a Labour Party way of doing things. The early sections of this chapter outlined some of the constructions of socialism in relation to domestic policy. This was done by examining both policy and philosophical claims to define socialism using the mechanism set out in chapter one, mainly community and constituency. The statements presented by the Labour Party were defined and interrogated to determine who and what the Labour Party was claiming to represent. It was discovered that claims to define socialism in domestic policy contained a range of constituencies, which might be represented. It was also discovered that the Labour Party had only a limited range of communities with which it associated, it only claimed to represent certain discursively constructed groups of people.

When it came to socialism's approach to foreign and colonial policy it was discovered that there was a heavy reliance on definitions of socialism constructed

in relation to domestic policy. This was particularly true of colonial policy. In examining colonial policy it was not necessary to present a whole range of definitions, as this is done in relation to India in chapters four and five, and to do so here would involve repetition. Mainly official statements on the colonies were examined in order to give an indication of a range of definitions of socialism in colonial relations. Many of these issues are not relevant to the Indian situation, for example proposals for land distribution and nationalisation, and will not,for that reason be dealt with again. They are dealt with in section 3.8. because they are a part of Labour's general approach to the colonies.

Colonial definitions of socialism, like domestic definitions, posed a range of possible constituencies. These were land distribution and state ownership as set out in the statements extracted from 'Labour and the Nation' (1928), a major policy document of the party at that time. A second constituency was centred on the notion of development applied to the economic structure. This might best be described as industrialisation, involving the transformation of the workforce from a rural to an urban one. A third constituency was the development of trade unionism and welfare policy aimed at certain communities. All of these constituencies so far are a direct translation from domestic definitions of socialism. Colonial issues had two constituencies which were not derived from domestic socialism, independence and the commonwealth. Both of these are the subject of a multitude of definitions and are taken up more fully throughout chapters four and five in relation to India. They were not, however, unconnected to some of the other constituencies, for example notions of development were often described in the context of a move towards independence.

The colonial communities of the Labour Party were a reflection of those claimed in Britain. The Labour Party variously claimed to represent the colonised peoples as a whole, or a section of those peoples, the poorest sections, and the workers. Its support for workers links

into what was just said about development as a constituency. Socialism in the colonies was concerned with the creation of an industrialised workforce. It did not claim to represent rural peoples, or peasants except as the poor in terms of a constituency which centred on living standards. The Labour Party did not appear to be able to represent those who lived in rural areas as such, only as peoples in transition to becoming an urban workforce. This is clearly demonstrated in the Indian case study, and is no doubt related to the manner in which the Labour Party had developed a representative function on behalf of certain communities in Britain. That is not to suggest that the Labour Party was not able to represent rural peoples, but it represented them as 'the Indian people' or the 'Sudanese people', it was not able to construct them discursively as rural peoples other than as a population in transition to becoming an industrialised workforce.

As indicated in section 3.8 the question of community priorities set up tensions within the Labour Party in cases where there was a conflict of interests. Whilst the Labour Party stood officially for the dissolution of the colonial bond, a position which attracted much support, it was often faced with opposition from within its ranks claiming, if indirectly, that the prosperity of the British working class was premised upon poor living standards and low wages in the colonies, in combination with the privileged position of British goods in many colonies. An example of this kind of reasoning is presented in relation to India in section 4.2. In cases where there was a clash of interests involved in representing colonial constituencies, for example welfare, there was usually a debate about which community should be prioritised. Arbitration between the interests of British and colonial labour were a prominent feature of many debates in the Labour Party and the Labour movement as a whole during this period.

As far as foreign policy was concerned, definitions

of socialism were only partly derived from domestic formulations. The need for Labour Party co-operation with socialist and similarly orientated organisations in other countries was an extension of its protection of the principles upon which the Labour Party itself was constructed. Socialism's defence of peace was not necessarily an extension of domestic definitions of socialism, although this might be explained as an international dimension of the party's adherence to the methods of democracy and civil order within Britain as factors conditioning the conduct of internal political affairs. This is more fully explored in section 6.6 in relation to public order in East London. In international relations, the cause of peace was identified with the interests of the workers who had suffered so badly in the first world war. This was transformed later in the 1930s, as indicated in section 3.9, in order to defend what was described as the cause of democracy and freedom, from foreign domination.

Because in its statments and policies the Labour Party must express a socialist point of view, this preliminary excursion into the constructions of socialism has been instructive. Definitions of socialism, whilst potentially differing in every statement, do seem to have a limited range of possibilities in terms of communities and constituencies to be represented. These are a part of the ideological structuring mechanisms which, in combination with others and constraints, collectively produce Labour Party statements. An examination of how the Labour Party issues statement, its institutional arrangements for the authorisation of statements and its possible definitions of socialism provide the background with which to examine statements of the two case studies on India and anti semitism. In relation to these two issues, defintions of socialism can be examined in detail as the Labour Party is constructed in relation to them. The case studies also aid a further development of the method outlined in chapter one as a method for

reading Labour Party statements, as well as a fuller development of the notion of a political community.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Labour Party's India.

4.1. Context.

India was both an object of discourse and an issue in the early part of the 1930s. It acted as a site upon which constructions of political community were focused. The variety of discourses informing this construction were centred on concepts such as development, civilization and culture. This chapter is concerned to establish a range of definitions of the situation referred to as India and claims of various institutions to the right to discourse on this issue.

This chapter examines the ways in which India was constructed by and on behalf of the Labour Party. By making a distinction between official and unofficial statements it is possible to discover which positions the Labour Party was prepared to tolerate and which it was prepared to sanction. Such a construction gives an indication of the ideological diversity of the party and makes it possible to speculate on why certain positions were accepted and others excluded from official enunciations. These positions may be explained in terms of the kinds of constraints, and structuring factors, which were effective in their production.

In fact the chapter deals simultaneously with three levels of analysis. It interrogates the concept race through focusing on the concept political community, which is both a concept and an object of investigation in this dissertation. Constructions of India are constructions of this concept and its field of concepts. This chapter also produces a construction of the Labour Party in a specific relationship to this organising concept . It is then possible to ask how the Labour Party acted in relation to issues which, in one way or another, raised the question of race. Finally it is also a comment on the conditions of making statements

and modes of stating.

There are numerous instances in which both Indian and British peoples were referred to as races in the debates featured in this chapter. See for example section 4.3 in which it was stated in the course of a parliamentary debate (Wise 1931) that it was India's destiny to be ruled by some kind of outside "race". Here the notion of a political community, appears to inform the concept race giving it an added distinctiveness. Indeed, race may be said to be constructed through the object of a political community which is one of the key objects of investigation in this dissertation.

Whether British and Indian peoples were distinctive races, or whether they were of the same racial extraction, as Maine's comparative studies suggests does not really matter. What is important is that the designation of peoples as races was overridden by classifications in terms of national, or potentially national, political communities. Maine's philogy set out in 'Ancient Law' suggested a classification of peoples unlike anything suggested before. Jurisprudential investigations based on comparative philogy had indicated that Indians and Britons were both Aryans, as far as racial classification in the 1860s was concerned. Maine identified Aryans as inhabiting cultural area in which everything important to progress and civilization had taken place. He divided peoples into those who were the product of progressive conditions and those who were the product of unprogressive conditions. It was further Maine's contention that the condition of immobility or unprogressiveness was the natural condition of mankind.

Maine's work is an example of how definitions of race were, and are, constantly changing. Races were defined for different purposes, as chapter five will demonstrate in the construction of the Indian political community. His concern to establish the common racial identity of Britain and India in terms of language, and cultures with which it was associated, serve to illustrate

the manner in which politically constructed divisions, such as political community inform the concept race as a way of designating peoples. The concept race was used as a way of designating other divisions which produced the category 'British'or 'India'. Yet, the category Indian political community is not unproblematic. In the 1930s it was subject to definition as chapter five demonstrates. The concept political community, is of course, one of the terms of the analysis imposed upon the material or statements to be examined, rather than one of the terms of the explicit discourse. In making statements about what constituted the Indian problem, it is possible to draw out the various definitions offered by the Labour Party to designate Indians as a political community and India as a constituency. This is taken up in more detail in section 4.2.

It is the aim of this chapter to address itself to the concepts, community and constituency, as a way of examining statements which the Labour Party made in defining India as an issue. This chapter does not deal in any detail with the constructions of India as a potential community as that is the subject of a detailed examination in chapter five. It is the aim of chapters four, five and six to provide material which will facilitate a discursive construction of race by using the concept political community. It is expected that other key concepts will emerge in the course of this such as progress, civilization and culture as explained in the introduction to the dissertation. Race is a key or organising concept which orders the use of other concepts. Political community, is the mechanism by which the construction of race is extrapolated. Race will be reconsidered, in the light of the material presented, in the conclusions to this chapter.

Positions, as points of intervention in a discourse offer definitions of objects and issues, in this case India. Positions are registered in and accessible through, statements. Part of the definition of statement offered in section 1.6 concerns its ability to state and

attracting contending positions. The statement of a position is the product of certain constraints and other structuring elements, described in section 1.7. These are informed by a set of ideologies which also have the effect of stucturing elements. It is possible to establish the set of ideological assumptions which must have been present in order for a particular statement, and thus indirectly a position, to have been arrived at. Positions have a relation to specifiable voices and thus have a representative function.

It is now possible to examine more closely the ways in which constraints and structuring elements operate in the production of statements in relation to material on India. Structuring elements are the mechanisms which produce statements, as opposed to organising concepts which structure the range of possible concepts in a statement. For example, race is an organising concept because it organises other concepts such as culture, civilization and so on. Political community is an object produced by discourses and a structuring element when the aim of a piece of analysis is to establish the conditions in which statements are produced. The aim of this dissertation is to establish the manner in which statements in political discourse are produced as well as to examine the operation of the Labour Party in statements concerning race.

A distinction must be drawn between constraints and structuring elements. This may be done in terms of their respective functions. As outlined in section 1.7, constraints function to compel, they impose a direction on events and statements which cannot be ignored.. They are much less negotiable than structuring mechanisms. Constraints do not themselves produce statements, they produce the conditions in which structuring factors produce statements. Structuring factors directly produce the form of a statement in combination with certain ideological conditions, more specific than those which are the property of constraints. Constraints have only a general orientation to offer to ideological conditions.

This point may be made clearer with an example from the Indian case study, in which there are specifiable constraints in operation. This is true of all Labour Party statements. The first to be considered are pledges. Pledges are statements which have a particular status in that they are general declarations of intent which carry the weight of either statute, or promises authorised on behalf of the office of government, and carrying the weight of statesmanship. In the case of India the constraints which may be described as pledges concern the promise that India would, at a point in time to be determined, be awarded independence in the form of a constitution, also to be determined. From this it may be seen that constraints do not specify a position, except in the most general terms. Pledges operate as a constraint because they specify a direction, in this case a movement towards independence as opposed to the continuation of colonial government. Pledges produce the conditions in which any number of statements may be made. They are called constraints because they preclude certain statements being made. For example pledges concerning India prevent the Labour Party from announcing that India will not achieve independence. These do not, however, preclude the imposition of a time scale which considers independence in terms of the epochs associated with race formation, rather than a matter of learning how to operate the machinery of government.

A second constraint to be considered in relation to India concerns a set of political circumstances, or conditions, in which statements are made. Of course a description of the political circumstances pertinent to the 'Indian situation' begs a definition. But what is clear, is that however the political conditions in India in the early 1930s were described, they were such that they demanded an initiative in pursuit of the constraint imposed by past pledges. All definitions of the situation in India at this time admitted that there was a condition of hostility to the continuation of British rule. This hostility presented itself as

a problem for the colonial authority in the form of a challenge to its ability to maintain the rule of (British) law and order in the colony.

The political community described as India, united under imperial authority, was on the point of falling apart ripped by violence until it was no longer a political community. Because of this, the British Government was constrained to keep the question of its withdrawal from India, and the conditions in which this might be achieved, at the top of its political agenda on the colonies. Again this withdrawal could have taken any number of forms. To find out why the Labour Party responded to this constraint with the Round Table Conference, it is necessary to look not to constraints but to other, structuring, mechanisms.

The third constraint in this case is the need for a certain continuity in activity relating to India. This continuity need not be dictated by the rules of logic, and would almost certainly not have been. Continuity in political initiatives is a question of establishing the links between one action or pronouncement and another. This really amounts to a statement of present action in terms of the past. This is just a linking mechanism and compels actions and enunciations to be connected to each other. For example in the case of India, the Labour Party was required to state its suggestion that the Indian problem be solved through the mechanism of the Round Table Conference, in terms of the Government of India Act (1919). Again, this constraint did not specify anything about the Round Table, only that its consistency with other initiatives be stated. Rather than produce a certain kind statement, it demanded that some kind of statement of this continuity be made.

The fourth constraint operating on the conditions in which statements are made, is found in the concept of an audience. This is imposed by the site of enunciation which will have a relation to the nature and extent of the statements issued. Whilst the audience compels the conditions in which statements are made in terms of a

general direction it does not produce a certain kind of statement. Priorities in terms of communities within an audience and the priorities of discursive constituencies associated with communities, operate on statements as structuring mechanisms. This is more thoroughly examined in section 5.4 in the context of the Round Table Conference.

The final constraint producing a set of conditions in which statements were made, is the Labour Party as a site of enunciation. As explained throughout chapter two, the Labour Party had a particular procedure for the authorisation of statements which could not be by-passed. As with the other constraints, the way in which the Labour Party issued statements did not specify their content.

The constraints just outlined produced the conditions in which certain kinds of statements were made. They constrained only a general set of objectives in which structuring factors then operated. The nature and function of constraining factors which actually produced statements, may best be observed by examining an actual statement.

The official statement on the Meerut prisoners is a good example. The details of this are set out in section 4.5. Any other statement would equally illustrate the points made. The Meerut statement has no special status except as an official statement. Differences between official and unofficial statements in terms of structuring factors will be indicated.

The statement on the Meerut prisoners was produced by a number of structuring factors which acted under the general conditions produced by the constraints. It is convenient to refer to these as the general terms of the debate. The terms of the debate in which this statement arose were the same as for any other statement on India in this period, and concerned the need to make an initiative in respect of Indian independence before an audience comprising a variety of communities in Britain and India, which had some demonstrable link with past actions and declarations. The Meerut statement was sanctioned by

the Labour Party Conference, and issued by the National Joint Council. This site of enunciation, therefore incorporates both the objectives of the Labour Party and those of the Labour Movement as a whole. The operation of the National Joint Council and its relation to the Labour Party as a whole was described in section 2.3.

The first structuring mechanism relevant to the National Joint Council's statement on Meerut concerns the range of constituencies and communities which the National Joint Council is likely to represent in making a statement on India. These were explored in relation to definitions of socialism in colonial relations in section 3.8, and in relation to more domestic defintions of socialism in section 3.4. Partly because of the influence of the trades unions in the National Joint Council, and partly because of the trade union connections of the Meerut prisoners, this statement described the Meerut prisoners as trade unionists. They were not, however, the kind of trade unionists the Labour Party approved of, because of their associations with the Communist Party.

At this point another structuring mechanism of an ideological nature comes into the statement. The Labour Party could not condone the actions of political institutions associated with the Communist Party, for reasons which are explored in sections 2.8.and 6.7 in which the Communist Party is demonstrated to be opposed to the claims of democracy made on behalf of the Labour Party. Unofficial statements did not necessarily need to state disapproval of the Communist Party. It therefore remains for the National Joint Council to support its constituency, trade unionism, but state its condemnation of the Communist Party. It gets out of this dilema by supporting the Meerut prisoners as citizens who were denied the rights of citizenship inscribed in legal practices, including the right to participate in trade union activity.

In addition to this, the Meerut statement is constrained by assessments of the nature of the audience to which it was addressed. One part of this audience

was the British trade union movement. The other consisted of Indian workers and those forces in India demanding independence. It was necessary for a statement issued under the authority of the Labour Party, to at least not deny a commitment to independence at the earliest possible moment, yet it was not openly able to support the cause of the insurrectionists in India. This was not true of unofficial statements of course.

Thus the National Joint Council managed to support the Meerut prisoners by designating them citizens deprived of rights, and support the cause of independence in terms of a constitutional settlement to be worked out in other statements and in its participation at the Round Table Conference. It was not able to support those who wished to throw the imperial power out forcebly through widespread insurrection.

All of these factors in combination meant that the statement on Meerut could not have been other than it was. The structuring factors were linked by their effects as blocking mechanisms at each stage. Each of the structuring factors acted upon the others to narrow down the field of possible options in the production of a statement. Ultimately, and considered in combination, these had the effect of constraints, so long as they themselves were not amenable to being opened to question. Constraints merely open up the general field and specify the terms of the debate.

The positions defining India fall into two broad categories if considered in terms of their constituencies. There were those which considered India to be an issue in terms of the position and condition of the workers. Then there were those which considered independence to be the most important issue. Most statements and the positions to which they could be reduced considered one or other of these issues strategic to a definition of the situation characterised as the 'Indian problem'. Each of these positions lends itself to definition by the various positions it attracted.

Some of the constraints under which India became an issue for the Labour Party and the office of Government, were set out above and in the introduction. The Labour Party was not, as it may be seen, wholly responsible for the definitions of India as a problem. An examination of two non Labour Party sites of enunciation, the Times and the Simon Commission indicate something of the nature of the debate associated with India outside the Labour Party and the specificity of Labour Party positions.

The Labour Party was required to work broadly within the findings and central problematics of the Indian Statutory (Simon) Commission. It was on the basis of the findings of this Commission that the party structured its greatest contribution to the constitutional settlement, the Round Table Conference. The Commission published its results in June 1930. Its central concern was to explain, what it considered to be, the 'complexity' of the Indian situation. It conducted an extensive investigation into the nature of the Indian population, its state of material development, and the multiplicity of political, social and religious influences. In the light of these findings it made certain recommendations in respect of the constitution. The bulk of the information came either from the 1921 Census of India or from selected informants. The Commission was guided by the idea that once the character of a population had been fully investigated it was possible to write for it an appropriate constitution. Because of its government sanction the Commission was necessarily an authoritative source of information on India which the Labour Party, as the government at the time of its publication, could not ignore.

The reporting of the Times on the Indian situation was also very much influenced by the pronouncements of the Statutory Commission. Whilst there are dangers in reducing a multiplicity and diversity of positions and statements such as those found in the Times, to one or two dimensions, it is possible to discern one or two general considerations which recur in Times reporting. The Times, like the

Statutory Commission was concerned to analyse the complexity of the situation in India in terms of its social, political and economic conditions. But unlike the Commission it did not need to reconcile this with a set of constitutional arrangements. The second central consideration concerned the problem of public order in the colony. The Times portrayed all kinds of political activity in terms of a formula which indicated that the central problem was a clash between security forces and forces of disruption and insurrection. The forces of disruption were variously described as nationalists and Congress supporters, (1/1/31 p.12) as revolutionaries (28/2/31 p.10) as Red Shirts (a militant Moslem group 12/1/31 p.12) and as Moslems and Hindus engaged in what was referred to as "communal" conflict (7/3/31 p.12). The Times's conception of authoritative voices in the Indian situation varied, but tended to emphasize Gandhi (30/3/31 p.12) as the leader of a particular kind of politics in the Congress, and European and business opinion (26/1/31 p.10).

Labour Party enunciations were opposed to the pronouncements of the Communist Party in Britain and its involvement with the international anti colonial pressure group, the League against Imperialism. The central consideration in the pronouncements of the Communist Party was to describe India as a revolutionary situation in which the political struggles were those of the masses of the people against the forces of imperialism and repression (Daily Worker 9/2/32 p.4). The agents of this struggle were variously described as "workers" (Daily Worker 19/3/31 p.3) and "peasants" (Daily Worker 1/1/31 p.1), or "masses" (Daily Worker 9/2/32 p.4). Divisions along religious or communal lines were considered incorrect. This was demonstrated in the Daily Worker which ran the headline "Hindus and Moslems unite to fight imperialism. Battle side by side." (1/2/32 p.4). Generally all activity whether nationalist or trade union based was described as part of this near revolutionary condition. Gandhi and the Congress leaders were denounced for perverting the revolutionary struggle and not representing the voice of

the Indian people, inscribed in revolution. (Daily Worker 6/2/31 p.3 and 25/3/31 p.3).

The League Against Imperialism was founded at an international conference in 1927 as an association of anti imperialist forces. At this point a number of prominent Labour Party members were involved, including Lansbury and Postgate as well as numerous trades union branches. As its eclecticism in the early days gave way to a more closely defined set of objectives, and hostility to Labour's colonial policy mounted, many Labour members left, Maxton of the Independent Labour Party was expelled, the Communist Party's application to affiliate was accepted, and the League joined the Labour Party's black list of proscribed organisations in 1929. (see section 2.8).

An important aspect of the League's political credentials was its association with the national bodies engaged in liberation and anti imperialist struggles. It had a particularly difficult relationship with the Indian National Congress. The League made an intervention into Indian politics by distinguishing the anti imperialist forces in the Congress, from those whom it considered accepted status as a Dominion in the British Empire by participating in the Round Table Conference. It denied that the Congress was representative of the 'voice' of India which must necessarily be anti imperialist and which, by implication, the League considered it was in a better position to represent.

When Gupta of the Congress was invited to address the world conference of the League in 1929 he carefully defined both the actions of the League and the basis upon which the Congress was prepared to co operate with it.

> "I am glad to assert that our League does not represent any vested interests. Its one aim is to remove from the world the rule of special interests, namely imperialism, and to replace it by the free republics of peoples. Its aim is to establish a social order based on co operation in place of

> domination ... I trust that the day is not distant when the nations of the world will emancipate themselves and live together like human beings and share this earth like brothers."
> (Gupta 1929 World Conference of the League Against Imperialism.

The Congress, in the light of the League's intervention in internal Indian affairs, was led to announce explicitly, that it did not necessarily accept the policy or methods of the League, although it agreed with its general orientation. It also asked the League to state its position on non communist members.

The key considerations of the Communist Party, the League Against Imperialism, the Times and the Statutory Commission define the political space within which the Labour Party operated in general terms. The Labour Party did not enunciate in isolation on the issue of India but was influenced by the enunciations of other institutions against which it defined itself.

This section has examined some of the general constraints within which statements on India were made, as well as the structuring mechanisms, which may, collectively, have the effect of constraints. To sum up, these are, the site of enunciation, voice (which denotes a relation to a representative function) the institutional conditions of authorisation of statements, community, constituency, audience and other ideological conditions in which statements are made. Of course, ideological conditions are implicated in the structuring factors just listed, but they are also ways of organising and linking the key concepts in a statement. It is now necessary to examine some of the positions offered to define India. As indicated earlier, these may be broadly divided into those which prioritised the conditions of Indian workers and those which prioritised independence.

4.2 Indian workers.

Struggles to define India in terms of the position of its workers were an extension of definitions of

socialism into imperial relations discussed in the last chapter. (see section 3.8) The positions which focus on Indian workers as a definition of India, each establish the right by which workers constituted this definition. Positions attached to this issue will be considered in terms of the ways in which they define workers.

Many definitions of India focusing on the position of workers defined them in terms of the conditions of poverty in which they lived and worked. One such position was registered in a statement in the Daily Herald which presented and commented on aspects of the findings of the Whitley Commission on Indian Labour (see section 4.7) which reported its findings in June 1931. Under the headline - "Scandal of Indian Wage Slavery". it stated.- "We are still responsible for India and for the condition of India. We cannot tolerate the continuence of the horror that is today the life of the Indian worker and his family". (Daily Herald 2/7/31). This related a story of appalling work and living conditions as constituting the right by which this community 'Indian wage labour' should have a privileged position in definitions of the situation in India. Poverty was the constituency of this statement and workers the community.

This position was accompanied by a set of policy proposals through which these conditions could be improved. It was also premised on a set of philosophical assumptions or ideologies of which it was the necessary outcome. The conditions of Indian workers was not only a challenge to the notion that India was capable of self government, a notion tied to a conception of development and civilization, they were also a challenge to the claims of Britain to be a civilized nation, as Britain presided over the misery and suffering on the Indian sub-continent. Responsibility and slavery are the key concepts around which this philosophical position was structured. The conceptualisation of civilization and its requirements in this manner was made more explicit in a statement in parliament which also defined workers as a privileged

community in definitions of the situation in India.

> "There are fifty million of the most degraded of humanity, the untouchables. It is really a standing scandal to civilization. We cannot claim were are a civilized race unless we are prepared to do much to alter the deplorable conditions..." (Williams 2/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1166)

This was structured by a notion that the existence of untouchables, not only reflected badly on the effectiveness of the British Labour movement but was unacceptable to the Labour Party as a way of being human.

A concern for the position of workers was often voiced in the context of a more general concern for the misery and suffering of the poor population of India. The statement in parliament referred to, only part of which is reproduced below, supported the contention that workers were a most urgent problem in India. It went on to focus on a category of people who were predominantly part of the peasantry, but making in-roads into the industrial labour force, untouchables, whose position was even worse than that of workers in general.

A statement issued as a pamphlet by the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda adopted the position that the condition of the Indian worker was central to a definition of the situation in that country. Introducing a resume of the findings of the Whitley Commission on their standards of life, it commented that this was an issue relevant to the Labour Movement because it threatened the standards of life of all western workers. The condition of Indian labour was thus considered to be of vital importance to the more affluent workers in imperial countries.

> "It is easier to maintain different wage levels in different countries than it is in different towns in the same country; but never the less any group of workers who accept lower standards of living for the same work than do those in other lands act as a drag on the latters progress... No Trade Union leader would rest content while there remained in his own country a great mass of unorganised, ignorant, under paid and exploited workers

> competing with his fellow unionists in the same labour market...Such a reservoir undoubtedly exists in India today; and so long as India remains a backward area, her workers illiterate unorganised and half starved so long will she remain a menace to the standards of life of the Western worker." (Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda undated circa 1932 The Indian Worker. p3-4).

This statement goes on to admit that the industrial population of India was only a fraction of the "Dumb, half starved millions" (p11) on whose behalf Gandhi spoke. This accepts that Gandhi was perhaps the most authoritative voice of India, but that the British Labour Movement had a right to speak on behalf of Indian workers because their positions were inextricably linked.

The joining of workers from the imperial nation with those from the colony as a single community on the grounds that both sought the same objects in a struggle for a higher living standard was sanctioned in the Labour Party's constitution.

> "To co-operate with the Labour and Socialist organisations in the Dominions and Dependencies with a view to promoting the purposes of the Party, and to take common action for the promotion of a higher standard of social and economic life for the working population of the respective countries." (Labour Party Counstitution and Standing Orders 1929. p3.)

This theme was expanded in section 3.8 which discussed the colonial dimensions of the Labour Party's Socialism. This pamphlet presumed there could well be a movement of capital towards cheaper sources of labour which would ultimately effect employment, and thus prosperity in a more expensive labour force. This point was also made by a Labour M.P in a parliamentary debate on India. "The Lancashire cotton operative cannot live in a loin cloth with a handful of rice for his food." (Hicks 3/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1365). The implication of this was that British workers had developed in terms of material culture beyond their Indian counterparts.

The unity in struggle between British and Indian workers, the pamphlet admits, had been temporarily disrupted by the diversion of workers political energies

into the cause of the nationalist movement. This is a clear subordination of independence struggles to a traditional conception of trade unionism.

> "When the political aims for which they have worked are attained, when their thirst for that measure of national independence essential to national dignity and self respect is satisfied, then surely it is reasonable to hope that their energies will be turned naturally from political into economic channels and the all too inadequate strength of the Indian Trade Union Movement will cease to be squandered on aims which only very indirectly concern their standards of living." (Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda undated circa 1932 The Indian Worker. p11)

This assessment was conditioned by ideological assumptions about legitimacy in trade union practice. Whilst it was considered legitimate for colonial labour forces to participate in liberation struggles against the imperial power, this was a distraction from more legitimate struggles which were narrowly defined as concerning standards of life. This statement is particularly interesting because unlike other descriptions of Indian workers it admits their involement in nationalist struggles even though they are presented as a circumstantial diversion.

The ideological conditions just outlined are a way of organising the key concepts outlined in this position. They constitute a mode of explanation at a philosophical level, of why the statement could not have been other than it was, its conditions of singular emergence. This connection may be demonstrated by considering the kind of statement which could be produced by a different set of ideological conditions. Suppose for instance, that a statement proclaimed that the struggles of the Indian workers were nothing to do with the British Trades Union Congress, and that any involvement in such issues was an unwarranted form of imperialist interference. The ideological conditions in which such a statement might be produced would be concerned with the autonomy of national labour forces, in terms of conditions and wage levels. It would insist on the formation of

capital within national boundaries. It might suggest that Indian workers and their organisation should have complete self determination, and that the support of the British Trade Union Movement was little more than a redefinition of the imperial relation.

Another example of the link between a statement and the ideological conditions of its emergence may be demonstrated in changing the statement to suggest that it was the task of Indian Trade Unionism to participate in widescale political violence aimed, not only at the destruction of the imperial connection but the overthrow of the Congress's authority. Such a statement would have different ideological conditions than the one examined because it would be offering a different definition of legitimacy in trade unionism. It would be suggesting that it was not the task of trade unions to agitate for improved conditions at work once imperial domination had been terminated, but that it was the task of trade unions to use all the means at their disposal to install a government which would legislate in favour of their interests. These are similar to the kinds of ideological conditions from which a statement of the Communist Party on India might be produced. The ideologies are ways of defining and organising the key concepts in a statement, and statements are in turn the material from which their ideological conditions may be derived.

In addition to its ideological conditions, the statement contained in the pamphlet "The Indian Worker" was also a product of certain other factors. It had a relation to its site of enunciation, in this case the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda. It was the product of the specific aims and outlook of this organisation. These were described in section 3.1 in which it was pointed out that it was the aim of the Society to diffuse the work of the New Fabian Research Bureau which defined its role, as the translation of 'socialist thinking' into concrete legisative forms.

The statement was also the product of the manner

in which the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda reached decisions on what sort of statement it should authorise. This process is not apparent in its documentation. It would also be expected that this statement would be consistent with others issued by the Society on similar, or related matters. Finally, this statement would also be the product of past concerns for a particular constituency and community. The general orientation of the Society was towards the position of workers in Britain. It was, therefore, perfectly consistent with the aims of the Society that this concern should be extended to India, especially given the concern of the Labour Party for the position of colonial labour and the relation which existed between the Labour Party and the Society (see section 3.1). The constituencies to which this statement addressed itself are illiteracy, poverty and exploitation, conditions which manifest themselves in the lives of the Indian worker.

A different relationship between British and Indian workers was expressed in a party conference statement on India, in which the interests of Indian and British workers were portrayed as antagonistic to each other. Like the previous statement, it does not deny that the interests of British and Indian workers were linked.

> "I believe that if you want to get public opinion in this country favourable on this question (Indian independence) you will have to convince the people that there is something to be gained by being favourable to it. In the year 1930 India took from Lancashire four thousand million square yards of cotton cloth; in other words they provided for every man woman and child in the Lancashire cotton industry three days work a week on a ten hour day. Last year it had fallen to about one million square yards..." (Singleton 1932 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p178)

The position implicit in this statement is that the political actions of the Indian workers, engaged in civil disobedience, were having an adverse effect on the living standards of British workers. Indian workers were thus seen as a separate community associated with a different set of constituencies.

The activity portrayed as trade in this statement was in fact a feature peculiar to the colonial relation. The Indian cotton industry was encouraged to supply British spinning industries with raw material and not to manufacture its own cloth, but to buy it from Britain. It was this particular facet of the colonial relation which was under attack in the foreign cloth boycott, one of the main actions of the civil disobedience campaign. Singleton's position was, therefore, conditioned by an acceptance of the legitimacy of the imperial relationship, which had brought such severe conditions of exploitation such as those described in the Whitley Commission, and the relative affluence of the British worker which was built upon the spoils of imperialism. Discourses on social imperialism had been preaching this doctrine since the turn of the century and it appears from this statement that such a position had entered the ideology of the Labour Party.

Statements defining India in terms of either the position of workers, or independence, were often statements of a priority rather than an exclusion of a particular issue. Quite often both issues were implicated in a position, one of which was presented as decisive in a definition of India. Independence and the position of workers were closely related in the case of the Meerut Prisoners.

The Meerut Prisoners were a group of twenty eight Indians and three Englishmen charged of conspiracy to deprive the King Emperor of his sovereignty over British India. The charge referred to the apparent orchestration of disruptive anti-British activity in the industrial centres of Calcutta and Bombay. The defendants were transferred to a jail in Meerut, hundreds of miles away from the scenes of their crimes. First imprisoned in 1929 it took years before they were brought to trial. The various descriptions of the Meerut prisoners as trade unionists or as nationalists, indicate the kind of issue in which they were considered to be involved.

As such the Meerut Prisoners were a site of struggle for competing definitions of the situation in India.

From the time of the Meerut arrests, the Labour Party was under pressure to comment on them. Policy resolutions presented on behalf of the National Executive Committee on India omitted to mention them from 1929 until 1932. This exclusion from party policy declarations did not go un-noticed.

> "I want to follow on in an expression of regret that the mover of this resolution (Lansbury) did not in his speech give us an assurance on the question of the Meerut Prisoners...One of the things which the last Labour Government could have done, and did not do was to free the Meerut Prisoners and the other political prisoners who have been in gaol for this long time without trial..." (Jagger 1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party. p217).

Pressure was also being exerted on the Trade Union Congress from member unions who were highly critical of the silence of the Labour Party and the Congress on the Meerut prisoners.

> "Judging from a letter received from a branch of the Electrical Trades Union, branches of affiliated organisations are still being circularised in a manner implying criticism of the Council's (General Council of the Trades Union Congress) action re the Meerut case." (National Joint Council 25/10/32 Minutes. p6)

When an official statement was finally made on the Meerut issue, it came from the National Joint Council on behalf of the Labour movement as a whole. It is significant that the official statement on the Meerut prisoners (see section 4.5) was made by the National Joint Council. The functions of this council, described in section 2.3 were to present positions on behalf of the main enunciative institutions in the Labour movement, the National Executive Committee,the Consultative Committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party and the General Council of the Trades Union Congress. Its job was to "consider matters affecting the Labour movement as a whole" and to "secure a common policy" on questions "effecting the workers as producers, consumers and citizens". (National Joint Council

25/11/31 Minutes).

Alexander Gossip, speaking on behalf of his union at Labour Party Conference took the position that the Meerut prisoners were militant trade unionists rightly concerned with nationalist struggles. Gossip was a member of the Communist Party but a constituent part of the Labour conference as his union representative.

> "What is the crime which is charged against these men? Trying to get rid of the sovereignity of the King in India. Is there anybody here who thinks we have any right whatever to be in India? We are not concerned with the sovereignity of King George or anyone else, but we are concerned as representatives of the organised working class in seeing that our brothers and sisters in India have the opportunity to be properly organised into militant Trade Unions."
> (Gossip, 1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.169).

This statement did not seek to separate the struggles of trade unionism from the struggles of nationalism, or the interests of the Indian from the British worker. It was structured by the idea that imperialism was a form of exploitation. Nationalist struggles against imperialism were, therefore a completely legitimate form of political activity which the British Labour movement should support without qualification. It was Britain's activity in India which was being described as illegitimate, not the anti imperialist activities of the nationalists. This was based on the consideration that the political objectives of nationalism and trade unionism were similar and that exploitation whether domestic or foreign was a legitimate target for political agitation.

Brockway, at the 1931 Annual Conference made a similar stand to that of Gossip except that he focused on the methods of nationalist activity, rather than its objectives in establishing legitimacy. Brockway considered that the Meerut prisoners' actions should be supported because they were not communists and had not been charged with overt acts of violence. Communism and

violence were associated with a mode of political action which he considered the Labour Party should not support. In doing this Brockway accepted some of the principles of official Labour Party statements on India.

This section has presented some of the positions offered to define workers as the key issue in the Indian problem. To divide statements into those which consider workers the key factor in definitions of the Indian situation, and those which, consider independence to be the issue, may appear at first a confusing distinction to make. In many statements both issues were mentioned, and one prioritised. Both independence and the condition of Indian workers involved a re-formulation of the imperial relation. Independence was to convert an empire into a Commonwealth, and the condition of Indian workers was taken up on their behalf by the British Labour movement.

In all the (unofficial) statements presented in this section, workers and trade unionists were presented as discursive communities. Is it not possible to make a distinction between the various positions claiming to represent these communities? It is not possible using the concept community alone, but constituency may have more to offer. The statement by the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda presented poverty as its key constituency. Independence was a secondary constituency presented as the solution to poverty amongst Indian workers.

In the Daily Herald statement and the contribution to the 1931 debate on India, the constituency poverty was also presented as the key issue defining the position of workers in India. The statement presented from the 1932 debate at conference, however, presents the constituency poverty in combination with another, competition between British and Indian workers arising out of the differences in their material standards of living. This is in opposition to the constituency of the document presented by the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda which presented poverty and independence, in combination

with a need for co operation between British and Indian workers, arising from differences in living standards. Rather than respond to the differences between British and Indian workers with repression, the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda was in favour of co operation to bring Indian workers up to the same living standards as their British counterparts.

By using constituency as an analytic device as well as community it has been possible to define more closely what it is that is being represented in the adoption of a community. It has been possible to see that representing workers has involved such diverse notions as competition, co operation, poverty and independence. So far it has been possible to construct some of the unofficial definitions of India through the position of Indian workers and the constituencies associated with them. It has been possible to show that even an apparently limited issue, like Indian workers, is capable of numerous constructions. It is hardly necessary to point out their diversity, but the fact that they all came from the Labour Party has important implications for the party's ideological diversity.

4.3 Independence.

Because independence was strategic to the colonial construction of socialism it was discussed in general terms in chapter three. The Round Table Conference was the Labour Party's official attempt to deal with the demand for independence being pressed from India. Independence raises many questions concerning the nature of the Indian political community and its representation, and is discussed again in chapter five. In this section it is proposed to examine some of the key contending positions offered to define independence as an issue.

One of the positions outlined in a parliamentary debate on India argued that India did not have the right to independence. It proposed that because Britain had demonstrated an ability to rule India which India was not able to replace, then the colonial relation should

be maintained.

The legitimacy of the colonial relation was produced by a number of factors. Firstly, it was considered that Britain had established her right to govern India in accordance with universal principles enshrined in political philosophy.

> "We entered into our Indian empire by two very sound legal methods of acquisition - the right of conquest and the right of purchase. The bulk of the empire has been acquired by these two measures, and having so secured it we have developed it to our own advantage."
> (Wise 3/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1360)

Conquest was the method of acquisition of territory set out in Maine's Ancient Law (1965 p.145). The acquisition of territory carried with it the automatic right to authority over the people who lived in that territory.

This position was also conditioned by the consideration that the exploitative nature of the colonial relation was legitimate. "We are in India for our own good." (Wise 3/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1360). This was part of the contract upon which the colonial relation was thought to be based. In return for the gains to Britain's economy and her people, India was offered various benefits, including good government and administration. Until this ceased to be the case "that contract must surely remain valid." (Wise 3/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1360).

> "Until it can be shown that there is no other nation capable of ruling that peninsula to better advantage than Great Britain, Britain should remain in the position she has won for herself."
> (Wise 3/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1360)

Britain's right to rule was at least partly conditioned by the consideration that India was incapable of self government. It was stated as a matter of historical fact that India had always been ruled by invading "races".

> "Therefore it would seem according to history that India is fated to be ruled by some form of outside race. The ideal outside race for that rule is one which is constantly recruited from overseas and which does not have to make its home in the

> country which it rules. In other words Great Britain does seem almost to be intended by providence to hold dominion over the Indian empire, and Great Britain is more fitted to do that than is any other nation."
> (Wise 3/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1360)

In fact the speaker in this case expressed doubts about whether India would ever be capable of self government.

Looking at the concepts expressed in this statement it is possible to discern the nature of the ideologies which must have been involved in its production. Ideology in this context refers to the arrangement and linking of the key concepts. These are rights, obligations, contract, disability, race and civilization. This statement would seem to suggest that self government was an ability embodied in a set of racial characteristics, an ability which India did not possess for reasons to do with race and the state of her civilization. But Britain, even when compared with other developed nations, was more "fitted" to this function. This represents little more than a statement on behalf of the Labour Party of some of the principles embodied in nineteenth century anthropology, which was based on the construction of a hierarchy of races in terms of their ability to develop and support a material culture. The existence of such a position in Labour Party statements, despite the official view of the necessity to renounce the colonial bond, demonstrates something of the eclectic nature of the ideologies upon which party positions were based.

The actual statement in which this position was enunciated was constrained by its conditions of authorisation. The fact that it was offered to the parliamentary Labour Party demonstrates the party's lack of control over statements made on its behalf in parliament. It was also constrained by the need for continuity with other statements. For this reason it was expressed as a view on independence. The debate of which this statement was a part, concerned the introduction of the white paper on India which followed the conclusion of the second Round Table Conference. (This is the subject of chapter

5). Its main concern was to decide how and when Indian independence should be granted. The statements constituting the debate were offering opinions on these issues, and the statement presented was no exception. It saw independence as only a very long term possibility. The view that Indians were not racially suited to self government implied that, like the process of race formation, it would take literally epochs for this disability to be overcome. Other contributions to the debate presented a variety of positions ranging from immediate independence to the need to begin a process which would lead to eventual self government. The necessity to enunciate in this way was imposed by parliamentary procedure, and by the consideration that Britain was the authoritative voice in the Indian situation. Indianswere presented as merely passive subjects to be discussed with no right to a voice in deliberations concerning their future.

A second position defining India in terms of independence considered that India should not only be awarded independence but that a constitution should be imposed by Britain. This position was the result of the notion that independence should be defined in terms of the quality of the democracy it produced, rather than through the process of consultation with India. Official Labour Party policy favoured the process of consultation.

> "They (the British Parliament) must lay down the law .... rely upon this house to produce the constitution for countries over which we have at some time or other extended our sway. We managed to do the right thing in Canada ...."
> (Wedgewood 2/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1149)

This position presented the process of constitution making as a matter of technical expertise in which Britain was a recognised expert in the "Budding off of free peoples" (Wedgewood 2/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1149). This tended to imply not only that constitution writing was a matter of technique, but that its relation to the people for which it was intended was merely a matter of horticultural expertise. No question arose of the suitability or acceptability of a particular

constitution for the people and conditions of India. Britain,as the mother of Parliaments was considered the best qualified authority for this task. This position did not question India's right or ability to be 'budded off'.

This position was also a result of the idea that whilst India was not incapable of having a democratic constitution imposed, it was incapable of reaching an internal consensus about the kind of constitutional arrangement it wanted. This was the product of a belief that India was a deeply divided society incapable of consensus, yet at the same time not incapable of the kind of consensus required to be an independent nation. The potential existence of a general political will must have been a requirement of nationhood, yet it was not considered problematic in this statement.

Because of an insistence on certain standards in democracy, this position took issue with the federal solution proposed for India by the Statutory Commission and the Round Table Conference. It considered that the federal solution was a form of democracy which was inferior to that of the British colonial administration. "I dislike the thought of India, my democratic India being converted into an oligarchy of Indian Princes." (Wedgewood 2/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1149). He considered that the British Government stood for a truer democracy "than you will get from rich Indians." This was a criticism of the Labour Party's policy on independence for representing the ruling interests of rich Indians.

A further consideration structuring the position expressed by Wedgewood was the idea that Gandhi represented the authoritative voice of India. Wedgewood's concern for a wider franchise than India was being offered, fits in with his concern for the masses of the people whom Gandhi represented.

> "There is a man who ... is trying to break down caste and says that the worst caste is the division white and coloured. He knows that that can only be broken down if the white man has to go to the coloured

> man as his master. His view of democracy is not to govern India, but to break down class distinctions between mankind and create a real brotherhood."
> (Wedgewood 2/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1149)

Gandhi was considered not only the voice of the majority of people in India and thus alone more representative than the delegates at the Round Table Conference, but was also considered to be a voice in favour of a human brotherhood.

The key concepts in this statement were democracy, franchise and brotherhood. They were organised around the consideration that Britain was superior in the organisation of democracy and that she was more truly in tune with the requirements of the people of India than they were themselves. Wedgewood considered Britain would be able to construct a constitution which reflected the political will of India with a heavy weighting towards those masses on whose behalf Gandhi spoke. This may be seen as another dimension of the kind of imperial arrogance involved in Britain's insistence that she could govern India more fairly and justly than India could govern herself. Britain was presented by wedgewood as the guarantor of certain standards of government thought to be universally valid and acceptable ways of living.

Another position, also stated in a parliamentary debate on India, expressed the view that India should be progressively awarded self government as Indians became tutored in the practices it entailed. Attlee suggested that the federal solution put by the Statutory Commission, to explore which the Round Table was constructed, was an adequate form of democracy for India in the first instance. It was no doubt considered that this could be extended into more acceptable formswhen India acquired its practices.

The federal solution was considered a form of government appropriate to the "State of mind of the people for whom the constitution is intended" (Attlee 2/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1120). Fitness for independence was thus considered to be at least partly

a mental property held by peoples collectively. It also considered that fitness was something which could be progressively developed. The practice of community, of collective living within certain structures could be acquired through a process of growth and development.

This position was also a product of the consideration that the participation of Indians in the settlement was more important than the nature of the settlement. Attlee considered the Round Table Conference to represent, broadly, the voice of the Indian people. His only reservation on this issue was indicated in his position that there should be safeguards for the "economically and educationally backward" (Attlee 2/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1120). He may have considered that these sections of the population were unrepresentable except through special consideration by the imperial power.

The ideological implications behind this position were that the Indian people were in a state of mental development in which they were not fully ready for independence. This might have been deduced from India's state of material and industrial development. Or, it might have been based on an assessment of the possibility of a single political community being developed out of a diversity of interests. Independent self government was being presented as a practice which could be acquired under the tutorship of the imperial power. Indians were considered to be backward in this respect rather than for ever incapable of self government.

The idea that the Indian people were thought collectively to possess a "state of mind" which made only a limited form of self government possible, or appropriate, in combination with the contention that the diverse nature of her potential political community made it difficult to design an independence constitution, were not in themselves constraints. They may however, have the effect of constraints when considered as part of a chain of events which were subject to the constraints imposed by repeated government pledges that India should eventually have independence, and the enunciations of the

Statutory Commission which suggested that a federal structure was the only reasonable form of government which an independent India could have.

A different position was expressed in a parliamentary statement by another Labour M.P., Buchanan. He took the position that independence was India's right, to be siezed immediately from the imperial authority. The form that the independent government should take was a matter for India, not Britain, to decide. This represents a challenge to the idea that Britain should be the awarding authority in any independence arrangements.

Buchanan considered that the colonial relationship was an illegitimate one in the first place.

> "What is the use in saying we have freed India from famine and given her justice and peace when all the time we have been thinking of the commercial domination and prosperity of Britain and not India's good."
> (Buchanan 3/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1356)

This was based on the philosophical consideration that the benefits which 'civilization' bestowed on India were irrelevant in the face of the exploitation involved in the colonial encounter. For this reason Buchanan considered the imperial bond should be speedily severed.

Another element of this ppsition was the idea that the legitimacy of the claim that Britain should withdraw from India was underwritten by the challenge to imperialism which came from the civil disobedience campaign. This was not cited by Buchanan as a nationalist but as a working class action against imperialism.

> "The working classes in India begin to organise and make economic demands and these men are not only put in gaol they are kept there. They are regarded as a danger to British commercialism and British Imperialism. The policy is to keep them from organising the working classes in India in order that they may demand not merely political liberation but economic liberation."
> (Buchanan 3/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col1356)

This indicated that civil disobedience was a challenge to the capitalism implicit in British imperialism, and

implied that nationalism and trade union struggles had something in common. This was reaffirmed in Buchanan's assessment of the authoritative voices in the Indian situation, the working classes and masses who had much in common with the working classes in Britain.

> "Imperial Britain has never,.... conceded anything to any democracy without the people having to fight and struggle for it. In India the working classes will have to fight.... against the will of Britain, so that one day India will be free. The great masses of the common people in India who have the same aspirations as the masses of the common people in Britain, will one day be united and we shall see both India and Britain economically free."
> (Buchanan 3/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1356)

The ideological considerations upon which this was based indicate more than an orientation towards the masses in India. It implied that unless they organised themselves and struggled, they would be awarded secondary status, in relation to other groups, in an independence constitution, by those who negotiated on their behalf. It was only through struggle that a truly representative form of independent government could be achieved. The struggle for independence was also presented as a class struggle in which a better economic position might be achieved.

This position was the product of the consideration that India was ready for self government and had the right to seize from Britain that which many thought was Britain's to award. As evidence of this readiness Buchanan insisted that India was the home of a civilization predating Britain's.

> "It is not fair of us to come here with a certain superiority that we have arrogated to ourselves, and to say that the Indians cannot be made capable and are not capable even now of governing themselves if given the choice."
> (Buchanan 3/12/31 Hansard vol.260 col.1356)

Because this statement establishing India's ability to be self governing was premised on the suggestion that

she had an ancient civilization, it does not represent a break with the philosophical equation of self government with civilization. Indeed it retains a conception of civilization as a qualification for self government. Civilization in this construction refers less to an industrial material development than a notion of execellence in arts and culture.

This position was similar to some of the positions expressed under the enunciative authority of the Communist Party. Generally the Communist Party considered that independence could be won only through mass struggles. Any level of co operation with imperialism, such as the Round Table Conference, was considered extraneous to any definition of independence. Many communist positions also asserted that the revolutionary movement was beyond the control of the non-violent movement, thereby denouncing the Congress in general, and Gandhi in particular, as the legitimate voice of the Indian people. Under the head line "Down with Gandhi Cry of Worker" the Daily Worker carried the following statement.

> "Gandhi got a reception very different from the one he is used to when, forsaking for once the society of his merchant and mill owner friends he went .... to address a worker's meeting in the mill district of Bombay."
> (Daily Worker 18/3/31)

Definitions of independence in terms of civilization did not feature in this kind of account.

In summing up the positions cited to illustrate independence as both a constituency and a key issue in definitions of the 'Indian situation', it is hardly necessary to point out that they were diverse. It is this diversity which is the key to the discursive construction of the Labour Party. The range of positions chosen were all stated in parliament in the 1931 debate on India which followed the close of the Round Table Conference. They were all a function of the same site of enunciation. Parliament produced a certain kind of statement because of its procedure and the practice of debate. It did not produce a certain kind of position.

These positions were not exclusively expressed in Parliament, but are also to be found in the documentation of other enunciative sites.

These positions differ in the manner in which they present the right to independence, and the time scale over which independence was to be awarded. The position expressed in the statement made by Buchanan considered that, by right of the exploitative nature involved in the colonial relation, independence should be seized immediately by the Indian people. He did not even accept that indppendence was something to be conceded by Britain. Buchanan's community was the Indian people as a whole in which workers were a priority.

This was in opposition to the position stated by Wise who considered that by right of racial development Britain should continue to rule India, as independence was a matter of a time scale associated with the epochs of race formation, rather than a matter of learning how to operate a constitutional apparatus. The community, in this case, was the totality of the Indian people as if they were an obvious political community, even though this was, as demonstrated in chapter five, problematic.

Wedgewood, on the other hand, who had been Secretary of State for India under the Labour administration (1929 to 1931), took the position that whilst Indians had an almost immediate right to independence they did not have the right or the ability to specify the constitutional form it should take. Wedgewood's opposition to the 'federal solution' added to his belief that Indians would impose a form of representation which did not favour the entire political community. Wedgewood's constituency was a definition of democracy in combination with a speedy independence, even though this went against the spirit of the Anglo-Indian co operation of the Round Table Conference.

Finally, Attlee saw independence as an immediate necessity, even to the extent that it was better to award it by means of the 'federal solution' which he

admitted was far from satisfactory, than not to award it. He expressed the opinion that this might provide a basis from which a more satisfactory form of representation could develop. Attlee's and Wedgewood's conception of independence was premised on a fuller definition of citizenship than others which had so far been advanced. Attlee's community was the totality of citizens, and his constituency a form of independence with a form of citizenship as an eventual right of all the Indian people.

The sections which follow deal with the positions which were sanctioned as official party policy on India, and attempt to establish which of the terms, definitions and positions offered to the Labour Party were accepted, and which were rejected. The section begins with a statement on the colonies which is important for its exclusion of India. This general statement on the colonies is included because it presents a definition of readiness for independence and an official Labour view of the empire as a whole.

4.4. Official Statements: the Colonies.

The Labour Party policy report "The Colonies", prepared by the Imperial Advisory Committee and presented by the National Executive Committee to the 1933 Annual Conference where it was adopted as Labour Party policy, is a statement of the requirements of independence. It presents, in its discussion of the different stages of readiness of various parts of the empire, a definition of fitness for independence. Although India was not included in its formulations it must have been subject to the same considerations which placed it in a separate category, not part of the colonial empire, and yet not part of the self governing dominions. India was, of course, part of the colonial empire but was treated separately not because it was thought to have fulfilled the criteria necessary for independence, but because of the British Governments commitment to independence for India. The pamphlet thus took up the position that

India was ready for independence as soon as a suitable constitution could be worked out. Its central position was to pose independence as a matter of development.

This pamphlet was the product of a number of considerations. It was structured by an assessment of the empire as a British responsibility, whilst at the same time condemning the exploitation which was involved in the colonial relation. This is implied in the following statement:-

> "The serious responsibility for the welfare of these many millions of peoples which rest on the British electorate and on the governments they appoint has never been adequately recognised by the British people. In territories where there has been a self conscious and vigorous white minority, expropriation of native lands and exploitation of native labour have been permitted and defended by successive British Governments. The methods of our capitalist system have been transported overseas and tribal and family life have been broken up....."
> (The Labour Party 1933 The Colonies. p.3)

If the empire was the responsibility of the British people and their government, then it follows that it was Britain's job to design the conditions in which this would cease to be the case. The statement suggests that it was British capitalism which produced the complexities of the colonial relation so often referred to in debates about independence. Capitalism and exploitation, responsibility and welfare were the key concepts in this part of the statement. Philosophically this was upholding one aspect of the colonial relation, responsibility, whilst seeking to end that part associated with the effects of the exploitation of capital. The Labour Party's empire was being quite carefully defined in this statement.

Stating its objectives as "Socialism and self government" (p.4), the statement went on to set out its policy objectives in terms of public works programmes, state ownership and industrial and agricultural development in combination with education programmes which aimed at self government. This was conditioned by a particular

conception of development which collapsed industrial, political and social structures into a concept of culture. Culture became an index and a way of describing multifarious dimensions of development. "Generally speaking, however, there is an obvious connection between the industrial and social structure of a dependency and its political development." (p.17) Dependencies were divided into categories depending on their closeness to European culture. They were divided into those of "European culture", those of "Oriental culture" and those "Inhabited mainly by people of primitive culture". (p.17) These categories were presented as indexing a hierachy of readiness for independence.

Those peoples who were of primitive culture were thought to be at the earliest stage in the development process and furthest away from independence. They presented "the most urgent colonial problem" (p.17). Those of Oriental culture were in areas of the world which were in the process of industrial development, like India. Independence in such colonies was only a matter of a little further development, but it was not simply a matter of industrialisation and a western life-style. Independence was also related to the "Government of their country on modern lines" (p.6) and the peoples ability to "Control by democratic parliamentary institutions the intricate mechanisms of the modern state. (p.6) British parliamentary styles of government were also considered part of a definition of fitness for self government. Those of European culture "language, religion and industry" (p17) were less of a colonial problem. Many of these, which included the inhabitants of the Seychelles and Falkland Islands, spoke French or English. "No question arises of natives" (p17). The possession of a European language appears also to be part of a definition of development away from the 'native' state.

In examining the ideological features of the space created by these conditions, it appears that the Labour Party officially upheld the perspective of imperialist discourses by considering independence to be a feature

of European culture, the pinnacle of civilization. Culture was constructed in terms of language and life-style. This may be seen as a construction of the concept development, when considered in combination with the requirements of industrialisation and a certain style of government based on Westminster. Many of the debates on India offered such definitions as a way of deciding whether India was fit for self government, yet India was explicitly excluded from this official statement about the conditions in which independence might be awarded.

> "The British Empire includes Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the self governing Dominions, India, the colonial empire and mandated territories.... This statement of policy is concerned only with.... the colonial empire."
> (Labour Party 1933 The Colonies. p.3)

This statement is significant for its failure to include India in a definition of the 'colonial problem'. Even so this picks up on many of the factors described as a stumbling-block to Indian independence such as the need for industrial development. It accepts that India's status was closer to a dominion than a colony.

"The Colonies" constituencies were culture, development and civilization. Its communities were citizens and workers. Whilst excluding India from its formulations, it maintained many of the considerations concerning the need for development towards independence expressed by Wise in the debate on India in Parliament in 1931. (see section 4.3)

The next section deals with the Meerut prisoners. This is a significant issue, combining as it does, issues of independence and defence of trade unionists. Like the statement on the colonies, it was one of the Labour Party's few official statements regarding India, apart from the Conference resolutions examined in chapter two as illustrations of the ways in which such statements were arrived at. (see section 2.5)

4.5 Official Statements: The Meerut Prisoners.

As demonstrated in the sections 4.2 and 4.3, the Labour Party was under pressure to include the Meerut prisoners in its definition of India. It did so in a particular way. Statements in support of the prisoners began to appear in conference resolutions by 1932 (see section 2.5) and a pamphlet was brought out under the authorisation of the National Joint Council in 1933 called "Meerut: Release the Prisoners".

The central position adopted in the pamphlet was that the Meerut case demonstrated that the operation of British justice in India did not take cognizance of the fundamental rights of citizenship. The British administration was thus accused of not observing normal human rights, and the quality of the colonial relation was put into question. This is clear from the opening statements of the pamphlet written in the form of a foreward by Walter Citrine. He described the case as an "almost unique example of the laws delays." which put into question:- "The administration of British justice in India, the rights of political prisoners, freedom of opinion, and the impartiality of the Indian courts." (1933 p.2). Citrine was most concerned about the prisoners rights as citizens which he considered had been denied.

> "There is ample evidence in these pages to show that the Meerut prisoners were deprived of fundamental and elementary rights as British citizens without any overt acts of unlawful character being proved against them." (Citrine 1933 Meerut: Release the Prisoners p.2)

In support of this claim the bulk of the pamphlet concerned itself with setting out the judicial procedure adopted in the case. The outline for the pamphlet came from an analysis of the trial documents made by the Haldane Club for the Labour Party. The suggestion that the Meerut prisoners had been deprived of "fundamental" rights of citizenship was supported by the following evidence.. Refusal of trial by jury, the two and a half year period of the trial; the disproportionate amount

of the trial occupied by the prosecution in which it sought to establish that the intentions of the accused were motivated by their commitment to the causes of nationalism and communism. Classical texts from Communist and nationalist writings were brought in to demonstrate the kinds of principles the accused subscribed to. Most of the prosecution's evidence, it was claimed, would be inadmissible in a British court. The prosecution claimed that the accused had participated in an anti-British conspiracy with a host of co-conspirators which it declined to indentify. The pamphlet considered there was no evidence of such a conspiracy.

The pamphlet also claimed that the acts for which the prisoners were being tried, that is speeches, writing in newspapers, demonstrations and strikes were all conducted within the limits which the "law of India allows for working class political activity". (p.6) Finally it was claimed that the nature and severity of the sentences was out of step with the imputed crimes.

> "The whole proceedings from beginning to end are utterly indefensible, and constitute something in the nature of a judicial scandal ... Only on political grounds can it be assumed that it was necessary to stage a state trial over the activities of a few men, none of whose efforts could have ever been presumed as probable of becoming a danger to the state."
> (National Joint Council 1933 Meerut: Release the Prisoners. p.8)

This position was structured by the nature of the philosophical problem it was posing. It was suggesting that in the normal course of events, British justice properly,administered, observed a conception of citizenship rights. British justice was normally a guarantee of these rights. In its failure to follow the usual procedure, the trial had flouted the rights associated with British citizenship in the colony. These rights were frequently suspended in certain parts of India by special ordinances. These were issued as part of a procedure for maintaining civil order. The Labour Party had not flinched from using these mechanisms, and suspending civil rights,

during its period as the government of India (1929-31). As far as this statement was concerned citizenship consisted in the right to be tried only for actions which fell outside the law of the land, to be tried by jury for 'acts' rather than imputed motive, and to be tried in line with certain standards of evidence.

It may be said that the constituency of this position, made accessible through the statement presented, is citizenship and the rights upon which it was constructed. The following statements make community and constituency accessible for analysis.

> "It is true that several of the accused were well known communists or active members of the communist auxiliary organisation "The Worker's and Peasant's Party." Others were associated with trade unions which were formed in opposition to the original bona fide trade union organisations because of the latter's reluctance to adopt the methods of the general strike (which, incidentally at the time of the arrests was not illegal). Trade union activities formed the bulk of the evidence of "acts" against the accused and of those 'incomparably the most important activities were the strikes'." (National Joint Council 1933 Meerut: Release the Prisoners. p.6)

In this statement the Labour Party chose not to state its support for either non bona fide trade unionists or communists. Instead it chose to uphold their rights as citizens to conduct their political activities within the structures of the laws of India.

Although the pamphlet presents Meerut as a problem concerning trade unionists and communists, it is obvious from the nature of the charge brought against them that the issue was really involvement in civil disobedience rather than the kind of trade union activity the Labour Party supported. Trade union activity might have been the method of the Meerut prisoners, but civil disobedience and anti-British agitation was its object. It is obvious now that the Labour Party did not feel that it was able to officially support anti-British agitiation. Indeed it was a party to the government of India, through the constraints imposed by statesmanship. The National Joint

Council, instead of supporting the objects of struggle of the Meerut prisoners, chose instead to support them as trade unionists who had acted within the law even if the legitimacy of this kind of trade unionism was put in doubt by its association with communism and the use of the general strike.

Officially the Labour Party appears to have gone to great lengths to separate the activities with which it associated itself, trade unionism, from the activities of the civil disobedience campaign. This was contrary to the position expressed by sections of the Communist Party, which presented such struggles as one insurrectionary initiative against imperialism. If the official statement on Meerut is compared with the unofficial ones offered to the Labour Party, certain important similarities and differences emerge.

The description of the Meerut prisoners as citizens who had been deprived of their rights, was at odds with the definitions offered in section 4.2 in the references back to the National Executive's Report to the 1931 conferernce. These were objecting to the executive's failure to deal with the Meerut prisoners. The references back variously described the Meerut prisoners as anti imperialists (Brockway) whose legitimacy was inscribed in the fact that they were non-communist and used non-violent methods: as militant trade unionists (Gossip) engaged in a single struggle against imperialism and capitalism: and as political prisoners (Jagger)like the many others in India picked up under special ordinances used to impose imperial rule long after consensus had been withdrawn. (The Labour Party was fully implicated in this as the government of India from 1929 to 1931).

Unlike these unofficial positions, the National Joint Council's statement did not really concern itself with the legitimacy of the struggles of the Meerut prisoners it was more concerned with the way they had been dealt with, and the fact that they had acted within the law. The reasons why such a position was adopted was outlined in section 4.1 It was structured by the

Labour Party's anti communism and reluctance to openly support the activities of the civil disobedience campaign as well as a variety of other structuring mechanisms and constraints.

4.6 Nationalism and Trade Unionism.

As the matter of whether political activity in India, such as that described in the Meerut issue, concerned nationalists or trade union struggles was a matter of dispute, it may help to examine this issue from the point of view of the kinds of institutional arrangements which existed in India during the 1930s. It is not the intention of this thesis to assert that an examination of Indian institutions offers a superior form of knowledge in respect of the issues presented, but to assess the extent to which the definitions of struggles from within the Labour Party were informed by the definitions which existed in the Indian Trade Union Movement and the Indian National Congress. In this way it may be possible to establish the nature and diversity of the Indian institutions engaged in independence and trade union struggles. This is important when considering the contribution of the Indian National Congress and workers delegations at the Round Table Conference outlined in chapter five.

The records of the All India Congress Committee, the various institutions of the Indian Trade Union Movement and the local District Congress Committees offer an enormous amount of material providing clues about the extent to which nationalist and trade union struggles were linked.

The Nationalist movement was politically diverse. Even in terms of its national leadership it displayed a divergent political character which indicates that like the Labour Party, it would be a mistake to consider it a unified organisation with a single political position. Nehru was involved in the renunciation of dominion status and aiding Britain in her constitution constructing activities. Gandhi was less interested in the details of

independence, which he thought of a more "spiritual" than a constitutional quality. (Brockway 1967. Interview transcript. p.3)

Although the Congress was the central organisation associated with civil disobedience, there were a host of others. There was the Congress Socialist Party set up to attract socialists to the cause of nationalism. There was the Indian Communist Party whose successes in organising strikes in the Bombay mills in the 1920s had been diminished by the witch hunts of the British Government. There was the All India Socialist Party which shared some political ground with the National Trades Union Federation. Then there were the Roysists (a faction of the Indian National Congress named after its leader) and the Reds who claimed a Marxism, which it differentiated from that of the Communist Party, as its creed. In addition to these, there were the various Trade Unions groups associated with various facets of civil disobedience.

The character of the political activities undertaken by this alliance under the formal direction of the Congress varied enormously. The most well known activities, the foreign cloth boycott, the picketing of liquor shops and the salt making campaign were mentioned in the introduction. The methods by which such aims were pursued will have been diverse, but none-the-less the Congress had a formal structure for initiating and carrying out such campaigns in the various towns and villages all over India. The actual organisation of the civil disobedience campaigns was conducted on a district basis. Districts were united through the organisation of the States and the States were organised into the All India Congress Committee. Camps were set up in the districts run by volunteers whose job it was to organise activities locally and build up support for the Congress. Volunteers were responsible to the District Dictator.

The extent to which civil disobedience was supported by the people varied from district to district at various times. Some areas reported difficulties in maintaining

the support of the cloth merchants in the cloth boycott as it was a direct attack on their standards of living. The following statement indicates something of the character of the movement and extent to which it gained support in one particular area.

> "The policy of repression and indiscriminate convictions continues as usual. But this has little effect of the Congress work in the Province. The authorities have no doubt succeeded to a very great extent in their efforts to eke out all the leading workers in the Province, but the movement goes on merrily gathering momentum every day from those very great arrests and conviction. Many Districts have all together been deprived of their prominent workers, but the work is being carried on as usual by those left behind for the movement has gone deep down the masses and it is from them, from those uneducated village folks that our workers are drawn and they form the real back bone of the movement... Total arrests during the week six hundred and ten and total up to the 18th July three thousand seven hundred and seventy two..."
> (Bihar Provincial Congress Committee. 18/7/30 Report to All India Congress Committee.)

The statement demonstrates the extent to which civil disobedience was supported by the people in Bihar and the level of police activity required to repress it. There are many accounts of police brutality and lathi (baton) charges at crowds as well as extensive arrests, imprisonments and transportation out of town where the arrestee was forced to walk ten or twelve miles home. Nehru commented on the extensive use of policing in a letter to Bridgeman of the League Against Imperialism as early as 1929.

> "We are having a number of police round ups and arrests all over the country. Either the police have completely lost their heads or a deliberate attempt is being made to show that vast conspiracies are afoot."
> (Nehru 20/5/29. Letter to Bridgeman.)

This was the kind of policing required to maintain British sovereignty over India even in 1929-31 during the Labour Party's administration. It was stepped up towards 1937 when partial independence was awarded.

This kind of activity under the orchestration of the Congress was an escalation of the peaceful forms of non co-operation, Satyagraha, which began in the 1920s. Sibnath Banerjee recalls the activities of this time. "I went to Khulna, my District and started to organise the volunteers there carrying the spinning wheel on my shoulders and speaking to them about non co-operation." (Banerjee 10/2/77 Interview transcript p.4) This was typical of the form of resistence associated with Gandhi, a form which was progressively abandoned in the face of a lack of progress towards independence, and increasing repression in the colony as demonstrated by the Congress records.

The extent to which nationalism and the institutions associated with it were linked to trade union activity was demonstrated in a report from the Executive Committee of the All India Trades Union Congress.

> "This meeting considers that the promulgation of the Public Safety Ordinance and the passage of the Trades Disputes Bill in spite of determined opposition of the All India Trades Union Congress and in defiance of public opinion in the country expressed both in the Legislative Assembly and outside constitute a great menace to the existence of the Labour Movement in India"
> (Executive Council of the All India Trades Union Congress 24/7/29. Minutes.)

This was part of a statement condemning the British administration for thwarting the development of trade unionism. The reference to the Public Safety Ordinance concerns the machinery which the administration used to deal with civil unrest produced by the civil disobedience movement, yet it was presented as threat to trade unionism.

By 1935 trades Unions affiliated to the All India Trades Union Congress had representatives on the local Congress Committees. In 1935 the All India Trades Union Congress sent letters to the Congress complaining that it had not defined its attitude to the trade union and working class movement. It set out the ways in which trade union struggles were linked to the struggle for independence. What was at stake in such statements was a defininiton of what constituted legitimate nationalist

struggles. To be legitimate, the All India Trades Unions Congress considered nationalist struggles must incorporate workers' demands.

> "In order to mobilise the oppressed and exploited masses in the struggle for freedom their economic demands and political aspirations must be incorporated into the programme of national struggle."
> (General Secretary of the All India Trades Union Congress 31/5/35. Letter to the President of the Indian National Congress.)

By 1937 the relationship between sections of the trade union movement and civil disobedience was much more explicit.

> "On April 1st the new constitution will be put into force. The National Congress has resolved to organise a country wide hartal (a stoppage of work as a protest) to demonstrate that the people of India will never submit to this infamous charter of slavery (proposed constitution)... In the new regime the toiling masses will be subjected to greater exploitation. Therefore the working class must take a very active part in the movement for opposing the introduction of the new constitution.
> (President and General Secretary of the All India Trades Union Congress 14/3/37. Statement issued in Bombay.)

It is likely that the introduction of the new constitution provided an added incentive to trade union and Congress unity. The National Trades Union Federation, the branch of the Indian movement in close contact with the Trades Union Congress and Transport House, did not appear to be included in these moves towards unity. The Trades Union Federation officially supported a style of trade union activity which was not overtly linked to civil disobedience.

As far as individual political activists were concerned, it was not unusual for campaigners in civil disobedience to see the trade union movement as a suitable instrument for intervention in nationalist struggles. Many who were committed to socialism in India at this time were quite prepared to take part in nationalist activity first. It was not difficult for some to align imperialism with exploitation.

Speaking of his activities in this period Banerjee said-

> "I started (in the) Trade Union movement as part of the national emancipation movement. I chose the jute mills because there the exploitation was the greatest, and in 1927 there was a strike on the railways and I was drawn into the railway movement."
> (Banerjee 10/2/77 Interview Transcript p27-8)

Banerjee was convinced that the organised working class should be in the forefront of liberation struggles. He commented on the conditions in which many Indian workers worked in the Bengal jute mills, which he says were mostly owned by British employers. As one of the Meerut prisoners who refused to be labelled a communist he said- "I am a trade unionist and trade unions are just good weapons to fight the British" (1977 Interview Transcript p59). It is unlikely that in India in the 1930s, given the strong institutional and personal links between nationalism and trade unionism, that there was the clear distinction between the two areas of struggle which the British Labour Party officially suggested.

The trade union movement in India was highly fragmented. The all India Trades Union Congress was formed in 1920 in close association with the Congress. Lajpat Rai was the first chairman of the Indian Trades Union Congress and was also president of the National Congress. The Trades Union Congress was thought to be a way of focusing attention on work and social conditions in India. It split in 1929 over the question of Indian representation at the Round Table Conference. Joshi and Shiva Rio were two of the most well known leaders to break away and form the Trades Union Federation under the official approval of the British Labour Movement which was trying to establish a particular style of trade unionism in India. The Trades Union Federation became the National Trades Union Federation in 1933 when it merged with another small group of unions.

In 1931 many communists left the All India Trades Union Congress (an organisation which the British Labour movement accused of being communist dominated) because

of its involvement in nationalist struggles. The Indian Communist Party considered these subordinate to the more traditional struggles for socialism. They were also concerned at the diversity of political elements engaged in nationalist struggles. The communist returned to the congress in 1935 under the United Front policy of Comintern. By 1938 the All India Trades Union Congress and the National Trades Union Federation merged in close association with the Congress in a renewed anti-British offensive. Constantly short of members and finance, this institutional unity was achieved at the expense of the movement's enunciative function. Because the united movement covered such a broad spectrum of political commitment, it virtually agreed not to issue statements.

Not only did the British Labour Movement see Indian trade unionism as officially divorced from nationalist activity, it favoured a style of political activity in the conduct of strikes. The constitution of the Trades Union Federation (a hand written document) contained a definition of bona fide action which excluded alliances with communism or communists, as a perversion of legitimate trade unionism into a broader based mass struggle. Its definition included a condemnation of the use of the general strike which it considered a political rather than trade union weapon.The Trade Union Federation's approval of political action did not appear to extend beyond action aimed at the redress of workers grievences, conditions of work and wages. The programme of the Federation proclaims a policy emphasis on housing, unemployment, wages, industrial accidents and hours of labour. (see section 2.1)

During a railway strike in 1930, the Federation kept the British Trades Union Congress informed of the conduct of the strike, voicing assurances that it was legitimate in its nature and peaceful in its conduct. This was of course, only the official position of the Federation. When the strike was called off, some of the member unions ignored the settlement and continued the strike, presenting a challenge to the authority of the Trade

Union Federation and its (British) imported methods, and indicating the ideological diversity of its member institutions.

The activities of the Indian institutions just outlined may be seen as the background against which both the Labour Party and the Whitley Commission made statements about the extent to which nationalism and trade unionism were linked. It was also the background against which the Whitley Commission made it recommendations regarding the development and rationalisation of Indian trade unionism, and the ways in which workers might be enfranchised through an extension of their participation in trade unions.

4.7 Official Statements: The Whitley Commission on Indian Labour.

The issue of legitimacy in trade union activity was taken up in the investigations of the Whitley Commission on Indian Labour which reported to Parliament in June 1931. As a statutory commission it was a statement on behalf of government rather than the Labour Party. But never-the-less, the Labour Party closely identified with it, and its enunciations. John Cliff, Assistant General Secretary of the Transport and General worker's Union served on the Commission, as did Joshi from the Indian Trades Union Federation. Labour Party Conference policy statements on India, began by 1932 to include the demand that the recommendations of the Whitley Commission be implemented (see section 2.5). The 1932 National Executive Committee resolution on India called for the government to "Promote the growth of trade unionism" in the light of the findings of the commission. This demand was repeated in the 1933 resolution (see section 2.5).

Statutory commissions represent a particular mode of enuciation. Their statements are partly the product of the purpose for which they are established. The Whitley Commission was set up to fulfill a promise set out in the Indian Statutory Commission (1930) that there

would be an extensive investigation of labour conditions in India. This was an admission of the shortcomings of the Statutory Commission because an examination of labour conditions was excluded from this otherwise extensive survey. Unlike the Statutory Commission, the Whitley Commission was not empowered to comment on the nature of a possible constitution, but to indicate a way in which labour might be represented in a federal-type of constitutional arrangement.

Not only was Whitley commissioned to produce an extensive survey of labour and employment conditions in India, it was to comment on how these might be developed into a more sophisticated industrial structure, and how workers might be represented. Its brief was to widen the terms of the franchise through the inclusion of certain kinds of workers. This was also seen as a matter of development for participation in political processes. As a statement, it was the product of general constraints to comply with past statements and contribute to India's development to independence.

Whitley was also a product of its sources of information. It worked through informants with the aid of only a section of the Indian Trade Union Movement. It located its investigations in certain kinds of factory-based manufacture as well as mines and public works. As far as agriculture was concerned its orientation was towards the large scale and capital based plantations. Given that ninety per cent of Indians were rurally-based and most industry took place in very small workshops, Whitley's findings were necessarily constrained by its criteria for selective investigation. These were considered areas where there was potential for development along modern (European) lines.

The Whitley Commission was required, as a government investigation to present both sides of the industrial problem, the position of the employers as well as that of the workers. The Commission contains numerous references to the problems posed by a transitory and ill-disciplined factory workforce. Employers complained

that workers, unused to the discipline imposed by factory production, wandered off during the course of the working day. Because the Whitley Commission was a government site of enunciation, this structured the kinds of statements it was able to produce. It took the view that the development of trade Unionism and the raising of the living standards of Indian workers would benefit employers and workers alike. Certain standards of objectivity are built into all statutory commissions, which are required to present all the positions it considered to be involved in an issue. Its constituency was industrial and agricultural development, and its community both workers and employers alike. An appearance of impartiality was one of its conditions of authorisation. As far as it acted as a voice, its function was to put the case of all interests in industry and agriculture.

The commission also observed an unstated relation to British trade Union practices. Or rather it had an unstated relation to what it considered British trade Unionism should be like. The commission appeared to consider that its recommendations were of wider implication than their suitability just for India. It considered that it was producing a blue print for an enlightened industrial policy.

> "But whatever the value of our report, the volumes of evidence which accompany it constitute a source which, for years to come should yield a wealth of information not available elsewhere for the study of labour questions."
> (1931 Whitley Commission on Indian Labour p.5)

The commission was in fact accepted as an authoritative source of information in official Labour Party statements. It appealed to the notion of statesmanship in Labour Party pronouncements which imposed the necessity for continuity with past government policy as a constraint. Whitley may be seen as part of a movement towards Indian independence promised by the British Government from the end of the nineteenth century. Whitley could not because of the constraints imposed by statesmanship have stated a reversal of this procedure,

even if its effects had been to slow down progress towards eventual independence. In general terms, the commission stated a belief in India's ability to be self governing in the context of the necessity for further development.

One of the central positions adopted by the Whitley Commission was to present Indian labour as a population in the process of transition from rural to an urban existence, a labour force in the process of development. Industrial development and prosperity were the key concerns of the commission. But these were just part of a much wider development. India's political and industrial development were linked, as in so many Labour Party statements. Trade unions were posed as key institutions in this process. Not only were they the institutions through which the labour force could develop the prosperity of its members, but the practices which this involved were seen as a way of developing the political potential of the Indian labour force. A limited form of political representation through trade unions, was thought to be a way of acquiring the practices of citizenship, albeit in a restricted form. This theme is expanded in sections 5.8, 5.13 and 5.14.

In the course of stating this general position, the commission defined both legitimate practices in trade unionism and citizenship. The Whitley Commission considered that trade unionism, as well as signalling and producing industrial development could produce the characteristics necessary for citizenship.

> "Trade Unionism, to be fully effective, demands two things: a democratic spirit and education. The democratic ideal has still to be developed in the Indian worker, and the lack of education is the most serious obstacle of all."
> (Whitley Commission on Indian Labour p321).

Legitimacy in trade unionism was to be administered by registration and the development of a particular institutional structure, resistence to communism and nationalist movements and a style of conduct in industrial disputes. The Whitley recommendation in favour of the

registration and development of a trade union structure was set against its disapproval for the ad-hoc unions which arose during the course of an industrial dispute which were often quite militant. The commission considered that these may serve the interests of their members, but, "do little in the way of educating their membership in trade unionism." (p320) It was argued that the registration of unions would prevent these ad-hoc arrangements and thus not only serve to develop the political education of their membership but increase the standing of the union with employers. The development of a trade union structure was thought to be something which could be learned from Western trade unionism.

> "Some of the labour delegates and advisors sent to the International Labour Organisation Conferences at Geneva, by extending their stay in Europe, have been able to secure some training in western trade union methods." (p330)

Again, as in the training of Indian trade unionists in Britain already discussed, the British Trades Union Congress was offered as a model upon which Indian trade unionism should, with suitable modification, be structured.

Nationalism and communism were considered by the Whitley Commission to be perversions of trade union principles. Legitimacy in this case was considered to contrast with what was described as political interests. In this case political was defined in terms of the wider aims of communism and the "political excitement" (p319) which surrounded nationalist activity, leading to the appearance of trade union leaders such as those associated with the All India Trades Union Congress, which were described as irresponsible. The commission considered that it was the absence of strong trade union organisation which accounted for the success of the communists in various strikes.

> "The absence of any strong organisation among the cotton mill workers and a realisation of their weakness, combined with the encouragement given by the results of a prolonged strike, enabled a few of the

> communist leaders, by intense effort to capture the imagination of the workers and eventually to sweep over fifty thousand of them into a communist organisation. One effect of these strikes, and particularly the last disastrous strike, (Bombay 1928) has been to render difficult the development of effective trade union organisation during the next few years."
> (1931. Whitley Commission on Indian Labour p.319)

The perversion of legitimate trade unionism resulting from communist and nationalist involvement is linked to a notion of what constitutes the correct conduct of industrial disputes. The commission thought that correct procedure was to follow a policy of conciliation. The report sets out a machinery for the arbitration of disputes so that they do not result in strikes which may be harmful "at this stage in India's industrial history". (p.333) Industrial peace was a central concern for the commission. If strikes were necessary then they should be in pursuit of economic rather than political ends.

> "At certain periods factors which were not economic had an important influence on industrial strife.... But although workers may have been influenced by persons with nationalist, communist or commercial ends to serve we believe that there has rarely been a strike of any importance which has not been due, entirely or largely, to economic reasons."
> (1931 Whitley Commission on Indian Labour p.335)

Industrial muscle must not be used for other than economic reasons. This is a narrow definition of objectives in industrial activity. It also means a narrow conception of strategies which might be pursued. Strikes were presented as a last resort, after the failure of all conciliatory moves.

The commission suggests that the interests of employers and workers were united as a single constituency. The intervention of communism was thought an abuse of workers collective power in pursuit of some other interest, such as the subversion of the system. Communists and nationalists were considered agents of ulterior political motives. Such a position also assumes that the functions

of workers were divided in terms of the strategies with which they may associate. Trade unions were presented as institutions where the exercise of rights in relation to pay and conditions were legitimate. The exercise of wider political rights as members of a state, it is implied, should be exercised elsewhere, in political representation.

The problem with this formulation was that trade unions were being suggested as the institution where a limited form of citizenship rights be developed. The Whitley Commission was suggesting at a philosophical level, the concept of the worker citizen as a form of inclusion into the terms of a limited franchise from which workers would otherwise be excluded. The result was a restricted form of citizenship which did not confer the universal rights with which it was usually associated.

The policy issues related to this construction of the worker citizen were the representation of workers in the legislature by means of special reserved seats both at federal and provincial level, through a process of nomination or election by registered trade unions. It was also suggested that the legislature concern itself with the implementation of policy which would improve labour conditions through the implementation of labour legislation. If trade unionists were apportioned special seats in the legislature then the commission reasoned they would be in a good position to form a pressure group for the reform of labour conditions. In addition to this it was suggested that workers participate, in an industrial council with the government and employers, in the formation of economic and industrial policy.

The form of citizenship implied in these arrangements was restricted to a political voice in certain areas of formation of state and provincial policy. These encompassed industrial strategy and economic arrangements in which the unions would, by virtue of their constitutional position, represent a lobby along with the interests of the economy as a whole.

This narrow conception of citizenship was conditioned by a perception of the nature of the Indian political community. Very little of the Indian population was considered representable for reasons which are outlined in chapter five. This was linked to a perception of the qualities necessary for citizenship, in which education was crucial. The representation of labour, even in a restricted way widened the political community.

> "Further, the proper representation of labour is itself educative; the recognition of its claims as a part of the body politic will bring increased responsibility and a sense of unity with the community as a whole." (Whitley Commission on Indian Labour. p462).

There was no other way in which an individual who was also a worker could be represented under these arrangements unless he was also a member of another representable category, for example untouchables or shikhs. When the independence constitution was published in the 1935 Government of India Act, about fifty per cent of seats in the legislatures were general rather than communal, but these were protected by the franchise requirements which excluded most workers.

As demonstrated in chapter three, the practice of community was also linked to constructions of 'civilization'. The incorporation of workers into the political community was thus seen as a stage in the development of India towards the mechanisms of liberal democracy. The importance of the findings of the Whitley Commission become aparent in chapter five, in which it is pointed out that workers, along with other groups were to be awarded only a restricted form of citizenship.

Of course the Whitley Commission covered a variety of statements, but its central position was the contention that the struggles of trade unionism and nationalism were separate. This was in line with the official position of the Labour Party set out in the Meerut pamphlet. In fact whilst it upheld the need for Indian independence and the incorporation of workers into some sort of restricted franchise, it did

not admit the legitimacy of civil disobedience. It was also preoccupied with the development of both Indian industry and the role of trade unions along side it in a specific form of activity which addressed itself only to trade union issues, yet provided a level of political representation.

The commission's concerns for Indian poverty was widely echoed throughout the Labour movement in Britain. Although, because Labour M.P's and trade unionists had visited India on fact finding missions throughout the 1920s, the conditions which prevailed in Indian industry were well known about prior to the findings of the Whitley Commission. This summing up of what the Commission accepted as definitions of the Indian situation demonstrate that it excluded the wider definitions concerning the role of the trades union offered to it. It also rejected the suggestion that workers should be fully represented as citizens in the constitutional arrangements.

4.8 Conclusions.

The examination of different positions representing claims to define India in this chapter indicate the eclectic nature of the Labour Party in its ideological perspectives. Whilst the party was quite specific about what kind of position it authorised, it tolerated a diversity of contradictory statements and positions.

The party was offered a diversity of definitions of India as claims to the right to define official positions. Certain of these were included in official definitions and others excluded. Although positions excluded from official enunciations are not sanctioned by the party they were none-the-less issued from within its institutional structures. They must therefore be thought of as statements belonging to the Labour Party.

Some Labour Party statements offered a definition of India in terms of the legitimacy of the colonial relation. The statement included in the chapter to

demonstrate this did not even redefine the colonial relation in terms of brotherhood or co-operation. It admitted that it was an exploitative relation and defended it on this basis. This did not only sanction the capitalist relation, it sanctioned its imposition on a country unable to reject it. This was an explicit statement of British superiority over India and other developed nations which had not been in position to challenge British imperial domination in India with a view to replacing it. This was premised on the assumption that India was incapable of fulfilling the conditions required for independence, the development of nationhood.

Other positions considered that the colonial relation of exploitation was illegitimate. In common with the last position these defined colonialism in terms of exploitation rather than the benefits it conferred on an underdeveloped people. This position maintained that any method for the termination of this relation, even armed insurrection, was legitimate. Other positions tempered this with qualifications concerning the illegitimacy of the use of violence to terminate the colonial relation. Such positions were capable of supporting the notion that any form of organisation of nationhood was valid.

Various other positions which concerned themselves with the invalid nature of the colonial relation suggested that it should be removed by a gradual process of transformation. In this process of transformation Indians were to be tutored by the imperial nation in the qualities of nationhood. The qualities of nationhood were variously described as concerning the development of parliamentary type institutions, a certain level of industrial development, and the practices associated with these qualities. Such positions tend to suggest that India could be tutored for independence under the direction of the imperial power whose definitions and practices of nationhood were beyond question. Britain was being offered as both example and tutor in nationhood.

This does not really represent a transformation of the imperial relation, but its reformulation. This idea that Indians were capable of such a development was variously attributed to a collective set of mental characteristics such as Attlee's statement suggests, or to the state of development of the material culture and social structure which may ultimately be thought to stem from a similar set of considerations.

Official Labour Party statements specifically excluded a definition of the colonial relation as legitimate. As far as official enunciations were concerned, the colonial relation must be replaced by another sort of relation. Official positions also excluded the consideration that India should sieze independence by violent or peaceful means. They therefore uphold the notion that independence should be the gift of the colonial nation to be bestowed upon the colonised, at an appropriate juncture.

Whilst accepting that the colonial bond was, ultimately, to be terminated, official pronunciations were meanwhile concerned about the nature of the colonial relation which the Labour Party, as a potential party of government, was partly responsible for. In terms of conceptions of statesmanship, the party was accepting responsibility for the administration of India and the quality of a relationship which it any way considered illegitimate. Under British administration, the Meerut pamphlet was suggesting that Indians be accorded the rights which all British citizens were entitled to and which were underwritten in the operation of judicial procedure.

The rights of citizenship as secured under British administration were somewhat more inclusive than those officially acknowledged in the findings of the Whitley Commission which was offering a restricted definition of civic rights linked to a narrow construction of the function of trade unions. The concept of a worker citizen as a form of limited inclusion in the political-

community does not square with some of the definitions of citizenship appropriate to the judicial position of the Meerut prisoners.

Whilst on the one hand upholding definitions of nationhood and citizenship, constructed as the preconditions for independence through notions of civilization which focus on culture, industrial and political development and the use of democratic government, the Labour Party appears to have been happy to award India independence and nationhood which did not add up to that prescribed. Civilization, as a reclamation from a state of barbarity was being officially constructed on the concept of a partial citizenship. Whilst the Labour Party, in its statements on colonial and foreign socialism outlined in section 3.8, upheld a conception of civilization which was based on the establishment of an international political community, it was prepared to concede independence to India on the basis of a very limited construction of its political community.

The conception of an International political community was an extension of the principal of democracy from the participation of individuals within the nation to include the participation of nations within the world community of nations. The limited franchise the Labour Party was prepared to see awarded in India, excluded her from these definitions of civilization. It would appear from the conception of citizenship outlined by the Whitley Commission, that Britain and the Labour Party were quite prepared to uphold double standards in its definition of nationhood. Whilst subscribing to rigorous standards in terms of the democratic representation of the political community at home, the party was prepared to lower these standards for the sake of shifting India towards independence. The result was that India appears to have been offered second class status as a nation. This will be more fully explored in chapter five which examines the nature of the Indian political community and the kinds of arrangements for independence accepted by the Labour

Party. If India was awarded second class status as a nation this could have important implications in the construction of the commonwealth.

Rather than participating in the redefinition of a conception of civilization to include conditions in India, the Labour Party's definitions of colonial and foreign policy socialism upheld many of the ideas advanced in classical writings on political philosophy, concerning the extent of the practice of community. In the case of India it seems to be including a restricted definition of a political community as a requirement for independence because the severance of the colonial bond was part of an official definition of colonial socialism. Because of this, it follows that India must be ascribed a status as a second class political community through a process of colonial tutorship. Colonial tutorship and the second class nationhood which went with it represent part of a new construction of the colonial relationship as a commonwealth. The Labour Party was active in this definition of commonwealth.

All of the definitions of India presented in this chapter construct Indians as a 'people' and inform the concept race. Chapter five continues this construction of India as a particular kind of political community. It will be possible, towards the end of chapter five to confront notions of race, as applied to India, with the construction of India as a political community.

It remains only to speculate in this chapter as to why certain positions were acceptable to the Labour Party and why others unacceptable. Part of the explanation for this accounts for all official positions. These concern some of the discursive conditions which constrained all Labour Party statements, whatever their object. These are the constraints imposed by the need to operate within the practices of parliament in the conduct of government, the continuity imposed by the practices of statesmanship and the need to address itself to the entire political community as a (voting) audience.

But to state this is to do no more than offer the kinds of explanation for the Labour Party's behaviour advanced by Miliband. Miliband's account of the Labour Party repeatedly stumbles upon the conclusion that it acted as it did in order to direct all political activity through parliament and that whilst the party claimed socialism as its object, it equally claimed parliament as its strategy. Miliband is, of course, correct in his assessment. But by the methods of discursive analysis it is possible to push the analysis a little further and speculate on the ideological structuring mechanisms implicit in the positions conditioned by the parliamentary practices of which Miliband speaks.

The Labour Party's official position on India may be summed up as follows. It rejected the colonial relation and sought to replace it with a relation of co operation and brotherhood. It was unable, none-the-less, to condone the civil disobedience campaign which was designed to force the British Government to terminate this relation. Whilst also condemning the colonial relation, it was insistent that it be administered in a manner which accorded Indians certain rights as British Indian citizens although it admitted that this had to be posed against the use of special ordinances to maintain civil peace in India. Finally, the Labour Party considered that a restricted form of independence should be awarded to India under a time table for eventual complete British withdrawal. This is arrived at by putting together all the central positions of official statements. Why was this the official positions? What were the ideological conditions in which such positions were produced?

These positions were the product of a dislike of the use of direct action to challenge the authority of a government, even if that government had no right to rule. The positions outlined were also the product of a belief in a new colonial relation, in which the Labour Party was able to nurture and direct the development of the Indian trade union movement upon principles such as those of the British trade union movement. These were

enshrined in its definitions of socialism in the domestic sphere outlined in chapter three. The Labour Party was in favour of a socialist imperialism in which Indians still did not have complete self determination. These positions also arose from the assumption that Indians were not, for some reason, capable as a political community of the kind of democratic institutions and citizenship that existed in Britain. This was one of the major differences in the two communities constructed in these debates. Thus the Labour Party's general conception of its community in India was not both workers and citizens as in Britain, but workers and a partial citizenship. In India the Labour Party's constituency was not democracy and poverty as in Britain, it was as near a democracy as the present capabilities of the political community allowed and poverty in combination not with the welfare policies of Britain but in combination with independence and increased trade unionism.

What does all of this indicate about the Labour Party? How does it help to answer the problems set out in the beginning of this chapter, which were concerned with the question of how the Labour Party constructed itself in relation to the concept political community (which informs the concept race) and what might be learned about the conditions of making statements and modes of stating? All of these issues are closely related.

This chapter indicates that the Labour Party was capable of making certain kinds of statements which were the product of constraints and structuring mechanisms. These were the specific site of enunciation within the party and the conditions of authorisation of statements (much of this is accounted for in the manner in which the Labour Party works as a statement issuing body and was outlined in chapter two), the range of communities and constituencies the party was prepared to represent in its function as a voice, the need for continuity with other statements and some of the general constraints outlined at the beginning of this chapter concerning

pledges. In addition to these there were often certain other ideological conditions such as the ones just described to account for the central positions on India. Some of these, for example democracy and action directed through the mechanisms of government and forms of protest defined as legitimate, are accounted for by the term constituency. Others are accounted for by community and the ideologies implicit in the construction of such a concept.

The above construction of the concept of a political community such as that thought to exist in India and to be represented by the voice of the Labour Party, informs the concept race in these debates. Race is a way of classifying populations, types of humanity. The concept political community, as constructed officially in India, offers a definition of Indians as unable to currently work the machinery of government or exercise the rights of citizenship. In accepting this definition of the Indian political community, as one with potential to develop fairly quickly, the Labour Party rejected the statement offered by Wise which insisted that Indians may never be able to govern themselves. It also rejected the statement of Buchanan (see section 4.3) which insisted that India was already a political community capable of whatever she required in terms of definitions of citizenship. Whilst not applying it to India, the Labour Party accepted the statements it set out in the pamphlet on the colonies that becoming fit for independence (becoming a political community) was a matter of acquiring European language, culture and habits, the qualities associated with civilization. These formulations offer hints as to the constructions of race in the concept of political community which were acceptable to the Labour Party and other constructions which were unacceptable for reasons already outlined.

The next chapter (five) examines the issue of representation, and further explores the concepts of political community, race and constituency in the context of the Round Table Conference, a constitutional initiative

with which the Labour Party was closely associated. This offers further information about the Labour Party and its construction of the notion of a political community through examining some of the statements made at the said conference. Chapter five also outlines the manner in which the Indian issue was resolved and independence given, as well as indicating some of the issues which this raised concerning the status of India as a nation and Indians as a political community. The concept political community, as applied to India, actually underwent a re-construction within the terms of the Round Table Conference which was ultimately reflected in the independence arrangements. Thus the concept political community in India was not unproblematic or obvious, it was a matter of negotiation, and the Round Table Conference was where it was negotiated.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Indian Political Community and its Representation.

This chapter examines the Round Table Conference as one of the enunciative sites in the discussions and debates surrounding Indian independence. It was not the only site, but it was the focus for major government intitiatives during the early part of the 1930s, and the basis upon which the eventual solution to the constitutional problem posed by Indian independence was structured. It was also an enuncuative site to which the Labour Party was officially committed, as demonstrated in the policy statements set out in section 2.5.

An examination of the Round Table Conference provides a focus for a number of analyses. The categories of people represented at the conference indicate a perception of the extent of the representable population of India, which could be party to a constitutional settlement. This does not indicate the composition of the Indian population, but the Indian political community. A political community refers to those included, by means of representation, in the body politic. Thus, the extent of the franchise in the Indian constitution was an issue of crucial importance.

The political community referred to as India was constituted through the act of its representation. The delegate list at the conference represented the Labour Party's assessment of the elements which constituted the potential Indian political community. During the course of this chapter the concept political community will be used to examine statements concerning independence to provide information about India's status as a nation.

During the colonial administration, India had been a political community of a particular kind. Government was exercised on its behalf by the colonial authority. The imposition of colonial government itself was an expression of India's inability to govern itself as a single unit. With the withdrawal of the colonial power the question of who should be included or excluded from the political

community became a matter of negotiation. The extent to which a country's population is incorporated into its political community is important in defining its status as a democratic nation. This is confirmed by considering the current international assessment of South Africa's political status, in which there is a gap between its huge population and its small (enfranchised) political community.

The nature and extent of the political community was a construction specific to the process of decolonisation, a process in which Britain insisted upon the nation as a privileged form of political community. The possible elements of this construction were the subject of negotiation at the Round Table Conference. The examination of the proposed constructions of the Indian political community in this chapter are not supposed to be a sociological account of populations, but a political construction, because what was being negotiated was the extent to which the population should be included in the franchise arrangements. Being invited to the Round Table Conference as a British Indian delegate, by the British Government, itself conferred a certain status. It indicated that a population category or interest group was considered a vital part of a political settlement, a representative of the voice of the Indian people, a constituent part of the general will.

It is quite possible, even likely, that the population categories presented as communities at the conference were focuses for contending claims to represent the interests of a particular community, its voice. The term community is one of the terms of the analysis, used to designate a group of people thought to share a constituency, to have a 'will' which was representable. Empirically there is no such thing as a single set of interests associated with a community. There are only claims to define these interests, presented as a form of general will. Political statements have an obvious relation to a constituency and to a community. A community being those on whose behalf a statement is issued or a position adopted. Constituency has wider implications than community. It poses the

question what, as well as who, is being represented in a statement. This may be reason, justice, independence or any number of things.

The relation between voice, constituency and community can be developed by examining the statements made by the delegates at the conference. All of the delegates made a claim to be representing a particular community as a legitimate part of the Indian political community, and the Indian nation itself. Many of the voices at the conference indicated the grounds on which India could be considered a single political entity. These amy be seen as constructions of nationhood.

Finally, this chapter sets out the constitutional settlement developed from the Simon Commission and the Round Table Conference, assessing the extent to which it corresponds to definitions of nationhood established in British political thought. It will then be possible to determine whether India was, through a constitutional settlement in which the Labour Party was heavily implicated, awarded a secondary political status as a nation by the standards of democracy and citizenship rights constructed in debates in British politics. This chapter examines the kind of political settlement which was offered to India and its implications. It also examines constructions of India as a political community by and on behalf of the Labour Party, and comments on how this informs both notions of race and constructions of the Labour Party.

5.1 The Round Table Conference.

The Round Table Conference was an event. It was also a collection of statements each produced by a set of general constraints which applied to all statements on India (see section 4.1) and a set of more specific structuring mechanisms. The conference enunciations constituted a body of statements by virtue of belonging to the same enunciative event in Indian political history. One of the themes of this chapter will be to explain the structuring mechanisms which produced the conference and no other event.

The Viceregal pledges made on behalf of the British Government and enshrined in the Government of India Act (1919) committed the government to a course of action which could be seen to be a move towards eventual independence. This requirement was incumbent in the duties attached to statesmanship. For this reason, these pledges acted as a constraint. The Labour Party was fully implicated in these requirements because it offered itself as a Party of government and had administered the colony briefly in 1924 and from 1929 to 1931. The constraints imposed by statesmanship did not further specify the nature of an initiative towards independence, apart from the need for consistency with past government intitiatives. Failure to observe such a constraint could easily lead to the break down of foreign relations, and a loss of confidence in the integrity of the British Government, if successive political parties reversed the decisions of their predecessors. International agreements, and agreements with the colonies, were necessarily made on behalf of the office of government.

The Labour Party was committed to colonial freedom. "That this Labour Conference endorses the policy of 'Home Rule for India' ...."(Labour Party 1918 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p138). But more than that, it was committed to a style of determining the form which colonial freedom should take. It was committed to the method of negotiation with the colony. This was demonstrated in a resolution passed at its 1924 conference.

> "The Conference is moreover of the opinion that in order to hasten the grant of a full measure of Home Rule to India, steps should be taken to summon a Conference of representatives of the various parties of India who shall be invited to prepare a scheme of self government for discussion with the British Government." (Labour Party 1924 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p120)

The Round Table Conference was the heir of this official statement. It was to establish the nature of the constitutional arrangements which would grant independence and the conditions under which it might be implemented. The Labour Party officially stated its approval of the

conference method in its 1931 resolution even whilst the Round Table was in session.

> "This Conference reaffirming its belief in the right of the Indian people to self government is convinced that the Round Table now assembled in London offers a unique opportunity of establishing this right in a most effective and certain manner through negotiations between the British Government and representatives of all sections of the population of India." (Lansbury 1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p215)

Even in 1933, after the failure of the Round Table Conference to produce a constitution for India, the Labour Party still upheld the efficacy of the methods of negotiation. "The new constitution of India should be negotiated in consultation and agreement with the representatives of the Indian peoples." (West Leyton Labour Party 1933 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p210). Whilst the Labour Party was not compelled to support this method because it had done so in the past, it was required by the need for continuity with other official statements to establish some sort of continuity between past and current statements.

The Round Table Conference took place in London in two sessions. The first was from November 12th 1930 to 19th January 1931 and the second from September 7th to December 31st 1931. The intervening period was described by the British Government as a period of consultation for both Indian and British participants. The fact that there was a general election in this period in which a National Government replaced a Labour Government was a testament to the continuity of statesmanship. The basic structure of the Conference was established by the Simon or Statutory Commission. The Commission, using the evidence of the 1921 Census of India to provide basic information about the nature and composition of the Indian population, established itself as an authoritative source of information. It set out to examine the Indian 'problem' and suggest solutions. The Round Table Conference embodied both the interpretation of the Commission as to the diagnosis of the Indian 'problem' and its possible solutions.

It is important to describe the way in which the Conference was organised as this was partly responsible for the kinds of statements which were made. For example, statements made in the plenary session were very general claims to representation in the Indian political community, whereas those made in the special committees were much more concerned with details. Generally, statements made in the plenary session of the second conference were just appeals to the British Government to award independence, because the Minority's Committee had failed to reach a solution to the Hindu Moslem conflict over representation and the British Government had warned that there would be no constitution until this issue had been resolved.

The Statutory Commission, on which Attlee served, described its findings as the "conditions of the Indian problem" (1930 p83). It reported the position of what it described as the "main communities of interest" (p209). Certain categories of peoples had, in fact, been encouraged by the British administration to organise themselves into separate legislative councils for the purpose of making their positions known to the British Government. Despite this it was the view of the Commission that the establishment of a plurality of representative institutions had inhibited the development of centralised political institutions representative of India as a whole.

The findings of the Commission informed the Conference to the extent that it defined the issues which were to be resolved and the manner in which this might be accomplished. It also specified the guest list. It offered a definition of the potential Indian political community from which the delegate structure at the conference only marginally departed.

The first conference consisted of a number of days general discussion (plenary) followed by the meetings of the various sub committees in which the objects of investigation and terms of reference were specified by the British Government. The special sub committees investigated the federal structure, the Provincial

constitution, minorities, franchise, defence services as well as the fate of Burma, the North West Frontier Province and the Sind.

These were issues considered necessary to a solution of the Indian problem upon which the conference was required to enunciate. They were also the areas of debate specified by the Simon Commission. They were presented by the Commission as the issues pertinent to "the solemn pledge of the British people with regard to the progressive realisation of representative government in British India." (24/6/30 The Times). The Round Table was the forum for the arbitration of just how progressive this 'realisation' was to be.

The nature of the problem posed by the Indian demand for independence as well as its possible solutions, were written into the structure of the Round Table Conference. This was made possible by the investigations of the Statutory Commission whose definitions of the problem and its possible solutions were the foundations upon which the Round Table Conference was built. Because of this the Conference did not come up with any new initiatives for a constitutional settlement. It did however, present the British Government with a variety of opinions expressed on behalf of the Indian people. In this way it presented an old problem with a new method, negotiation. The idea that the Indian 'problem' required a federal solution was well rehearsed by the time the Round Table Conference was set up. It is hardly surprising therefore, that one of the key issues around which the conference was structured was who should be represented in the federation, and in what proportion.

5.2 Federation and the Structure of the Conference.

The Indian Statutory Commission, popularly known as the Simon Commission stated the inevitability of the federal structure as a suitable political form for a self governing India.

> "It inevitably follows that the ultimate constitution of India must be federal, for

> it is only in a federal constitution that the units differing so widely in constitution as the provinces and the states can be brought together while retaining internal autonomy." (24/6/30 The Times)

The federal structure was thought to be the only solution to the economic, political, social and cultural diversity existing in a country the size of India. It was considered a suitable form in which to politically unite an otherwise divergent population. Federation became a model for future decolonisation.

The Statutory Commission's pronouncements on federation confined the range of possibilites considered at the conference table. Federation was the only political system seriously considered. Because of this the Round Table set up, as one of its committees, the Federal Relations Committee. Its terms of reference were to -

> "Consider the structure of a Federal system of government in India as regards relations between the Provinces of British India and the centre, including the question of responsibility at the centre, and to recommend the main principles to be applied." (1930-1 The Proceedings of the Round Table Conference p7)

This meant discussions on the component elements of the Federation, the type of Federal Legislature and number of chambers, the powers of provincial and Federal legislatures, the method of choosing representatives, the Supreme Court and the issue of which minorities were to be represented.

Federation was not just a principle which suited the supposed diversity of conditions in India, it was a structure of government made respectable by its use in America and Canada. This was frequently referred to in discussions about its use in India. The Times of India headlined a report at the time of the Round Table which proclaimed - "Canadian model for India" (13/1/31). Such comparisons were also a feature of British parliamentary debates. This reference was intended to establish the pedigree of federation and its status as a form of constitutional arrangement. This must be premised on the fear

that India was being awarded something of an inferior democratic quality, or else such statements would have not gone to these lengths to establish the credentials of such a system. Both America and Canada were considered prestigious forms of nationhood.

The prestige of federation was established in the writing of Jefferson who framed the constitution of the United States. Jefferson presented federation as a superior form of democratic structure. "The united powers of the Federal Government and jelousy of subordinate governments affords a security which exists in no other instance ..." (Padover 1943 The Complete Jefferson p124). Jefferson considered federation a form of government closer to the people, and principles of human nature "nature written in our hearts" (p124) than any other form of government.

This was confirmed by Burke's assessment of the British and American systems of government as superior to any other which led him to extol the virtues of federation.

> "To be attached to the sub division, to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the first principle (the germ as it were) of public affections. It is the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love of our country and to mankind."
> (Burke 1969 Reflections on the Revolution in France. p135)

For Burke, federation was an extension of the principles of familial bonds, as with most of the Social Contract theorists. America, the model for these statements, was a territorial federation. This was true of India, but only to a limited extent. India's suggested federal structure contained units of territorial integrity, in that it was to be divided into states with provincial legislatures united at the centre in a Federal Assembly. But, it was also to provide representation for an electorate divided on a communal, as well as a geographical basis. Within the provincial structure the constitution suggested for India was to provide representation for certain (representable) minorities,

women, Moslems, Christians, Europeans and others. These were to be allotted seats in the Provincial Assemblies in proportion to their numbers in certain areas.

Whereas the United States model was constructed on a wide franchise, the Indian federation was to be a selected incorporation of certain communities. It fixed the principle of representation more closely than the federal system in America, in that people from a particular area could not speak for that area, but for a specific collection of people within it. This is different from a system of quotas or reserves in an assembly of representatives who vote according to conscience on all matters, and are not just there to act on matters concerning the category whose quota they help fill. The important thing about representatives in the Indian system of federal representation was they were there to represent a particular section of the political community, rather than the community as a whole. Because of the divided nature of the electorate, it was considered that a simple majority in favour of a policy was inadequate, and that the voting population should be sub divided into distinct political 'wills'.

This system was to produce a federation within a federation. The Round Table Conference was to establish the terms of this unique federal union in India, the first black country to be considered suitable for political freedom. Furnival, later in the history of black colonial freedom, acknowledges the need for such a system.

> "This solution in its acceptance of the plural character of such societies may be termed the federal solution for it recognises that each federal constituent of the social order has many characters of a unit of a political federation and differs from such a unit mainly in its lack of territorial integrity."
> (Furnival 1939 Netherlands India. p468)

The need for community representation in the Indian federation resulted from the consideration that the Indian political community would not be adequately represented unless the colonial authority defined its composition closely. By implication, the diversity of the Indian population was considered a block to the development of

consensus or a general will, one of the requirements of nationhood presented in these debates. This led to criticisms being levelled at the independence arrangements for falling short of its American model.

> "In certain of its most questionable features the constitution of the United States has been taken as a model... But the nobler spirit of the American constitution, its bold assertion of the citizen's fundamental rights there is... no trace ... The Indian Federation rests on no social ideal whatever, save in the sphere of religion there is no foundation of citizen rights."
> (Brailsford 1931 Political Quarterly. p552)

The form of the provincial constitution was another crucial issue at the Round Table Conference. As part of the federal issue it was linked to the suggestion of the British Government that India should, in the first instance, be given provincial autonomy as the first step in a movement towards independence. India could then be schooled in the practices of self government. In this situation, the colonial government would maintain control over central powers such as finance, defence and international relations. This was also set out in the Statutory Commission as a basis from which Indianisation could be developed as India became tutored in the practices of self determination. The colonial authority was not slow to exploit one of the main features of federal government, the division of powers between central and provincial legislatures. Which subjects should be central and which provincial was for these many reasons an object for arbitration at the Round Table Conference.

Whatever form the constitution of India was to take, one of the key issues to be resolved was the extent of the franchise. As pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, it was the extent to which the population was enfranchised which determined the conversion of a population into a political community. Prior to independence Indians constituted a community in political discourse which differed radically from that which was suggested under self government. Under the Raj, Indians were represented, however remotely or inadequately, by the Imperial power.

With a transfer of power to a self governing India this community was to be rather more narrowly reconstructed upon a restricted franchise. This provided a system of government which was accountable to a small number of Indians rather than none. The extent to which the Indian people were to participate in their government was a matter for negotiation. This was structured by what were presented as 'realities', and concerned assessments of the ability of different population categories to discharge the duties incumbent on the enfranchised.

The Simon Commission was in favour of an increase in the number of registered voters from the present 2.8% returning members to the Provincial Councils. The Commission suggested that the franchise should be broadened to an extent which was reasonably practicable. It considered the franchise restricted by illiteracy and the lack of an adequate supply of competent persons to conduct elections. It suggested that a franchise committee or similar body be set up with a view to extending the franchise to around ten percent of the total population.

These were the terms of reference under which the Franchise Sub Committee at the Round Table Conference met, with a limited conception of the extent to which the Indian political community could be constructed. The sub committee's brief was to determine "On what main principles is the franchise to be based for men and women." (1930-31 Proceedings of the Round Table Conference. p56). It was to determine the qualifications for inclusion into the electorate so as to enfranchise the ten percent suggested by the Simon Commission for the Provincial Legislatures.

The position of minorities, given the divided nature of Indian society described by the Statutory Commission, became one of the key issues at the Round Table Conference. Like the Commission, the conference placed particular emphasis on the need for a settlement which gave the sizeable Moslem community an adequate voice in the Legislative Assemblies. This was informed by the observation that communal conflict between Moslems and Hindus was widespread and a threat to internal order.

The principle of communal representation was extended to other groups which included labour, women, Christians, Anglo Indians and the depressed classes. The Minorities Sub Committee was set up to decide who should be represented and in what kind of proportions. It considered the claims of various minorities to constitute special interest groups in need of representation in the constitution.

Whilst accepting that a system of reserved seats for certain minorities was the only possible solution to the problems posed by Indian independence, the Statutory Commission expressed the opinion that such an arrangement ultimately restricted the development of citizenship in India.

> "On the one hand, communal representation - the provision by law that a particular religious community shall be represented in a popular legislature solely by members of its own body, with a guarantee as to how many communal seats there will be - is an undoubted obstacle in the way of a growth of a sense of common citizenship... On the other hand we are now faced, as the authors of the Montagu Chelmsford Report were faced, by the indisputable fact that the Mohammedan community as a whole is not prepared to give up communal representation and would regard its abolition without the consent of that community not only as the withdrawal of a security which it prizes, but as a cancelling of assurances upon which it has relied."
> (24/6/30 The Times)

At a more abstract level this is referring to the inhibition of a general will. It is an admission that India was to be awarded a political settlement which did not correspond to the usual definition of citizenship in British political thought.

The structure of the Round Table Conference and its specification of issues conditioned the general kinds of statements which could be made, and the ways in which debates might be resolved. The conclusions of the conference were to have an advisory status in informing the British Government about what constituted an acceptable platform upon which a phased withdrawal of the imperial power could be based. The fact that the conference had

been called at all was informed by the consideration that negotiation was feasible, that there was a point of consensus on India which could be reached.

The committees of the conference were followed by a statement by the Prime Minister, McDonald, summing up the achievements of the conference and setting the terms of reference for the second conference. He was emphatic that the successful resolution of the conference would only be ensured by an agreement between Hindus and Moslems on the proportions in which they should be represented in the legislatures. This ultimatum appears to have been a challenge to India's ability to act as a single political community in the quest for independence.

It was in the light of this ultimatum that the second Round Table Conference met under the jurisdiction of the National Government. The order of business was different from that of the first conference. It began with the same sub committees and with the spot light on the minorities committee. The Moslem Hindu issue was not resolved because the Moslem delegation considered that it had not been accorded adequate representation in the legislatures. The Moslem League had mandated its delegates on the question of the numerical proportion of the voice it considered appropriate to its security. The conference had thus failed in its purpose to produce an agreement upon which a constitution could be based, even before the second plenary session. The British Government had to some extent, built in this stumbling block.

This necessarily affected the kinds of statements which could be made in the plenary session at the second conference. These mainly consisted of appeals to the British Government to award a form of independence anyway. The Hindu Moslem issue was recorded as a problem in the Montagu Chelmsford Report and the Statutory Commission, yet the burden of its resolution was placed on the British Indian delegation.

The plenary session of the second conference was followed by the Prime Minister's assessment of the main

achievements of the conference which were to be presented as a White Paper, and another step in the direction of independence, for the endorsement of parliament. The decisions of the conference, thought to be an expression of the Indian voice were to be only one of the considerations in the award of independence to India. This was to be further conditioned by the necessity for a particular style of government imposing a concept of nationhood as a privileged form of political community.

The fact that India should live as a single political community under a single apparatus does not appear to have been an issue of debate at any point in the decolonisation process. This was only reconsidered in the early 1940s under pressure from Moslems for political autonomy, awarded in the creation of Pakistan as a separate state. Because India was a political unit for the purposes of colonial rule, it was assumed, under the impact of Western thought, that it would also be a political unit under an indpendent government.

The contention that India was a single political unit was almost certainly a colonial construction. The India of the East India Company was certainly not a unified political structure. Prior to the days of the East India Company, India was ruled as a multiplicity of units of varying size under the authority of princes. The remnants of this system still existed in the 1930s with the survival of the Indian princes, and the States over which they ruled as political units nominally distinct from British India. The relationship between British India and the states is described in the next section (5.3) The East India Company did not manage to institute a unified political structure in India, although it may have been considered a single unit for their (commercial) purposes. Initially the East India Company worked through the native system of administration, but it found it made the activities of the company easier if it instituted measures to provide an efficient administrative machine to dispense justice and ensure peace. Such measures ensured the continued profitability of the company

throughout the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century. This marked the beginning of the imposition of a form of colonial unity on India, for the porposes of commercial exploitation.

The first attempts of the British crown to assert its authority over India occurred with the imposition of the Regulating Act of 1773. This was an act designed to protect the residents of Bengal from the excesses of the servants of the East India Company. It was extended in the period of 1786 to 1793 when the Supreme Court was set up to effect the exercise of the jurisdiction of English law throughout the India of the East India Company. This trend was continued after the Indian mutiny in 1857, with aggressive legislative measures being introduced in the eighteen sixties and early eighteen seventies. This marked a break with the era of reforms carried out in the eighteen thirties with the co-operation of the Indian middle class. This period following the mutiny marked a progressive intervention of the British Government in the affairs of India and the decline of the limited administrative and military authority of the East India Company.

British rule extended over what was referred to as British India, and to a lesser extent, the Indian states. This comprises the whole of the territory now designated India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Because this was a unit of colonial administration, the fact that it constituted a single political community was never questioned. The federal method of government, in the peculiar form in which it was introduced into India, was a way of reconciling the diversity of the Indian population with the imposition of a single political community. The federal structure, offering representation to certain interest and population categories in India, was to effect the construction of the Indian political community as the totality of the representable elements within it. The question of what was representable was an issue at the Round Table Conference.

5.3 The Delegate Structure of the Conference.

The delegates invited to the Round Table Conference were thought to speak on behalf of the Indian people. They were to represent the voice of India. The list of delegates represents the government's assessment of which communities could be incorporated in a political community. This section examines who was included in the potential political community, who was excluded and why.

The constituent parts of the conference were specified by the British Government. There were three parties to the discussions at the conference. Each was in a different position relative to the others. The position of a delegate as a member of one of these three parties acted as a structuring mechanism on the kinds of statements which could be made. Each of the three parties had a relation to a specific site of enunciation.

The British delegation was composed of representatives of the three main political parties as well as experts on Indian legal issues, conference functionaries and administrators. Few speeches were made from this delegation, it was a listening delegation. It was to regard the positions expressed by the Indian delegation and take them into consideration in the awarding of independence. Britain was the awarding authority. Although a politically diverse body it was collectively representative of British statesmanship.

The Indian delegation was split into two sections, the Indian princes and the British Indian delegation. They must be treated separately as formally they each occupied a distinctive place in the negotiation procedure, and because the states were administratively distinct from British India.

The Indian states were represented by sixteen of the leading princes of India. They were a conceding authority in that many of them had agreed to take part in the constitutional arrangements of an independent India and thus concede some of their sovereignty. The states, of which there were five hundred and sixty two, varied in

size from those with fabulous wealth, to a few acres. The form of government prevailing varied as widely. They were not distinctively divided from British India by linguistic, racial or geographical boundaries. The peoples who lived in the states had a peculiar status. In terms of the government of India they were not British subjects because they did not live in British territory. Their relation to the British Government was established by individual treaty or other written document or by usage or agreement. Each state made and administered its own laws, imposed, collected and spent its own taxes. There was usually a British Resident or other agent whose duty was to "offer advice to the ruler and report to the British authorities" (Indian Statutory Commission Report. p85) The British crown reserved the right to intervene as the paramount power in the internal affairs of the state in cases where it suspected misgovernment. For international and diplomatic purposes the states were represented by the British Government which maintained control over all external relations.

Britain's powers of intervention in the states had been carefully defined by the Butler Commission which was set up in 1927, and reported in 1929. The commission stated that in the event of a dominion government being established in India this relationship would need to be re-thought. "The future development of India cannot be envisaged without bearing fully in mind their (states) existence and influence, and the crown's obligations in regard to them." (Indian Statutory Commission Report. p83) It would appear that certain pressures had been brought to bear upon the princes to participate in the conference in order that their position in a dominion India may be redefined. Contact between the states collectively, and the British Government prior to the Round Table Conference, was activated through the Chamber of Princes. This was set up in 1921 and was attended by one hundred and eight of the ruling princes. Its function was described as "deliberative, consultative and advisory" (Indian Statutory Commission Report. p90)

It is most likely that the princes at the conference were a selection of those associated with the Chamber of Princes. Their position as a delegation was a little different from that of the British Indian delegation, in that the princes were not required to represent anyone but themselves. It was incumbent upon them to state how far they identified with the terms of their inclusion in an All India Federation, rather than represent the voice of the peoples who lived in the states as their subjects. The princes did not need to establish the right by which they were at the conference making statements. They were there, unlike the British Indian delegation, by right of birth and no other right.

The term delegation is used because it was the language of the conference. The people invited to the conference were not in any sense delegated by those whom they purported to represent. They were appointed by the British Government in line with the findings of the Statutory Commission. The relationship between the delegates and those whom they represented was often quite obscure. In the case of the Moslem League (only one of the institutions through which Moslems were represented) although delegates were appointed by the government, the Moslem League managed to hold a conference of their members in between the first and second Round Table Conferences, with the result that their delegates went to the second conference with a mandate to accept only a certain kind of settlement.

The case of Indian labour has already been discussed in an earlier chapter (see section 4.6). It was the Indian Trades Union Federation, and not the All India Trades Union Congress which was represented at the conference, and even then there was dissatisfaction expressed by many of the members of the Federation about the manner in which their leaders had represented them. In the case of the Indian National Congress, it was Gandhi who was invited to be the delegate, rather than Nehru. In the selection of the representatives of the congress and organised labour, the Labour Party was fully

implicated as it was the major parliamentary political institution with contacts in the congress and the trades unions.

The British Indian delegation was by far the largest with fifty seven members. It was composed of delegates from sections of the Indian population selected by the government as collectively representing the voice of India. This may be seen as the construction of a potential political community in which the Labour Party was fully involved. The British Indian delegation comprised representatives from the following: Moslems, Hindus, Indian commerce, European commercial interests, landlords, women, depressed classes, army, workers, sikhs, Anglo Indians and Indian Christians. Gandhi refused the invitation to the first conference but attended the second after an arrangement had been made between the congress and the Viceroy for the cessation of congress activity in exchange for the release of political prisoners.

In general terms the British Indian delegation operated as a requesting delegation. More specifically, the different parts of this delegation set out the discursive right by which their community should be a party to a political settlement, as part of the voice of India. The construction of right was religious, economic and commercial, through birth or indigenous association, through a part played in the modernisation process or through being down-trodden.

The British Indian delegation was requesting independence from the colonial authority. In return for this it was offering certain guarantees of civil and political conduct adequate to the operation of democratic political institutions. The British Indian delegation was also anxious to demonstrate the capability of India to operate as a single political community in its behaviour at the conference. It was constrained by its dependence on British authority and pronouncements over which it had little control.

As important as the delegates at the conference,

were those sections of the population, or political forces in India which were mentioned in the Statutory Commission and the Times newspaper reports, but which were excluded from the Round Table Conference. These were specifically excluded from the potential political community. The 'voice' of the Indian people excluded the Moslem Red Shirts, the Communist Party and peasants who were not members of the depressed classes.

Despite the widely reported disruptive activities of the Communist Party and the Red Shirts, the Statutory Commission pronounced "the only well organised and disciplined party with a definite programme (though, it is true, a negative one) is that of the Swarajists." (p209). The Congress was the main political institution associated with Swaraj, the movement for independence. In the 1930s 'Swarajists' was a way of designating the main political goal of the Indian National Congress. Whilst swarajists had left the Congress in 1923 to set themselves up as a separate political force, they joined again in 1926. Apart from the Congress, the only other political organisations mentioned in the Commission were the Justice Party and the National Unionist Party. With the exception of the Congress all other political organisations were dismissed as hindering rather than aiding India's political development.

> "The various groupings with kaleidoscopic changes of nomenclature, composition and leadership, have not often been on anything but communal lines and their communal character has tended to become more, rather than less pronounced."
> (1930 Indian Statutory Commission Report. p209)

The National Congress was posed as the instument through which the general will of India as a single political community could be developed. As the major concern of the commission was the construction of nationhood out of diversity, the Red Shirts and the Communist Party were excluded from its considerations and from the Round Table. Apart from their insistence on the importance of class divisions, it is also likely that the methods of disruption and violence associated with these institutions was a

factor in their exclusion.

It may also be argued that quite apart from its politically educative function in Indian nationhood, the congress was necessarily a party to any political settlement in India because it had demonstrated its ability to institute and inspire widespread civil disorder in its demand for swaraj. Therefore, for a political solution to the Indian problem to be effective, it must necessarily meet the approval of the congress. The congress was also a party to a political settlement because at least some of its leaders accepted the validity of negotiating with the imperial power. Gandhi, in his demand for a 'spiritual independence' must have considered the assumptions of Montagu and the Statutory Commission at least negotiable at the conference. Nehru with his more definite orientation towards complete dominion status was also prepared to sanction Gandhi's appearance at the negotiation table.

> "If it is made clear however, that the conference will meet to frame a constitution of free India, subject to such adjustments... I for one would be disposed to recommend that the Congress accept an invitation to participate in the conference. We are ready to agree to reasonable terms for the period of transfer of power from a British administration in India to a responsible Indian Government and we must meet the British people to discuss the terms as nation to nation on an equal footing."
> (Nehru 25/6/30 The Times of India, Bombay Edition)

In the case of the Round Table Conference, it appears that three factors were necessary to make a political force a party to a settlement. Firstly it must either accept the general negotiating structure of the settlement or consider it negotiable. Secondly it must be able to demonstrate, through its effectiveness and extent of its support, that it is necessary for it to be placated in order for a settlement to work. Finally it must have either an organisational structure and programme, or be considered a progressive force because of its role in building nationhood. This final factor is the key to a contradiction, because nationalism was

considered by the imperial power to be both a progressive force in the building of nationhood, and a disruptive force which challenged public order.

But the major point in its favour must have been that the Indian National Congress was different from many of the other forces represented at the conference, in that it did not claim to represent a specific population category or set of religious or commercial interests. It did in fact claim to represent India as a whole with a particular reference to the poorer sections of the population.

The inclusion of the Congress against the exclusion of certain other political forces is different from the exclusion of the peasants as against the inclusion of the depressed classes. The exclusion of peasants from the delegate structure at the Round Table Conference does not square with the Indian Statutory Commission which considered them at some length in its report. Using the information of the census the commission was able to indicate that approximately ninety percent of the population of British India was rural. Of this percentage, with the exception of a small proportion of landlords of varying degrees of wealth, the overwhelming majority were peasants. The Commission presented peasants as living at a very low standard of life in an impoverished culture, untouched by the impact of British rule.

> "Almost everywhere in India it would appear that, from time immemorial, the rural population has lived in small villages, the mud and bamboo houses of which are huddled together in a more or less compact area situated in the midst of the fields which provide the means of livelihood to their occupants."
> (1930 Indian Statutory Commission Report. p16)

The Commission devoted some considerable space to outlining the factors which limited rural progress towards prosperity and a more developed material culture. It considered rural progress to be inhibited by social traditions, a lack of communication (they had been excluded from the imperial railway boom which had linked important industrial and commercial centres to the major

ports) as well as irrigation facilities and other modernising processes. Apart from one or two irrigation projects to facilitate rice production, the Commission had to admit that life in rural areas was likely to remain unchanged.

The Commission, further, presented the peasant as excluded from a conception of a political community which was more extensive than the political life of the village unit. It suggested that participation in the village political community was the limit of the peasants' capacity for political involvement.

> "...the ordinary cultivator on his tiny plot is still a man of few resources, with small means for meeting his limited needs - usually illiterate, though not on that account necessarily wanting in shrewdness - with an outlook confined by tradition and environment, and needing above all things that those who consider his future as a citizen should understand something of his life as a man." (Indian Statutory Commission Report. p19)

The Indian Statutory Commission, in its presentation of the peasant, constructs his exclusion from the potential political community represented at the Round Table Conference. In so doing it is constructing the requirements of citizenship or membership of the Indian political community. This amounts to an admission that almost ninety percent of the population of India were unfit for citizenship. The offer of nationhood for India was, therefore, of a highly restricted nature.

Peasants were not considered potential citizens or members of the political community because they lived outside of political processes which were anything other than local. This was indicated in the suggestion that they lived a self contained life within the political structures of the villages. The Commission did more than this. It also suggested that peasants were not capable of living in larger political units. This was linked to the assessment that their development was constrained by the conditions of their material culture. It was being suggested that peasants were excluded from the general will associated with a political community

until such time as external forces, for example an irrigation programme, affected their development. If peasants were not capable of citizenship then they were automatically excluded from the negotiations surrounding the development of the national political community.

The inability of the peasants to be part of national political processes was also indicated by their exclusion from the effects of imperial rule. If life in the villages was as it had been before British rule, then peasants were not implicated in the imposition of British sovereignty. Because of the limited inclusion of peasants in colonial political and economic structures, they were not necessarily a party to the discussion of possible changes in this arrangement. Peasants were excluded from the strictures of colonial rule on two counts. In the first place they were excluded from imperial commercial interests which centred on the industrial and commercial centres. They were also excluded from the national political structures imposed by the British Raj. Although formally British subjects, they continued to live in the political units under village headmen. Peasants only felt the authority of the British administration if they engaged in the disruptions associated with the civil disobedience campaign or if they migrated into the industrial and commercial centres to work as waged labour in industries owned by British, European or Indian capital. Unlike industrial workers, peasants did not even have a stake in the modernisation process.

Exclusion from citizenship for the peasants was structured around their state of development and feudal relations, their exclusion from colonial rule and lack of association with national political institutions or sentiment. There was nothing to be represented by peasants at the Round Table except the need for development and prosperity, both of which were beyond their sphere of influence which did not extend beyond village life. Citizenship was defined in relation to participation in the changing political processes associated with Indian

life in this transitional phase. Tribal peoples were treated in a manner similar to the peasants. They were referred to in the Indian Statutory Commission as "primitive peoples" (p32) of "aboriginal stock" (p33). They were also unrepresented at the constitutional talks.

The depressed classes were represented at the Round Table Conference by Doctor Ambedakar who was not one of their number but spoke on their behalf. As with peasants, the commission described their material conditions of life as deplorable. Unlike peasants this condition was presented not as the result of their externality to the forces of development, but their externality to the structures of Hindu society. The depressed classes were described by the Statutory Commission (1930 p37) as part of the potential political community because their exclusion from certain spheres of Indian life was a structural feature of Hindu religious practices. Unlike peasants, Untouchables lived in all spheres of Indian life, in rural as well as urban environments. They were often found working in industry and commerce as wage labourers. They were therefore fully integrated, as a population category, into the process of development in Indian society. Indeed, the Commission (p38) considered that the processes of modernisation through industrialisation in India would eventually obscure caste divisions. It cited the case of Jamshedpur factories where workers of all castes worked alongside each other. It was implied that the divisions associated with industrialisation were superior to caste and other features of under development.

The pitiable position of the depressed classes acknowledged in the Statutory Commission was described as removable through the inclusion of these elements of the population into the political community. For this reason they were represented at the Round Table Conference where it was suggested that they should be reserved certain seats in the legislature in order to have a voice which could be used to improve their position in Indian society. "Their state is indeed pitiable - inside the Hindu fold

and yet not of it - living on the edge of starvation, and unaware of any hope of improving their lot." (Indian Statutory Commission Report. p38). The conditions in which the depressed classes lived were not presented by the commission as any more pitiable than those of the peasantry. Yet for the reasons outlined they were considered a constituent part of the Indian political community, a body from which peasants, as the bulk of the Indian population, were excluded.

So far in this chapter it has been possible to outline the conditions in which the Round Table Conference was the only possible response of the Labour Party to the Indian demand for independence. It has also been possible to demonstrate that the structure of the conference and its delegate list relied heavily on the report of the Indian Statutory Commission which prescribed the potential political community, its manner of representation as special interest groups, and the federal structure.

It has been pointed out that federation in the context of the decolonisation of India meant something quite specific. This was especially true given the highly restricted nature of the franchise and the inability of the British Government in general, and the Labour Party in particular, to define the qualities of citizenship except in relation to the processes of modernisation in which industrialisation was of crucial importance. The inability of the British Government to include peasants in the political community was not alien to Labour Party formulations. The Labour Party's inability to define peasants as one of its communities, or rural issues as its constituency, in combination with its emphasis on a small organised section to the industrial work force, outlined in the last chapter, indicates its inability to depart from values prioritised in Western thought in its conceptions of decolonisation. It therefore retained notions of the superiority of Western industrial and social structures in constructing the commonwealth. This was a measure of development which India was never able to live up to.

The next section deals with the audience to which statements of the Round Table Conference were addressed. The idea of an audience acted as a constraint on the conditions in which statements were produced. The audience of Round Table statements was extensive and diverse. In many cases it is possible to discern the audience priorities of a statement.

5.4 Audience and the Round Table Conference.

The concept of an audience as a constraint began to be developed in section 4.1. Consideration of the Round Table Conference as a site of enunciation allows the further development of this as an analytic tool. Along with political conditions, authoritative statements or pledges and the need to establish a continuity with past statements and positions, audience is a constraint. It is a constraint because it compels the conditions in which statements are produced, the terms of the debate.. Audience does not directly produce certain kinds of statements, only the conditions in which they are made. They impose a direction on statements which cannot be ignored. There are structuring mechanisms associated with an audience which actually produce certain statements. This will be fully explained below.

Assessments of the nature and extent of an audience are closely related to their site of enunciation. There is a vast difference between the audience associated with the pronouncements of a local Labour Party branch meeting, and the audience of the Round Table Conference. Assessments of who received the statements of the Round Table Conference may be ascertained through an examination of the statements, and the fact that as a site of enunciation, the Round Table attracted a wide audience becuase of the interest it stimulated in India.

An audience may be defined as a collection of discursive communities. In the case of the Round Table Conference there were three basic communities addressed, the British people and their government, the Indian people

and international or world opinion. Each of these communities may be broken down still further into smaller community units, depending on the constituencies and positions variously ascribed to them by the authors of statements at the conference. There are two main differences between an audience and a community. Firstly an audience is usually composed of a collection of discursive communities. Secondly, a community is represented by a voice expressing a position on its behalf. An audience is not represented by a statement, it has a statement or position presented to it. For example, statements representing the cause of independence on behalf of the people of India were presented to an audience which contained the community being represented. But the audience priority of such statements was the British Government which had the authority to award independence. Because the Indian people were also part of this audience, it was open to them to challenge their representative's ability to represent them.

The British Government and the British people were addressed by the delegates of the British Indian section of the conference as a force which had to be convinced that India should have independence. This was the result of an assessment by those who voiced statements at the conference about the divergent pulls within this community. It was not necessary for the British Indian delegation to convince those who were in favour of independence, only those who considered it either impossible, or a long term possibility. Various references were made to the fact that the quality of British statesmanship was on public view at this conference. Numerous references were made to the fact that Britain was being offered the opportunity to settle honourably the long term obligation associated with the imperial relation. Because of the public nature of the conference as a site of enunciation, it was frequently pointed out that Britain came under world scrutiny in her dealings with India over independence.

At this point it is necessary to take up the issue of the structuring mechanisms. Unlike constraints

structuring mechanisms directly produce certain kinds of statements. This was hinted at earlier in this section where it was pointed out that an audience element such as Britain would be broken down into smaller elements, such as pro and anti independence opinion. Becuase an audience is the totality of possible communities it is necessary to establish audience priorities. To single out a section of an audience, for example, British anti independence opinion, represents a priority which is specified in terms of a community and a constituency by the person or institution issuing the statement.

Audience priorities act as structuring mechanisms on the production of statements. In the example just given the kind of statement associated with the British Government as an audience priority would be a demonstration of India's ability to be self governing. If the audience priority was British opinion in favour of independence, the statement might push for a certain kind of constitutional arrangement. This would depend on the priorities of the statement in terms of Indian audiences.

The British people and their government were the first audience of the Round Table Conference to be considered in this section. The Indian people are the second audience element of the Round Table Conference to be considered. It is evident from the documentation of the conference that some statements prioritised the need to address themselves to an Indian rather than a British audience. Again the category 'Indian' was a matter of defining sudience priorities because there were numerous opposing pulls associated with this political community and the multiplicity of constituencies which might be represented on its behalf. There is no necessary or natural constituency (set of interests) associated with a community. Different statements will associate different constituencies with the same community. Constituency, like community is a construction. For example, if the Indian people as a whole are posed as the community of a statement, it is possible that they will be represented either by the constituency independence,

or by the constituency full citizenship rights for all. A particular statement may consider that political rights have priority over independence as the constituency of the Indian people.

The Indian people as an audience in these debates were variously defined. In some statements the priority in terms of the Indian section of the audience was the Indian National Congress and its ability to disrupt. This was frequently referred to and appears to have been something of a bargaining counter for the Indian delegations demand for independence. But even the National Congress did not have a united position, it was a focus for opposing pulls to define different constituencies or constituency priorities on behalf of the Indian people. The statements made by the British Indian delegation were widely reported in India. This delegation was to some extent accountable for its statements upon returning to India. Delegates sent to represent certain communites would be expected to represent the constituencies which that community claimed as its own. This is complicated by opposing claims in a community to define its interests in terms of different constituencies. It is possible that each community could be associated with a range of constituencies. For example, the representatives of workers and untouchables prioritised a full franchise over independence in its demands (see sctions 5.8 and 5.11) realising fully, that without a vote, their position in an independent India might not be much better than in a colonial India.

The audience of political statements is usually, like the audience at a political rally, extensive and diverse with no single set of expectations and priorities. Because political statements have a representative function they specify community and constituency priorities in front of their diverse audience. The concept of an audience as a tool of analysis in this dissertation, as a way of looking at the material or statements on India, facilitates a fuller understanding of the conditions of making statements and the Labour Party as a statement issuing institution. This makes it possible to construct

the Labour Party as a political force in terms of its statements relating to India. By the 1920s, the Labour Party was not only committed to Indian independence, but a mode of attaining that independence, negotiation with the 'voice' of the Indian people as the next section (5.5) demonstrates.

5.5 Labour Party Policy and the Round Table Conference.

The Labour Party declared its support for the Round Table Conference as a style of settlement of the Indian issue. This was demonstrated in its policy statements. Lansbury's resolution on behalf of the National Executive of the party in 1931 was, perhaps, the most explicit statement of this.

> "This conference reaffirming its belief in the right of the Indian people to self government is convinced that the Round Table Conference now assembled in London offers a unique opportunity to establish this right in the most effective and certain manner through negotiations between the government and the representatives of all sections of the population of India."
> (Lansbury 1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p215)

This support for the conference was picked up by the Daily Herald which gave full, and largely uncritical, coverage of the events of the conference. The Herald coverage emphasised a special relationship between its readership and Gandhi. It demonstrates a relationship with the political position of Gandhi as a member of the Congress.

Official policy statements indicate that the Labour Party was fully implicated in supporting the Round Table and defining its delegate structure as the voice of the Indian people. This amounts to an acceptance of the main assumptions of the Statutory Commission upon which the conference was constructed.

Very little criticism of the Round Table was voiced from within the Labour Party. This was not for lack of opportunity. When Lansbury delivered his resolution in 1931 it was criticised because it did not

include a reference to the Meerut Prisoners, but not because it supported the Round Table. The Labour Party Conference was one of the prime enunciative sites for criticism of Labour Party policy and activity, yet none was recorded. The same was true of the documentation of the New Fabian Research Bureau and the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda. Criticism voiced in the New Statesman was muted, and speeches made in Parliament, another prime enunciative site for criticism of party policy, contained little reference to the defects of the Round Table mode of settlement. The only exceptions to this were, firstly Wedgewood's statement in the debates which followed the conclusion of the second Round Table (see section 4.3). He claimed that he disliked the Round Table system because he thought the federal solution was undemocratic. Williams (see section 4.2) also took up the position expressed by the Indian labour delegates at the conference, that the proposals to come out of the conference rested on a very limited adult suffrage without a declaration of rights for all.

Opposition from outside the Labour Party was much more vociferous. The Communist Party sources declared the conference to be a "divide and rule" tactic (Daily Worker 1/1/31 p3). The Executive of the Labour and Socialist International expressed its concern over the limited franchise associated with the Round Table arrangements.

> "The Executive recalls the repeated resolutions of the Congress of the Labour and Socialist International, which have again and again demanded full self government for India, and expresses the hope that the present negotiations arising out of the Round Table Conference in London will have a successful issue.
> The Executive is, however, very alarmed at the possibility that the new constitution of India may deny the franchise to the working class."
> (Executive of the Labour and Socialist International 1931 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p304)

The British section of the League Against Imperialism was also highly critical of the Round Table and its implications.

> "This Conference of the British Section of the League Against Imperialism pledges itself once again to oppose the Indian Round Table Conference as nothing but an imperialist conspiracy between the Indian bourgeois and the British imperial rulers in the guise of a federal constitution for the continuation of the oppression murders and exploitation of the Indian workers and peasants." (League Against Imperialism May 1932 Conference Reports)

The Daily Worker also described the conference as an "Imperialist United Front" (1/1/31 p4). Its reports had headlines such as - "More Eye Wash at the Round Table Conference" (1/1/31).

It appears that the Labour Party had no coherent alternative to the Round Table as a mode of settling the Indian issue. It supported a constitutional settlement and could not come up with another method for achieving it. This appears to have been the case in the party generally and was not confined to its official voice. Not only did the party as a whole fail to come up with an alternative strategy, it did not really even manage to mount an effective criticism.

The next seven sections of this chapter will deal with some of the contributions of the British Indian delegation. These are analysed because they allow a detailed examination of statements in terms of the conceptual apparatus developed over the last two chapters, audience, community and constituency. The statements examined constitute attempts to represent certain communities and constituencies and specify audience priorities. Examining the claims of certain communities is an attempt to use these terms and demonstrate what they contribute to an analysis of political statements. The selection of communities has been confined to some, rather than all of the delegates. To examine all of them would have involved repetition of the manner in which they establish definitions of nationhood.

The statements which follow are the voices of the Indian political community, though not all of them. Moslems, Anglo Indians, workers, Indian commerce, Hindus,

the depressed classes and Gandhi, were chosen because they demonstrate in their statements the use of audience, voice, constituency and community. These communities offer a range of constructions of nationhood in terms of concepts such as development or material conditions. To examine all the communities represented (note community is one of the terms of the analysis rather than the material, although it does sometimes appear in the statements as ways of dividing the Indian population) would mean repeating constructions of nationhood. For these reasons, women, European commerce, landlords, the army and Sikhs have been excluded from the detailed examinations of this section. The total number of communities from India represented at the conference constitute those elements which were considered to be capable of becoming part of the community of the Indian nation in a limited way.

5.6 The Moslem Delegation.

The Simon Commission considered Moslems a distinct community because they had separate cultural and religious intstitutions which had made a distinctive contribution to Indian life. The distinctiveness of Moslems was also constructed in Aryan race theory (see section 5.17) in which Hindus, especially high caste Hindus, were thought to be of the same family of the human race as Britons (Leopold 1974 p583). Such considerations informed the idea that Hindu Moslem conflict was inevitable as long as Hindus and Moslems shared a political community. Joan Leopold (1974 p585) points out that Hindu Moslem conflict was much emphasised after (1857) the Indian mutiny. Leopold (1974 p583) supports her suggestion that Hindus and not Moslems were considered Aryans by quoting Max Muller's 1874 paper ("On the Relation of the Bengali to the Arian and Aboriginal Languages of India") "The race of the Hindoos (original spelling) themselves, at least the higher castes, or the so-termed twice born tribes, who call themselves Arians, must be looked upon as genuine descendants of the Arian Conquerors." A certain importance was also placed on the numerical strength of

the Moslems.

> "Dispersed among the 216 millions of Hindus of India are seventy million representatives of a widely different type of culture, not originally or exclusively Indian, but spread throughout India as a consequence of a series of invasions... the splendid monuments of Moghul architecture stand as a perpetual reminder of the vanquished domination of Mohammadan rule... Differences of race, a different system of law and the absence of intermarriage constitute... an effective barrier."
> (1930 Indian Statutory Commission Report p16)

The Commission constituted the autonomy of the Moslems on the grounds that they were racially, culturally and to some extent institutionally distinct from other Indians. This assessment led the commission to suggest that Moslems should be represented through reserved seats in the legislature. It did not consider them autonomous enough to warrant separate nationhood.

Fazl-Ul-Huq, representing Moslems at the Round Table Conference constructed the autonomy of his community on the basis of its former position of dominance over Hindus.

> "The blood of the slave does not run in our veins. Until recently the Mussalmans held the sceptre of sovereignty in India and along with their fellow men in other lands, the seventy millions Mussalmans in India have traditions of sovereignty and conquest extending over thirteen centuries and three continents... Muslim India has been deeply stirred and will be satisfied with nothing less than the fullest recognition of their legitimate rights."
> (Fazl-Ul-Huq 1931 Round Table Conference Proceedings p160)

This statement indicates an alliance between Moslems in India and in other countries on the grounds that they shared a culture and set of religious practices which constituted the distinctiveness of the Indian Moslems from other Indians. As former sovereigns, this delegate was also insisting, Moslems were not prepared to become the subjects of a Hindu sovereignty. Fazl-Ul-Huq was indicating a priority of communities which placed Moslems before Indians in general. Moslem culture was his constituency, rather than independence. Generally, the Moslem delegation saw little point in independence if it

did not award them a certain level of representation which allowed Moslems to govern in Moslem areas, giving them an effective voice in assemblies which were otherwise predominantly Hindu.

As well as representing the position of Moslems against the claims of the other minorities, another Moslem delegate also represented the voice of India against that of the imperial government. As well as emphasizing the importance of Moslems as a distinct part of the political community with a distinct will which could not be represented by an undivided electorate, this Moslem delegate also stressed the basis upon which India should be considered a single nation despite the divided nature of her population.

> "The part taken by India during this unparalleled world conflagration (first world war) gained for her, her legitimate position in the international affairs of the world as a signatory of the treaty of Versailles and an original member of the League of Nations..."
> (Shafi 1931 Round Table Conference Proceedings p53-4)

Shafi was claiming that India was capable of nationhood because she had demonstrated her ability to participate as a nation along side others in international forums. He considered that in representing itself at the League of Nations India had demonstrated that she could speak with a single voice, not as a collection of separate communities. India was a single political community because she could be collectively represented.

5.7 Anglo Indians.

The Statutory Commission's report on Anglo Indians began by quoting the Montagu Chelmsford Report which claimed that on historic grounds Anglo Indians had the right to be considered a community in the Indian constitutional arrangements. The Commission stated -

> "The community has played an honourable part in the development of the country and in supporting the forces of law and order. These avenues (staffing administrative posts) of employment are the more important to it since

> the Anglo Indians are not cultivators and few of them hold commanding positions in the world of commerce. It is, generally speaking, a poor community: the standards of life it endeavours to maintain make this poverty still more severely felt: it is domiciled in India, and must make India its home, and it now finds itself as the result of Indianisation exposed to the danger of falling between two stools..." (1930 Indian Statutory Commission Report p44-5)

Anglo Indians did not constitute a community with a common set of cultural practices, they were thought to constitute a community by reference to a special constituency, the forces of law and order. Added to this they had a dimension of occupational identity. In order for them to be represented through the mechanism of specially reserved seats on the legislature, a very precise definition of Anglo Indians was required in terms of parentage to avoid overlap with other communities. This was of course true of all putative communities, but such definitions were more clear cut in some cases rather than others. Anglo Indians were the product of mixed marriages between Indians and British people and as such were thought to occupy a place between two cultures, with a semi expatriate status.

Lt. Colonel Gidney, representing Anglo Indians at the Round Table Conference stated the right by which Anglo Indians were an autonomous community within the national political community in need of a separate representation.

> "We represent in our very bodies that fusion of East and West, India and Britain which in other Indians and other Britons can exist only as a fusion of interests in politics and economics. If India is our motherland, Britain is our fatherland...our loyalties are to both these great lands in the connection between them we find our truest welfare...we are your joint responsibility and no party can disclaim its honourable obligation to protect us. Moreover, small as our community is it has played a mighty part in the making of British India. Its military services from the old John Company days to the great war, when we gave eighty percent of our manhood at the call of King and Empire...today with India seething with civil disobedience and

> revolution, you will find at all important railway stations our men standing behind sand bags with rifle in hand protecting British and Indian lives and property." (Gidney 1931 Proceedings of the Round Table Conference p74)

This particular voice represented the right of Anglo Indians in terms of their being a biological product of the colonial relation. They were therefore being presented as having a superior position in relation to the interests of Britain and India. They were also presented as representing the constituency of order from the height of the trading companies in India to the civil disobedience campaign. Order implies a relation to a higher form of civilization, a mark of progress.

Gidney also set out the basis upon which India was constructed as a single political community, ripe to attain nationhood.

> "My people and I are Indians, but Indians whose roots are deeply not only in the soil and traditions of India, but in the soil and traditions of this country where we are meeting today." (Gidney 1931 Proceedings of the Round Table Conference p76)

This was a claim that nationhood for India was constructed by geographical boundaries which were considered natural, and a common set of traditions or history shared by the population as a whole which overcame other divisions. This represents an acceptance of British assessments of India as a single unit. Gidney also hinted that India was not a single nation by virtue of its ability to disrupt the colonially policed social order imposed by Britain, but its ability to resist that disruption. Thus Anglo Indians were integral to India in the supreme part they played in that resistance. Gidney therefore considered Anglo Indians a legitimate part of the voice of India to be represented in its political community.

5.8 Workers.

The Indian Statutory Commission presented workers

as migrating peasants caught up in the processes of industrialisation. As such they were not considered a well developed social force in Indian society. They were thought to constitute a community because of the conditions in which they lived.

> "The Indian peasant who goes to some busy centre of activity to supplement his income, often lives there under conditions which are almost unimaginable to the British working man...The conditions under which most of the industrial workers live tend to be much worse than the conditions under which they work..." (1930 Indian Statutory Commission Report p21)

Joshi, representing the workers at the Round Table, tended to uphold this definition of workers as an identifiable community, but also stated that their condition was shared with the masses of the Indian people. The distinctiveness of workers from the masses was presented by Joshi as the result of their position in relation to industrialists. The interests of workers were presented as resting on a challenge to the authority of industrialists through the exercise of their numerical strength as a community. Their shared constituency was a lowly position in relation to employers against whom they were to assert their interests for an improved standard of life.

The claim by Joshi that India was a single political community capable of nationhood was premised on the articulate political position of her workers who were demanding a fuller franchise which would award them the rights of citizenship. "The constitution must be founded upon universal adult suffrage...the Indian masses will never agree to deprive themselves of the rights of citizenship for ever." (Joshi 1931 Proceedings of the Round Table Conference p111). Indian workers prioritised universal suffrage as a constituency rather than independence, because an independence constitution which did not give them adequate representation, would contribute very little to the improvement of their lives.

5.9. Indian Commerce.

The Statutory Commission considered that the contribution of Indian commerce to the future life and well being of India constituted the right by which it was to be represented as a constituent part of the political community.

> "It was British capital that began the modern process of industrialisation in India, but more and more commercial enterprise is falling into Indian hands...India is now one of the eighth most important industrial areas in the world..."
> (1930 Report of the Indian Statutory Commission p23)

This statement by the Commission places a good deal of importance on the industrialisation process as an aspect of India's development. Development was being offered as an important part of the construction of nationhood, a process in which the Indian industrial community was important. This accepts many of the assessments of the Labour Party regarding development as constitutive of citizenship.

The emphasis on development was put more forcefully by Mr. Mody at the Round Table Conference in his representation of Indian commercial interests.

> "Commerce and industry are the life blood of a nation. Political freedom is not going to mean anything to us unless we have economic freedom, which will enable us to regulate our economic and industrial development along lines which we regard as most conducive to our interests..."
> (Mody 1931 Proceedings of the Round Table Conference p155-6)

Indian commerce was being presented as a community by virtue of its privileged position in the processes of the development of India to nationhood. It was also suggested that Indian commerce was able to challenge the British monopolies in trade and industry and establish the development and prosperity of India without the Raj. Indeed much of the debate at the Round Table Conference centred on the struggle between European and Indian commercial interests for supremacy. The Europeans were anxious to hold on to their position in India which had

been established through enforced trade monopolies rather than commercial superiority.

The voice of Indian commerce expressed by this delegate, whilst supporting the need for the industrial and commercial development of India, prioritised the need for independence. The development of India inside the colonial relation would operate in favour of European, rather than Indian commercial interests. Independence was thus being defined as the constituency of Indian commerce.

Indian commerce considered it was a distinct community to be represented in the legislature because of its strategic position in relation to India's future prosperity. Commerce was presented as integral to India's ability to become a nation. It was part of the economic structure upon which independent nationhood could be constructed; its constituency was development and prosperity. Indian commerce presented an economic challenge to the British Raj, just as the demand for independence presented a political challenge.

5.10 Hindus.

The Statutory Commission portrayed Hinduism as a religion which encompassed a total way of life and set of cultural practices.

> "It is a religion which touches ordinary acts of everyday life at nearly every point and a philosophy of existence which provides an outlook fundamentally different from that of the creeds of the West...Hinduism has no one distinguishing central concept. Superimposed on a heterogenous people differing widely in race, language, political and social traditions..."
> (1930 Report of the Indian Statutory Commission p24)

It was the philosophy and way of life associated with Hinduism which constituted its autonomy and the reason why Moslems required separate representation. Hindus were a recognised majority in India as well as the dominant social force in the National Congress. The position of Untouchable Hindus was treated separately.

As far as their representation at the Round Table was concerned, Hindus were less concerned with asserting their identity as a community amongst others, than claiming to be a major part of the Indian political community as a whole. Hindus were part of many political institutions, including the National Congress and the Hindu Mahassaba. There was one statement which constituted their unity as a race. This represents a fairly grand claim to Hindu identity. "Efficiency, competence, intelligence and capacity for work, if that be the test for the loaves and fishes of life, if that be the test for a man's worth, I, coming from the great Hindu race have nothing to fear." (Moonje 1930-1 Proceedings of the Indian Round Table Conference p81).

The Hindu delegates at the Round Table were more interested in demonstrating the unity of India, upon which nationhood could be constructed, than asserting their individuality as a community. Hindus presented themselves as India, and independence as their constituency.

> "Hindus of Hindustan which is called India in English. Hindus therefore means Indians to whatever religion they may belong...There are Indians in the Civil Service, there are Indians in the medical service, there are Indians in the military service, and their wives and their sons and their brothers and their nearest relatives are taking part actively in the National Movement of civil Disobedience... the time has come to assert India's position and dignity."
> (Moonje 1930-1 Proceedings of the Round Table Conference p83)

This statement is suggesting that India was a potential political community because of the ability of her people to staff certain key positions in the modern state and because they had demonstrated their ability to assume a united political stand against the British. The production of a nationialist movement was cited as evidence that India was capable of the expression of a single political will. The audience priority of this statement, like that of most statements of the British Indian delegation, was the British Government.

5.11 The Depressed Classes.

The Statutory Commission considered that the depressed classes or untouchables were a separate part of the Hindu fold having little in common with caste Hindus.

> "The difficulty of the administrator or political reformer is much increased by the fact that the great body of untouchables as yet accept their destiny as natural and inevitable. Their state is indeed pitiable - inside the Hindu fold and yet not of it - living on the edge of starvation, and unaware of any hope of improving their lot... At the bottom of the economic scale and are generally uneducated...they are normally separated in a separate quarter...Two most widespread difficulties that arise are in connection with water and schools (Untouchables were not allowed to use the same wells and education facilities as caste Hindus.)..." (1930 Report of the Indian Statutory Commission p38)

Because of these conditions it was considered that the depressed classes had a separate political will which could be represented, and directed at the disappearance of these conditions. Untouchables were presented as an object of social reform.

The autonomous position of untouchables was re-stated by their spokesman at the Round Table Conference, Dr. Ambedakar. He pointed out the numerical strength of this category which consisted of one fifth of the population of British India.

> "The Depressed Classes form a group by themselves which is distinct and separate from the Mohammedans and although they are included amongst the Hindus they in no sense form an integral part of that community. Not only have they a separate existence, but they have also assigned to them a status which is invidiously distinct from the status occupied by any other community in India...It is one (status) which is mid way between that of the serf and that of the slave and which may...be called servile - with this difference, that the serf and the slave were permitted to have physical contact from which the Depressed Classes are debarred...a positive denial of all equality of opportunity and...those most elementary of civic rights upon which

all human existence depends..."
(Ambedakar 1930-31 Proceedings of the Round Table Conference p131)

This suggests that untouchables were currently beneath citizenship. It was also implied that their position did not square with the standards of civilization and development required for independence to be awarded. Untouchables were claiming the right to be incorporated in the political community in proportion to their numbers. Dr. Ambedakar was in favour of representation through special seats if that was the only method of representation being offered. Like workers untouchables favoured as wide a franchise as could be achieved. They were prepared to submit themselves to the sovereignty of the political community as long as they were properly and proportionately represented.

Like many of the other delegates, the representative of the depressed classes considered that India was a single political community ready to be granted independence, as evidenced by the existence of the collective political will embodied in the nationalist movement. Dr. Ambedakar considered that this participation indicated a state of mind on the part of Indians, a collective mentality.

Like workers, untouchables prioritised a universal franchise above independence. An independece constitution with any kind of franchise qualification, for example income or property however small, would effectively exclude them from the political community. This could leave them less represented than they were as British subjects, and fail to put them in a position from which they could improve their lives. At least under British administration, whilst nothing had been done to ameliorate the lot of the untouchable or the poorest workers, there was a certain humanitarian concern for such categories of Indians which might disappear under self government instituted by a franchise qualification which favoured the rich and propertied. The audience priority to which the untouchable's request was directed was the British

Government as the authority able to cede independence. Dr. Ambedakar was also appealing to delegates representing other communities to support the untouchables demands, and demonstrating to untouchables in India that they were being represented.

5.12 Gandhi.

Gandhi presented himself at the Conference as the voice of the Indian National Congress which made the further claim to represent India through the spirit of Indian nationalism. The National Congress in common with other political institutions, was being presented as the voice of the corporate organisation of a specified community. Within this claim it also claimed to have a particular allegiance to a community which was so widespread that it was almost possible to claim that it was India. The "dumb, toiling, semi starved millions" were Gandhi's and the Congress's main concern:-

> "I said at one of the preliminary meetings of the Federal Structural Committee that the Congress claimed to represent over eighty five percent of the population of India, that is to say the dumb, toiling, semi starved millions. But I went further: that the Congress claimed also by right of service to represent even the princes...and the landed gentry, the educated class. I wish to repeat that claim and I wish this evening to emphasize that claim. All other parties at this meeting represent sectional interests. Congress alone claims to represent the whole of India, all interests. It is no communal organisation...its platform is universal...the Congress has been able to demonstrate its influence over and amongst the masses...It is the only all India Wide National organisation..."
> (Gandhi 1931 Proceedings of the Round Table Conference p390)

The spirit of rebellion was how Gandhi described the will of India. It was this spirit which the Congress considered it embodied. Gandhi claimed that independence was both the Congress's and the Indian people's constituency. Indeed this was the right by which he claimed that the Congress was the voice of the Indian people, the sharing of a constituency in political struggle. His audience priorities in this part of his

statement were both the British Government, which he was trying to convince of India's unity, and the Indian people, whom he was claiming to represent. If sections of the Indian audience challenged this claim, then doubt would be placed on Gandhi's ability to represent all of India, in front of the British Government.

5.13 Some General Comments on Representation.

Certain points emerge from this exposition on representation which make it possible to draw together a number of general conclusions at this point about the relationship between community, voice and constituency, which represent an advance on the comments made in chapter four. Delegates spoke for communities, the groups they had been invited to represent. They did so by stating the right by which their group might be constituted as a community and a constituent part of a federation of communities. Delegates established the basis upon which their group should be considered a community with a level of collective existence. The 'right' by which a group of peoples could consider themselves a community was based on a number of factors. In the case of Moslems for example, it was based on their distinctive culture and history. The Moslem delegate considered himself the spokesman of that right, its voice. The Moslem delegate was making an interpretation of the general will, or psychological disposition of that community as a whole. He was presenting himself as being in a privileged position in that community, in that he was able to grasp its collective will as the sum of all the individual wills. That disposition had then to be presented in terms of the debates of the conference.

It is in the act of representation that 'will' becomes 'voice'. Voice is specific to a set of discursive relations. Will can be considered in the abstract, but has to be translated into voice to effect a representational function in the process of political debate. Voice is the articulation of the general will of a specified

community, the right by which it exists as a distinct entity within a given set of discursive practices. Voice, like will, is the expression of a set of general propositions thought to be the property of a discursively constructed community. Right concerns the principles of construction of a community.

The delegates claims to represent the will of a community must be looked at more closely. 'Will' features prominently in the discourses which may be referred to as political philosphy. In terms of discourse analysis, will means something quite specific. It refers to the position which a representative considers to be a property of a discursively constructed community. A position is made up from constituencies and expressed as a statement. Delegates at the Round Table Conference were stating a position on behalf of a community of which they were claiming to be the voice. This claim was open to challenge because those who were part of a particular community being represented, as part of the audience of a set of statements, could state opposing positions. The idea of a 'will' existing as the collective psychological disposition of a community as something naturally occurring and representable by a sovereign must be challenged. 'Will' is no more than a construction of constituencies and positions, and is open to challenge and reconstruction.

Moslems were being defined as a community through their common history and culture. This was the way their identity as a group of people was constructed. A community is not just constructed through right, it is also constructed through its stated association with certain constituencies. Moslems presented their constituencies as the values of a long established civilization, as conquerors over other Indians, an expression of their superiority. Community and constituency are therefore inextricably linked. It is partly an identification with a given set of characteristics and objectives which makes a people a community for the purposes of political discourse. In some cases the

community identification is more vague than the constituency. This is particularly true in the representation of the national political community, where a constituency such as reason, or order, is being represented.

In the case of the Round Table Conference as an arena for political discourse, communities were also representing themselves as a part of the voice of the national political community. Because Britain only recognised the validity of the national political community, accepting individual communities only because they were its federal units, the voices at the conference necessarily had to demonstrate that India was potentially a political community, and that its own community was vital to that community. Such statements demonstrate the importance of a particular community within the national political community, for example, Anglo Indians presented themselves in terms of the constituency - order. In so doing it was suggesting that order was integral to a definition of nationhood. The various voices at the conference were busy constructing definitions of nationhood as well as the right by which their own community was an integral part of that nationhood.

Generally the statements made by the delegates at the conference were posing a double constituency, the properties of their community, and the legitimate properties of nationhood. They were also representing a dual community, their own and the totality of communities designated a national political unit or nation. Each definition of a community by its voice presented a definition as strategically important to the community as a whole.

India was not a pre given reality to be assumed, it was constructed in various ways at the conference. It was constructed as the incarnation of potential order and progress, and as the ability to disrupt and force the hand of the imperial power. However it was constructed, the communities associated with a construction came into

prominence. In the language of political philosophy, the subjects of the sectional communities held membership and participated in the general will of their own community, and at another level, in the general will of the national political community. They thus held membership of two related sovereign bodies. Members of a community were to be the subjects of its sovereign body, indirectly represented in the national political community through the legislative assemblies.

The national political community in India was being mechanically constructed by the imperial authorities in the belief that the diverse political communities were incapable of general will, being only capable of a more specific kind of will. Moslems for example, were members of their own community or sovereign body, and were represented in the sphere of the second sovereign, India. Unlike Britain, where all peoples were thought to be capable of participation in the general will, Indians were considered capable of no more than a limited form of citizenship.

The statements at the Round Table offer some definitions of nationhood. Many statements considered nationhood to be constructed on the collective participation of Indians in civil disobedience. Participation in civil disobedience was thought to indicate a collective will, attributable to all sections of the Indian population. Some delegates considered nationhood to be based on India's ability to represent itself as a single voice on international bodies. Both participation in international bodies and civil disobedience make reference to a level of existence of a general will or a collective mentality.

5.14 Nationhood and Citizenship.

In order to attain the status of independence, India was required to establish that her diverse population could act as a single political community. The colonial authority was not prepared to accept an alternative. This has been partly discussed in the last section. Britain, as the conceding authority was only prepared to award

independence to India if it could be demonstrated that she was capable of acting as a single community. The huge variety of traditions, racial characteristics, ways of life and outlooks demonstrated by the delegates at the conference not withstanding, Britain insisted that British India and the Indian States were potentially a single nation. The only possible basis for this insistence on a single geographical entity, was its recent history under British administration. India was a single unit of British sovereignty. Any division in this was unthinkable in the early 1930s.

Britain was proposing to institute a single geographical boundary around the colony over which it had long ago established its authority. That is, India was to constitute a single society, a single political division with a single set of institutions as far as the judiciary, legislature and executive were concerned. "One body politic under one supreme government." (Locke 1970 p160). Many of the concepts which inform constructions of nationhood and citizenship were developed in western traditions of thought.

The statements of political philosophy outlined in chapter one assume the unity of society and nation as a single, automatically occurring form arising when men depart from the state of nature. Mill also believed that nations were naturally occurring forms, and that the terms primitive and nation were not mutually exclusive. He believed that even very primitive groups of people could be coerced and instructed in the practices of nationhood. In common with others Mill was suggesting that nationhood was a feature of human organisation which was a logical extension of the faculty of being human. Because Western colonisers were demonstrably closer to this than other societies, they were often considered necessarily closer to the principles of human nature. They were, in short, more human than less developed forms of humanity. Because the wise and democratic organisation of the national plitical community was thought to increase the good qualities and happiness of the governed, the more

developed a people, the happier they were. Nationhood was not only a sign of development, it was a better form of social organisation.

Mill, in common with other political theorists believed that nationhood could be imposed on a people in a rude state of social organisation. Thus, the extension of this principle supports the rationale behind imperialism because of its role in tutoring less developed peoples in the practices of nationhood. In the case of India, the Statutory Commission considered -

> "It was in any case a difficult and delicate operation to transplant to India forms of government which are native to British soil, and what was needed was that the new institutions should have time to take root and grow naturally." (24/6/30 The Times)

Britain was firmly associated with these 'superior' traditions of government and the horticultural techniques of rooting them in less developed, less human, societies. Nationhood was the delicate political plant Britain was to bestow upon the Indian peoples. This was a process considered to correct and improve upon the chaotic openings of the Indian nationalist movement, a movement which developed the sentiment of nationhood but did little for its institutional organisation or concept of order which was integral to development.

This statement of the Statutory Commission indicates that the institutions of nationhood were not universal, but native to Britain. The suitability of such institutions for India depends on a conception of India, and the possibility of its political development. The Statutory Commission did not seem to think that India was incapable of developing the institutions of nationhood. This would appear to draw upon the classifications of peoples developed by Maine, outlined in section 4.1, which considered Britons and Indians to be Aryans, a category of peoples designated as 'progressive' because they were able to operate institutions of democracy, a development from the notion of a political contract.

Nationhood and the rights of citizenship associated

with it were a construction produced by a number of considerations. Citizens were members of the national political community whose rights, duties and obligations flow from the terms of the social contract. This refers mainly to the obligation to submit to the collective will and its sovereign body. The possession of a general will, as demonstrated in the statements of the Round Table, was vital in the construction of nationhood. It was necessary to have a general will to - "...Confer all their power and strength upon one man, or upon one assembly of men, that may reduce all their wills, by plurality of voices, unto one will... CIVITAS." (Hobbes 1970 Leviathan p89).

Mill stated that the theory of good government was built up from the elements of a good state of society of which "order and progress" (p186) were the most important. Progress, in line with the Social Darwinist tradition of Spencer (1972 p17), meant the development of human potential to a greater and happier state. It implied not only a relation to material culture as an index of this development, but a notion of a hierachy of human development derived from early anthropology which stressed the importance of racial characteristics in assessments of development.

Progress in the work of Mill (1968) was considered more than the progressive development of a material culture, it implied a set of mental characteristics which were attributable to a people (Mill 1968 p188 and p193). Frequent reference was made in the tracts of political philosophy and, in the debates on Indian independence, to the "state of mind" of peoples. (See for example Attlee 2/12/31 Hansard vol. 260 col. 1120) This was thought to be related to their ability to participate in certain forms of government. "conduciveness to progress, thus understood, includes the whole excellence of government." (Mill 1968 p190). But more than this, progress was thought to be an inherent quality of human nature, as well as the capacity of some peoples rather than others. It follows that nations of the greatest

progress were considered closer to this assessment of human nature. This contains the implication that the developed Western world was more closely human than those over whom they exercised their sway in the colonies.

Order was very much linked to the conditions of progress in the work of Mill who considered the individual qualities of citizenship were associated with conditions which were conducive to order and progress. These were, "Industry, integrity, justice and prudence" (Mill 1968 p187). It follows, therefore that industry, as indexed by the state of industrial development of a group of people, was associated with the other qualities necessary to nationhood and citizenship. In this respect Britain was also in a better position than India. Progress, or membership of the forces of progress, was one of the qualities associated with the development of nationhood in the Round Table debates. Those communities who were associated with industry and commerce considered they were the incarnation of citizenship.

Indeed, order was the first principle of human social organisation as demonstrated in the Hobbesian notion of the "state of warre" (Hobbes 1970 p64). Order was the first capacity required for human social organisation, and thus any kind of political community, to exist at all. Mill considered that:-

> "Order is said to exist where the people of the country have, as a general rule, ceased to prosecute their quarrels by private force and acquired the habit of referring the decision of their disputes and the redress of their unjuries to public authorities." (Mill 1970 Utilitarianism, Liberty and Representative Government p187)

Order was considered fundamental to the possibility of social existence. In the case of India, the British Government was warning that civil disobedience, whilst demonstrating the existence of a ntional general will, was overthrowing the notion of community upon which nationhood was premised.

Citizenship, or membership and active participation in the national political community, was not to be

awarded to all in India. As in the case of Britain, prior to universal adult suffrage, citizenship was quite narrowly constructed.

In the debates of political philosophy which informed the Indian debates, citizenship was related to property. According to Locke (1970), men first entered into the state of society for the common protection of themselves and their property. Therefore, only those with property had a stake in the political community. The possession of property was one of the considerations underlying the discussions about the extent of the Indian franchise.

The property qualification had been superseded in Britain with the advent of adult male suffrage and a restricted form of female suffrage by 1919. By this time citizenship was constructed in terms of education rather than property. Thus membership of the political community was firmly linked to the ability of people to actively participate. Citizenship was associated with the public provision of education for all. Mill considered that education was the point of access of the people to government, and the exercise of the rights and duties associated with citizenship. "It (political machinery) needs not their simple quiescence, but their active participation; and must be adjusted to the capacities and qualities of such men as are available." (Mill 1968 Utilitarianism Liberty and Representative Government p186). Education and the ability to participate in citizenship duties was very much an integral part of the debates surrounding Indian independence. The ability of the peoples for whom the constitution was framed was one of the arguments put forward for India's remaining in the colonial fold.

Political theorists were unequivocal about the institutional form which best suited the expression of nationhood. The best form of government was one where the people all had a voice in the exercise of government, that is, where the entire people was enfranchised and

entered the political community.

> " There is no difficulty in showing that the ideally best form of government is that in which the sovereignty, or supreme controlling power in the last resort, is vested in the entire aggregate of the community; every citizen not only having a voice in the exercise of that ultimate sovereignty, but being, at least occasionally, called on to take an actual part in government, by the personal discharge of some public function, local or general."
> (Mill 1968 Utilitarianism Liberty and Representative Government p 207)

This formulation was subject to certain qualification. "I regard it as wholly inadmissable that any person should participate in the suffrage without being able to read, write and I will add, perform the common operations of arithmetic." (Mill 1968 Utilitarianism Liberty and Representative Government p280).

Mill (1968) considered that citizenship could not be bestowed upon those who did not have basic literacy and numeracy skills. It was a requirement of citizenship that the people enfranchised should be "willing and able" (p218) to discharge the functions associated with it. There was something of a consensus surrounding the award of a limited franchise to the Indian people in British Parliamentary politics which was probably related to these formulations. Nationhood was constructed on a full franchise, but serious doubts were expressed as to the suitability of this for India. Without a full franchise India was to have less than nationhood in its independence arrangements.

In the formulations of Mill representative government was the best form of government, but a form which was not suited to all forms of society.

> " We have recognised in representative government the ideal type of the most perfect polity for which, in consequence, any portion of mankind are better adapted in proportion to their degree of general improvement. As they range lower and lower in development, that form of government will be generally speaking, less suitable to them."
> (Mill 1968 Utilitarianism Liberty and Representative Government p218)

If the award of a representative form of government was an index of the degree of a people's state of development, then the proposals for the Indian constitution which followed the Round Table Conference tended to indicate India's inferior position in relation to Britain and other Western countries.

Whilst Mill was concerned to establish the principles of democratic government as a superior form of political organisation, and the requirements of citizenship which accompanied it, he did not equate the development of citizenship with achieving the status of nationhood. Mill's formulations appear to consider citizenship in terms of educational qualities, but present nations as obvious and naturally occuring divisions of mankind.

> "A portion of mankind may be said to constitute a nationality if they are united among themselves by common sympathies which do not exist between them and any others - which make them co-operate with each other more willingly than with other people, desire to be under the same government, and desire that it should be government by themselves or a portion of themselves exclusively. This feeling of nationality may have been generated by various causes. Sometimes it is the effect of identity of race and descent. Community of language and community of religion also contribute to it. Geographical limits are one of its causes. But strongest of all is identity of political antecedents, the possession of a national history and consequent community of recollections; ...pleasure and regret connected with the same incidents in the past." (Mill 1968 Utilitarianism Liberty and Representative Government p306)

This statement admits that nationhood could be based on national history, geographical boundaries and political antecedents. But ultimately it suggests that nationhood may be little more than a feeling. In the case of India, nationhood could not have been based on language, religion or race. There remains only the imposition of a colonial political structure and history and Mills' feelings of "pleasure and regret" as definitions of Indian nationhood. As demonstrated in the statements of the Statutory Commission and some of

the representatives of the Round Table Conference, nationhood was subject to a number of constructions. The requirements of citizenship in India were also a construction, to be defined by the British Government.

It may be useful at this point to sum up the manner in which the Indian political community was presented by and on behalf of the Labour Party through the Round Table Conference. The construction of India as a political community by the Labour Party is part of a wider project, that is, the extent to which political community informs constructions of race which have in other respects changed (see section 5.17). This is an appropriate juncture at which to sum up the presentation of the Indian political community and comment on the extent to which race has been developed so far in this dissertation.

The Indian people were considered capable of living as a single political community, a nation, despite the diversity of smaller communities from which it was to draw. The diversity of this community with its many planes of cultural, linguistic, religious and social cleavage was considered to be best contained within a federal form of government. This federation was quite unique in its construction. It was unlike those which existed in America and Canada to which they had no more than a discursive relation. It was a federation from which ninety percent of the Indian people were to be excluded. Those who were included were considered to have the qualities necessary for citizenship or membership of this restricted political community. Eligibility for citizenship was a construction which concerned itself with the extent to which a group of people were integral to the processes of development, both economic and political. Peasants were excluded on the grounds that their mode of existence was currently a social, economic and political fossil. This did not overlook the possibility of change in the future, perhaps under the influence of some external force.

Those who were included in the Indian political

community were to represent the position and interests of the community they were selected to represent. It was proposed that members of the legislatures were to operate under a restricted notion of community and represent only the community whose quota they filled. They were not, as in federal legislatures in America and Canada, to operate as members of the total political community. It was through this partial representation of all representable elements that the political community was to be constructed.

The gradual rate at which India was to make progress towards independence (it was really the aim of the Round Table Conference to set up some form of provincial autonomy in the first instance) indicates a set of considerations concerning the need for Indians to learn to be self governing. Indians were not therefore considered incapable of self government in any permanent or long term sense. There is nothing in the Statutory Commission or the political debates in the Labour Party surrounding the general issue of Indian independence, to suggest that Indians were in any sense in possession of a set of racially determined characteristics which were thought to prevent this development of political capabilities. Indeed, the Statutory Commission appears to have considered that Western political thought had begun to gain acceptance amongst educated Indians.

> "Political thought in British India today is derived from Europe. The keen intelligence of the educated Indian has been stimulated by Western institutions. It is remarkable how the theories and phrases of political science as expounded in England and America have been adopted and absorbed. But the sudden impact of ideas drawn from the experience and conditions of other peoples in other climates is bound to have a disturbing effect."
> (1930 Indian Statutory Commission p400)

In this statement the superiority of the West over India is being asserted not in terms of a set of permanent physical or mental characteristics associated with a race, but in terms of the fact that such political philosophies

were produced in Western climates and conditions. This did not mean that other, less politically developed political communities could not learn and absorb such ideas, but that the transfer might prove problematic. The superiority of the West was to be found in its ability to develop such ideas, their proliferation to India was presented as a matter of time rather than innate ability.

Much of the discussion inside and outside the Labour Party concerned not just the proliferation of Western political philosophy, but the ability of Indians to staff the machinery of the government. Such positions ignore the manner in which Indians were kept out of civil service posts. This was despite the fact that a clause outlawing what was termed 'racial' discrimination in employment practices was incorporated into the Government of India Bill in 1833. This was clause eighty seven of the charter by which the East India Company ruled in India under the authority of the British crown. It was part of a move towards liberal and humanitarian reforms in Britain which extended to the Government of India. This clause was the result of the findings of a Royal Commission, which upon investigating the affairs of the East India Company, discovered that although it had developed through the use of native organisational structures it did not employ Indians in any but subordinate positions.

This clause prohibited racial and religious discrimination in public services. It stated that no one "shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them be disabled from holding any place, office or employment " in the East India Company. (July 1833 Hansard vol. 19 col. 534) It was a judicial recognition of 'racial' equality. It was the view of Macauly, as Secretary of the Board of Control for India at that time, that it would be wise to use the English educated middle class Indian in the task of government in India. These were, he considered, "a class of persons Indian in colour and blood, but English in

tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect." (Trevelyan 1864 The Competition Wallah p343). This suggested that the colour and blood of Indians, the physical characteristics associated with the division of the human family into groups, was not a block to the proliferation of tastes, opinions, morals and intellect. This tends to indicate a belief that under British tuteledge and given equal access to the civil service, Indians were likely to do as well as their British counterparts.

In fact clause eighty seven of the Government of India act had no discernable effect in allowing Indians into the civil service. This was a matter of Parliamentary concern when the East India Company' s charter came up for renewal in 1853. In 1857 however the company's rule in India was abruptly terminated by the Indian mutiny, and India was to be ruled directly by the British crown. Clause eighty seven was re-affirmed by Queen Victoria's Government. Under the 1861 Indian Civil Service Act all higher appointments in the service became subject to an examination which was held in London, rather than in India and in London. This, in combination with the lowering of the age limit for sitting the exam proved an effective bar to the operation of the clause as Lester and Bindman (1972 p397) pointed out.

Despite their lack of effect, legislative measures of a liberal and humanitarian character continued to be passed for reforming the Government of India by allowing the participation of Indians. In 1883 a bill was introduced into Parliament to give Indian District Magistrates and Sessions Judges the same powers as their European counterparts to try Europeans. This provoked an uproar from the European community in India in defence of their rights to be tried by their peers. This was a right which European delegates at the Round Table Conference wanted maintained in the independence constitution despite challenges from Indian delegates to the effect that they should be tried in the same manner as Indians.

The first serious period of Indianisation of the public service took place with the Government of India act 1919. Between 1919 and 1929 the number of Indians in the civil service trebled from seventy eight to two hundred and forty one. This increase, however, must be considered in the light of political circumstances in India rather than an acceptance that Indians were capable of doing the job as well as Britons. The hostility resulting from the Amritsar massacre in which hundreds of Indians were murdered, in combination with the beginning of the civil disobedience movement, made it reasonably clear that the colonial government was under orders to 'quit India' and made the recruitment of British people to the Indian civil service difficult. It was not until the 1935 Government of India Act that the prohibition of racial distinction was widened to include private employment and the acquisition of property, rather than just public employment.

Despite the monopolies which Europeans had enjoyed in India from the time of the East India Company, they did not hesitate to attempt to maintain this position of privilege in the course of the Round Table negotiations. This was particularly true of European commerce. With independence appearing as a real political possibility, Europeans made a great fuss about the need for "equal rights and privileges to those enjoyed by Indian born subjects in all industrial and commercial activities." (1931 Proceedings of the Round Table Conference p70). This was despite the fact that Indians had never been afforded any kind of equality, with the exception of a formal juridical equality, under European domination.

The status of the Indian political community even from the time of the East India Company was quite clear. It was not incapable of self government or lacking in intellectual ability. But it was the object of special, anti discriminatory legislation. Whilst the constitutional proposals which emerged from the Round Table Conference did not award the kind of political structure associated with nationhood in the British political community, it did offer a diminished form of status which was broadly

in keeping with the conceptions of the abilities of Indians outlined in the discourse just examined. The construction of race in terms of, and through the concept political community for India at this time, did not pose any long term reason why Indians should, as Aryans, have a dimished status.

The pronouncements of the Round Table Conference were superseded by a political settlement in 1935 which formed the basis for independence in 1947. What were these arrangements and what sort of political community did they construct?

5.15 Indpendence.

Because the object of analysis of this chapter concerns the nature and compositions of the Indian political community constructed in Labour Party, or Labour Party supported statements, it deals mainly with the early part of the 1930s and the Round Table Conference. The eventual independence structure offered to India was chronologically periferal to this. The Labour Party eventually awarded Indian independence in 1947. It is therefore necessary to examine the kind of political community which was eventually created at the point at which India ceased to be a British responsibility. The construction of the Indian political community is vital in considering the kind of status India and her people were accorded in the international political community, and the manner in which Indians (later) arriving in Britain were treated. It is likely that constructions of India as a political community or nation informed the status of Indians in this country and contributed to the construction of race, a division considered legitimate as a way of designating their distinctiveness.

It is the aim of this section to examine the relation between the Round Table Conference conclusions and the eventual independence arrangements, to establish what was retained from the Round Table Conference, and its implications. It appears that the independence constitution of 1947 bore a striking resemblance to the main issues

discussed at the Round Table Conference which were the result of the Indian Statutory Commission.

The pronouncements of the conference were issued from the various sub committees set up for specific purposes. At each of the conferences these were followed by an announcement from the Prime Minister defining the main issues which had been resolved and those which still required resolution.

At the first Round Table Conference, the Minorities Sub Committee rejected the possibility of a general electoral register on a regional basis. Even if a general register had been acceptable, it is unlikely that it would have been based on a broad franchise. In fact the entire structure of the conference anticipated this rejection which was in line with the findings of the Statutory Commission. It was widely acknowledged that certain minorities were afraid that a general electoral register would not provide the kind of legislature which would favour the representation of their particular community. Moslems, the largest and most vociferous of these minorities, were concerned that they would be submerged in a Hindu society without adequate representation. The Minorities Committee accepted that the best form of representation for India would be a form of communal representation with a fixed proportion of seats awarded through nomination by the communities to be represented.

It was not quite clear at this stage which communities were to be represented, although all of the communities invited to the conference were pushing their claims to special representation. In the first instance representation was to take place in regional assemblies and to depend on actual numerical strength of a community in a specific geographical area or province.

The Sub Committee on the franchise at the first Round Table Conference declared that it required as wide a franchise as Britain would tolerate. It stated its aim as full adult suffrage. There was an enormous range

of positions expressed in this committee, because as already discussed in section 5.4, a full franchise was a prioritised constituency for workers and untouchables, as without it they would not be adequately represented in an independent India. But the official statement which came out of the committee favoured the suggestion that whilst India was progressing towards full adult suffrage, the pronouncement of the Statutory Commission that the franchise should be broadened to incorporate ten percent of the population, should be extended to enfranchise a proportion of the population which was somewhere between ten and twenty five per cent. This would still produce a very limited franchise.

The franchise was to be a function of property qualifications, but the definition of property was to be extended to include home, wages or cash income. This was to be the same for all communities which in effect gave a greater representation to communities with property or a history of property ownership. This worked against those communities who were the poorest of all, the workers and many untouchables whose position prevented them from accumulating property or income. The eventual extension of the franchise was to be the task of the Provincial Legislature.

At the conclusion of the first Round Table Conference the Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, declared that all parties in Britain were convinced that India should be independent but that there were many details still to be worked out before the British Government could fulfill its long standing promises to the Indian people. The three main points to emerge from the first conference were that the Indian delegates were to settle the communal question amongst themselves to avoid the need for Britain to impose a settlement. The princes were praised for agreeing to enter into the terms of the proposed federation and there were to be qualifications attached to the terms of any settlement which would safeguard British interests in India during the period of transition to full independence.

The second Round Table Conference brought little advance to the conclusions of the first. It re-stated a commitment to a federation, the terms of which were still to be established. The failure of the conference to establish the principles upon which a constitution might be constructed, was blamed on the inability of the main communities to agree upon the proportions in which they should be represented.

> "Federation cannot be achieved in a month or two. There is a mass of difficult constructive work still to be done...the surest and speediest route to federation would be to get these measures in train forthwith and not delay the assumption of full responsibility by the Provinces a day longer than is necessary. But it is clear that this partial advance does not commend itself to you...His Majesty's Government have no intention of urging a responsibility which for whatever reasons, is considered at the moment premature or ill advised..."
> (McDonald 1931 Proceedings of the Round Table Conference p.417)

At this juncture the British Government was prepared to offer only a limited form of independence, provincial autonomy. This was unacceptable to all the Indian delegates at the conference as it would leave Britain in complete control of all federal matters.

In fact only two main things emerged from the Round Table Conference. There was yet another re-statement of the British Government's commitment to Indian independence. This took the form of a White Paper outlining the necessity to reach a solution to the communal question and institute a federal government. The second was the setting up of another forum in which the discussions between Britain and India over the constitution could be continued. This was the Joint Parliamentary Committee.

Following the second Round Table Conference, the National Government was forced to call a third. This was a response to pressure built by Indian reaction to the announcement of the cabinet that a white paper would be drawn up to set out the intention of the British Government regarding the future government of

India. This Round Table Conference did not have as wide a brief as its predecessors. It was instructed to discuss specific topics ready formulated by the cabinet. The first two Round Tables were really a departure from past goverment policy because they involved negotiation with Indians, even though the possible solutions to the constitutional problem were built into the conference proceedings. The concept of a federal system upon which the Round Table was constructed was a departure from past solutions on the part of the Statutory Commission. Prior to this commission, the Government of India Act had extended the principle of decentralisation in Indian politics by establishing eight autonomous provincial governments in which Indian ministers were responsible to legislatures elected on a franchise which incorporated 2.8 percent of the population into the political community. These ministers had control over half the functions of the government in each province, with all important taxes and sources of revenue being collected centrally.

In August 1932 the National Government published its Communal Award. This refers to the extent to which the various communities were to be represented and was the issue on which the Round Table Conference had failed to produce agreement. These provisions were issued with the proviso that they would be changed if all the communities could agree on an alternative. The Communal Award set aside a certain number of seats in each province for the purposes of the general representation of the political community. The proportion of general to the total of communal seats varied from province to province, but was rarely over half and usually considerably less. In addition to this seats were awarded in varying proportions to Moslems, the depressed classes, land holders, sikhs, the backward (tribal) areas, Christians, commercial classes, Labour and a small category of Anglo Indians and Europeans. This was the background upon which the 1935 Government of India Act was based.

The 1935 Government of India Act instituted the Federation of India. It was "an act to make further

provision for the government of India" (p.569). The federation was a combination of British India and those states which agreed to join the federation. Many of the princes had been anxious to participate in a federal system, since it became apparent that India might be transferred from an imperial power to an Indian paramount power, which did not trouble to consider the hereditary rights of the princes as rulers of India. Described as an "infamous charter of slavery" (1937) in a statement issued by the All India Trades Union Congress, it did more than any other measure to unite the institutionally divergent opposition to Britain in India.

India was divided under the terms of the 1935 Act into a provincial and federal structure, each with its own area of responsibility. The head of the Federal Executive was the Governor General who exercised authority on behalf of the King, and from whom all authority was delegated. The Federal Executive consisted of the Governor General and a council of no more than ten ministers. It was their job to advise the Governor and they were appointed by him. The executive authority of the Governor extended over law-making functions, the raising of Indian military forces, the exercise of rights in tribal areas, defence, ecclesiastical and external affairs.

In addition to this the Governor General also had other special responsibilities. These included a special responsibility for the prevention of any menace to peace in the colony, safeguarding India's financial stability, safeguarding the interests of minorities, safeguarding the rights of past public servants and their descendants, preventing action discriminating against British and Burmese goods in India, in the light of the phasing-out of the trade monopolies which had favoured goods from these countries. Finally, the Governor General was responsible for securing the rights of the rulers of the Indian states.

The Federal Legislature created by the 1935 Act

consisted of two chambers, the Council of State and the Federal Assembly. The Council of State contained one hundred and fifty six representatives from British India and no more than one hundred and fifty four representatives from the Indian states. Of this one hundred and fifty six seats, one hundred and fifty were allocated to the Governor General's Provinces depending on the size of the population in each province. Of the one hundred and fifty seats allocated to the Governor's Provinces, two were allocated to Indian Christians, seven to Europeans and one to the Anglo Indians. In each of the provinces a proportion of the seats were allocated to the electorate in general in that province. This meant that a proportion of Indians were represented as citizens rather than just as members of certain interest groups. This was subject to franchise qualifications outlined in section 5.14. Fixed proportions of seats were allocated to the Untouchables, Sikhs, Moslems and women. The basis for this representation in the Council of State was not explained, but would be related to the proportion in which some categories were represented in the population. This was not true of women who received an average of only four percent of the seats in the Council despite their representation in the population in general. In fact women were only represented in six of the fifteen provinces.

Other groups represented in the Council of State were Moslems, who on average had thirty three percent of the seats in all the provinces in which they were represented. Sikhs who had an average of three percent of seats and Untouchables who had four percent. Like women, Untouchables were seriously under represented. The proportion in which various categories were represented varied between areas. For example Moslems had thirty three percent of the seats overall in the Council of State. This ranged from a twelve per cent representation in the Central Provinces to one hundred per cent in Baluchastan where they had the only seat on the Council from that province. The overall averages referred to were obtained by adding together the total number of seats held in each province

by a particular community and establishing the percentage of total seats held by all communities.

The Federal Assembly was the second chamber in the Federal Executive. It comprised two hundred and fifty representatives from British India and one hundred and twenty five from the states. Like the Council of State, representation was on a provincial basis. Fifty per cent of the seats were allocated to the electorate as general seats. This was a limited way of exercising citizenship. The other fifty per cent of seats were allocated to various communities. The communities represented in the Federal Assembly were untouchables who had eight per cent of the total, Sikhs who had two per cent, Moslems thirty per cent, Anglo Indians one per cent, Europeans two per cent, Indian Christians two per cent, land holders two per cent, Labour five per cent and women three per cent. Labour was the only category not to be represented in both chambers, although it was allocated one of the remaining four seats not to be allocated on a communal basis, commerce and industry gaining the other three.

Election or nomination to the Federal Assembly from the various provincial legislatures was on the basis of communities choosing their own representatives. Methods of selection varied. Women, Anglo Indians, Christians and Europeans were chosen by an electoral college.

Legislation could be introduced into either chamber but had to go through both before it could offer itself for the Royal assent delegated to the Governor General. The Governor had the power to refuse assent or send bills back to the chambers to be amended or altered in any way he saw fit. He also had the power to 'send messages' to either house offering an opinion on any Bill under consideration.

The organisation of government in the provinces was similar to that at Federal level. The Provincial Executive consisted of a Governor appointed by the Governor General, who presided over a council of ministers of his own appointment. The council of ministers had an

advisory function. Provincial Governors had the same special responsibilities as the Governor General in safeguarding certain vital interests, only he was responsible for these matters on the provincial rather than federal level. It was also the job of the Governor to execute the orders handed on to him by the Governor General.

The judiciary in each province was under the jurisdiction of the Advocate General who was also appointed by the Governor.

The Provincial Legislature comprised the Governor and a chamber known as the Legislative Assembly. In the provinces of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, U.P., Bihar and Assam there was a second chamber in addition to this. In the Legislative Assembly the categories of people represented were little different from those represented at a federal level. Again general seats accounted for fifty per cent of the total in the provinces overall, although this was as low as eighteen per cent in the North West Frontier Province and as high as eighty two per cent in Bombay.

Untouchables were represented at an average rate of three per cent in the provinces overall. They were represented as eighteen per cent of the total electorate in the Central Provinces and were not represented at all in Sind. Other categories were represented as follows - Backward classes and tribes (1% overall) Sikhs (2%) Moslems (30%) Anglo Indians (.7%) Europeans (2%) Indian Christians (1%) Commerce (3%) Labour (2%) Landlords (1%) and universities (.5%). Women were represented in very few provincial legislatures. In addition they were represented as Sikh, Anglo Indian, Moslem and Christian women. This made an average of three per cent in the provinces as a whole.

As far as the extent of the franchise was concerned the Government of India Act was vague about entitlement

to vote.

> "The qualifications entitling a person to vote in territorial constituencies at election of members of a Provincial Legislative Council and the qualifications to be possessed by members of such councils shall be such as may be prescribed."
> (1935 Government of India Act p.905)

This vagueness was because it was hoped that the franchise might be extended. It is likely that only around fourteen percent of Indians were enfranchised in line with the suggestions set out at the Round Table relating to property. Indian Trade Union Federation statements (undated circa 1933-5) suggested that the franchise was restricted to fourteen percent of the population.

The Indian Independence Act was published on July 4th. 1947, and India became an independent dominion on August 15th. 1947. It left intact the structures of the 1935 Act with the exception that the sovereignty of the King Emperor and the British Parliament lapsed and under pressure from Jinnah and the Moslem League, the province of West Punjab became West Pakistan and East Bengal became East Pakistan, a thousand miles apart. The communal identity of the Moslems was converted into separate nationhood under its own sovereignty. The partition of India and Pakistan enhanced the communal bloodshed it was designed to defuse. The final chapter in this colonial saga was played out much later with the creation of Bangladesh from East Pakistan. The results of this partition are still to be seen in the present troubles in Assam. Here many refugees from East Pakistan live in conditions of hostility with Assamese Indians who are petitioning the Indian government for their expulsion whilst murdering large numbers of them.

Attlee as Labour Prime Minister and Mountbatten as Viceroy presided over the transfer. The two dominions were to be governed under the structures established by the 1935 Government of India Act. These bore a striking resemblance to that which was mooted by the Round Table Conference which was based on the Statutory Commission of 1930. The Statutory Commission was a departure in

terms of policy, but a continuity of assurances with the declaration of Montagu as Secretary of State for India and Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy in 1917, later incorporated into the Government of India Act of 1919.

The similarities between the formulations of the Round Table Conference and the settlement of 1935 which was the structure under which independence was awarded are striking. The most obvious continuity was the federal structure of government. First set out in the Statutory Commission and built into the Round Table negotiations it was the basis for the independence arrangements of the 1935 act described above. The division between federal and provincial powers was suited to the notion of a gradual transfer of authority in which Britain would maintain a controlling interest.

Secondly, whilst the notion of a general form of representation attached to some of the seats was announced after the conclusion of the Round Table in the National Government's Communal Award, the mode of representation in independent India was still largely to be based on communal loyalties. Generally the communities represented at the Round Table Conferences were part of the political community to varying extents when the representation involved in the 1935 Act was announced. The political community, therefore, remained as it was constructed at the conference with peasants mostly excluded from citizenship.

Finally the notion that only a very limited form of franchise was possible in India was retained in the independence arrangements. The Indian Independence Act (1947) failed to mention the franchise at all. It, therefore, left intact the vague formulations of the 1935 Act which stated that the qualification entitling people to vote "shall be such as may be prescribed" (p905). Certainly between the Round Table Conference and the 1935 Act it was suggested by the Indian Trades Union Federation that only fourteen per cent of the population would be enfranchised. With the lapse of

British sovereignty in 1947 this became an issue for the new rulers of India to determine. The huge gap between the Indian population and the Indian political community constructed by Britain, remained in the 1937 and 1946 elections to the Provincial Assemblies. Only in 1952 did India conduct its first elections as an independent nation on the basis of a full adult franchise.

5.16 Comment on the Settlement of India

The Labour Party was not incidental to the settlement of this chapter of colonial history. It was fully implicated in the arrangements associated with Indian independence, the manner in which it was handled, the structure which was finally set up and its implications. Not only was the Labour Party responsible as the government, for the administration of the transfer in 1947, but it was also the political heir to the manner in which that solution was arrived at. The eventual constitution was closely based on that which was structured into the Round Table, the main plank of Labour Party policy on India, in the early 1930s.

As the door closed on this area of the Empire the Labour Party reiterated its commitment to the Commonwealth. Attlee at the second reading of the 1947 Independence Bill described it as the "Fulfillment of Britain's mission in India." (Attlee 11/7/47 Daily Worker p.1). Attlee also believed that the aspirations of Indian independence could be promoted within the British Commonwealth, the political form to which ex colonies were promoted and in which her citizens maintained their status as British subjects. The Daily Herald, voicing the feelings of many in the Labour Party claimed the Bill as a Labour achievement.

> "The Indian Independence Bill, published yesterday is one of the most notable and glorious achievements of the Labour Government. By the constitutional action of Parliament this tremendous change, which brings to an end British rule in India and established two new dominions, goes through by general agreement and without strife and bloodshed. The new Dominions - India and Pakistan -

> will have the right to secede if they wish, from the British Commonwealth; but it will be the fervent hope of almost everyone in this country and in other parts of the Commonwealth, that they will not do so."
> (5/7/47 Daily Herald p.2)

Indeed, the Daily Herald went further in extolling the virtues of the Indian independence arrangements.

> "Thus Britain gives to mankind a shining example of how the basic principles of social democracy may develop and progress outside the island as well as within."
> (5/7/35 Daily Herald p.2)

This shining example, this glorious achievement, had a number of important implications in India both at the time and as far as the future of India as a political community was concerned. It also had a number of important implications for Indian citizens. As far as public order was concerned, the British handling of India had been responsible for a tradition of violence from 1929. This was escalated with the imposition of the 1935 Act. By the time of the British withdrawal, the colony was in a state of complete disarray. This was particularly true in areas where Moslems considered they would not get the political recognition they deserved. Increased agitation led to the partition which caused further upheaval especially around the areas which became Pakistan where the greatest movements of people and the problems caused by refugees were most acute. The British newspapers were full of reports of violence and public disorder right throughout the 1930s.

Much of the disorder was communal and on the scale of a holocaust. Much public disorder was also concerned with industrial unrest, for example - "Six people were killed and fourteen wounded when police opened fire on striking workers at Jharia" (26/7/47 Daily Worker p.6) This kind of report indicates that there was widespread civil disorder in India. This was supported by the British Government's records which revealed a growing intensity of inter-communal and inter-religious strife in India. Wavell, the Viceroy who was replaced by Mountbatten in 1947, wrote to Attlee in 1946 -

> "I said in it (a previous, unanswered letter) that it was essential that I should know your mind more fully as regards India, and that I should have a definite policy...The situation here is tense and we may be faced with a crisis at any time."
> (Manserg 1979 The Transfer of Power 1942-7 Vol. 8)

Calcutta and Bombay were centres of both religious and industrial strife which had prompted Wavell's fear of the total breakdown of public order in India. Mountbatten, on taking over from Wavell insisted that the British withdraw within a matter weeks, so tense was the situation in the last days of the Raj.

If Britain was so concerned about the philosophical principles of order and progress upon which nationhood was constructed, then it did not demonstrate this in its dealings with India. Britain was highly instrumental in the creation of disorder, bloodshed and chaos. Indian independence was awarded amidst a complete civil breakdown which was fostered by British administration. This was the legacy which Indians and Pakistanis carried with them as they became self governing. The decolonisation process upon which the Commonwealth was constructed was responsible for the creation of these conditions and a status which ex-colonies carry with them in the eyes of the international community of nations, that of having been, at some point, incapable of self government as a (national) political community.

As far as the constitutional arrangements were concerned, Britain first of all imposed a single nationhood on India under the terms of the 1935 Act, and later retracted and created two nations, India and Pakistan. Bangladesh was much later formed out of the terms of this union.

Britain also awarded a franchise which excluded the majority of the Indian population from participation as citizens in the political community. Thus India was constructed as a nation whose peoples were not capable of citizenship. Even those who were included in the polity were included in many cases as interest groups,

not as full citizens. They were partial citizens in that they were considered capable of voicing only the political will of a specific community, rather than of the national political community as a whole. Indian citizenship concerned allegiance to a communal sovereign and through this mechanism allegiance to the (national) political community. It was a unique form of citizenship at this time. Canadian citizenship was not communally constructed, as Canada, a country with a diverse immigrant population, was a federation of geographical regions rather than communities.

India's and Pakistan's status resulted from the award of a constitution which was an expression of the inability of their peoples to participate as citizens. Even those who were enfranchised were awarded a peculiar and unique form of citizenship, as fifty percent of seats in the legislatures were communal. India and Pakistan were awarded a second class status as nations. A status which was inextricably linked to assesments of ex-colonies and the abilities and standing of the peoples who lived there. These assessments remained with the peoples of those countries when they migrated to the mother country in the 1950s in search of work.

The Commonwealth was the new political form in which this inferior construction of nationhood was contained and maintained. Under the terms of the 1948 British Nationality Act Indian and Pakistani citizens also retained their status as British citizens. When they began taking up the rights associated with that status, the right to live in Britain, they were ready constructed by the terms of the colonisation and decolonisation processes in which the Labour Party was fully implicated.

5.17 Race and Political Community.

Having constructed India as a political community and pointed out the kind of status it was awarded, it is legitimate to ask at this point, what does the notion of a political community add to the concept race? Does it inform discourses on race? It has been the contention

of this thesis that political community informs racial classification. It is now possible to demonstrate this in the light of the construction of India in the decolonisation process. Race so far has only featured in a shadowy way in this dissertation. It has been pointed out throughout chapters four and five that Indians were often referred to as a 'race'. It was also pointed out that some of the statements concerning India's ability to become independent were based on considerations of capacity for self government which were informed by the thinking of nineteenth century anthropology in which racial classification was imposed upon assessments of the state of development of a material culture.

Confronting race with a conception of political community such as that developed over the last two chapters in the context of India, presents problems because definitions of peoples in terms of their classification into 'families' of the human race were, and are, constantly changing. Modes of classification used in the eighteenth century were overridden by new classification in the nineteenth century neither of which still prominantly persists in discourses concerning race in Britain in the last twenty years. It was pointed out in section 4.1 that in the mid nineteenth century Henry Maine was using a racial classification based on research into philology. Philologically based models of classification had, by this time, replaced a classification based on phenotype. This section will expand on this change in emphasis, and consider what it meant in terms of India, and as a mode of classifying Indians as a 'people'. It will then be possible to comment on this in the light of the specification of Indians as a 'people' offered by their construction as a political community outlined in chapters four and five.

The Indian case study demonstrates that the racial classifications which were relevant in this period, were those of comparative philology which asserted the linguistic and cultural unity of Britons and Indians as was shown in the section which considered the work of

Maine and the concerns for racial discrimination in the Indian Civil Service which followed from it. (See 4.1 for the discussion of racial classification in Maine's work and 5.14 for its implications in terms of the 'racial' capabilities of Indians as indicated in the clause of the Government of India Act 1833 which outlawed 'racial discrimination'). The discourses on India in the 1930s examined in this dissertation indicate that Aryan race theory based on a classification of languages was relevant to this period.

The fact that Britons and Indians were considered to belong to the same Aryan 'family' of the human race was evidenced in the position, expressed by many including Attlee in the parliamentary debate referred to in section 4.3, that India was capable of a gradual development to independence under British tuteledge. Only one Labour Party statement considered India to be incapable of independence for reasons constructed in terms of racially defined capacities. This position (see section 4.3) did not accept the classification of races based on comparative philology.

Secondly, the Labour Party's official pamphlet on the colonies (see section 4.4) excluded India from its formulation of the Empire. Indeed in many Labour Party statements, India was referred to as a dominion, even though it was the production of a constitution upon which dominion status was to be based, which was the Labour Party's main concern in the early 1930s. The Empire in this pamphlet refers to those places where there was a need for development towards readiness for independence. India was considered to be ready. Furthermore, the pamphlet divides the Empire in terms of proximity to European language and culture. In colonies where European languages were spoken, and European social customs observed, it was claimed "No question arises of natives" (Labour Party 1933 The Colonies p.17). This is an explicit acceptance of the racial divisions constructed in comparative philology.

These are just two examples of how Aryan race theory informed the deliberations of the Labour Party. There are numerous such examples and they are not confined to Labour Party statements. Many in the Liberal and Tory Parties accepted the same classification, although there were those who thought development towards independence was an issue of race formation, and as such subject to development over epochs. Such statements did not accept that Britain and India belonged to the same racial category. This might indicate the limited existence even in the 1930s, of notions of race based on comparative anatomy rather than language. Numerous examples of the acceptance of Aryan race theory are to be found in the statements made by Indians at the Round Table Conference, as a mode of asserting equality with the colonial masters. There were numerous references to Hinduism's 'ancient civilization' and Moslems were proud to distinguish their civilization from that of the Aryan Hindus. Delegates at the conference made reference to their ancient art of government.

> "For four thousand years our ancestors ruled in our country. Long long before any Englishman set his foot here, there our ancestors had a system of government which your own historians have admired. For only one hundred and fifty years has there been British rule in India..." (Malaviya 1930-31 Proceedings of the Round Table Conference p.400)

As well as referring to the art of government, another delegate referred to the Indian states as preserving something of India's ancient traditions against the imposition of British culture. "We feel indeed that we are the conservators of a great tradition, of an ancient civilization and a proud culture." (Maharaja of Patiala 1930-31 Proceedings of the Round Table Conference p.78). Whilst such statements do not assert links with European culture, they do claim that Indians had an equal civilization in which they had been self governing. Indeed it was being claimed that elements of these traditions had been maintained in the Indian states which had not been subject to the same domination by Western Culture as British India.

It is quite likely that references to India as having an ancient civilization were based on discourses concerning an Aryan theory of race, as developed in the work of Maine and others. Aryan race theory became a feature of racial classification as early as 1813 when Thomas Young used the adjective 'Indoeuropean' to designate European and Asian languages. (Leopold 1974 p.587). By 1833 this term was used by a variety of writers including Jacob Grimm and A.F. Pott, but was restricted to Sanskrit, Persian, Greek, Italian, Slavic, Lithuanian, Armenian and by 1838 Celtic languages. It was argued that these were linked by grammatical similarities and presumed to have ancient origins in common.

This notion of linguistic race was given a social context around 1850 through the reconstruction of Indoeuropean myths and cultural similarities. It was suggested by writers of the time that this was the result of the dispersal of tribes associated with Blumenbach's 'caucasian race' over an area between the Caucasus and the Hindu Kush which conquered and colonised India, Persia and Europe after 200 B.C. It was also around 1850 that the term Aryan (spelt Arian) began to supplement 'Indoeuropean'. The first Englishman to use this term was James Cowles Pritchard in the Natural History of Man (1843). Between 1850 and 1870 it became accepted in investigations and classifications of man, that linguistic criteria were more reliable than classifications based on criteria such as hair, eye, skeletal or cranial structure.

The logical upshot of all this was the equality of the British and Indian peoples. There is some difficulty, however, in squaring this equality with the existence of colonial relations between Britain and India. The concept of an Indian race in this period was problematic. Indeed, even in the 1930s Indians wre frequently referred to as 'races' rather than as a single race. The concept of an Aryan race overrode the diversity of religious, social, tribal and political divisions which had combined to produce a plural notion of race in India.

Despite the fact that Aryan race theory appeared to challenge the efficacy of colonial rule, for how could Britain justify her domination over an equal race, it was quoted in support on colonialism. This is demonstrated in a quote from E.B. Cowell's inaugural lecture as Professor of Sandskrit at Cambridge in 1867.

> "If they (young Englishmen going to India) look upon them as barbarous and childish (as the degraded serfs of an inferior race) they may raise revenue and administer justice, but no sympathy will exist between ruler and ruled, and our Empire will be built on sand..." (E.B. Cowell 1867 An Inaugural Lecture p. 12-13)

Around 1875 Monier Williams, professor of Sandskrit at Oxford, in emphasizing Indo-British unity, was of the opinion that alienation between coloniser and the colonised had been a contributory factor in the Indian mutiny (1857).

Despite this postulated racial unity, it was thought that British rule could make a positive contribution to India. Cowell expressed the view that Britain could bestow the blessings of "Western civilization and Christianity". (Cowell E.B. 1867 Inaugural Lecture p.12-13). This indicates a belief in separate developments of Aryans in Europe and Aryans in Asia, and was a way of indicating the inferiority of Indians against Europeans. This will be taken up later.

Henry Maine in his early work on Indo-European similarities postulated that as well as linguistic links there were links in terms of institutional developments between Indians and Europeans. He found links in terms of property, patriachy, kinship and a host of other institutions. He assumed both the unity and superiority of Aryan culture. In his work on the Village he claimed that Aryans had established self governing village councils in India and Europe. The oldest and purest remains of this culture he took to be preserved in India. Indians were "of the very family of mankind to which we belong" (Maine 1875 Village p.215)

Like Maine's writings, most expositions of Aryan race theory accepted the notion of Aryan superiority.

Laing's work is an example of this.

> "they (Aryans) are eminently the intellectual race, the race of science, art, poetry, philosophy, conquest, colonisation and progress. All Aryan nations possess in a greater or less degree this divine faculty.." (Laing 1862 Lecture on Anglo Indian Languages and Races. p13-14)

Whilst incorporating the ability to conquer and colonise in his definition of racial superiority, a formulation from which Indians should, as a colonised race be excluded, he went on to distinguish the Hindu from the negro. "The Hindoo, however dark skinned is no more a negro, or anything in the remotest degree a negro than you or I are." (p22-23)

Laing's statement raises an important point in considering the manner in which racial divisions based on a classification, which aligned British and Indians as Aryans, account for imperialism and the imperial relation in which India was subject to British rule. Even in the 1930s, as the case studies in this dissertation demonstrate, the debate over when India would be ready for nationhood was raging. What does this mode of racial classification offer to explain imperialism? Leopold explains the inferiority of Indians in Victorian thought (Leopold 1974) in terms of the suggestion, prevalent at the time, that Indians were historically, if not racially inferior to Britons. Maine, Jackson, Meadows and Taylor explained the historical inferiority of Indians with reference to the blood, society and languages of pre Aryan inhabitants of India insisting that Dravidians and hill tribes had infected the highly cultured Brahmins with barbarism and superstition. This was not true of European Aryans who had been subject to different historical processes.

Leopold also points out that Indian inferiority was also explained by means of environmental arguments in which it was suggested that European Aryan superiority was the product of physical and cultural environment. It followed from this that it was generally

a good idea to send Indians to Europe for certain periods of time. This was in line with popular Victorian notions of progress. Imperialism was thought by some to be an index of progress. It would follow from this that Indians could make up for lost development by adopting European institutions in commerce, law and social organisation, without vandalising their civilized heritage.

The notion of an Aryan race as set out by Leopold, like any conception of race, was a construction. It was constructed in terms of primarily linguistic divisions of mankind, upon which cultural differences and notions of civilization and progress were built. This construction did not, however manage to account for the inferior position of Indians as fellow Aryans. This inferiority was inscribed in its status as a colony and rehearsed in the debates which surrounded its demand for independence, some of which have been recorded in the case study. In the light of the failure of Aryan theory to account for the inferiority of Indians within this racial classification, Leopold points to further constructions of Asian Aryans in terms of the influence of cultural and physical environment and the historical impurity and thus inferiority of Asian Aryans.

This serves to demonstrate firstly that race is but a construction partly produced by political and social considerations. This was equally true of conceptions of race which predated the divisions of mankind offered by philology. Previous divisions were constructed in terms of physical features in terms of an evolutionary hierarchy in which physical divisions were thought to manifest themselves in mental, and eventually in cultural qualities. This demonstration of the kind of construction on which Aryan race theory was based also serves to illustrate that Aryan theory as a classification of races cannot offer any of the constructions of India's inferiority outlined in this chapter or in chapter four. These constructions of

India were part of its construction, not as a race, but as a political community. Britons and Indians may have been racially equal, subject to a few qualifications offered by considerations of environment, but they certainly were not equal as political communities. Their designations as peoples, as nations, can be further specified through the use of political community. It is possible for the concept political community to construct India in ways which Aryan race theory cannot. It therefore informs race as a concept.

As demonstrated in this chapter and in chapter four, India was constructed in terms of the poor position of her workers (see section 4.3). She was also constructed by the debates which considered her right and ability to be independent. This ability, or its absence, could not be very clearly specified in Aryan race theory without reference to history and the effects of environment as very general explanations. As indicated (see section 5.15) it was through India's independence constitution that her position as a second class nation was constructed on a limited franchise which proposed the representation of the political community, partly in terms of sectional interests, as a restricted form of citizenship. This instituted a wide gap between India's population and her political community. A gap in which her status as a political community was considered, in terms of the notion of democracy, to be inferior. The Whitely Commission on Indian Labour (see section 4.6) constructed India as a problem of development in terms of a transfer of its labour force from rural to urban production. In this statement India was posed as a problem of industrialisation as an index of development. It also suggested that Indian workers, incapable of aspiring to political citizenship, be awarded a more restricted form of citizenship, and be represented as workers.

All of these constructions are bids to define India as a political issue. They met with varying degrees of success, though it is fair to say that all achieved prominence at the time. They all became current ways of

defining India although, as indicated, some were acceptable fo the Labour Party as official definitions and others were not. It has been demonstrated that the Labour Party was an active participant in constructions of India as a political community. This added a dimension to the designation of Indians as a people, which was not offered by (Aryan) race theories prevalent at the time.

It now remains to be seen what constructions of political community offer to explain anti semitism in East London in the 1930s. The Jews were also included in Aryan race theories, as is shown in the work of A.F. Pott and Jacob Grimm (Leopold 1974) cited earlier in this section in which the term Indoeuropean, a term which later became to be replaced by Aryan, was used to designate the linguistic unity of Sandskrit, Persian, Greek, Italian, German, Slavic, Lithuanian, Armenian and Celtic languages. Jews did not come to Britain from areas other than these, indeed most were Eastern European. If Jews were constructed as a separate, inferior community in political discourse, and this remains to be established, this could not be explained in terms of a separate development for most Jews in Britain were Europeans, not Asians. It could, possibly, be explained by historical processes, but as with Indians, it is necessary to look to the construction of political community(s) in Britain in order to establish the status of Jews as a people. Chapter six addresses itself to these issues.

CHAPTER SIX

Labour and Anti Semitism.

6.1 Introduction.

In the early 1930s there arose a force in British politics which acted as a catalyst in focusing attention on alien immigrants, their relation to the national political community, and the local communities in which they lived. This force was the British Union of Fascists formed in 1932 by Sir Oswald Mosley when he abandoned the New Party he had left the Labour Party to establish. The British Union was not a new force in British politics. Its political predecessor was the British Brothers League founded in 1902 under the slogan "England for the English" (Nugent and King 1979 p. 32). Although it generally avoided using the word 'Jew' it conducted a campaign calculated to win popular support in protesting against the inflow of pauper aliens into Britain. Thirty years later, the British Union conducted an anti semitic campaign overtly.

Just as the British Union was not a new force in British politics, the issues it raised concerning the composition of the political community were quite well established. Yet the 1930s proves a useful juncture at which to study the debates in which the nature and composition of the political community were raised by the presence of Jewish people in Britain. Such debates received an added input from the existence of the British Union because it focused debates about whether and how the British Union should be opposed in its (anti semitic) activities. The 1930s was a period in which the Labour Party had to decide how to react to the existence of an active and campaigning form of anti semitism directed at a group of people who were considered to be racially distinct from the rest of the population. (See 6.4) It was thus forced to confront the issue of race because of divisions within the political community constructed in debates.

The aim of this case study is to determine the ways in which the Labour Party constructed and confronted divisions within the political community which were thought to be racially determined. It is also the aim of this case study to discover the forms of anti racism which the Labour Party supported as political strategies, and the issues considered to be important in a campaign directed at an overtly racist political institution. Michael Banton has pointed out (1977 personal communication) that the term racism was not used in this period. It is, never the less, a term which has subsequently been used to describe very similar struggles to those of the 1930s. The concept race may be used in this context because many of the debates designated Jews as a racially determined group and because it was a focus for ideological abstract and philosophical notions concerning the idea of invasion.

The Labour Party was issuing statements on anti semitism at the same time as it was issuing statements on the situation in India and its possible solutions. India was an issue which forced the Labour Party to enunciate on the political capabilities and construction of political communities of colonised peoples. The importance of the anti semitism case study, whilst it deals with race as a way of designating white peoples, indicates some of the ways in which the Labour Party deals with immigration, racial antipathy, aliens and the political community, and anti racism as a political practice. Thus in combination with the case study on India it is possible to suggest that these are some of the conditions in which later debates in the nineteen fifties concerning immigration, nationality and the multi racial community were established. By the nineteen fifties, although immigrants were black, the notion of a race was differently constructed and the political scenario was different, many of the issues surrounding immigration and multi racial communities which were relevant then had been objects of discourse in the nineteen fifties.

Although anti semitism was not confined to focus on the East London Campaigns, East London makes an informative case study. East London had been a laboratory for social reform from the Nineteenth Century, and its population had long been subject to a certain surveillance prompted by concerns for the moral and physical health of its population. This theme will be expanded in section 6.2. The import of aliens into this delicate situation in the last half of the nineteenth century had added a new dimension to the problems caused by poverty and deprivation.

Anti semitism is also important in constructing the Labour Party because it admits a dimension which was outside the scope of the Indian case study, the local organisation of the Party. India was a national rather than a local issue, and whilst individual branches contributed statements and definitions of the situation, it did not directly concern them. The case study on anti semitism poses a range of issues which local parties, especially in East London, had to deal with actively and on a day to day basis. For this reason anti semitism was less remote than India. Because of the local nature of anti semitism as an issue,local parties found it necessary to formulate their own responses. It is therefore possible to examine briefly the kinds of positions which were being put forward locally, the extent to which these were in accordance with the positions and strategies of the Party centrally, and what this contributes to an understanding of the Labour Party.

Finally, it must be pointed out, that anti semitism as a way of designating the issues surrounding the political community in East London, is imposed by the analysis. The designation of the activities of the British Union as primarily anti semitic have only a shadowy existence in the statements examined. Whilst it was not denied that anti semitism in many respects was an issue, it was rarely seen as the major issue in these debates. Therefore, to determine how the Labour Party spoke of Jews and anti semitism is a dimension imposed

on the debates. Anti semitism in this context refers to the verbal and physical attacks by the British Union of Fascists on the Jewish population of East London and the philosophical discourses upon which this was based.

Because space does not allow the kind of extensive analysis used in the case study on India, this chapter will be confined to the exposition of the key official positions adopted by the Labour Party with a rather cursory treatment of the positions which were not adopted. For this reason, the manner in which statements were arrived at will not be explained. It was discovered in the Indian case study and in chapter two, that it is not possible to give a general account of such processes because statements come from any number of institutions. It is, however, possible to comment on why some statements were acceptable as official positions and others were not. This was pointed out in chapter two and in the Indian case study. Instead of considering where certain statements came from, the official position, and the demonstration that it was not the only possible response the party could make, will serve to illustrate the kinds of positions the party adopted from those available to it.

Before examining the Labour Party's positions on the issues raised by considering anti semitism, it is necessary to examine the political and social circumstances of East London, as this was an area where the Labour Party was strong, and where the need for the social welfare programmes, which were a structural part of the Party's official definitions of socialism (see sections 3.1 and 3.4) were the greatest in London. The following section seeks to elucidate these conditions and determine the extent to which the Labour Party was integral to the culture and practices of this area. This was the context into which anti semitism must be fitted as the Labour Party did, to a certain extent, construct East London as a political community of which it was the natural representative.

6.2 Poverty, Welfare and Labour in East London.

By the 1930s the concepts poverty and East London were firmly associated. This was confirmed by an interviewee who offered information about the Labour Party's activities in East London from the point of view of his position as a local councillor. On being pressed repeatedly for information about the Labour Party's local attitude to its Jewish residents, he repeatedly offered descriptions of the poor social conditions of the area. According to his descriptions, life in the back to back cottages was such that the residents had to sleep outside in the summer for fear of being attacked by bugs and vermin whilst asleep. It was also his contention that everyone in the area was in the same position. This adds support to the claim often made by local Labour Party members that the residents in the area could be described as a community. This was a construction of community in terms of poverty. This description is included because it came from an active member of the local Labour Party and described the part which the Labour Party was to play in the politics of East London in imporoving the lives of these people.

If poverty was firmly associated with East London then so was social reform. East London was, traditionally, a forcing house for social reform. During the nineteenth century its poor, working class population had been an object of philanthropic scrutiny, carefully watched and studied. The Oxford and Cambridge missions, which brought the privileged into close contact with the underprivileged, brought in their wake philanthropists of Liberal and Fabian political persuasions. Its inhabitants were objects of interest prompted not only by the nobler emotions of philanthropy, but also concerns for social stability in the years which represented the depths of an economic depression. Gareth Stedman Jones (1976 p.343) points out that the East End of London had something of a history when it came to riots. He cites the East End bread riots in 1855, 1861 and 1866 and the unemployed riot in 1886 which he attributes to the casual

poor.

The social welfare policy of the Labour Party was aimed at precisely the section of the population which inhabited East London. Labour thinking was rooted in a tradition of reforms inherited from Liberalism and Fabianism. This was reflected in its policy orientation towards the improvement of wages, benefits and a concern for the life standards of those whom it represented.

This concern was very much reflected at the local level in East London. East Londoners were the Labour Party's community par excellence, just as poverty and social reform were its constituency. This was demonstrated in section 3.4 when Labour's definitions of socialism were discussed. In this context the term East London was as much a concept as a geographical entity. If poverty was a part of the social fabric of the East End then so was the Labour Party. It was the strategy of some local Labour Parties to take over the machinery of local government in areas which were their strongholds, and wield it in the interests of the local people. In the case of Poplar in the 1920s the council managed to fix a minimum wage in the borough, to the annoyance of Bevin and the Transport and General Workers Union. G.D.H. Cole (1969 p.227) suggests that from his reading of Snowden's Autobiography, it was Lansbury's involvement in 'Poplarism' which excluded him from influential office in the 1929-31 Labour Government. He was offered the Office of Works, a post he took on condition he was given a place in the Cabinet.

The involvement of the Labour Party in the lives of the people replaced Liberalism in East London in the post first world war period and a culture of poverty became steeped in Labour and trade union practices. The Labour Party managed to place itself at the centre of local social life by organising social and sporting functions as well as the local Sunday School, which in the case of Bow was held at the home of George Lansbury. Trades union branches often provided similar facilities for their members. In Bethnal Green the Labour mayor

handed out cards in the borough bearing the inscription:- "When you want advice on any matter, housing, pensions, compensation etc., come to the Labour Party office." (Tate, undated circa 1930-9 N.E. Bethnal Green Labour Party Files.). The Labour Party was anxious to serve the people in East London in all aspects of their lives.

The East End of London was also a centre of anti semitic activity. It was the home of many of the poorer Jews who had come to Britain and had been the centre of agitation which led to the Aliens Act of 1905, a move to exclude pauper aliens. The Aliens Act was the result of activity across the political spectrum. In 1891 an association was formed to prevent the immigration of destitute aliens in which both Liberals and trade unionists, concerned about the effect such immigrants would have on the living standards of the local population, participated. In 1892, 1894 and 1895 the Trades Union Congress passed resolutions in favour of immigration restriction. This position of the Trades Union Congress had a second facet. It was busily trying to work towards the elimination of 'sweating' and for the organisation of Jews into effective trades unions. By 1902 the Trades Union Congress was lobbying for an easier naturalisation procedure. Thus pauper aliens were at the same time an object of 'socialist' sympathies and concerns for social welfare, and a threat to the wages and conditions of trade unionists. This ambivalence was to some extent a feature of Labour Party approaches to the presence of Jews in Britain.

The decision to restrict the entry of pauper aliens into Britain, in line with nineteenth century movements in the United States which introduced a poll tax to prevent the immigration of the destitute, had its supporters and critics right across the political spectrum. This was particularly evident in the Liberal Party. There were those who considered that restriction was a necessary aspect of social reform and the elimination of poverty, and those who considered that Britain should maintain her traditions of political toleration and accept political refugees as the Huguenots had been accepted when

Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes which gave them religious toleration.

Aliens were not incidental to conceptions of poverty in the nineteenth century. Poverty in the discourses of the eighteenth and nineteenth century was thought to reflect the moral and physical health of the population. Race health and poverty were the main ingredients of the eugenicist problematic which concerned itself with the physical health of the British race. In the work of Malthus (1976) poverty indicated the absence of thrift and industry, qualities contributing to the advancement of mankind. Poverty was inextricably linked to a concept of intelligence and mental development. Intelligence was the key to industry, progress and wealth. Darwin's and Galton's discourses on populations focused on the qualities of the individual and their role in the production of human stock. Galton in "Hereditary Genius" tried to show that the distribution and inheritence of intellectual ability followed the same laws as the inheritence of any other ability. Degeneracy and a lack of intelligence was indexed in poverty. These debates were situated in discourse which divided up mankind in terms of a conceptualisation of race. The same characteristics were thought to apply to rich and poor nations. Such schema had been established in the disciplines of the nineteenth century anthropology which divided the human species into races.

The fact that many of the aliens pouring into East London from the late nineteenth century were poor was considered a comment upon them as individuals as well as upon the 'race' from which they were popularly thought to have derived (see section 6.4) and therefore upon the harm they might inflict on the already degenerate population of the East End. The immigration of pauper aliens added weight to the argument of Malthus (1976 p252) that the poorer sections of the population were in danger of increasing disproportionately. Immigration accentuated the process by which this sector of the population was to

increase itself. This represented an actual physical danger to the stock of the nation. Of course not all immigrant Jews were poor, although those living in East London had a tendency to be so. The present residents of East London, some of whom originated in Bengal, are by definition poor because they come from a third world country. This was not true of Jews in the 1930s.

Many of the discourses in which the eugenistic problematic was situated placed an emphasis on environment as much as stock. City areas which had problems of overcrowding and insanitary conditions since the factory system was introduced, rapidly converted a rural to an urban population, and became a focus for concerned environmentalists who busied themselves with the problems of poverty. British participation in the Boer war indicated that the slum dwelling population of the cities were in many instances physically unfit to defend the empire against the encroachment of other European nations (see Searle 1971 p65). Such concerns about the health of the nation were encouraged by the national efficiency movement in Germany in which social welfare was a priority (Searle 1971 p67). Social welfare was thus part of a debate concerned with racial superiority and the preservation of empire.

The Labour Party's concern for social welfare must be seen in this tradition. Many of the early Liberal reformers, including Beveridge who pioneered modern welfare policy, were certainly connected to the eugenicist traditions of the turn of the century. Prominent social reformers were members of the Co Efficients dining club which was formed to consider social policy and the health of the nation (Searle 1971 p.150). The Trades Union Congress's support for immigration restriction represents an implicit acceptance of the eugenicist argument that the importation of alien paupers would have a detrimental effect upon the racial health of the British nation or political community.

Because Jews were often described as a race in the discourses to be examined in this chapter, their association with poverty in East London became a comment on the moral and physical health of the race from which they were thought to come. Because Jews were Aryans, other distinctions, not based on colour were used in these discourses to demonstrate their distinctiveness as a race.

6.3 The Jews and the Political Community

East London was constituted as a community by the local Labour Party. Its people were all in a similar position. "Large families in small cottages using the communal baths." (Benningfield 1977 Interview.). The involvement of the local Labour Party in all aspects of the lives of the residents of this area testifies to the identification of East London as an area of poverty, in need of social welfare. East London was a discursive community in Labour Party statements and concerns.

If East London was a discursive political community for the Labour Party, it remains to be determined whether Jewish residents were an integral or alien part of this community. If they were an alien or separate community, how was that alienness constructed? The discussion of pauperism was one way in which this alienness was constructed but there were others. Of course these were not just questions pertinent to East London, constructions of the national political community were also at stake. What was to be defined as the community for Labour Party politics was a site of struggle in the Labour Party as there was no single construction.

Jewish residents in East London, and in the rest of Britain, were to some extent involved in institutions which were distinct and separate from those of the rest of the population. Much of this separateness was the result of Judaism. Jews were officially represented in Britain by the Board of Deputies of Anglo Jewry. This had very strong links with the synagogues and regarded

Jewishness as a cohesive social entity distinct from the multiplicity of practices associated with gentiles. The Board disapproved of any division of Jewishness and this was reflected in its relations with Jewish Trade Unions and the Poale Zion, the Jewish Labour Party.

Jewish workers and their trades unions were firmly associated with certain (sweated) trades by the 1930s. In many cases they worked for Jewish employers, working numerous hours for low wages. The Poale Zion acted as a bridge between the Labour movement in Britain and in Israel after the state of Israel was set up in 1948. In the 1930s it was strongly orientated towards the setting up of a Jewish 'socialist' home in Palestine. The Poale Zion was institutionally distinct from, yet affiliated to, the Labour Party.

Jewish people were also organised separately into an organisation called the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen. These were Jews who thought that their record of fighting for Britain in the war made them demonstrably British. They frequently paraded wearing their war medals against the accusation that they were an alien force in British society. It is rumoured that the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen was and is an active force in combatting anti semitism, but the details of this struggle remain obscure because of the reluctance of Jewish people to discuss their activities. None-the-less the ex-servicemen make the point that the Jews were not really an immigrant community, as many of them had arrived in Britain in the 1870s. In fact immigration to Britain in the 1930s had almost stopped. This is interesting because in parliament, one of the issues associated with anti semitism was immigration and aliens taking jobs which the indigenous population needed in a time of mass unemployment. Although such arguments were unfounded because in many cases Jews worked for Jewish employers in jobs created by Jews, the Labour Party as well as other parliamentary forces, participated in discussion which accepted this assertion.

One member pressed the Home Secretary in an oral answer in Parliament to reveal "...the number of aliens at present working in Great Britain under permits, giving comparative figures for twelve months." (Day 26/3/36 Hansard 1935-6 vol. 310 col. 1379). This refers to new immigrants, but there was a belief at the time that aliens (predominantly Jews) were entering the country in large numbers. "Is the right honourable gentleman aware that there is a genuine feeling throughout the country that a good many undesirable aliens are getting in." (Everard 13/2/36 Hansard 1935-6 vol. 308 col. 1119-1120). Many questions were asked of the Home Secretary in Parliament during this period concerning the employment of 'aliens' as opposed to British workers. This did not actually refer to Jews already settled here, but it made the link between aliens and taking jobs which could be done by British workers. The following statement is one such example:

> "...how many male and female clerks and shorthand typists of foreign nationality had been given permits to come to Great Britain for the purpose of taking up clerical work in British firms...and whether in view of the number of clerks and typists, male and female, now unemployed stricter methods will be observed with a view to limiting or ceasing to issue these permits."
> (Garro Jones 4/2/36 Hansard vol. 308 col. 67)

Jewish people also had their own charitable and friendly societies. Indeed much of the poverty which existed in the Jewish communities would have been dealt with within the community. In addition to this there were institutions and practices associated specifically with Judaism, Jewish schools and the keeping of the sabbath on a Saturday, which underlined the institutional distinctness of Jewish people. Because Jews originated in various parts of Eastern Europe, in many instances they spoke their own languages which also served to distinguish them from other Londoners. Jews could also be distinguished in many instances by their mode of dress and physical appearance. The institutional and physical distinctiveness of the Jews in East London

constrained the political discourses in which they were implicated.

A prominent, organising concept of dicourses on political community which focused on Jewishness and East London was the insistence that they in fact constituted a race. Race was a specific way of indicating the total separateness of the Jews just described. This statement in the New Statesman and Nation may be seen as offering a description of Jews as a race to the Labour Party.

> "Its peculiar relevance to recent disturbances (in Mile End)...lies in the fact that its population is made up of members of two very different races, in numbers fairly evenly balanced. For many decades Aldgate and Whitechapel have been overwhelmingly Jewish in composition. Steadily Jews have spread Eastwards; and I have seen street after street in Mile End which were, even twenty or so years ago, almost wholly occupied by Gentiles; progressively occupied by Jews until almost every house in the street, including every little corner shop, has come to be in Jewish occupation. The Jews are much more clannish than the natives they have so largely replaced." (New Statesman and Nation 7/11/36 Jew and Blackshirt in the East End. p. 698-9)

The claim that the Jews were a race was supported later in this statement in which it was claimed that Jews had "a different glandular and emotional makeup" from the average Englishman. In addition to this they had a "code of social conduct" and were "pushfull" and "persistently industrious." (p.699).

An examination of these concepts in terms of the philosophical debates which linked them, the ideologies, indicates a belief in race as a series of physical and psychological characteristics. The phenotypical and mental characteristics of Jewishness were thought to be linked. This notion was borrowed from the early discourses of anthropology, in which the investigation of man was conducted in a racial hierarchy which favoured the white races. In the case of the Jews, the same kind of terminology was being used to account for differences between white peoples. This was clearly informed by the idea that Jews were a separate people.

Race has been a way of classifying populations of human beings from the time when man first became an object of 'scientific' investigation. The manner in which race has been designated has changed. This was pointed out throughout chapters four and five and was particularly taken up in section 5.17. In the classifications of Cuvier which were based on comparative morphology (see Stocking 1968 p. 13-14) Jews, who came from a variety of nations and Britons, would have been considered if not members of a single race, then racial formations which were closely related. Such divisions were replaced by more refined classifications in the nineteenth century, which were less based on anatomical considerations. An example of such classification is to be found in the work of Maine and others (see section 5.17) who based their racial classifications on comparative philology. As indicated in the last chapter Maine and others constructed a notion of Aryanism which was prevalent in the debates on India in the 1930s.

As far as the classifications of Aryan theory were concerned there was no racial difference between Eastern European Jews and Britons. Yet Jews were referred to as a race in many of the statements reproduced in this chapter. The New Statesman article of November 1936 just cited is one such example of these references. Why were Jews referred to as a separate race from Britons when Aryan theory contradicts such a division? There are two possible explanations for this apparent contradiction. The first is that definitions of race in terms of phenotype, which concerned themselves with skeletal structure, hair colour and other physical characteristics so prevalent in the eighteenth century, had survived re-definition by Aryan theory and were used in some cases as a way of referring to what appeared to be differences of physical appearance between groups of peoples.

The second possible explanation concerns the division of a population into 'peoples' just referred to in connection with a mode of expression of differences based on phenotype. It appears quite likely that the

suggestions that Jews were a race was based on a further refinement of Aryan theory as a mode of classification. This must have taken as its starting point the status of Jews as an alien community. The distinctiveness of Jews as an alien community was constructed in the debates from which the statements presented in this chapter are drawn. The Labour Party was one of the political forces which was active in defining this distinctiveness. Jews were institutionally, socially, culturally and in many instances physically distinctive from the 'host' population. This was the basis from which their identity as a political community was constructed. The Labour Party's construction of the distinctiveness of the Jewish community was but a further refinement of the construction just outlined which consisted of a distinctiveness based on physical appearance and the social practices associated with Judaism.

Political community is a general concept organising both case studies. It is the purpose of this chapter to discover how that is organised in discourses on race and anti semitism. It is possible to say, so far, that the term race as applied to the distinctiveness of the Jewish population of East London was a refinement of Aryan theory which relied heavily upon notions of political community. Ways of designating Jews as a separate community were expressed in the New Statesman article just examined. In this they were described as "pushfull" and "industrious". This was social behaviour which was thought to emanate from their "glandular" and "emotional" make up. (New Statesman and Nation 7/11/36 Jew and Blackshirt in the East End p. 698-9). This statement appears to borrow both from the construction of Jews in terms of their social and work behaviour as a means of identifying them as a distinct community and from the idea that race has a physiological referent.

Whilst the distinctiveness of the Jews was expressed in terms of the well rehearsed terminology of racial difference, it must not be overlooked that this was a designation which was active in their construction as a political community, and to that extent notions of

political community do inform formulations concerning race which are otherwise constantly changing. Anti semitism relates to notions of race and political community because perhaps the central consideration in opposing the existence of Jewish people in Britain was their specific construction as a distinct political community which made them an indentifiable target. As long as Jews could be singled out from the rest of the population at large the way was open to the development of an ideology which considered their effects on a British way of life.

When the terms multi racial society (a concept which did not enter current usage in the 1930s) and political community are referred to the term racial is used because it is the term used in the discourses. Racial properties are no more than social and political constructions. This was demonstrated in section 5.17 in relation to Aryan theories of race.

The statement in the New Statesman and Nation just examined also considers that Jews have displaced indigenous East Enders. This was seen as a threat to the political community in that its established character was under threat of invasion by alien practices.

Just as Jews were a threat to the character of the East London political community, its way of life and identity in which the Labour Party was embedded, Jews were also perceived as a threat to the jobs and livelihood of East Londoners. This was demonstrated in the statements from Hansard quoted earlier in this section. This rested on the assumption that the local jobs belonged to the host population by right of long term association and integration into the local culture and way of life. This was thought to be underwritten by an absence of any roots in foreign political communities, exterior to Britain. "Sweating" was the term used by the British Labour movement to describe the conditions in which many Jews worked. These conditions were as poor as the wages they earned and were constituted as a threat to the

achievements of the Labour Movement in this sphere. Constitutionally, the Labour Party was the representative of "The people and more particularly of those who depend on their own exertions by hand or by brain for the means of life." (Labour Party 1929 Constitution and Standing Orders p.3)

This formulation did not necessarily exclude Jews who were in the position it described. Jews could only be considered a threat to the living standards of the Labour Party's community if they were exterior to that community. As far as these formulations were concerned, Jews, for all the reasons outlined and expressed in terms of race, were not a structural part of the Party's political community. This position was not held right throughout the Labour Party. To many in the Labour Party as to many of those in the Communist Party, Jewishness was not a legitimate division. Class was a legitimate division to the extent that all elements in the political community were either workers or they were not workers. But the thinking that Jews were responsible for taking British jobs and British homes must be premised on the consideration that they were a non British or alien community.

This position was adopted by Herbert Morrison and Harry Pollit (who was a member of the Communist Party) in conversation with Neville Laski. Neville Laski, brother of Harold Laski, invited Pollit and Morrison to his house to discuss the situation in East London. During the course of the conversation he took notes. The statements which follow were taken from those notes which were reproduced by the Society for the Study of Labour History. Laski recorded that Pollit and Morrison agreed that:

> "The Jews must deal with the small employers who were using sweated labour...Jewish employers should make a point of employing only union labour at union rates and in conditions which were decent instead of filthy as was so often the case...The community had to punish them unless they were going to allow this state of opinion to grow in the East End..."
> (Society for the Study of Labour History 1976 East End Anti Semitism 1936 p.28)

Morrison had said that Jews should take a back seat in the Labour Movement.

> "There were some extremely valuable people in the East End. At the present too many Jews were playing too prominent a part. They should keep in the background - except for the more important figures in the community whose names and position would command respect - and leave it to Gentiles to fight for them."
> (Society for the Study of Labour History 1976 East End Anti Semitism 1936 p.29)

Morrison, as a prominent Labour Member of Parliament, was suggesting that not only were Jews guilty of undercutting the wages of other workers, they had also invaded the Labour Movement and struggles which were legitimately, Gentile.

In this first statement, Jews, referred to as "them" are posed as exterior to what is referred to as the "community" of East London. The use of the word "community" designates the collectivity of East London people. In the second statement, Jews are referred to as a "community" indicating that they were quite distinctive from non-Jews, a separate community. It was being suggested that two political communites existed in East London.

The positions expressed by Pollit and Morrison were premised on two philosophical positions which organised the main objects and concepts in the statement. The first relies on some of the abstract debates on race already mentioned, that Jews were in many respects a separate community in East London in particular and in Britain in general. This separateness was partly referred to in terms of their constituting sweated labour which was a threat to the wages and conditions of the labour force as a whole. Jews could only be seen as offering competition as long as they were distinct in the political community. This does not mean that Morrison and Pollit were insisting that Jews were racially distinct, although they might have been, but they were suggesting that they occupied an alien status in the labour market and the Labour movement. Jews earned low wages because they were Jews, or their wages would be comparable to the rest of

the working population in East London.

Linked to this alien status was the second set of philosophical discourses. These concern the notion of competition and survival as voiced in the statements of Malthus and the Social Darwinists. The problems of East London were thought to be based on the scarcity of resources such as wages, housing, jobs and all manner of social provisions. As mentioned in section 6.2 competition for these resources in the work of Malthus (1976) usually took place within the context of the national political community. The imposition of an alien community added a new dimension to this old problem. Competition within a political community for scarce resources was already problematic in the production of vice and misery, but competition between the community and an alien community would produce further antagonisms. These arguments were widely used in the Labour Movement to explain anti semitism in working class areas such as the East End of London.

Support for this conception of competition may be found in the questions raised by Labour M.P.s concerning the Home Secretary's allowing numbers of aliens into Britain in the 1930s and their employment in certain kinds of jobs, thus depriving 'our people' of jobs. Notions of competition were fiercely rehearsed over such issues. Such examples were cited earlier in this section concerning the employment of aliens in clerical work. There were many more to be found in parliamentary debates during 1936 (see Hansard 1935-6).

Even statements which claimed that Jews were a part of the community of East London specified them as a guest sector of that community, living at the behest and courtesy of the host population. As the Minister of Defence said - "What right has one section of the community to point the finger to a section to which we have given hospitality for years." (Inskip 15/10/36 Daily Herald) This asserts the exteriority of Jews to the nation, a geographical boundary with a common set of traditions and heritage. Jews were discursively constructed as an

alien political community in the positions examined, in terms of the threat they posed to the physical stock of the national political community, its cultural traditions and its material well being.

6.4 Fascism and Anti Semitism.

The discourses, asserting both the alien and the integral status of Jews in East London, became an issue in a political analysis of local events which focused attention on the British Union of Fascists. Could the activities of the British Union of Fascists be described as Fascism or as Anti Semitism? These were important issues in defining the struggle, as Jews were the object of anti Semitism but a range of forces including the Labour movement were defined in Labour Party statements as the objects of Fascism. In either case what was being described were the activities of the British Union of Fascists and the implications of this action.

The analyses of the Labour Party, like the actions and imagery of the British Union, were borrowed from the continent. The British Union had deliberately styled itself on the regimes of Hitler and Mussolini, using similar ideology and symbolism. It propounded a nationalism which demanded financial and racial purity. Its famous cry was - 'we've got to get rid of the yids'. This coincided with the publication in Britain of the Protocols of Zion which uncovered a fake plot by Jewish financiers to create a world state. The insistence that the Jews were international financier communists bringing the financial ruin of Britain was the same as the position put forward by the Nazi regime. The military style of politics and the demagogic adulation of its leader was also similar to the trend in German politics. But the British Union, whilst styled on continental Fascism, was a very home grown product. It was the political successor of the British Brother's League which was covertly anti semitic and in favour of a national purity free from alien elements.

The British Brothers League according to Nugent and King (1979 p.32) strongly denied the charge of racial prejudice and its leaders generally avoided using the word, Jew. Never-the-less it suggested that the import of aliens created a nation within a nation. Aliens were referred to as 'scum' and 'rubbish' and it was suggested that they were invading and 'flooding' Britain. In this period, around the turn of the century, aliens were mostly Jews, fleeing from religious persecution in Eastern Europe. Irish immigration, a focus for much hostility, had reached a peak between 1850 and 1880. So Jews who were arriving in Britain from 1870 were undoubtedly the aliens to which the British Brothers League referred.

Like the British Union the British Brothers League was also strongly rooted in East London. The British Union instituted a sustained attack on Jews until its activities were suspended in 1940 under the Defence of the Realm Act. Its attacks on Jews were both verbal and physical from 1934 onwards. Its emphasis was not so much pauper aliens which had been the main concern of the British Brothers League and the agitation which produced the 1905 Aliens Act. Instead it portrayed Jews as world conspirators holding prominent positions in world financial structures. Anti semitism was a prominent but not its only political platform. Its main thrust was a corporatist theory of the state. Set out in the writings of Oswald Mosley and others, corporatism called for a collective approach to industrial relations and the organisation of the political community into corporate interest groups.(Mosley 1932; Thomson 1937; Chesterton 1937).

Superficially corporatism was not unlike Cole's Guild Socialism, but whilst that turned everyone into a producer, corporatism maintained the functions of producers, employers, and above all, experts. Also Mosley had a conception of sovereignty as a corporate unity embodied in a single leader, whilst Cole considered it a severalty of wills in a balance. Mosley, who had propounded Keynsian economics in a radical economic

committee with Lansbury in the (1929 -1931) Labour Government, in which he held a post as the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, was a firm believer in a cult of experts, in which the emphasis was on corporate unity not class divisions. This collective unity took a very nationalistic perspective with a strident protectionism. In addition to this A.K. Chesterton, Normal Leys, and Mosley himself wrote bemoaning the demise of the British Empire and affirming the rightful position of Britain as one of supremacy in the world. These key intellectuals of the British Union, considered that the nation was the natural form in which race supremacy was defined. Whilst this did not mean that they considered racial and national divisions to coincide, they did assume that nationality and the nation state as a political entity were divisions underwritten by an identity of racial characteristics.

It was more than the political style and rhetoric of the British Union of Fascists which convinced large sections of the Labour Party that its efforts should be directed against Fascism. The dramatic collapse of the German Social Democratic Party and the subsequent treatment of Communists, socialists and trade unionists in Germany, convinced the Labour Party that the issues raised by the emergence of the British Union in British politics, was the supression of working class political organisation, of which it was the professed representative. The Labour Party considered itself and the movement it represented as one of the objects of attack of the British Union. The theory of the corporate state was opposed to the class divisions and the political strategies associated with them. The Labour Party's principal constituencies and communities presupposed such divisions.

The Labour Party did not ignore the anti semitic character of the actions and propaganda of the British Union, but officially considered it only a symptom of a much wider political problem, an attack on democracy. What was described as the racial aspect of Fascism was manifest in Germany where it was known that widescale

persecution of Jews was taking place. In 1933 the National Executive of the Party commented: "In Germany, discontent has given a despot the opportunity to invoke medieval methods of terror, torture and racial persecution." (National Executive Committee 1933 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.3). The records of the Labour Party are full of discussions of the events on the continent, indicating that they were considered to be especially relevant to the situation in Britain created by the emergence of the British Union of Fascists.

The declaration that Fascism, rather than anti semitism was the appropriate way of labelling the political events surrounding the activities of the British Union, was not a position confined to the central institutions of the Labour Party. In East London there were anti Fascist alliances and demonstrations which supported this contention. This position was supported by the Joint Consultative Committee of the London Trades Council and London Labour Party.

> "British Labour has expressed by resolution and financial aid its sympathy and solidarity with workers who are oppressed by Fascist dictatorships, and with the Jewish people who have been the victims of racial persecution." (Joint Consultative Committee of the London Trades Council and London Labour Party 1934 The Labour movement and Fascism: A Special Memorandum.)

This statement suggests that Fascism was a threat to the Labour movement and goes on to warn its members to beware of Fascist propaganda coming from within the Labour movement, pointing out that the philosophy of Communism does not differ radically from that of Fascism.

> "We would further urge upon Trade Unionists in particular to beware of Fascist propaganda within the Labour movement...there is a remarkably close analogy between the methods of the Fascists and the methods of the Communists." (Joint Consultative Committee of the London Trades Council and London Labour Party 1934 The Labour Movement and Fascism: A Special Memorandum.)

This assessment of the similarity of Communism and Fascism was based on the fact that both were — "destructive of individual as well as public liberty."

The community to which this statement laid claims was not only the Labour and trade union movement, but "The British people". Its constituency was "reason, common sense and understanding" as opposed to the "theatrical" and "hysterical" nature of the Blackshirt clad British Union of Fascists. The political strategies locally proposed to combat the Fascist menace were:-

> "By constructive propaganda and education to create a socialist public opinion, not only amongst the manual workers, but also amongst the clerical, administrative, professional and technical classes, for in the long run it is educated public opinion which provides the best protection against dictatorships of any kind. One of the greatest lessons of Germany is the importance of socialist education among the salaried workers."
> (Joint Consultative Committee of the London Trades Council and London Labour Party 1934 The Labour Movement and Fascism: A Special Memorandum.)

This was a re-statement of the Labour Party's constitutionally defined community, and the belief that education to socialism without any direct action against Fascists provided the most effective method of combatting Fascism. This statement also implies that the philosophical nature of socialism as defined by the Labour Party, would automatically repudiate Fascism. This depends on the purported democratic nature of Labour socialism, set against the totalitarian methods of the Fascists and will be taken up later in this chapter.

The degree of consensus in the Labour Party and Labour movement regarding the definition of the same problem as Fascism rather than anti semitism, is demonstrated in the support it received from the Labour and Socialist International. This however, did emphasize the 'racial' element in Fascism.

> "This Conference calls the attention of the workers to the close connection between the growing Fascist Movement and anti semitism. As is being demonstrated in the German example, it may become a great temptation for the impoverished middle classes and intellectuals of certain countries, in times of acute crisis... Racial hatred, stimulated by unscrupulous

> demagogy, may in this manner become a dangerous ally of reaction and of counter revolution by reaching the great masses of the lower middle classes and even contaminating sections of the working class."
> (Labour and Socialist International 1933 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.123)

Racial hatred, although firmly associated with Fascism, was presented as one of its techniques for fomenting discontent amongst those hardest hit by the world economic recession. Racial hatred, therefore, had a particular status, as the side effect of a general political problem, rather than as a problem in its own right. It did not have a political solution in its own right, but that it should be resisted as part of a general political strategy which addressed itself to the problem of Fascism.

Indeed, mentions of anti semitism were absent in the Labour Party's early official statements directed against Fascism. In the National Joint Council document "Fascism at Home and Abroad" (1934) the main thrust of the analysis was of German and Italian Fascism and its inhibition of liberty in working class political activity. It criticised the British Union for its militarised approach to political action and insisted that its long term political aim was to convert Britain into a corporate state along Italian lines. The main thrust of the National Joint Council's objection to the British Union, it appears, was its fundamental conflict with the philosophy of the worker's movement.

> "It is clear both from the professed objects of the Fascists, and the actual events which have accompanied and followed their seizure of power, that Fascism is fundamentally opposed to the ideals and methods of the working class movement."
> (National Joint Council 1934 Fascism at Home and Abroad - draft document p.15)

The belief that Fascism was the problem was demonstrated in a resolution passed by the Labour Party Conference in 1934. It was offered on behalf of the National Union of General and Municipal Workers, and under the heading "Socialism, Democracy and Fascism". It stated the following:-

"We therefore express our deep concern at the spread of Fascism in the countries of Europe, the atrocities perpetrated by its adherents in Germany and Austria, and our detestation of the policy which has resulted in wanton destruction of irreplacable books, documents and works of art. We deplore the insidious moves now being made to encourage and assist the spread of this brutal doctrine here at home, and this Conference calls upon the National Executive Committee to arrange a nationwide series of demonstrations for the purpose of exposing the political and economic implications of Fascist dictatorship, stating clearly its own democratic and socialist policy and urging the need to make illegal all semi military political organisations. We welcome the statement made by the National Council of Labour on this subject and associate ourselves with the resolution of the Weymouth Trades Union Congress."
(Dukes 1934 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.142)

Anti semitism only received a rather oblique reference in mentioning "atrocities" perpetrated by Fascism. Again it was considered a property of Fascism to be countered by an anti Fascist political strategy.

The link between Fascism and anti semitism was officially and tenuously stated at the 1936 Conference of the Labour Party in a National Executive Committee resolution. This specifically addressed itself to the political situation in East London in which it was difficult to obscure the anti semitic character of British Union activity in mounting personal attacks on Jews and their property. Never-the-less, it does not actually refer to either Jews or anti semitism as the object of attack by Fascism.

"This Conference views with grave concern the tragic and deplorable events of yesterday in the East End of London; condemns the Government's unwillingness to ban the Fascist march, in spite of the obvious danger of a breach of the public peace; condemns the provocative tactics of the Fascists; and records it view that whilst freedom of speech must be preserved, the encouragement of civil disorder, racial strife, the parade of force and militarised politics, and the use of political uniforms should be forbidden. The Conference also calls upon the Government to institute an immediate enquiry into the recent disturbances and into the activites and finances

of the Fascist organisations."
(Morrison H. 1936 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.114)

The relation between racial strife and Fascism suggested by this official statement focuses on another issue, public order. Again race was deflected as an issue, and Jews seen as the focus for public violence by the British Union and its opponents. The anti semitic implications of British Union activity in East London could not be ignored on this occasion. The Conference was in session as the British Union marched through Jewish districts of East London to the opposition of thousands of anti Fascists. This event was later called the 'Battle of Cable St.'

This statement also contained an official Labour Party demand for the restriction of the absolute right of free speech and political expression in the light of possible lapses in public order that such licence had given.

The official statements of the Poale Zion were in accordance with official Labour Party pronouncements over this issue. They too defined the key issue as Fascism rather than anti semitism and declared that "The Jewish masses in this country have suffered in common with other members of the working class." (Poale Zion 1935 Election Address). At the same time the Poale Zion was engaged in anti Fascist activity in East London and quite possibly in Jewish defence organisations.

A definition of the political situation in East London as one in which the main issue was attacks of a racial character on the local Jewish population were offered by the New Statesman and Nation, the newly formed National Council for Civil Liberties and the Church. In addition to this there were questions raised in Parliament by the East London members about the inactivity of the police in preventing personal attacks on Jews which were part of a general concern for the maintenance of peace and civil order in their East London constituencies.

The New Statesman and Nation carried an article which described a number of attacks on individual Jews in the East End.

> "An elderly Jew, a member of no political organisation, was attacked from behind by five young men and knocked down with a split skull. Another, a match seller, had his beard so violently pulled that hair was torn out by the roots. Other Jews have had their stalls knocked over. Petty persecution of this kind has become so frequent that the Whitechapel Labour Party has had to picket the Jewish market on Sunday mornings to try to discover the individuals committing these outrages, which are the natural results of Fascist propaganda."
> (New Statesman and Nation 10/10/36 Fascism and the Jews p.497)

Whilst placing racial attacks within the much rehearsed framework of Fascism, the article did place a good deal of emphasis on attacks on individual Jews as the logical outcome of Fascist propaganda. It also revealed that the local Labour Party was taking part in defensive action to protect local Jews from attack, even though the Labour Party centrally placed little emphasis on the anti semitic nature of the British Union's activities. This would indicate that in the areas where anti semitism was rampant, political strategies were directed in a manner which supposed that anti semitism was an important issue, even if it was ultimately subsumed within a framework which suggested that Fascism was the main issue.

The National Council for Civil Liberties defined the main issue to be anti semitism as indicated in a letter to the Mayor of Bethnal Green.

> "As you probably know, my council has long been interested in the question of Blackshirt provocation and anti semitism. I was particularly interested therefore to read in the Daily Herald...a report of your council meeting at which complaints were made of anti semitic intimidation in your district. My council proposes to conduct a vigorous campaign during the Autumn on these questions."
> (National Council for Civil Liberties 28/9/36 Letter)

A similar concern for the prevalence of anti semitic attacks was expressed by the church in a statement carried

by the Jewish Chronicle.

> "Dr. Cosmos Lang, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal A. Hinsley, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, and Dr. Scott Lidgett, the Honorary Secretary of the National Council of Evangelical Free Churches, have issued a statement condemning "recent attempts to revive anti semitic feeling in East London..."..." (Jewish Chronicle 9/9/38 Jewish Defence p.21)

The Jewish Chronicle was much concerned with the issue of attacks on Jews and the defence campaigns which might be conducted. It was after a concerted campaign by the Chronicle that the Board of Deputies finally took the issue of Jewish defence seriously, abandoning its position that anti semitism and the political strategies associated with it were nothing to do with its main concern, Judaism. Under threat that it would be usurped as the leader of the Jewish community if it did not participate in defensive campaigns to protect the community, it capitulated and in the late summer of 1936 it was pressured into adopting a position summarized in the following words: "Let us stand together as Jews, the employer, the worker, the Rabbi and the youth." (16/10/36 Jewish Weekly).

It would appear that whilst the Labour Party had a terminology for identifying certain activities as 'racial' it was only capable of identifying them as part of a wider political perspective of anti democratic political trends, to which the Labour movement was fundamentally opposed. Rather than develop a way of defining 'racial' issues as specific political problems, they were considered within the framework of some well rehearsed Labour Party formulations relating to democracy. Democracy and public order were constituencies adopted in favour of 'racial' attacks. Within this context the interests of the Labour movement and Jews were aligned although, unofficially, it was often admitted that the interests of these two forces were fundamentally opposed as the discussions referring to 'sweating' indicate. This contradiction remained unresolved in Labour Party discourse in this period. The struggle against Fascism was officially defined as democratic liberties versus a militarised and alien mode of political

intervention, such as that associated with the British Union. The success of 'racial' feeling was attributed to the efficient propoganda of the British Union in a given state of economic decline.

Whilst local branches of the Labour Party were implicated in this formulation to the extent that they were unwilling or unable to challenge such a position discursively, they were able to develop local strategies which had the effect of defending sections of the Jewish population from attack. This would not necessarily involve them in conflict with the central institutions of the Party because racial attacks were considered a feature of Fascism and opposition to such attacks could be considered a part of an anti Fascist strategy. Never-the-less, local decisions to take part in Jewish defence represent a definition of the political problem which may have been left unstated, but levelled an implicit challenge to the central enunciative institutions of the Labour Party. This would not have been true of all local Labour Parties even in areas where there was a substantial amount of anti semitic activity.

6.5 Zionism: Labour's Palestine.

The Labour Party's main official concern with Jewishness focused on the issue of the proposed Jewish homeland in Palestine. The Labour Party was fully committed to the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. This committment was incorporated in a Conference resolution in 1930, although this was not the first such statement. Zionism is the term which denotes this committment to the notion that Palestine was the ancient homeland of the Jews. This has a biblical authority.

> "That this Conference reaffirms the policy of the Labour Party concerning the establishment of the Jewish National Home in Palestine, as declared in consecutive pronouncements and resolutions...It records with satisfaction the conclusion arrived at by Mr. Harry Snell, the Labour member of the Commission of Enquiry (into land and settlement in Palestine) that "the achievements of the Jews in Palestine in the last decade are as significant

as anything that has happened in our time" and reiterates its conviction that no divergence of interests exists between the Jewish and Arab working population of Palestine;...The Conference is of the opinion that the introduction into Palestine of adequate Labour legislation and the encouragement of Trade Unionism and Co-operative methods is the policy best calculated to raise the standard of life of the working masses..."
(Rosette 1930 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.218)

This resolution moved by the Poale Zion was duly sanctioned as official Labour Party policy. It asserted that the Jews right to live in Palestine was a product of past declarations and pledges. As a British mandate the Balfour declaration had given assurances that a home for the Jews would be created in Palestine. The resolution also insisted on the Jews proven ability to develop Palestine and raise the standards of living of the local population. Jewish occupation of the land was thought to be synonymous with advance and progress, processes very much favoured by the Labour Party in the debates surrounding right to inclusion in the Indian political community. The Poale Zion's commitment to create a form of socialism in Palestine was also favoured by the Labour Party, as demonstrated in past declarations on foreign policy (see section 3.9).

In 1935 the Poale Zion, in an election address supporting the election of a Labour Government declared:

"The Labour Party has a real understanding and profound sympathy for the Jewish National Home in Palestine. The Labour Party is the only party which has repeatedly declared at its annual Conference its determination to further its development."
(Poale Zion 1935 Election Address)

Herbert Morrison declared at the 1929 Conference "There is room for both races" in Palestine and Frankel, moving a resolution on behalf of Mile End Labour Party in 1936, declared the Jewish intention to create a "Socialist community" in Palestine. The Labour Party was thus fully commited to Jewish settlement in Palestine, a position constrained by its relations with the Poale Zion and by Jewish Labour Party members.

The Poale Zion, however, went further than just insisting that the Labour Party was committed to Zionism. Its statement proclaiming Labour Support for the Jewish homeland was contained within a statement which condemned the persecution of Jews associated with Fascism. It was therefore, suggesting that Zionism might be an effective solution to the political problems posed by the re-emergence of anti semitism in the 1930s. In urging its followers to vote Labour, the Poale Zion was suggesting that this was what the Labour Party in Britain stood for.

This position suggested by the Poale Zion as an official Labour Party position was supported in a speech by a member of the National Executive Committee at the 1936 Annual Conference. It was significant that this conference, meeting against the background of what was seen as the serious threat to public order posed by the incidents in Cable Street, and passing a resolution concerning "Fascist Disturbances in East London", should also choose to reaffirm the Labour Party's often stated position on Palestine. The resolution moved on behalf of the National Executive Committee, was not in any sense a departure from past official declarations.

> "This Conference, recalling the continuance of support given by the British Labour Movement in the establishment of a National Home for the Jewish people in Palestine, and recognising that the interests of Jewish and Arab workers alike can be served only by their cordial co operation, deeply deplores the outbreak of racial and religious strife which threatens to destroy this great humanitarian project, and to deprive the Jewish people of the opportunity of developing their own cultural and social institutions."
> (Lawrence 1936 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.217)

This statement makes the claim that Jews should be awarded a kind of nationhood, by being given a territory in which to develop cultural and social institutions of their own through living as a single political community. The identity of Jews, their claim to be a single political community, was primarily based

on Judaism and a common history of religious persecution, as well as a claimed historic right to Palestine. A territory in which a political community could be developed seems to be thought a fitting unit for a 'people'. It was as if nationhood imposed a further identity on an already identifiable 'people'.

The fact that Jews had, historically, been subject to persecution appears to have been one of the greatest influences on Labour Party support for a homeland in Palestine. This was demonstrated by the mover of the 1936 resolution on Palestine. Lawrence constituted the right of the Jews to live in Palestine in the following way:

> "For we realised that even before the war the persecution of Jews, as Jews, has never ceased in the whole world. Those people in the East End of London of whom we spoke earlier on are nearly all of them descendants from refugees of the Tsarist pogroms, and we felt then and now that it was right that the most persecuted people in the world should have some place where they could develop freely."
> (Lawrence 1936 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.217)

The right to nationhood was being constructed on behalf of the National Executive Committee in terms of a common history of religious, and possibly racial, persecution. This amounts to a fairly drastic form of the demand for racial or religious toleration, the removal of Jews to a separate state. Weight was added to this argument by the current persecution of the Jews in Germany. The Jews were unique in this respect, as it has not been suggested before or since that a race should be exterminated.

It was, ironically, at the height of Jewish persecution that the immigration of Jews to Britain and to the British mandate in Palestine was the most difficult. The British Government did not allow aliens into Britain unless they had a country to which they could be returned. This was known to be an impossible condition for many Jews fleeing Germany. The Labour Party did little to challenge this, although some Labour and Independent Labour Party parliamentarians did take up cases of

individual Jews wishing to enter Britain. Lansbury's personal papers are full of such cases, and Fenner Brockway (1977 Personal Communication) admits to having participated in forging entry papers and passports to facilitate the entry of those fleeing the Nazis. He was in the Independent Labour Party at the time. Immigration to Palestine was also tightly controlled by its British administration. At this time it was under the direction of a High Commissioner in true colonial style.

For a Party which was so keen on a Jewish homeland and a refuge for the Jews from persecution, the Labour Party did very little to help in a practical way when the Jews were most in need of a refuge. After the war when the Labour Party, as the Government, was in direct charge of the Palestine mandate it managed to antagonise large sections of the Jewish community in Britain and all over the world through its handling of the partition. Jews who had suffered the worst holocaust in human history were kept waiting in refugee camps for years although the partition was effected in 1948 as the state of Israel was created. Sidney Silverman, Ian Mikardo, Harold Lever and Morris Albach opposed Bevin's policy on Palestine vociferously in parliament. It was at this point that the Poale Zion and the Labour Party fell out. (Levenberg 1977 Personal Communication).

The Labour Party officially defined attacks on Jews as Fascism, and the situations it produced as public order situations. It dealt with Jews as a specific issue in terms of the creation of a state in Palestine. Ultimately its response to problems surrounding the existence of a Jewish community in Britain, was no policy on the rights of Jews to live as a distinct community in East London, the absence of a notion of a multi racial society. Anti semitism was removable through the return of Jews to Palestine where they could live as an autonomous political community. It appears that the Labour Party kept its official statements on Fascism separate from statements on Jewish persecution. Its statements on Fascism primarily referred to East London and those on

Jewish persecution to Palestine. There was, as has been pointed out, some recognition of the fact that Jewish persecution took place in East London, but its ultimate solution appears to have been the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. Zionism was the political strategy designed to remove anti semitism, just as the assertion of democratic libery and British political traditions was the strategy for dealing with Fascism. The major political context in which anti semitism was raised officially by the Party, was in terms of its support for a Jewish state.

Whatever the Labour Party did in terms of propaganda to support Jews, or whatever it did in terms of forming defence committees for the physical safety of Jews in East London, it must be admitted that Jews remained an alien community in Britain for precisely the same reasons as constituted their right to be a separate political community in Palestine, a history of persecution which was continued in Britain at the hand of the British Union of Fascists.

Within this framework of defining Jews as an alien political community the Labour Party were anxious to put out propaganda proclaiming their equality and right to walk the streets unmolested. The Labour Party was the self-professed enemy of those who sought to foment racial hatred and the public disorder which so often accompanied it. The Labour Party was also anxious to define as Fascism a political movement which was opposed to Jews living in Britain, and define the struggle against it as one of democracy versus totalitarianism. But despite this it still remains true that discursively the Labour Party's only way of dealing with Jewishness was through the operation of immigration control under the 1905 Aliens Act, and the creation of a homeland where they had an unquestioned and automatic right to live as Jews practicing Judaism.

There were those in the Labour Party who disapproved of this statement of policy in support of a Jewish homeland. This was indicated in the 1936 Labour Conference

debate in which a delegate claimed:

> "The whole Zionist conception of a national home for the Jews is, from a socialist point of view, reactionary. The national home of the Jews is not in Palestine...Palestine is the national home of the Arabs. The national home for the Jews is in those countries in which they have settled and whose customs they have adopted."
> (Hutchinson 1936 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.221-2)

This position offered to the Labour Party by the delegate from Rusholme Labour Party posed a fundamentally different conception of the Jews than that officially put forward. It was suggesting that Jews did not form a political community of their own which could be awarded nationhood through the acquisition of territory. He was suggesting instead that they were an integral part of the political communities in which they were already resident. Persecution as the basis of a common history and racial identity did not convince this delegate that the Jews were a potential nation. British Jews were therefore an integral part of the British national political community.

So far the imposition of the category anti semitism on these statements has made it possible to determine that the issues relevant to the British Union of Fascists activity have been defined as Fascism, public order and the need for a Jewish homeland.

6.6 Public Order and Political Strategy.

Public order, as a way of describing the activity directed toward the British Union of Fascists, was a focus for contending positions in the Labour Party in the 1930s. Concern over public order constrained the range of possible political strategies which could be used to oppose the British Union. Jewish people were, in some respects, perceived as the stimulus for public disorder, and the official party support for Jews to have a state in Palestine implied that in some ways Jews in Britain were themselves a problem.

There were those in the Labour Party who took the

position that public demonstrations in opposition to the British Union was a legitimate form of political activity. Such a position was expressed by one of the East London Members of Parliament.

> "I also informed him (a Blackshirt) that the Labour Party in the East End had not yet begun to organise against Fascism, and that he was deluding himself if he thought that the Fascists were going to get away with it. I said that once we were compelled to stir our people into action we could from West Ham to Aldgate organise a force sufficiently powerful to deal with Fascism, but that we should not do so until constitutional methods failed."
> (Charter. undated circa 1936 Statement for publication in the Citizen newspaper)

This statement amounts to a promise to the British Union that in the event of the failure of constitutional methods, the Labour Party was able to mount a force to physically confront them. Confrontative political demonstrations were quite distinct in Labour thinking from demonstrations which took place in the absence of the force to be countered. Counter demonstration was liable to produce actual public disorder, whereas demonstration of opposition in isolation from the British Union was considered to be a legitimate public expression of a political point of view.

This particular East London MP, Charter, was in favour of directly confronting the British Union on the streets of East London, a process which could and did result in public disorder and the use of police to restore order. Official pronouncements of the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress were directly opposed to this kind of confrontation as a political strategy. The divergence of positions within the Labour Party and the Labour movement on the strategies for opposition to Fascism did not take any discernable institutional alignment. Just as on the question of Indian independence there were intra-institutional divergences, the same was true over public order. There were those in all of the major central and local enunciative institutions who supported and others who opposed official policy on this issue.

A resolution passed at the Trades Union Congress, proposed by the Non Manual Workers Advisory Council in May 1934, coupled its support for the maintenance of public order in political protest with an objection to the British Union's militarised style of politics and demanded legislation to curb its activities. This was a common response to the issue of public order in this period. Frequently when the issues concerning the British Union's activities were described as pertaining to public order, it was coupled with a request that such activity be proscribed by law. The main objection to them usually centred on the wearing of uniforms for political purposes.

The weight of the National Joint Council, which effected an arbitration between the three major enunciative institutions of the Labour Movement (the Trades Union Congress, the Consultative Committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party and the National Executive), was added to this position in August 1934. The National Joint Council circulated letters to all its affiliated institutions informing them of the correct strategy for the opposition to Fascism in East London. The National Joint Council's statement was a response to a letter circulated by individuals, "purporting to represent their trades unions and others" (National Joint Council 1934 Minutes), to all working class bodies in London to demonstrate in Hyde Park in opposition to a British Union demonstration. This was seen as an attempt to usurp the enunciative authority of the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress in the Labour movement.

> "We have to point out to all organisations affiliated to the Trades Union Congress and Labour Party, and the Co operative Movement that none of the signatories to the letter has any authority to speak on behalf of any section of the Labour or Co operative Movement. Most of the signatories are either known as active communists, or are associated in one form or another with Communist activities. It is clear from the letter that what is aimed at is a repetition on a wider scale of the tactics pursued by the Communist Party in connection with the Olympia demonstration, when organised opposition to the demonstration was fermented, the effect of which was to give the British Union an excuse for display of

> violence that has called for universal denunciation. The attitude of the National Council for Labour was clearly defined in connection with the happenings at the Olympia meeting, when it was emphasized in the clearest and most emphatic terms that the organised Labour Movement repudiated entirely every form of organised interruption at public meetings. It need scarcely be pointed out that the proposal contained in the circular letter would almost inevitably lead to widespread disorder, and any association with it on the part of the bodies attached to the organised Labour or Co operative Movements would merely be playing the game of those who desire to see a restriction, if not the abolition of the rights of public meeting and freedom of speech. We request your organisation to refrain from having anything whatever to do with the proposal." (National Joint Council 1934 Statement to the Movement)

This statement was premised on the philosophical assumption that the freedom of expression of a political position, whatever its implications, was a universal right written into the fabric of British liberal democratic politics. The National Joint Council was even upholding this right, realising it awarded the British Union the right to incite the public against the Jews in a manner which was crudely racialist. The right to oppose such positions, the statement thought, should be confined to the exercise of the same democratic right, but not in proximity to the opposition.

Fascism, though separated from anti semitism by most statements associated with the Labour Party, when defined in terms of its associations with public order had an obvious association with anti semitism. Many of the more well known Fascist demonstrations which attracted counter demonstrations and were accompanied by violence, such as the 'Battle of Cable Street', took place in Jewish districts. This was significant because it was an attack which Jews could not ignore as it was paraded through the areas where they lived. The point of a counter demonstration as a political strategy was to demonstrate that anti semitism had its opponents. Jews were also the main object of attack in the British Union's

rhetoric in street and public meetings. They were not the main object of attack in British Union statements in books and in some of its more theoretical work. The prominence of attacks on Jews at street meetings was partly a response to the kind of Jewish defence it associated with counter demonstrations. Thus Jews were inevitably associated with public violence and disorder. The fact that they were victims of this disorder was not always apparent.

On the occasion of the 'Battle of Cable Street' prominent Labour and Independent Labour Party politicians, notably Lansbury and Brockway as well as many of the East London Mayors, petitioned the Home Secretary to prohibit the British Union from marching through the Jewish area in a manner designed to invite violence from anti Fascists. This was a position which the Labour Party was later to back officially in its support for the Public Order Act. The official position of the Party was repeatedly in the Daily Herald which warned its readers to "Keep Away" and ran the headline: "Lansbury advises people to keep away from Fascist Demonstration in East End." (1/10/36 Daily Herald). Yet the counter demonstration took place and went uncondemned by the Herald which ran the headline: "Street Battles Stop Mosley March" and went on to say:

> "Thousands of demonstrators barred the way when Sir Oswald Mosley and his Blackshirts attempted to march into the East End yesterday... The crowds were aroused to fury by the Fascists constant Jew baiting and marches into Jewish districts..."
> (5/10/36 Daily Herald)

This statement indicated that the demonstration had been successful in preventing Jew baiting in Jewish districts at least on that occasion.

Despite official Labour Party disapproval of the strategy of the counter demonstration many members of local Labour Parties had taken part in the street violence which accompanied the confrontation between Fascists and anti Fascists. On the occasion of the Cable Street confrontation a telegram was sent to the Mayor of Bethnal

Green from a local Communist Party branch arranging to meet the local Labour Party and attend the counter demonstration together. "Earnestly urge your Party rally all members and sympathisers for great anti Fascist protest against Mosley march through Jewish quarter. Assemble..."(Springhall Communist Party 1/10/36 Telegram).

The response of Labour Party members in Bethnal Green to this request for collective opposition to the British Union flouted two official pronouncements of the Labour Party because it involved public co operation with the Communist Party and participation in a counter demonstration. There were numerous examples of this kind of local Labour Party activity in East London from 1934 onwards.

This kind of activity represents not so much an enunciative challenge to the official policy of the party as a decision to act on other considerations. Challenges to official enunciations were frequently being made at Labour Party Conference. These indicated a certain amount of support for both joint activity with the Communist Party on Fascism and participation in counter demonstration type protests. The official statements of the party issued centrally were ineffective if the membership on whose behalf the enunciation was made chose to ignore it. The authority of the Labour Party was overridden by direct action on the part of some of its members. This does not mean that East London Labour Parties spoke with one voice on this issue, or that they collectively subscribed to a position which was against the one expressed on their behalf. It is likely that there was as much support for official policy in the local parties as there was centrally but on this occasion the voice of certain local parties was expressed indirectly and actively against its official position.

Disaffection on this scale did effect a slight shift in official policy. The Labour Party did not accept the position of those who attended counter demonstrations, that it was necessary for there to be public opposition to the policies of the British Union. But it did begin

to listen to those who adopted the position of George Lansbury and some of the East London Mayors, that it was not possible to prevent the membership attending counter demonstrations, but that the due processes of law should be used instead to prevent the Fascists marching, thus removing the necessity for a counter demonstration. This represents a shift, however slight, in official Labour Party policy.

This demonstrated that the official pronouncements of the Labour Party did respond to pressure from party members. It does not represent a significant shift in the Labour Party's constituency, public or civil order. Though it does however represent a shift in the strategies by which civil peace was to be maintained, through the use of legal machinery. It also qualifies the party's conception of absolute political liberty against the possible threat to public order caused by certain public meetings and processions.

The Labour Party supported the right of government to restrict public expression of certain positions in areas where it was calculated that there would be a threat to public order. For example it would give the right to have had the march through Cable Street banned. This was a delicate political tight rope to walk. It represented support for the power to selectively withdraw the rights of political expression in order to maintain an established style of British politics, the absence of the use of violence in the expression of a political position.

The Public Order Bill which became an Act in 1936, and did not extend to Northern Ireland, was two pronged. It instituted the legal machinery with which to prohibit the militarised style of politics of the British Union with its drilling and uniforms, and preserve the public peace by providing for the banning of certain public demonstrations. It described itself as:

> "An Act to prohibit the wearing of uniforms in connection with political objects and the maintenance by private persons of associations of military or similar character; and to make

> further provision for the preservation of public order on the occasion of public processions and meetings in public places." (1936 Public Order Act)

It is important to point out, because of the contemporary use of this piece of legislation, that it was not necessarily intended as a blanket banning device, although it could be used as such. Never-the-less, the law did provide for the selective banning of specified kinds of processions. The reluctance on the part of police commissioners and the Home Secretary to use the Public Order Act to ban a "class" of public procession in accordance with the provision of the act indicates a reluctance to establish criteria which allow the specification of a kind of procession as a threat to public order. The result being, that once the Public Order Act has been invoked in an area, even the Salvation Army cannot march with out special dispensation. "An order prohibiting for such period not exceeding three months as may be specified in the application the holding of all public processions or of any class of public procession so specified." (1936 Public Order Act Section 3). The Act covered offensive weapons and conduct being used during demonstrations. Similar, but less extensive, powers to those awarded by the Public Order Act already existed in the 1839 Metropolitan Police Act. Similar pieces of legislation also existed in other police districts.

The importance of the Act for debates concerning the nature of the community in areas where Jews were concentrated was that it provided an new legislative focus for the association between Jewish areas and the possibility of widespread public disorder. The Act had its opponents, one of the vociferous of which was the National Council for Civil Liberties, which, whilst concerned about the extent of attacks on Jews, did not approve of the extension of police powers facilitated by the Act.

In official Labour Party statements the preservation of public order was considered a more important political

principle than the defence of Jewish people or opposition to Fascism through counter demonstration. This consideration is the product of certain philosophical debates which go back to J.S. Mill and further, to the Social Contract theorists who deliberated on the formation and political organisation of communities. Philosophical discourses on the nature of the political community stress the importance of public order to the maintenance of the structure of the political community itself. Indeed, order is integral to the possibility of social, as opposed to individual, existence in the first place. As Hobbes pointed out, it was the cessation of 'warre' which made social existence a possibility. The organisation of human beings into units of collective existence or communities was premised on the cessation of private violence and the organisation of collective violence on their behalf. Community, society and order are inextricably linked as concepts in these discourses.

J.S. Mill defined public order in terms of the cessation of private violence.

> "Order means the preservation of peace by the cessation of private violence. Order is said to exist where the people of the country have, as a general rule, ceased to prosecute their quarrels by private force, and acquired the habit of referring the decision of their disputes and redress of their injuries to the public authorities."
> (Mill 1968 Utilitarianism, Liberty and Representative Government p.187)

Mill considered that order and progress were related principles. Order was the mechanism which allowed human beings to devlop out of the state of nature, and their progress was assured by the maintenance of that order and the elimination of all private violence. Clashes on the streets between Fascists and anti Fascists amounted to public violence which was not being dealt with by the due processes of the law. This was consistent with the official view of the Labour Party that the British Union should be unhampered by counter demonstrators, and if they were in breach of the civil peace they would be dealt with by the due processes of law. Violence by private parties executed outside the authority of the

state was defined as a criminal rather than a political act, to be dealt with by the criminal law. There appears to be no concept of a special category of political violence as far as the law of Britain was concerned, although such a principle was admitted briefly in Ulster. The notion that private violence was criminal, whilst violence by the forces of law was acceptable, appears to be in operation over the discourses surrounding the passing of the Public Order Act.

These discourses were active in the pronouncements of the Labour Party and a key consideration in its decision to condemn the strategy of the counter demonstration. They relied on the assumption that private violence, whatever its motive was criminal. This position and the perception of the British Union's activities as a public order issue rather than a Jewish issue structured it into a peculiar form of defensive confrontation. Order, as one of the main constituencies of official Labour Party positions on this issue, acted as a structuring mechanism on party statements. The same was true of the constituency democracy, dealt with in the next section.

It should be pointed out that the Labour Party's commitment to public order in this instance was highly selective. Public order was also at issue in the attacks on the persons and property of Jewish residents which were being perpetrated by the British Union. As already demonstrated in an earlier section, whilst some concern was expressed in parliament about these attacks, especially by East London members, these were not defined as public order issues. This designation appears to have been confined in Labour Party discourses, to the situations produced by direct counter demonstrations by anti Fascists.

There is evidence to suggest that the terrorisation of individual Jews in the East London area was extensive. In response to a parliamentary question by Lansbury, the Home Secretary, Sir John Simon revealed that the number of deaths and injuries caused by personal attacks between Burdett Road and Bow Bridge in the twelve months ending on May 31st 1936 was one hundred and thirty with no

deaths. For the previous twelve months it was the same but this figure included four deaths. These will primarily, though not exclusively, have been Jews. (18/6/36 Hansard vol. 313 col. 1158).

There were also numerous criticisms expressed in parliament concerning the failure of the police to prevent these attacks. In response to this inability or unwillingness on the part of the forces of law and order, the protection of the Jewish people passed into private hands, and vigilante groups grew up to fill the gap. Even though Jews were part of the community in East London they were not protected by the community forces of law.

The next section deals with some of the philosophical debates which are implied in the manner in which anti semitism was defined as a question of Fascism, Public order and a Jewish homeland.

6.7 Democracy, Totalitarianism and the United Front

Debates concerning the nature of the political strategies appropriate to the opposition of Fascism were developed against the proposition of the Communist Party that a broad anti Fascist alliance or 'United Front' be formed. This was based on the popular front which had been formed for the same purpose in France and represents a fresh initiative on the part of the British Communist Party to work with the Labour Party on specific issues, its application to affiliate having been repeatedly turned down.

The Socialist League was proposed as the institutional form this alliance was to take. Formed in 1932 the Socialist League was developed out of the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda (see section 3.1). With the disaffiliation of the Independent Labour Party from the Labour Party many pro affiliationists in the Independent Labour Party were approached by the Society for Socialist Inquiry as part of an initiative aiming at co operation with the Labour Party. The pro affiliationists had more sympathy with this kind of initiative than

disaffiliationists. The National Independent Labour Party affiliation committee favoured the formation of a new institution with more popular appeal than that of the Society for Socialist Inquiry. Thus the Socialist League was formed as a combination of those in the Independent Labour Party who did not want to disaffiliate from the Labour Party, and the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda. But in order for it to be able to make an effective impact on the Labour movement, the support of the Labour Party was needed.

Whilst it is difficult to assess the extent of the support in the Labour movement for such an alliance the issue was repeatedly raised at Labour Party Conference between 1933 and 1937. Officially, the Labour Party opposed an alliance on the grounds it had always used to insist that joint action with the Communist Party was inappropriate. This did not fail to attract numerous critics in the party such as that voiced at the 1934 conference which expressed: "A protest against the manner in which the report is ignoring the lessons of the working class struggle, both here and in other countries." (Heath 1934 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p135).

This statement considered that Fascism was a general threat to the Labour movement, a position officially supported by the Labour Party, and that an appropriate counter strategy was united action. This demonstrates that the same analysis does not always implicate the same strategy. The statement went on to point out that the Labour Party's opposition to the United Front on the grounds that it supported 'democracy and freedom' was a selective principle because it had not supported democracy and freedom in its use of the Bombay Ordinance in India or in its treatment of the Meerut prisoners. This is a reference to the use of special legal machinery in India which did not observe the usual practices in which the rights of the individual were observed. For example when an ordinance was invoked in a given area of India, it allowed individuals to be arrested without pretext, except the suspicion

that they were engaged in seditious activity, and detained for long periods without trial. The Meerut prisoners were held for years before even coming to trial. In opposition to this, the Labour Party would argue that its official support for democracy and freedom often had to be selective, as it had to consider the effects on freedom of a collapse of civil order. It thus traded notions of individual freedom against the greater principle of collective freedom. As demonstrated in the vast turnout of local Labour members to oppose Fascists marching through Cable Street and other similar occasions, there was a good deal of support for the United Front.

In response to this support the central enunciative institutions of the Party bombarded its members with statements condemning such action. One such statement, issued by the National Executive and signed by many leading Party members stated the following on the issue of the United Front and the political alliances it entailed. "Inquiries are being received at the Head Office of the party regarding the attitude to be taken by our members towards various "United Front" proposals that are the subject of current discussion." (National Executive Committee 1937 Party Loyalty: An Appeal to the Movement). The statement seems to consider that one of the main issues was the undesirability of co operation with the Communist Party and went on to remind its members of the numerous conference resolutions in which the Party had repudiated the moves of the Communist Party to affiliate. It was the 'ineligibility' of the Communist Party so often referred to which was at stake here.

The ineligibility of the Communist Party was not the only issue. The self sufficiency of the Labour Party as the sole representative of the political wing of the Labour Movement and its definition of socialism was being re-affirmed in the second part of this statement.

"We renew our claim that the Labour Party is the most democratic party in British politics and the only effective force whereby socialism can be realised in this country. Since the Party adopted socialism as its fundamental objective, it has conducted more real socialist education and propaganda work under its own immediate auspices than its opponents are willing to acknowledge. No party has given greater attention to the devising of practical socialist policies that are of primary interest to the organised working class, men and women alike...Its policy and programme are wide enough in their scope to have enabled and still enable, hundreds of thousands of men and women to express their socialist faith clearly and without reservation, and to work actively, happily and loyally within its ranks." (National Executive Committee 1937 Party Loyalty: An Appeal to the Movement).

In this statement the National Executive was suggesting that the eligibility of the Labour Party was constituted in a number of ways. The first was its track record in developing socialist education and propaganda. This was an assertion of its effectiveness as a political instrument to represent the constituency "Socialism". The second was its community, the working class, and even more so the organised working class in the trade unions, whose interests it was effective in representing. Thirdly, it considered it conducted its socialism within the framework of the British tradition of democratic politics. Finally it was eclectic and thus able to represent a diversity of definitions of "Socialism" within its institutional structures.

The key consideration in the Labour Party's official definition of its own eligibility to represent the Labour Movement was its concern for a democratic style of politics, lacking in Communist Party activity. Its commitment to democracy was reiterated in an early pamphlet issued by the National Joint Council as a statement on behalf of the movement as a whole.

"Political events at home and abroad impel the British Labour Movement to reaffirm its belief upon the fundamental principle of government. In Germany, as in Italy, Poland, Hungary and elsewhere, Dictatorship has

> usurped the place of democracy. Elected representatives have been imprisoned by triumphant reaction. Persecution and terror have overthrown freedom of speech and freedom of the press. Religious and racial intolerance in its vilest forms has reappeared. Masses of the working class electors - divided between communism and social democracy- have fallen victims to Fascism and reawakened militarism...British Labour has led the world in its claim for industrial democracy and its demand for political democracy. Its historic task today is to uphold the principles of social democracy...its fundamental faith." (National Joint Council 1933 Democracy Versus Dictatorship).

The Labour Party then, as now, described its philosophical and policy definitions of 'socialism' as a 'faith'. Implying it is a creed to which its membership subscribes, rather than a set of political principles which form the basis of a programme for an alternative form of government. In this statement the Labour Party was making a far more extensive claim than its role as the representative of socialism in a democratic framework in Britain. It was making a claim to lead the world in this respect. This could also be the justification for intervention in imperial issues, and its redefinition of the imperial role.

Furthermore the Labour Party was suggesting that the political philosophy and strategies of the Communists and Fascists equally posed a threat to the Labour movement. They posed different kinds of dangers. Fascism was the enemy of the workers movement, as it had demonstrated in its treatment of workers and socialists in Germany, and Communism was a threat because it divided the workers movement and therefore weakened it making it susceptible to Fascism. Communism therefore, divided a movement which the Labour Party claimed should be legitimately represented by social democracy. In fact the Labour Party went further than this and suggested that the ineligibility of the Communist Party to lead a worker's movement based on democratic principles was premised on its totalitarian character. On this count it was being equated with Fascism. Herbert Morrison,

on behalf of the National Executive, pointed this out as part of his defence of the document 'Democracy versus Dictatorship' which came under attack at the 1933 Annual Conference by Labour Party members who supported a united front with the Communist Party as an anti Fascist strategy. He said -

> "We had received an invitation from the Communist Party to co-operate with them in a united front for the purpose of combating Fascism and war. We could not accept that because we had found in the past that co operation with the Communist Party was an impossible thing, and indeed it was really asking for trouble. Moreover, we should have been in a difficulty in fighting Fascist dictatorship by associating with the Communists, because they themselves believe in a form of dictatorship,...we condemn dictatorship as such, whether that dictatorship is a dictatorship of the Left or of the Right..." (Morrison 1933 Annual Reports of the Labour Party p.219)

Whilst not confusing the distinctive political philosophies involved in Communism and Fascism it was being suggested in this statement that dictatorship based on any set of political principles was objectionable to the Labour movement. By this token, the Communist Party was as much a menace to the democratic fabric of British politics as Fascism. This explains why the Labour Party encouraged the Daily Herald to describe the activities in East London as a clash between Communists and Fascists in which genuine 'socialists' were asked not to participate. This was picked up by commentators outside the Labour Party. Duff Cooper, the Secretary of State for War, was quoted in the Daily Herald as saying that the clashes in London's East End were;

> "Between the supporters of two foreign creeds ... the majority of Englishmen have no sympathy with red Communism or black Fascism, and we resent it deeply that these supporters of alien doctrines should make the city hideous." (Duff Cooper 15/10/36 Daily Herald)

Communism and Fascism were presented by the Labour Party's newspaper as alien creeds. Alien, that is, to the fabric of British politics to which the Labour Party was claiming to be the political heir. Socialism in the Labour Party

as demonstrated in the case study on India, was very much a question of democracy. The definition of the street clashes, as the product of alien political creeds, fits in with the Labour Party's official definition of Jews as an alien community in East London as they were the focus for the strategies of the alien creeds.

Since the main thrust of the arguments about the undesirability of the United Front centred on the ineligibility of the Communist Party, what constituted this ineligibility apart from its undemocratic nature? The Labour Party pamphlet "The British Labour Movement and Communism" emphasized the alien or foreign influence of the Communist Party on British politics in a manner which was not unlike the Secretary of State's statement in the Daily Herald.

> "Side by side with the building up of the new Russia there has been a steady campaign- sometimes in the open, but too frequently in secret- directed against the National and International working class organisations which voice the democratic aspirations of other countries and which have achieved democratic victories which Russia has not achieved." (Labour Party undated circa 1937 The British Labour Movement and Communism p4-5).

It was being suggested here that Russia, a less democratic and thus less well developed political system, was attempting to divert the working classes of democratic countries into the ways of Russia. Russia and Communism were synonymous in this statement. This was supported by the activities of the Comintern in which Russia was supremely influential in the affairs of national Communist Parties.

The foreigness of Russian doctrine was constituted in its obvious lack of relation to the affairs of the United Kingdom. Its involvement was presented as a form of alien interference. But more than this, Russia represented the influence associated with the politics of revolution. "The British Labour Movement and Communism" reproduced the following statement which it claimed came from a Communist thesis on tactics (1925).

> "The tactics of the United Front are only a method for agitation and the revolutionary mobilisation of the proletariat for considerable periods. The tactics of the United Front were, and remain, a revolutionary and not a peaceful and evolutionary method."
> (Labour Party undated, circa 1937 The British Labour Movement and Communism p8).

The problem with revolution was its association with violence and bloodshed, the antithesis of public order, as demonstrated in the history of the Russian revolution.

In addition to these objections, the Labour Party also claimed that the ineligibility of the Communist Party was structured by its failure, despite "intense and expensive propaganda", to attract the support of the working class in Britain. It had not, it claimed, managed to capture a "substantial part of British public opinion." (p12). This was considered further proof that the Communist Party was an alien influence which was incapable of representing the political will of the British public. It was considered a political force which was external to the national political community, rooted in the political culture of an alien community, the product of a bloody revolution.

Communism, like Fascism, was considered a danger to the processes of civilization itself, in that democracy was considered an advanced form of human political organisation and the Labour Party its guarantor. The inferiority of the Communist world, like that of India and the colonies, was written into the Labour Party's official enunciations. Labour's 'socialism' required the overthrow of capitalism by gradual means, but it required the maintenance of the apparent political structure of capital, the tradition of British democratic politics.

6.8 Conclusions

Official statements concerning anti semitism excluded certain terms as descriptions of the issues at stake. These were, the claims that anti semitism or attacks on Jews were the main issue, the necessity for

confrontative political demonstrations to oppose the British Union of Fascists, the possibility of joint political strategies with the Communist Party, and the position that Jews domiciled in Britain were British and should continue to live in Britain rather than seek a territory in Palestine and the acquisition of a Jewish nationhood. These positions were unacceptable to the Labour Party officially partly because of its involvement in pledges of the British Government that Jews should be given a territory. The powerful lobby of British Jews, many of whom were in or allied to the British Labour movement, also had the effect of a constraint because it managed to secure the endorsement of resolutions at Party conference in favour of a Jewish homelend.

It appears that the question of joint action with the Communist Party was unacceptable because of repeated decisions at Party Conference, endorsed in National Executive circulars, which proclaimed the incompatibility of the Communist Party with the basic aims and philosophies of the Labour Party. The details of this incompatibility, set out in section 6.7, point to the undemocratic nature of the Communist Party and the extent of Russian influence on its pronouncements and revolutionary strategies.

Linked to the issue of collaboration with the Communist Party and its political strategies was a concern for the maintenance of public order as a condition of political acceptability. Because of this any action calculated to provoke a breach of the peace was excluded from consideration.

One of the key positions the Labour Party officially accepted was the notion that the British Union represented the forces of Fascism, in line with analyses of events on the continent. This represents a selection of Fascism in place of the more specific formulation, anti semitism, as a description of the main thrust of the British Union's activity in East

London. The Labour Party did not perceive anti semitism as an issue relevant to the British Labour movement, whereas Fascism, given the collapse of the Social Democratic Party in Germany, clearly was. The issue was therefore posed as one of totalitarianism versus the forces of enlightenment and democracy represented by the Labour Party. Anti Fascism rather than anti semitism was the Labour Party's constituency.

The notion that anti semitism was not an issue pertinent to the Labour Party no doubt structured its formulation of the position of British Jews. Because the Labour Party took up the Jewish question in terms of the provision of a homeland in Palestine, it was constructing Jews as a political community in their own right, rather than as a part of the British political community. Jews were principally the Labour Party's community in so far as they were associated with autonomy, as a constituency. This was partly the product of conditions imposed by Jewish groups who defined their own aspirations in this particular manner. None-the-less the Labour Party did not have to adopt these definitions offered to it. Jews were implicitly considered to be more than immigrants with some kind of right to remain in Britain, they were political refugees whose right to remain was a temporary one whilst they arranged a homeland for themselves.

As an alien community Jews were a focus for public order issues. These mainly consisted of demonstrations and counter demonstrations. The same concern for public order did not extend to the right of freedom from personal attack. In this way Jews were not a part of the political community to be protected. The manner in which the British Union got away with Jewish persecution in East London focused a certain amount of criticism of the ability of the police to maintain order on the public highways. The toleration of Jewish residents may, officially, have been considered something of a limited duration.

The importance of the statements examined is that officially the Labour Party did not really make any stand in favour of the concept of a multi racial society, although it had stated a belief that what was at stake was the cohabitation of two different races in the same nation or political community. At least it did not accept the concept of a multi racial community as a long term political possibility, but as a temporary arrangement. Multi racialism in Britain, even though Jews were described in the discourses as a race, was displaced by Fascism, public order and the need for the removal of Jews to Palestine. Jews were the Labour Party's official community in so far as they were associated with national autonomy as a constituency. The autonomy and distinctiveness of Jews was repeatedly constructed in the Labour Party's official statements. This was partly supported by the fact that Jews had their own Labour Party, the Poale Zion, representing socialism as a constituency and Jewish workers as a community.

The Jews were thought to be an autonomous political community, not a part of the ready existing political community. The concept of a multi racial community does not admit this kind of distinction, which although it constructs separate communities, includes them in the cosmopolitan construction of a single community. Whilst other groups of peoples living in Britain later on in the 1950s were to be described as communities, there has been no mainstream political move to effect their return to the territorial entity from which they were thought to have originated. This represents a major change in discourses concerning race, the acceptance of a multi racial society.

This chapter demonstrates a certain divergence between the political actions and strategies of some of the local parties and the central enunciations of the Labour Party. This is partially accounted for by the fact that local and central parties do not operate under exactly the same constraints. Local Parties did

not have to operate within the constraints imposed by parliamentary practices. The Labour Party centrally was, at least potentially, addressing itself to a nationwide audience as well as its entire membership. Local parties addressed their statements and accounted for their activities to a much more restricted group of party members. Thus, local divergence over the issue of the confrontations which took place in Cable Street, may have been possible because large numbers of local members agreed that confrontation should take place. As long as there was no vociferous lobby prepared to report such dissidents for a breach of discipline, they were likely to get away with it. This was pointed out in chapter two in the discussion of Party discipline in which it was indicated that the disciplinary institutions of the Party highlighted actions in certain areas only. For example the disciplinary machine was keenly trained on the enunciations of the Parliamentary Labour Party. It also focused on the National and Local Agents. It was unlikely to have the activities of local branches brought to its notice unless there was a complaint.

The dissent over the Labour Party's official adoption of a non confrontative strategy, although voiced at Party Conference, did not really represent a discursive challenge to the Labour Party centrally. It bypassed the necessity to present a discursive challenge at a national level and instead usurped the authority of the Party locally and through direct action. It should be noted that, whilst the pronouncements of the central institutions of the Party carried great authority, they were ineffective if they were not able to constrain the activity and political strategies adopted in the local branches.

The participation of many East London local branches in the confrontations in Cable Street, and on other similar occasions, represented more than a challenge to Party strategy. It was an assertion of certain policy and philosophical positions concerning the legitimacy of confrontation to demonstrate Labour

Party support for Jewish residents in East London and the need for joint action with the Communist Party on such issues. This was a challenge to the Labour Party's official definitions of its communities and constituencies. It suggested that Jewish people were the Party's community in combination with a constituency which advocated their defence, not public order as a constituency priority. This should not be interpreted in the framework of Miliband and others who consider such divergence as demonstrations of the contention that the Labour Party members are more revolutionary and disposed to direct action than its leaders. It simply demonstrates that local and central parties operated under different discursive conditions, that the Labour Party was unable to do anything about a mass defection from officially sanctioned policy because its disciplinary machinery was designed to deal with individual cases of breaches and did not focus too closely on the branches, and finally that it was possible for an alternative position to that of the central institutions to achieve dominance in the branches, though in some branches only.

It remains only to list the constraints and structuring mechanisms which prevailed over the formulation of official Labour Party policy. These in combination produced the statements which had been authorised as Labour Party policy and presented in this chapter. The constraints which produced the conditions in which the structuring mechanisms produced statements may be identified as follows.

The only pledge, carrying the weight of statesmanship, relevant to the issues examined was the stated intention of the British Government (1917) that a Jewish homeland would be created in Palestine without involving the displacement of the Arab population. The White Paper on Palestine (1930) represented the Labour Party's response to this pledge, the authorisation of a land survey in Palestine. Statements at Labour Party conference regarding Palestine were constrained to heed

this general orientation of policy. Although such pledges did not involve a time limit or specific commitment to the form of the partition.

Official statements were also constrained by the need to state a relation with past statements, to establish a continuity. This is evident in the manner in which references to the problem posed by the British Union of Fascists was repeatedly referred to as Fascism. In many official statements the Party's past position was stated before developing a new policy initiative. This is demonstrated in the statement on Palestine moved at conference called 'The Situation in Palestine'. (see section 6.5).

Political circumstances are the second constraint in the discourses presented in this chapter. All the statements in this chapter were claims to define the political circumstances of this part of the 1930s. Statements were forced to acknowledge that there were grave disturbances in East London. Whether these were described as racial attacks or public order situations, depended on definitions of relevant constituencies, or constituency priorities. Statements officially sanctioned in this chapter also appear to have been constrained to take account of the demand by many Jewish people that the British pledge referring to the mandate in Palestine be fulfilled. The Labour Party was also faced with the conditions in British politics produced by the emergence of the British Union of Fascists as a force to be countered.

The final constraint concerns the audience to which the statements of official Labour Policy were addressed and the Labour Party itself as a site of enunciation. The audience to which the statements of this chapter were addressed were Jews in Britain and possibly in other countries who were anxious about the execution of the mandate. This must have been particularly true of Jews in Nazi occupied countries. Another part of the audience was the organised Labour

movement, the people of East London, and the people of Britain whom the Labour Party claimed it could, if elected to government, represent. Within this wide formulation different statements proclaimed different audience priorities. The statements on Palestine were calculated to appeal to the Jews without antagonising the Palestinian Arabs who were also a part of the foreign audience of such statements. The audience priorities of different statements are closely related to both the enunciative site from which they were issued and the communities being represented.

The structuring mechanisms, which, in combination with the constraints combined to produce a particular statement and no other, may be listed as follows. These operate within the terms of the debate set by the constraints in all cases and do not go outside of such conditions. If they did they would not act as constraints. One of the most important of these is the Labour Party's conditions of authorisation of statements. The conditions of authorisation of statements, that is the combination of ideological elements which proscribe the limits of what is acceptable, and the sites within the Party from which statements are derived, vary from statement to statement. Although, as pointed out in chapter three, what might be acceptable to the Labour Party may be specified as a range of possibilities. Because of this the conditions of authorisation cannot be described as a constraint because they do not fix a definite direction for statements. The Labour Party as a site of enunciation proscribes a manner of operating which may be challenged constitutionally and perhaps may best be described as a constraint. This does not need to be discussed in relation to each case study because the manner in which statements were sanctioned was set out in chapter two.

Other structuring mechanisms were the Labour Party's communities. These were Jews, the poor, the people of East London, and the workers, especially those who were unionised. In the case of anti semitism

these were quite firmly associated with certain constituencies. Palestine as a constituency was something represented on behalf of the community of Jews. Anti Fascism was a constituency primarily prioritising workers and trade unionists as its community. Public order as a constituency prioritised the people as a whole in Britain and the organised Labour movement whose interests were best served by the use of democratic structures.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusions

It remains to comment on the use of the methodological apparatus for the analysis of political statements, the discursive construction of the Labour Party through its construction of socialism in general and India and anti semitism in particular, and to see how political community emerges from the case studies. It will then be possible in the light of this analysis, to see what implications this holds for the Labour Party's current construction of political community and race issues. It may also be possible to assess the extent to which present discourses in the Labour Party concerning race issues are related to the constructions of the 1930s. The Labour Party's commonwealth has been the subject of re-definition throughout its history. The re-definition of British nationality in the British Nationality Bill (1980) serves to remind one of the most recent construction of the commonwealth in which the Labour Party was implicated.

I shall begin by commenting on the use of the methodological apparatus developed from the work of Foucault in developing my ideas on political discourse. An analysis of the Labour Party through its discursive construction of certain issues constructs both the issue in question and the Labour Party itself, avoiding the necessity of reducing it to an essence thought to be underlying and directing its actions and statements.

The work of Foucault does not provide a ready made framework for the analysis of political statements, but it does provide a starting point from which one can be developed. Foucault does more than establish the importance of discourse as a mode of analysis. He indicates some of the elements necessary to it, and establishes its underlying purpose, the conditions which produce a statement. Foucault pointed to the central importance of the statement as a unit of analysis. He also pointed to other useful elements of a discursive analysis, voice,

enunciative modality, object and concept. Whilst this framework is not in itself adequate to the task of analysis of political discourse, it provides an invaluable outline from which to work in the development of an adequate framework. Whilst I have found Foucault's central concern, the delimitation of discourse, an unproductive line of enquiry, prefering instead to analyse the discourse with a specific series of objectives in mind, I have worked within his framework of determining the conditions in which statements are produced.

Foucault's methodology required further development in order to be able to fulfill his prescribed function of explaining the existence of a particular statement as opposed to any other possible. In this dissertation such a task was more than an exercise in the use of discourse. The explanation of why a particular statement was produced provided invaluable information about the Labour Party as a statement issuing institution. The dissertation retained the central importance of the statement in Foucault's work as the raw material of discursive analysis, but used it to construct both the Labour Party and the Labour Party's conceptions of political community. Discourse analysis was used as a method of political investigation with specific aims and objectives in mind.

Foucault's notion of a position in discourse was developed from the empty place occupied by the subject, to include the ideologies arranging the key objects and concepts of a statement. It was pointed out that a position could be deduced from the statement in which it was articulated, and that a position was capable of a range of statements.

Foucault's notion of an enunciative modality was also developed to account for the ideological and constitutional features of the Labour Party as a political institution. Site of enunciation is a tool developed from Foucault's enunciation modality. The Labour Party as a site of enunciation with specific conditions of authorisation was dealt with at some length in chapter

two. Foucault's stress on objects and concepts in discourse was maintained in the dissertation because they provided a useful way of differentiating statements, past from present, official from unofficial.

Voice was another mechanism used by Foucault to refer to the subject or institution articulating a statement. This was adopted because it had potential to be developed as a way of expressing the representative function of political statements. Voice is a concept which may be developed and used to do more than ask - who is speaking? In political discourse voice is capable of addressing itself to the enquiry - who is being spoken for? A voice may, though this is rare, have a single identity. Any statement may state a claim to provide a voice for a number of communities identified and constructed in discourse. Voice is the point of delivery of a statement and a focus for dispute, as a community may be the subject of a multiplicity of conflicting and opposing articulations. In the case of the Labour Party voice usually had a number of dimensions. Statements often claimed to be the voice of the Labour Party, the voice of the workers or the poor as well as the voice of the nation as a whole. Voice was designated in the dissertation as a structuring mechanism because it is active in the production of a statement.

Perhaps the major additions to Foucault's framework were constraints and structuring mechanisms. These are the mechanisms in the political discourse by which statements are actually produced. Constraints and structuring mechanisms (as pointed out in section 1.7) have different functions, but they have in common their effects in narrowing the range of options in the production of a statement. Constraints act on the conditions in which statements are produced. They function to compel but only in terms of a general direction. It is possible to specify the constraints operating in relation to a given set of political discourses. These constitute the terms of the debate, the structures within which all statements are produced. By specifying the constraints of a political

discourse and the structuring mechanisms which operate within the terms of the debate, it is possible to explain the existence of a particular statement. No single constraint or structuring mechanism can, alone, account for a statement. A statement is the product of the combined effects of all the constraints and structuring mechanisms relevant to a particular set of discourses.

The following constraints were identified in the discourses examined in this dissertation. Firstly pledges made on behalf of the office in government. It was pointed out that these were usually general enough to do little more than specify a direction for events and an eventual goal. Pledges rarely dealt with the mechanisms by which goals should be achieved. Continuity was the second constraint identified. This refers to the necessity to establish the links between one statement and another, so as to demonstrate a direction, and progress on actions relating to specified issues. Political circumstances were the third constraint. Whilst all statements in political discourse may be seen as attempts to establish a set of priorities in terms of political circumstances, it is possible to list all the political circumstances produced in the discourse as relevant to a particular issue. Political circumstances act as a constraint in that they set the limits of the kinds of issues which may be taken up in the form of statements. The site of enunciation of statements was also outlined as a constraint. The major enunciative site of relevance to the dissertation was the Labour Party and the smaller enunciative sites which exist within it. This was outlined in detail in chapter two. The final constraint on political discourse concerns the audience to which statements were addressed. The audience is the totality of communities and peoples who receive a statement. Whilst audience priorities vary with each statement, the idea of a body of people to whom a statement is addressed remains constant in all statements. Audience is a claim, constructed in the same way as voice.

I have just outlined some general categories by

which it should be possible to establish the terms of debate of any political discourse. It would be necessary to establish the identity of the audience, the political circumstances and the nature of pledges for the political discourse under examination. Constraints attached to a set of political discourses do change, and the terms of the debate change with time. Never-the-less this does present a general formula for the analysis of political discourse which is more widely applicable than its use to construct notions of political community in the 1930s. The same is true of structuring mechanisms.

The structuring mechanisms outlined in the course of the analysis conducted in relation to the Labour Party were the following. Community will be considered first. Communities are constructed in political discourse because of the representative function of political statements. All positions are established on behalf of a group of people, discursively constructed as having a specifiable group of characteristics in common. These are usually identified as interests and expressed as a position. A community can be subject to any number of constructions. This presents a challenge to the notion of pre-existing social formations waiting to be represented in political discourse, by suggesting that communities are constructed in the act of discourse itself. Constituencies are the second structuring mechanism to be considered. Constituencies are what is represented in political discourse as opposed to who. These are the objects, goals or aims which a statement supports, for example Indian independence or worker control. There is no necessary or natural correlation between communities and constituencies. Any link which is made is a construction which is open to challenge by another statement in the discourse. It is possible for a single community to have a multitude of constituencies offered on its behalf. Constituencies and constituency priorities may therefore be seen as sites of political struggles.

The objects and concepts advanced in a statement also act as structuring mechanisms, as they define what

a statement may express. For example a statement which expresses terms such as 'struggle' and 'conflict' will be fundamentally different from one which expresses the terms 'conciliation' and 'co-operation.' The conditions of authorisation of statements are the final structuring mechanism. This refers to the process of authorisation of statements as official. It has been possible to establish a range of positions and their ideological conditions of existence which were acceptable to the Labour Party. Positions which offered themselves as official statements had either to accept these conditions, and operate within them, or challenge them.

Working within the general terms of the debate structured by the constraints, the structuring mechanisms each pose a range of options. For example it is possible to choose to represent a particular community in relation to a particular constituency rather than another. The end product, the statement, is the result of series of options open to it. Like constraint I am suggesting that voice, community, constituency, the other statements in discourse (for statements do not occur in isolation), conditions of authorisation and to some extent strategies (for a constituency may be achieved through a variety of strategies) are general categories which may be used to analyse political discourse. They are not just relevant to the discourses examined in this dissertation.

The analysis of political statements as a mode of organising the explicit terms of the discourse provides valuable clues about the statement issuing institution. But a reading of statements using the method outlined provides even more information which a literal reading of the explicit discourse does not. I am suggesting that in order to interpret a political statement it is necessary to asK the following questions. What are the key objects and concepts in this statemnt? How are they linked to imply a certain position? How may that position be described? What is the range of statements of which this enunciating institution is capable? Who is being represented in this statement? How is that community

constructed? What is being represented? What are the strategies being suggested in this statement? Finally, what is the range of communities, constituencies and strategies of which this enunciating institution is capable? What are the ideological limits of its toleration?

If a statement is interrogated with these questions in mind it is possible to produce information about the enunciating institution as it constructs itself through the issue of statements on particular subjects. This method was used in the dissertation to produce some information about the Labour Party in general, and about political community as constructed in relation to India and anti-semitism in particular. This method could be used to examine any political organisation in relation to any specified issue.

I shall now summarise some of the information made accessible through discourse analysis concerning the Labour Party in general terms rather than in relation to anti-semitism and India. By examining the ways in which statements were issued by the Labour Party it has been possible to determine the way it operates as a political institution. Whilst any individual or institution within the Labour Party could help define the party as a construction created by the issue of statements, central enunciative institutions such as the National Joint Council, the Parliamentary Labour Party and especially the National Executive Committee had privileged access to the processes of authorisation of statements. The openess and eclecticism of the Labour Party is not difficult to establish. As was demonstrated in the dissertation, it tolerated a diversity of positions on the issues examined. This diversity and eclecticism, however, had its limits. These were played out in the expulsion of individuals as well as in disaffiliations and refusals to allow certain bodies to affiliate.

The limits of Labour Party toleration were quite clearly set in the 1930s to exclude the Communist Party on the grounds that it represented a foreign and

undemocratic influence which could not properly represent workers and indeed was likely to pervert the cause of the workers' movement. The Labour Party's toleration did not extent to the Labour Nationalists either, who were accused of mis-representing workers by agreeing to a lowering of their standards of life through prioritising financial orthordoxy. The Labour Party also demonstrated that it was not prepared to tolerate those who sought to usurp its enunciative autonomy. Thus it dealt summarily with the Youth League, which was demanding the right to make its own policy, and with the Independent Labour Party, which wanted to operate as part of the Labour group in parliament but with the freedom to carry out its own policy and conference decisions. It appears that the Labour Party did not mind groups operating within its institutional boundaries, as long as they did not overstep basic principles as in the case of the Communists and Labour Nationalists, and as long as they did not demand the right to a voice which was not issued through the channels provided for in the party constitution. As long as the Labour Party preserved its enunciative sovereignty, it was one body with a multiplicity of voices. If this sovereignty was usurped it would no longer be a single institution because it would have lost the ability to impose a position as official, through the mechanisms provided in the constitution.

Struggles to usurp the enunciative unity of the Labour Party or to intrude political organisations with very different ideological conditions of existence were more than mere intra and inter institutional struggles. They represent bids to re-define the Labour Party by admitting principles which had hitherto been excluded from the discursive construction of the party. Other kinds of challenges occur in the form of constitutional challenges to redefine the composition of the Labour Party's voice. An example of this was the movement by constituencies in the 1930s to increase their representation on the National Executive Committee, on the ground that they were a part of the Labour Party which was under represented by the existing constitutional definition of the

party. The contemporary relevance of such challenges need hardly be pointed out. The leadership selection issue raised at the 1980 Labour Party Conference was a bid by certain sections of the Labour Party to establish themselves as a constituent part of the Labour Party's voice in the selection of a leader. This was a challenge to the sovereignty of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

Struggles to define the Labour Party in the 1930s, as now, were of crucial importance. The enunciative ascendency of certain positions may cause particular groups and individuals to leave the party on the grounds that they are no longer able to operate within its ranks. If a group of individuals left the party on these grounds then the range of positions associated with the party may be reduced, or increased as others were attracted by the party's new image and activities. The contemporary relevance of this observation is all too clear in the implications of the formation of the Social Democratic Party in early 1981. In this dissertation the Labour Party is not treated as a static political entity, but something which is constantly being defined, challenged and re-defined, a discursive construction. Despite this it is possible to discern a range of positions with which it has associated on a particular issue. It is also possible to identify from an anaysis of the discourse, a series of communities, constituencies and strategies with which the Labour Party may be associated. In this way it may be defined. It is not an empty political space to be defined everytime a statement is made.

In the 1930s the Labour Party associated itself with a range of constituencies, communities and strategies by means of which it may be defined. For a moment the statements dealing with anti-semitism and India will be ignored as these require separate treatment. As indicated in chapter three, the Labour Party distinguished itself from the other political parties in parliament by means of its claimed constituency, socialism, which it shared with the Communist Party. Socialism is a key constituency because it organised a range of other constituencies such as public ownership

and worker control. Like other constituencies socialism was a construction, but it was probably more open to construction than some others whose range of possible interpretations were more closely fixed. For example, worker control has a far more limited number of constructions than socialism. Socialism was, therefore, a mode of organising other, less general constituencies.

As demonstrated in chapter three a whole range of positions were offered from within the Labour Party to define socialism, and indirectly, construct the party. Although it was offered ideas such as worker control and complete social, industrial and financial re-organisation, the party managed to do little more than adopt an official definition of socialism, in the London Passenger Transport Bill for instance, which was a limited form of public ownership accountable to parliament, under the direction of private finance and with no worker participation in management much less control. In the Labour Party's policy statement "Socialism and the Condition of the People" (1933) it was a little bolder. This made provision for national control and planning in finance. This selection demonstrates that officially, whilst the Labour Party was the professed political representative of trade unionism, it was not able to do other than continue the subordination of workers in the industrial structure, choosing instead to support schemes which gave them higher living standards and better working conditions.

Philosophical claims to define socialism similarly demonstrated a range of positions and were outlined in chapter three. Key constituencies in Labour Party definitions of socialism appear to have been democracy and citizenship. Despite attempts by Cole to define democracy for the Labour Party in terms of the representation of people not just in politics, but at work and in all of the functions of their every day life, the position expressed by Durbin (see section 3.5) gained enunciative ascendancy and socialism's democracy was officially little more than an advance on Mill's conceptions with a notion of social justice tacked on. This placed an emphasis on activity in parliament rather than action

outside of parliament, a narrow definition of political representation presented as suitable to the party's definition of socialism. Trade unionism was a constituency which was outside parliament, but whose function was subject to strict definition, as the party's treatment of trade unionism in India demonstrates. The Labour Party was the self-acclaimed political representative of the trade union movement in Britain. This was a direct translation of trade union issues into the language and strategies of parliament.

It was also demonstrated in the course of the dissertation that the Labour Party had a limited number of communities by means of which it may be identified. It was pointed out in the course of chapter three that its main communities were workers, trade unionists, the working class, the common people, the poor, the unemployed and the British people. These were fairly uncontentious in themselves. Conflict usually arose over the formation of community priorities expressed in statements when it was necessary to support one community at the expense of others. The range of communities supported by the Labour Party facilitate any number of representations.

It is not possible to suggest that one or some of these communities were more acceptable to the Labour Party for the purposes of official declarations than others. All of the ones listed were acceptable to definitions of socialism in official Labour Party statements. It is only in examining anti-semitism and India that it can be shown that communities are focuses for contending claims. The party excluded certain communities, for example anti-Fascists, peasants and what were described as Indian nationalists and terrorists from its official pronouncements. The exclusion of certain communities became sites of struggle because they effected the production of statements giving official statements a particular character.

It was pointed out in chapter three that when it came to colonial formulations of socialism, the Labour Party largely relied on its domestic descriptions merely translating them to fit the colonial situation. The

main planks of Labour colonial policy were public ownership and the welfare of colonised peoples in combination with the creation of trade unions similar to those in Britain. The other main stay of colonial policy was self determination. This was not derived from domestic definitions of socialism. The party's communities were the same as those which it supported in Britain.

When it came to foreign relations the Labour Party was at a loss to apply homegrown formulas to define its communities and constituencies. The Labour Party had no communities in foreign relations in the 1930s. But it did support foreign organisations which represented certain communities, as its involvement in the International Labour Organisation demonstrates. In many respects the party's constituencies were a response to the situations which occured and varied with each set of statements on an issue. That is not to suggest that its international pronouncements were pragmatic responses, they were expressions of Labour Party ideology, but they were structured by the nature of the issues which presented themselves for comment. The main constituencies of the Labour Party in international affairs in the 1930s, as pointed out in chapter three, were its commitment to internationalism which found expression in the League of Nations and its stated aim of establishing a commonwealth, support for other social democratic governments, a limited support for the Soviet Union and peace.

The Labour Party's India.

It was demonstrated in chapters four and five that the Labour Party constructed India as an issue which primarily focused on a particular form of independence. In so doing it was constructing a socialist colonialism and ultimately a socialist commonwealth. It remains in this section to summarise the manner in which this was done in view of the alternatives which were offered, and to see what this meant in terms of the construction of India as a political community in Labour Party discourses.

Constructions of the Labour Party's commonwealth clearly focus on India as the first black colony

to be granted independence. None of the objections raised concerning Indian independence had featured in the debates which accompanied independence in the white ruled colonies granted autonomy in the Statute of Westminister Bill (1931). White colonies were not awarded the same kind of peculiar federation which India was granted. It was pointed out in chapters four and five that the Labour Party was integral rather than incidental to the construction of India as an independent political community. The Labour Party was involved in the form in which independence was awarded and its political consequences, as well as the enlargement of the British commonwealth to include black ex-colonies, and the retention of the category 'British subject' as a way of describing citizens who had lived in British colonies.

It was demonstrated in chapter four that a socialist colonialism, whilst concerning itself with the quality of the colonial relation, worked towards a policy of full national self determination for colonised peoples. The Labour Party was offered even from within its own ranks a range of positions concerning independence as a constituency. These ranged from the belief that the colonial relation was legitimate and should be maintained until the colonised demonstrated their ability to govern themselves, to the belief that independence was India's right to be seized by a process of insurrection and violent overthrow of the Raj. These were Labour Party positions which the central institutions of the party did not try to exclude from its ranks, such was the diversity of its enunciations. However, when it came to the sanction of policy as official, a policy of gradual withdrawal under a programme of Indianisation was favoured. This involved the maintenance of the colonial relation by force from 1929 until full independence in 1947. The implications of this choice are clear. India was not automatically and immediately capable of becoming an autonomous political community in the 1930s, or even in the early 1940s. It implied that two centuries of imperial domination had still left India unable to operate the

political apparatus appropriate to the single political unit of nationhood.

The political consequences of the path of Indian independence chosen by the Labour Party had a second consequence in the construction of India as a political community. The maintenance of the colonial relation long after the consent of the colonised had been withdrawn, if indeed it was ever given, led to the escalation of violence in India aimed at the termination of the colonial relation. The Indian nationalist movement was increasingly forced to abandon the passive resistence, so closely related to Gandhi in the 1920s, in favour of a more direct and confrontative form of struggle against the Raj. In addition to this, a measure of communal conflict had been encouraged by the setting up of a communal federation in which all population categories were treated in the same way as Moslems and Sikhs afraid of being swamped by Hindu political structures. The result of communal tension and the escalation of civil disobedience was widespread civil disorder in the colony by the time Britain withdrew. This legacy of violence and bloodshed was not easily extinguished, indeed it was exacerbated by the creation of Pakistan and later Bangladesh. This had the effect of constructing India as a volatile political community which was unable to maintain civil peace. This has been maintained to some extent by the kind of news coverge India currently receives in Britain in which communal violence, riots, and the repression with which Indian police meet such outburst feature prominently.

The constitutional arrangements whereby the Indian demand for independence could be met was perhaps the key constituency of the Labour Party in the 1930s. The constitution was a constituency which focused the issue of community priorities more than any other issue. Who was to be represented, how, and in what proportion was one of the main concerns of those who framed this constitution. The range of positions offered to the Labour Party on the nature of the constitution was less diverse than those which concerned themselves with the

legitimacy or otherwise of the colonial relation, for this reason. Those who considered that independence was India's right to be seized through insurrectionary strategies did not really concern themselves with debates about the constitution, considering such matters to be for the Indian people, not the British Government to decide. Because of this debates concerning the nature of the Indian constitution did not receive the opposition they might have received if those who supported the seizure of independence had participated. Discursive constructions of the independence constitution were thus more limited than they might have been.

The debates concerning the independence constitution focused on a number of issues. There was no alternative offered to the federal solution or the suggestion that Indians should be represented as communities in the legislatures. It is a matter of speculation why the Labour Party was not able to offer an alternative formula. Perhaps, with massive unemployment and poverty in Britain, Labour Party members had decided that its community priorities were British workers and the British poor rather than their Indian counterparts. Whatever the reason, the Labour Party was not able or not willing to offer a challenge to federation, or the peculiar form of representation suggested for Indians, which resulted in a political community with a unique and less than full citizenship. The issues which were a focus for debate were whether there should be a full or restricted franchise as the basis for Indian nationhood. There were those in the Labour Party who thought that Indians should have full adult suffrage. This was quite a popular position amongst those who claimed their community priorities were Indian workers and untouchables, as without a full franchise these groups would hardly be represented in proportion to their numbers in the population as a whole. Offered a construction of Indian citizenship on the basis of full adult suffrage, the Labour Party officially rejected it as unrealistic. This was an assessment which comments quite clearly on the capability of Indians to take on the rights and duties associated with citizenship

in Western political thought. The choice of the Labour Party to adopt a franchise limited by a property qualification indicates a community priority in favour of the better off section of the Indian population. This was an abandonment of the cause of the workers and the poor and an adoption of double standards in respect of its pronouncements on democracy in the British context.

On closer examination it is quite curious that the Labour Party was prepared to abandon its well worn formulations of the association between democracy and socialism, so often presented as a mode of distinguishing the Labour Party from the philosophies and strategies of communism. Because the Labour Party did not abandon its formulations on democracy in Britain, it was guilty of maintaining double standards, which commented unfavourably on India as a political community, suggesting that whilst democracy was a more desireable and advanced political form it was not suited to Indian politics. This was an indictment of India's ability to operate as a political community on the same terms as Britain and other Western nations. There were numerous comments from the Labour Party in which the need for democracy was presented as a constituency priority above independence and the need to negotiate with India. Wedgewood, for example (see section 4.3), expressed the opinion that Britain should impose full democratic self government on India. He further considered that the federal solution was incapable of doing this but failed to offer an alternative to federation. Thus his opposition ultimately was ineffective.

Ultimately Britain awarded India autonomy under conditions in which approximately 86% of her population were disenfranchised. Britain created a political community in India which amounted to just over 14% of the population. This was a comment on India's political ability, that most of her population were not capable of citizenship. As the first black country to be admitted to the Dominion club, India was admitted as a second class nation. This was the direct result of political decisions in which the

Labour Party participated. It was a deliberate choice in respect of the positions open to it in presenting a socialist construction of the Indian political community. The Indian formula was repeated throughout Africa, later in the history of decolonisation. My comments, that India was awarded second class nationhood are equally true of many other new commonwealth (black) nations. New commonwealth refers to those nations which were not given autonomy under the Statute of Westminster Bill which transformed the white governed colonies into independent dominions. Membership of the new commonwealth carried connotations concerning their dubious political status as new nations.

Conceptions of development were highly instrumental in Labour Party decisions to support a particular form of independence at a particular point in India's colonial history. Industrialisation was considered to be central to the process of development and workers were central to this process. This position had wide appeal in Labour Party circles, as it asserted the central importance of workers. The notion that the development of India required the proletarianisation of the peasantry was not widely challenged from within the Labour Party. The fact that the Labour Party approached the issue of development from the standpoint of one of its constituencies, trade unionism, does not obscure the implication that development of industrial capacity was part of the construction of India as a political community. The exclusion of peasants from citizenship outlined this association between industrial and political development. If industrialisation was an index of political development then India came off rather badly with its largely rural based population.

Labour Party support for its community, workers, in India was rather selective. It appears from chapter four that the Labour Party supported the development of a particular kind of trade unionism in India. It was anxious to impose the values of British trade unionism as constructed in the official pronouncements of the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress. In the Indian context the Labour Party frowned on the use of the general

strike as a political weapon, approved of the setting up of a rationalised trade union machine rather than ad hoc workers committees to deal with single issues, it encouraged Indian trade unions to seek representation through the legislative processes to be set up by Britain, it suggested that Indian trades unions supervise the political education of its membership to citizenship, it supported a narrow definition of legitimacy in trade union struggles to exclude violence and nationalist struggles which had a wider basis and a direct and confrontative strategy.

The inapplicability of these methods to India is clear. India had a very small trade union movement because it had very few industrial workers. It might have been more appropriate for the Labour Party to suggest a form of organisation which could deal with the struggles of rural peoples if it wished the political community to extend to the toiling masses of India. Indian workers were heavily involved in nationalist as well as trade union struggles, yet this was an aspect of workers struggles which the Labour Party chose to ignore in its official pronouncements. In its dealings with Indian Labour, the Labour Party was guilty of reformulating the imperial relation by asserting the unquestioned superiority not of Western culture or industry as in the days of Queen Victoria, but the superiority of British methods of trade union organisation. The Labour Party attempted to define trade unionism and trade union struggles for India in a way which was highly inappropriate to the conditions and struggles which existed in that country. Rather than adapt methods which had been tried and tested in Britain, the Labour Party instead indicated that it was up to India to develop to a point where British formulations were appropriate.

The analysis of the construction of India as a political community by the Labour Party is not complete without an examination of the communities which were presented on its behalf. The variety of positions expressed on India indicate that the Labour Party was

capable of representing Indians in general, Indian workers, Indians who met the franchise qualification (presented not as such but as Indian interests in general), the poor, the masses, trade unionists, peasants and nationalists. Whilst this demonstrates the discursive eclecticism of the Labour Party, it does not give us an idea of how community priorities were constructed. Generally speaking those who favoured a democratic (i.e full franchise) constitution prioritised workers or the poor or both. Those who wanted independence in the form of a restricted franchise and a communal federation supported the Indian people as a whole, though in fact they were prioritising those who fulfilled the franchise qualifications. Supporters of independence also often supported the nationalists as a community priority.

Official pronouncements indicate a different set of community priorities. Unable to represent either peasants or nationalists as such, the Labour Party was quite able to include them in its formulations of the Indian peoples, but not to represent them as distinct communities despite widespread support in the Labour Party generally for both communities. Thus the Labour Party was officially unable to support the major struggle in India for independence of the biggest category of Indians, the peasants. Perhaps this indicates a belief that these were transitional features of India's political development, or that the Labour Party was unable to move beyond the communities relevant to domestic definitions of socialism.

It has been the aim of this conclusion, and indeed this dissertation, to demonstrate that at every stage in its dealings with India the Labour Party made a choice. It was offered constructions of the Indian political community from within its own ranks which it chose to ignore. It must be said that from the opposition voiced to official pronouncements, the Labour Party was capable of a very different construction of the Indian political community. How different this construction could have been is demonstrated in the opposing positions expressed

in the debates.

Firstly the Labour Party could have awarded a full franchise even if it was not able to offer an alternative to the restricted form of citizenship represented by the communal representation of the Indian population. Secondly it could have avoided some of the disorder and violence by withdrawing from India in 1930 under a Labour Government, because the independence arrangements which were eventually implemented were not much of an advance on those set out in the Statutory Commission (1930).

If the Labour Party had chosen the options just outlined from the positions available to it, India would have been given the status of a nation in which all her people were citizens. Also, India would not have had the prolonged association with anti British struggles and the violence and political instability which was produced by the escalation of nationalist struggles. There are however features of the Labour Party's handling of India which were not challenged. There was no effective challenge to a communal federation which was one of the structures in which the inferiority of the Indian political community was inscribed. There was also no effective challenge to official assumptions about methods of trade unionism in India, or the idea that India would develop into an industrial nation in which workers rather than peasants would be of central importance. What was challenged was the linking of industrial to political development. However, those who thought that India should become independent immediately were not necessarily adverse to thinking that her industrial development would bring her a higher standard of living for the people. Alternative ways open to the Labour Party for the construction of India as a political community were limited by the range of discursive constructions open to it. These might have been limited, but they existed, and if they had been taken up the status of India as a political community might have been slightly different. This is how the capability of the Labour Party should be assessed, in terms of the options

open to it, and the results which alternative constructions might have had.

I have already speculated in the conclusions to chapters four and five as to why certain positions were adopted as official and others rejected. It remains only to speculate here on why the Labour Party did not offer a greater range of positions to describe India. It is possible that many in the Labour Party did not see India as relevant to socialism, it is also possible that India was not an issue of priority for Labour Party members because of its remoteness from Britain and the problems which faced the Labour Party at home. It could be that too many conflicts arose for Labour Party members over whether socialism's communities in India or socialism's communities at home should be priorities. Whilst the official position on India was the focus for opposition, that opposition was not able to present an alternative which dealt with the nature of the constitutional arrangements. As indicated earlier, this may be explained by the fact that many did not think it was Britain's place to write a constitution for India at all. I shall venture to suggest that Indian independence was not an issue which excited much of a following in the Labour Party as a whole, save for in the policy committees and in parliament. Even at conference much of the opposition to official policy focused on the treatment of the Meerut prisoners as trade unionists, rather than on independence. India was thought marginal to Labour Party concerns and to socialism.

Despite the assessment of the Daily Herald that Indian independence was a "shining example" of the "basic principles of socialist democracy" (5/7/35 Daily Herald p.2) as an issue it was perceived as marginal to other aspects of socialism and its democracy. Although Indian independence was hailed as a socialist move, the Labour Party managed to compromise most of its socialist constituencies and community priorities in the final analysis. It demonstrated its willingness to abandon both its conceptions of democracy and its support for workers as citizens

in its dealings with India. Out of the racial equality between Britain and India constructed in Aryan race theory, the Labour Party managed to create inequality between Britain and India as political communities at the demise of the imperial relation.

Labour and anti Semitism.

The Labour Party was offered definitions of the events which were taking place in East London during the mid 1930s which placed an emphasis on racial attacks, anti semitism. These offers did not come from within its own ranks but from the journal New Statesman from which it had been offered political analysis in the past, from the National Council for Civil Liberties and the Church. Statements from within the Labour Party did not obscure the fact that attacks on Jews were taking place, indeed many East London M.P.s. were most concerned about the political climate in East London. However they did not present racial attacks as a constituency priority. These were placed instead in the wider political framework of Fascism.

I did not find one statement attributable to the Labour Party which contradicted the assessment of the political events in East London as Fascism, although the statements varied as to the extent to which they recognised that anti semitism was a feature of Fascism. In constructing the Labour Party in relation to anti semitism this must be born in mind. The Labour Party as a whole, not just its official voice, considered anti semitism a side effect of a more widespread political problem, which was more obviously the constituency of the Labour Party. By implication, anti semitism was only marginal to the Labour Party. It was not a constituency priority. The Labour Party did not consider anti semitism a political problem in its own right. Anti semitism was not its constituency, and Jews were not its community, save as the victims of fascism, and in respect of their claim to a territory in Palestine.

It would be unfair to claim that the Labour Party

was unconcerned with racial hatred, it was not. But without exception the positions expressed from within its ranks presented racial hatred as the product of the economic circumstances of a crisis in which the British Union of Fascists, as a political force, was profiting. This tends to suggest an analysis which considered fascism a political product of a squeezing of the living standards of peoples of Europe and Britain. Fascism was the major political force to be countered, especially in view of the attacks it was making on continental social democracy, communism and the organisations of the workers. The Labour Party was comfortable in defining anti Fascism rather than anti semitism as one of its constituencies.

The Labour Party was offered several definitions of the form which anti Fascist struggles should take. It was demonstrated in chapter six that there was much top level and grass roots support for open confrontative anti Fascist demonstrations. The party's official concern for public order made this kind of anti Fascism unacceptable. Instead, official statements condemned the violence of street clashes, and suggested that anti Fascist demonstrations should be confined to areas where they would not openly and directly antagonise the British Union of Fascists. Anti Fascism was a constituency generally accepted throughout the Labour Party, but officially public order was prioritised to the extent that it structured the form which anti Fascism could take. Public order was not an exclusively Labour Party constituency. It was shared by the other parliamentary parties as well. The Labour Party was anxious to identify itself as an active and campaigning anti Fascist force, but only within the confines of some stringent standards of public order, a positon from which it condemned Fascists and anti Fascists alike.

The Labour Party was offered constructions of the community in East London which included Jews. As the Jews were widely referred to as a race, this amounts to an admission of the principle of a multi racial society. Officially however this was rejected in favour of a formulation which asserted the autonomy of Jews not only

as a separate race, but as a separate political community with its own representatives. When the Labour Party spoke on behalf of the Jews, it represented them as a community in their negotiations with the British Government over Palestine. The Jewish counterpart of the Labour Party was the Poale Zion and it is likely that the Labour Party considered this the legitimate representative of Jewish labour. It was significant in considering the construction of the Labour Party over the treatment of Jews, that it was only able to represent Jews as a political community over the issue of their removal from the British political conjuncture, from British society.

Race and Political Community: Some General Comments.

Not all political communities are referred to as races in the process of their discursive construction. It was suggested throughout the dissertation that any reference to a group of people is a claim constructed in the process of discourse. Is there anything special about those communities where race is part of their construction as distinct entities? Political community is a way of constructing any set of differences which constitute the autonomy of a group of people, yet in respect of certain groups that autonomy is at least partly constructed as 'racial', a term which usually specifies a set of physical characteristics upon which other cultural and behavioral characteristics are premised. For example women and workers are communities constructed in political discourse, but they have no relation to statements about race. This is obviously untrue of other communities, for example Jews or Indians. How was race constructed in the statements examined in this dissertation and what part does political community play in their constructions?

Perhaps the base line in any construction of race is a set of physical characteristics by which a group is identified and identifiable. Aryan race theory not withstanding, both Jews in Britain and Indians, of which only a small minority or an elite lived in Britain in the 1930s, were physically distinguishable from Britons.

Beyond these obvious and observable differences referred to as 'racial' characteristics other differences were constructed in respect of the autonomy of Jews and Indians as communities in political discourse. Indeed it may be argued that differences constructed in terms of political communities led to the differentiation of groups presumed to have a common history and descent in Aryan race theory. A common history and descent was thus subordinated to the claims that the differences between Britons and Indians, and Britons and Jews were greater than their similarities. The differences between Britons and Jews and Britons and Indians were constructed in a particular context and over specific issues, anti Fascism, public order, Palestine and in the case of Indians, independence. The constructions of categories of common history and descent cannot be separated from these contexts.

The importance of the context of a discourse or set of discourses may be indicated by comparing the construction of the category Indian in relation to independence, and in relation to the existence of Indians in Britain in the 1960s as migrant labour. I can only at this stage suggest that these two constructions might have had some similarities in the assumed nature of the societies from which Indians had migrated, but that in other respects Indians might be considered in the 1960s in some of the ways in which Jews were considered in the 1930s, clannish and a threat to a British way of life.

Jews and Indians were, in many respects in very different positions in relation to each other in the 1930s. Jews were a community attempting to live in very close proximity, in the same national territory as Britons (also a construction informed by a common history, set of social institutions and no doubt a set of physical characteristics) whereas some Indians were making much more abstract claims, fully supported in Britain, to be a part of the British family of nations, a relation it was seeking to put on a new footing. The terms of the debate were changed when Indians attempted to take up the rights associated with British citizenship and live

and work in Britain.

Beyond the claims to racial identity stated in terms of physical appearance, are a set of characteristics which I have called the construction of a political community. The construction of certain groups as political communities has in some cases informed divisions already thought to exist in terms of physical characteristics. Indeed I shall go further than that, and suggest that differences were sought and attributed to racial characteristics, which might not have been sought had it not been desireable for some other reason to distinguish a group of people from another. I should like to suggest that racial characteristics are attributed to political communities which have, or claim, a territory and political autonomy not only in Britain, but in other parts of the world. For example Indians were claiming autonomy in India and Jews in Palestine. These two communities have in common their alieness from the British political community, against which they were constructed. But more than that they were each making claims on British sovereignty. Jews were living along side the British political community, and the Indians were claiming that they were Indian first and British subjects second. Even after independence they remained British subjects because they lived in a territory which had once been under the sovereignty of the British crown. Both of these communities were essentially alien, yet making claims on the British political community against which they were constructed in the act of discourse.

Another reason why Indians and Jews were constructed as political communities in relation to a set of characteristics designated as racial, lies in an assessment of the status of the communities from which they came. It was suggested in chapter five that the construction of India as a political community in relation to Western ideas about democracy, attributed a second class status to Indian people. This is important in considering the claims which Indians were making on the British political community, and the desireability of their becoming a part

of it by living in Britain. The Commonwealth as a political community of British subjects was a far looser association than was suggested by the co-existence of Britons and Indians within a single national boundary.

In the 1930s, Indians were claiming the right to be a British dominion rather than a British colony. This was still a relation of subordination to Britain, as the whole conception of the British Commonwealth was one in which the mother country as the former imperial power remained in close association with former colonised peoples. The superiority of Britain over the colonies was stated, particularly in respect of the new commonwealth in terms of economic and industrial resources, in terms of the nature of the British political community, and by the imagery of 'Rule Britannia' which did not simply evaporate with colonial freedom. The Commonwealth was more than an idea, it had an institutional form in which British Superiority was inscribed. It currently survives in the form of the Commonwealth Conference, a common legal system, the Commonwealth games and so on. The idea of a commonwealth, so strongly backed by the Labour Party as a useful relationship in its framework of internationalism, was but a re-statement of India's former position as a colony in which her subjects were also British subjects. This was challenged when the first large influx of Indians into Britain as migrant Labour with rights of citizenship arrived, because this represented a closer claim on the British political community. When Indians began to take up their rights as British citizens, the status of the political communities from which they came moved sharply into focus.

The case with Jews was a little different. They had not formerly been British subjects, though many of them were seeking naturalisation as British subjects by the 1930s. The issue of the nature of the political communities from which they were refugees in Eastern Europe may have contributed to the construction of Jews as a separate political community. But it was the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine which primarily constructed their separateness.

However Jews and Indians were constructed in these debates, they shared a status in relation to Britons of being alien political communities with roots outside Britain, in foreign territories. Whilst India in the 1930s was British territory it was only British through the process of conquest and colonisation. The construction of a people in relation to a political community is clearly demonstrated in the case of the Jews who were seeking a nationhood through the award of a territory in Palestine. Territory, origin and the status of nationhood achieved by a people, were important ways of constructing political community in relation to Jews and Indians in the 1930s. These were the divisions which informed the notion of physical characteristics and a distinctive way of life and set of social patterns which were described as racial and presented in the language of the racial classification of mankind into particular divisions.

Race is a construction premised on divisions constructed through political communities. For this reason the notion of a political community has been the subject of particular attention in the discourses examined in this dissertation. Just as constructions of race have changed over time, so have constructions of political community. Both constructions are highly conditioned by the nature and conditions of the discourses and statements in which they are constructed. That is not to suggest that such divisions of humanity are constructed in relation to a purpose, for that would ascribe a set of intentions underlying the discourse. But they are constructed by, and in relation to, the terms of debate and the structuring mechanisms of the discourses in question. An analysis of the position of present communities in Britain constructed in a relation to racial divisions, would need to be examined within the context of present not just past debates. A cursory look at the manner in which the Labour Party officially constructs political communities designated as races may throw some light on the extent to which the current debates are informed by, or are a departure from, those of the 1930s. It cannot be assumed

that present Labour Party constructions of race and political community are the same as they were in the 1930s. Within the limitations imposed on concluding remarks, I intend briefly to outline what these constructions might currently be. This cannot avoid charicature, as it could be the subject of another dissertation, and my main purpose is to see how race and political community were constructed in some of the early discourses which dealt with race. My comments on the present are therefore speculative and tentative. They open up the area for debate rather than come up with any conclusions. They attempt only to establish the extent to which historical discourses inform present situations, and what this indicates for the Labour Party. Do historical discourses on race and political community have any contemporary relevance?

The Present.

Race as a current issue in British politics has been constructed by the Labour Party in a particular way. It is still informed by constructions of political community, but these constructions, like the debates and issues in which they are situated, have changed. Political discourse is of course only one of the discourses in which race is constructed. Indeed it may only be in political discourse that the concept of a political community has such influence. I shall reiterate my opening remarks. Political community is but one mode of constructing race, but its centrality in political discourse has been demonstrated in this dissertation. I suggested also in the introduction that the 1930s may have provided a terminology and theorisation of race which still persists. It is to this that I now turn. I should point out as I did in the introduction that such links if they can be demonstrated to exist do not imply any links between the present and the 1930s in terms of political and economic structures, or that discourses and the ideologies which inform them have a trans-historical essence. I merely want to suggest that discourses have specifiable

conditions of existence which may be explained and which are not necessarily confined to the conjuncture in which they were developed and articulated.

The Labour Party has more recently constructed race and political community in relation to particular issues. I propose to examine very briefly official responses to immigration and nationality law, anti racist struggles, and the problems of what is widely referred to as the inner city. As in the 1930s, in constructing race and political community in relation to similar issues, the Labour Party was constructing itself as a statement issuing institution by participating in these political discourses. The issues just set out feature in recent Labour Party statements particularly in pamphlets on racism.

The Labour Party has constructed race and political community in the process of defining anti racism, and the kinds of struggles which are appropriate to it. There are two facets to the Labour Party's official definition of anti racism, race relations and public order. They are placed within the framework of an analysis and recommended resistance to Fascism. These two facets of anti racism are outlined in the following statement set out in a pamphlet on race.

> "In a statement, 'Response to the National Front' published in October 1978, the National Executive Committee suggests ways in which racialist activity can be curbed. The National Executive Committee propose that the National Front should be tackled both through the race relations laws... and where necessary through the Public Order Act. In the National Executive Committee's view the activities of the National Front and similar organisations should be treated differently from those of the main political parties by strengthening existing powers against racists."
> (Labour Party 1979. Race Immigration and the Racialists. p.50)

There are two main things to note about this statement. Firstly, racialism was presented as primarily a problem presented by the National Front and similar organisations, and secondly the main instruments suggested for dealing with them were the use of the law.

The pamphlet from which the above statement was

quoted did not explicitly attempt to equate the National Front with Fascism or suggest that it was a Fascist organisation. It described the membership and main activities of the National Front and followed this section with the heading "Fascism - What it Involves" thus implicitly presenting the reader with a context in which to place their understanding of what was presented as extreme right wing politics and the lengths to which it can go. The pamphlet's statement on Fascism firmly identified it with the strategies of racialism, the subject of the pamphlet.

> "Fascism, so often the ideology of despair and nihilism has two main components. First... nationalism and racism, both doctrines with an emphasis on division. The second component authoritarian government necessarily involves the complete destruction of democratic processes... trade unions, political parties and pressure groups would need to be broken - as in Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy... Fascism tends to flourish in a period of capitalist crisis."
> (Labour Party 1979. Race Immigration and the Racialists. p.70)

This is a clear demonstration of the way the Labour Party continues its practices of the 1930s, and places organisations with an explicitly racist political platform within the framework of the brands of Fascism which existed on the continent in the 1930s. This is further emphasized in the broad anti racist Labour Movement organisation which takes the title the "Anti Nazi League". This conjures up an imagery of the atrocities which befell the Jews in Nazi Germany, as a mode of explaining the possible outcome and political implications of groups like the National Front. As in the 1930s, this is a way of presenting racism as an aspect of a much more widespread problem produced by the constant crises of capitalism. Anti Fascism was therefore necessarily a broad based struggle mounted around the maintenance of democratic liberties on which the trade union and labour movement was based. Once again this formulation does not acknowledge that racism is an issue in its own right.

The shifting of anti racist struggles onto the machinery of the law also has a familiar ring about it

when considered in the light of Labour Party responses in the 1930s. In the late 1970s and indeed today, the Labour Party is officially still advocating the use of the Public Order Act to curb the activities of political groups who mimic the imagery of 1930s continental Fascism, and whose main public political platform contains attacks on communities constructed in relation to the category race. In the 1930s these assessments focused on the British Union of Fascists. At the present time the National Front and the British Movement are posed as the political force against which anti racist struggles should be directed. This is a very limited perception of anti racism. The Labour Party's suggested use of the Public Order Act has changed since the 1930s. It is no longer as nervous about protecting the extent of free speech and British political liberties as a universal political principle. The Labour Party is no longer afraid to exclude explicitly racist groups from political liberties.

Race relations legislation was the other main plank in the Labour Party's anti racist programme. On this issue the party was able to demonstrate that it took the issue of race seriously as a political problem in its own right and not just as a facet of other problems as its emphasis on public order and anti Fascism suggest. This is a complete departure from the Labour Party's treatment of race issues in the 1930s because a concern for race relations suggests the specificity of race as a political issue with a distinct set of political strategies.

Succesive Race Relations Acts were passed in 1965, 1968 and 1976 under Labour Governments. They were, it was officially suggested by the Labour Party, reciprocally linked to immigration policy. It was thought that immigration control, in combination with a good race relations policy which legislated against discrimination on racial grounds, was the socialist answer to the presence in Britain of what was posed as an alien immigrant population living along side the indigenous population. Jenkins in a parliamentary speech in 1976 made just this

point.

> "...the third principle of government policy is that there is a clear limit to the amount of immigration that this country can absorb, and that it is in the interests of the racial minorities themselves to maintain a strict control over immigration."
> (Jenkins 4/7/76. Hansard col.1548)

The 1965 and 1968 Race Relations Acts outlawed racial discrimination in a number of spheres of everyday life, and set up the Race Relations Board as a conciliatory mechanism under a very limited brief with no real statutory powers.

The 1976 Race Relations Act was a little bolder as a legislative measure. Amongst other provisions it set up the Commission for Racial Equality with greater powers than the old Race Relations Boards. This legislated against discrimination in education, employment and the provision of goods, facilities and services. The Act is significant for its definitions of race and the discrimination against which it was attempting to legislate. It proclaimed itself as "An Act to make provisions with respect to discrimination on racial grounds and relations between people of different racial groups..." (1976 Race Relations Act p.1). This opening statement makes it clear that the purpose of the Act is to deal with relations within the national political community as a whole where there is friction between communities constructed in relation to the category race.

The 1976 Race Relations Act was to deal with community relations as a whole in which certain groups were to be the subject of special legislation prohibiting discrimination against them. It defined discrimination as "treating less favourably".

> "It is hereby declared that for the purpose of this Act, segregating a person from another on racial grounds is treating him less favourably then they are treated."
> (1976 Race Relations Act p.2)

Racial grounds were defined as "Colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins" (p.2). This definition assumes that there is something which can be objectively referred

to as race and that colour and political community were also ingredients of 'racial' discrimination. This is a very inclusive definition of the problem. It is a construction of race so inclusive as to be almost meaningless. It did however, manage to suggest that the idea of a multi racial community, upon which it was premised, was problematic. Multi racialism was quite definitely a departure from the Labour Party's official position in the 1930s when it did not admit that such a conception of the political community was viable. The problematisation of relations in the community because of racial division reflects badly on those who required to be the subject of special anti discriminatory legislation. It tends to suggest that the existence of certain groups in the national political community creates problems.

The problem aspect of Labour Party constructions of race was repeated in the second major issue which focused on race, urban decay and deprivation. The Urban programme initiated by the Local Government Grants (social needs) Act (1969) under a Labour Government was to enable government to direct funds into inner city areas. The Home Office insisted that the problems of the inner city were not just to do with the importation of aliens. In this context race was constructed in relation to immigration which had long been considered a problem by both parties in 1969. In its notes on the urban programme the Home Office insisted that "large numbers of commonwealth immigrants" were only one factor in defining social need in the inner city. .(1969 Notes on the Urban Programme 1) None-the-less the association of urban deprivation with aliens was clear even if their presence was only one of the relevant factors.

The Labour Party itself made the link between the inner city and aliens more clear in its pamphlet on racialism produced for the last General Election (1979). In defining racial prejudice as the product of the general squeezing of living standards, not least those of the poor, idigenous and hard pressed working class of which the Labour Party was historically the political representative,

it suggested that racial discrimination had a special place in the inner city. "There must be action to combat racial discrimination and disadvantage and revive the inner cities." (Labour Party 1979 Race, Immigration and the Racialists. p.46).

The National Executive Committee statement on Race Relalations at the 1977 Annual Labour Party conference also placed an emphasis on what were traditionally the 'problem' areas of the inner city as an appropriate part of the battle against racial discrimination.

> "We think it is essential that existing jobs should be saved in the deprived inner city areas and new jobs created. The Government, together with all sectors of industry within the public sector, must also give a lead by actively promoting equal employment policies... Unless relevant provision is made for the ethnic minorities - particularly the younger members - their difficulties will only increase. Since the future of race relations in Britain depends very much on the young generation, action to help must be taken now."
> (Labour Party 1979 Race Immigration and the Racialist p.4

The problem aspect of the inner city was, it appears from section 6.2 on East London, a well established association with the importation of pauper aliens. The inner city was, even before the arrival of commonwealth immigrants to Britain in significant numbers, a focus for fears concerning public order evidenced in the bread riots and unemployment riots in East London in the mid nineteenth century (see Steadman Jones 1976 p.343) and the Fascist and anti Fascist demonstrations which accompanied Jewish settlement in that area. Poverty, inner city and alien, were already closely associated in relation to public order well before the Labour Party made the link explicit in the debates which surrounded its urban programme as part of its race relations policy. Never-the-less, the Labour Party gave prominence to this association by restating it.

All of the associations just outlined are not unrelated to the nature of the political communities from which immigrants were arriving. Immigrants were arriving in Britain from third world black ex colonies,

parts of the empire which were by definition poor. This was clearly understood in the reasons why they had migrated in search of employment. Connotations of poverty, deprivation and social and economic underdevelopment had been clearly stated in the debates which surrounded the decolonisation process in India. As well as a second class nationhood, Indians were widely understood to live in a general condition of disadvantage, which could be improved in seeking work in the mother country of the commonwealth. It is not unlikely that such a status clung to those who arrived in Britain from ex-colonies, political communities whose problems were closely associated with Britain's past. This would explain the different perception of immigrants from the white (old) commonwealth or from other developed and westernised countries. In this respect the race issue as posed in the inner city was highly contextualised by colonial discourses and the conditions and assumptions of decolonisation which accorded a particular status to some immigrants and not to others.

The distinction between the political and economic status of different political communities did not feature in the Labour Party's assessments of the extent to which race, ethnicity and political community presented a problem to race relations. But it was implicit in many of the international structures in which the British Government participates, such as the foreign aid programme which singles out mainly ex-colonies in need of financial support, the structure of the United Nations in which the richer and politically important western powers preserved the right of veto with the key communist nations. Both of these institutions along with the commonwealth confernece and a variety of other institutions place poorer political communities, often presented as democratically inferior, in a specific relation with western countries. Former colonies were also presented as lacking in maturity in trade union and industrial practices. The status of the political communities from which immigrants in Britain came, and which were making claims to a relation to the British political community through the notion of multi

racialism, were important underlying constructions in the political discourses in which they were considered.

In the light of the comments just made it is not unreasonable to suggest that the presence of what were referred to as immigrants in the inner city exacerbated the problems traditionally associated with these areas as a focus for deprivation and decay. The belief that migrant peoples contributed to the worsening of these problems was not just related to a conception of their position in the British job, housing and education lottery, but was at least partly constructed in relation to the position of such peoples as political communities in world politics. For example the title Indian, African, Carribean or even black firmly situates some peoples as under developed in social and economic terms. It might even conjure an image of political instability and inferiority in terms of parliamentary style government as conducted in Britain. Such positions were stated in the discourses surrounding decolonisation. In insisting that immigration and race relations were acute in the inner city, the Labour Party was also guilty of invoking these associations.

Immigration and nationality are issues in which race is constructed in a direct and obvious relation to political community. The statutory measures in which immigration and nationality are contained have succesively defined and redefined the British political community in the light of commitments given to those who have migrated to Britain from former parts of the empire. Immigration and nationality law, in which the Labour Party has been fully implicated, has policed the title British. Immigration legislation and its mode of operation prescribed the extent to which peoples from political communities which did not originate in Britain are allowed to enter and live in the British political community, and in combination with nationality law, those who may be naturalised or registered as British peoples. Both of these issues have been for almost twenty years the subject of a bi-partisan approach in British politics. None-the-less in many

respects the Labour Party has in many instances preserved for itself a distinctive way of dealing with them.

Prior to 1947, Indians along with the rest of the peoples of the empire, were British subjects with full rights of entry into the U.K. With independence and the creation of an Indian nationality there was concern that the status of Indians as British subjects should be maintained. This was to be achieved through the British Nationality Act (1948) "An Act to make provision for British nationality and for citizenship of the U.K. and colonies" (preamble). Its main concern was that:-

> "Every person under this act who is a citizen of the U.K. and colonies or who under any enactment for the time being in force in any country mentioned in subsection (3) of this section is a citizen of that country shall by virtue of that citizenship have the status of a British subject."
> (British Nationality Act 1948. Public Acts and Measures. p.1243)

The countries listed in subsection three referred to were Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Union of South Africa, Newfoundland, India, Pakistan, Southern Rhodesia, and Ceylon. These were all dominions and members of the British commonwealth of nations and had created their own nationality on independence. The British Nationality Act passed under the direction of a Labour Government was an attempt to re-establish the citizens of dominions as British subjects. This was one of the ways in which the ties of former empire were re-stated and in this case enshrined in statute.

The thinking behind this re-assertion of the ties of the empire was made explicit in the parliamentary debate which surrounded the passing of the Statute of Westminster Bill (1931) which granted independence to the white governed parts of the empire listed above, with the exception of India. The M.P. for Stafford Burton moved an amendment to the statute to ensure that none of the peoples in the newly created dominions would lose their British nationality. "British nationality is one of the bonds of the empire, or British Commonwealth as this act seeks to call it... We all value our British

nationality, and it is particularly valuable to those in more distant parts of the world". (Gretton 24/11/31 Hansard vol. 260) This tended to suggest that British nationality was a prize conferring a certain status. Lansbury commented of the Statute of Westminster, that it was a piece of "good socialist policy" (Lansbury 24/11/31 Hansard vol.260) Stafford Cripps in congratulating the National Government on guiding the bill through Tory opposition commented "We are delighted to see that the empire is launched on a new era." (Cripps 24/11/31 Hansard vol. 260)

This re-assertion of imperial bonds, even if transformed into a new form which pleased the Labour Party, meant that the peoples of the ex-colonies had an unusual status in that they formally had membership of two political communities, Britain and the dominion from which they originated. The undue value placed on British citizenship must have relied on assessments of its value in relation to the status confererred through coming from India, or one of the other dominions. By virtue of the Statute of Westminster, and the British Nationality Act, the British political community had an extensive overseas branch, though there were differences between these nations constructed in relation to their distinctiveness as political communities. The commonwealth was a political community of a particular kind, not as close knit as the nation but its subjects all had the status of being British.

This unity of subjecthood created amongst diverse political communities was first challenged by the 1962 Commonwealth Immigration Act. Whilst this did not challenge the rights of commonwealth peoples to retain the title British, it selectively withdrew their ability to take up the rights and duties associated with citizenship elsewhere in the world, the right to enter, live and work in the country of which a person holds citizenship. The result was that Britain had a situation in which subjects were not all potential citizens. This was unique.

The Commonwealth Immigration Act of 1962 was a Tory

measure which the Labour Party was pledged to repeal on the grounds that former subjects of the empire had an unchallenged right to enter the mother country. This was a position being defended by Conservatives during the 1950s. Under whatever pressures, constraints and structuring mechanisms (a description of which is outside the scope of this dissertation) the Labour Party was, by 1964, in favour of a restriction of immigration, in combination with race relations legislation. The Wilson white paper (1965) defined the categories of labour which should be allowed into Britain and the 1968 Commonwealth Immigration Act began to shift its definition of those who should be eligible to assert their rights as British subjects from Britain's labour requirements onto the concept patriality which placed an emphasis on place of birth of immigrants and their ancestors. Patriality as a construction of being British was re-asserted in the 1971 Tory Immigration Act, the last and most stringent control on entry to the U.K. Britain still has an outstanding immigration commitment to relatives of former immigrants and stateless persons who have been stripped of all nationality by the withdrawal of British citizenship from British subjects.

The Labour Party, like the Tory party, has claimed that it will attempt to see that these commitments are honoured. It stated its approval at the time of the General Election in 1979 of allowing in the dependants of immigrants already in Britain on the basis that "racial intolerance has been aggravated by the structure of our citizenship and immigration laws and procedures" (Labour Party 1979 Race Immigration and the Racialists. p.52) Perhaps the main difference between Tory and Labour immigration policy is the readiness of the latter to state its intention to allow the law to be interpreted more liberally and in a more humanitarian way. This can be done through the immigration procedure and does not require a change in the law.

The position officially stated and followed by the Labour Party in relation to immigration could be the

subject of extensive comment. I shall confine myself to one or two comments. Immigration restriction constructed on the principle of patriality implies that numbers of peoples arriving in Britain, mainly but not exclusively from new commonwealth (black) parts of the former empire, constituted or exacerbated problems in relation to the pressure on the indigenous community in the scramble for resources. This was particularly true of the workers, whom the Labour Party claimed to represent. It was also particularly true of the poorest sections of the political community and tended to focus on those resident in the inner cities and the anxieties with which they were regarded. It is likely that the Labour Party's involvement in immigration control is the product of community and constituency priorities which favoured the indigenous community rather than a community, or part of the community, which was perceived as immigrant or alien, even though it may have been British in terms of nationality. The association of immigration with race relations and the multi racial political community has managed to convey the impression that the Labour Party was prioritising those already settled in Britain, as opposed to new immigrants. The race relations legislation favoured by the Labour Party was a statement of the formal equality of all members of the political community whatever their racial or national affinities.

The most recent saga in the establishment of Britishness, and those who have the right to this title, was played out over the proposals for a definition of British nationality. This was to bring British nationhood into line with the restrictions placed on immigration by successive immigration controls. Both major parties are committed to rectifying what was presented as the anomolous position of British nationality. Both party's answer to this problem was the passing of a British Nationality Act. The Labour proposals are contained in a discussion paper (1977) in which two categories of British were established. British citizenship which gave full right of entry and the right to live and work in the U.K. and British Overseas citizenship. British overseas citizenship would

not confer any right to enter, live or work in the U.K. It was meaningless except that it retained the title British in a modified form. British overseas citizenship was to be awarded to all those who had been British under the 1948 British Nationality Act, and peoples of countries which had subsequently attained independence, the former subjects of the empire. What could be the possible use of retaining the title British in a form which in many respects devalues the concept of nationhood? Citizenship of any other country confers special rights, but British overseas citizenship, did little more than state the latest reformulation of the imperial bond.

The Labour Party did not get a chance to implement the proposals outlined in its green paper on British nationality. Instead the Conservative Government has ready for the royal assent, a Bill which will create a three tier nationality; British citizenship, British Overseas Citizenship and Citizenship of British Dependant territories. The final category was included in the Labour Party's definitions of British citizens, because after all these countries are still under British sovereignty until their independence can be arranged.

Labour Party opposition to the parliamentary passage of the Bill has been limited. Few M.Ps have demonstrated an interest indicating once again that such measures are not considered integral to a definition of socialism. The bulk of the parliamentary opposition has come from Lester, Lyon and Hattersley. But the Labour Party has not put up an orchestrated opposition, at least partly because it officially favours some kind of nationality legislation. Opposition has centred itself on the parts of the Bill which prescribed the acquisition of Britishness, which is no longer possible through registration but through naturalisation. "suitability" for citizenship is no longer to be established through simply living in Britain, in future "applicants should be able to demonstrate a real intention to throw in their lot with this country". (British Nationality Bill 1980. p.7) This is supplemented by the qualification that applicants for British citizenship

should be able to demonstrate that they were not working against the interests of Britian. There are many more facets to this which cannot be explored here. The Labour Party, realising that the status of some former immigrants will be to say the least tenuous under this new Bill, have opposed it on these grounds, that it could mean the possible removal of non patrial unregistered but none the less settled former immigrants.

Again the Labour Party has demonstrated its official support for the restriction of rights of former British subjects whilst maintaining a reformulated conception of the commonwealth with all of its imperial history, and at the same time presenting itself as the champion of the multi racial society.

> "Britain is and will remain a multi racial society. There can be no question of keeping black families separate for even longer periods than at present or of repatriating black people, half of whom were born here. Our purpose must now be to build on the advantages that come from a diversity of culture and to deal effectively with the threats to all of our community which come from discrimination and disadvantage experienced by minorities." (Labour Party 1979. Race Immigration and the Racialists. p.56)

This statement implies that all British people whatever colour and wherever they come from are the community of the Labour Party. This is certainly a major shift from its position in relation to Jews in the 1930s. The Labour Party has gone on stating its belief in multi racialism long after it has ceased to be challenged in political discourse. (That is not to say that multi racialism is not challenged outside of political discourse. Many white working class people ostensibly represented by the Labour Party are challenging precisely the right of communities identified as immigrant to live in Britain) The nationality Bill with its attack on the rights of certain peoples to naturalise as British does not represent an attack on multi racialism. Yet the Labour Party continues to state its commitment to multi racialism which is unchallenged by the parliamentary parties and the non parliamentary groups with the exception of the

National Front and the British Movement.

A statement by Joan Lester at the 1976 Annual Conference of the Labour Party in the debate on race relations places the defence of the multi racial society in a wider context.

> "...when we allow the attacks on racial minorities to go by, we are paving the way for attacks on the very basis of this movement and on what it rests. Have no illusion about that you cannot separate the attacks on a minority from attacks on trade unionism, on the welfare state and on all the other things that this movement has stood for over the years."
> (Labour Party 1979. Race Immigration and the Racialists. p.56)

This is quite extraordinary in its reliance on links between organised labour and groups posed as "racial minorities" made in the 1930s. The remarks of the 1930s were made in the context of the experience of the Nazi regime in which Jews and socialists and trade unionists had been objects of attack. Apart from alluding to this conncetion, Lester appears to have no basis to her assertion that attacks on "racial minorities" were the thin end to a wedge which would not stop until the organised labour movement had been attacked also. Perhaps we should look not at the imagery of this statement but its intention in terms of its community and constituencies. Lester is suggesting that the defence of "racial minorities" is the constituency of the Labour Party as an arena of struggle. But she was only suggesting this on the grounds that such an attack was an indirect attack on the Labour movement and those whom it represented. So in effect the constituency of the Labour Party was ultimately its own defence, the defence of minorities being only a facet of this. Why was it not possible to suggest to Labour Party supporters that racist attacks were their constituency and that "racial minorities" were their community?

The statement just examined maintains the exteriority of "racial minorities" to the British political community, whilst the concept of a multi racial society includes them as a category in need of special legislation through

which the formal equality of all the members of the community might be maintained. In fact the multi racial community is often broken down in many aspects of Labour Party discourse. The Black community, the Asian community, the West Indian community are all ways in which the community titled Britain is divided. The rest of the community outside of these designations being simply the community.

The Labour Party's multi racialism is ambiguous and qualified. Communities referred to as 'racial' are frequently constructed out of this supposed unity in the process of political discourse depending on the context of the statement in which it is constructed. Multi racialism is constructed in particular circumstances to underline the real unity of the British political community.

> "Nearly half our coloured people grew up here. Many more have worked here for over twenty years. They speak with the accents of London, of Birmingham, Lancashire or Yorkshire. We face the same problems together and share the same hopes and fears. We all pay taxes, rates, and union dues. We all care about our children about housing, jobs, prices and Manchester United." (Labour Party 1976. Speaker's Notes Labour and Racism.)

The Labour Party's treatment of race and the problems constructed in relation to it is two-edged. On the one hand it asserts that all members of the community face the same problems as the statement above demonstrates in its support of multi racialism. On the other hand the party has recognised that some groups in the community have special problems in relation to racism. As in the 1930s the Labour Party does not construct race issues as political problems in their own right, but as part of wider political problems with which it can identify the interests of those who have traditionally been its supporters. It has been extremely hesitant in suggesting that racism is a specific political problem with a specific set of strategies which are the constituency of British workers in general.

I have attempted to demonstrate in this conclusion

that the Labour Party had a particular way of posing constructions of the political community and the issues involved when it came to divisions of the community described as racial. It has been possible to show that to some extent theorisations and constructions of race and political community in the 1930s by the Labour Party have persisted and still inform present constructions in which the Labour Party is implicated. It would be possible to gain a detailed knowledge of these constructions by following the methodology of this dissertation and applying it to present day statements of the Labour Party in its dealings with race issues. Some elements of political discourse remain outside of the conditions in which they were constructed and articulated as problems. Former constructions of political community by the Labour Party, in which decolonisation was an issue, still inform its present responses to race issues and pose grave problems in respect of its ability to overcome the discourses in which it was steeped in the reconstruction of the empire on 'socialist' grounds, the creation of Commonwealth. The Labour Party's ability to construct itself in relation to race issues in a manner which will make it an effective instrument of anti racist struggles must thus be placed in question on the basis of its present record in these matters.

In the creation of commonwealth the Labour Party created a particular kind of political community. Communities constructed in political discourse may be differentiated from communities constructed in other discourses in order to isolate what makes them 'political'. Community has a multiplicity of constructions. I shall only isolate one or two of them in order to demonstrate what I mean by a political community in general terms. Community is constructed in discourses concerning themselves with child care, mental health, medicine and penal reform to refer to a mode of care which is non institutional. Community in this instance simply means society, divided into geographical units of co-existence. In sociological discourse community refers to units of co-existence also. These units can be based

on any specified condition such as race, ethnicity, income group, class, or simply sharing a set of streets and common life experience. A group may be designated a community in sociological discourse because it shared a set of interests for a particular reason, for example opposition to the council's new road scheme. Or a group may be designated a community because it shares a common geographical location.

The designation of a group based on a common set of interests is the closest to the meaning of a political community. It may be possible to distinguish community constructed in sociological discourse from political discourse by taking for example the designation 'Asian community'. In both political and sociological discourse, Asians have been presented as a community with reference to what are believed to be differences from other Britons presented as racial, cultural and to some extent geographical. Sociological discourses, as far as it is possible to lump them all together, tend to construct the Asian community in terms of a common experience of disadvantage derived from living in British society. In general its main concern is to establish a dimension of social inequality based on divisions which were thought to be racially constructed. Such concerns may be voiced within the institutional context of universities, social work or social welfare agencies.

The Asian community in political discourse is presented in a different way. It is presented in relation of representation by a voice which does not necessarily articulate a common position on its behalf, but it makes a set of demands as the outcome of a common position. A political community is presented as a category of people in relation to a constructed set of constituencies. In addition, both the community and its constituencies may be presented in terms of a set of strategies. This is certainly not true of communities in sociological discourse which primarily comment on situations rather than make an intervention. Political communities are therefore constructed in a direct relation to a notion of a general will. That is, not only does the community

have a common position, a common mentality as in sociological discourse, it also has a set of demands in relation to that position which may be articulated within the terms of current political debate. The Asian community is currently being represented in political discourse in relation to nationality legislation and police harassment. These are not issues of their making, but refer to the way they are presented in the processes which legislate for the society as a whole. The existence of will and voice, taken from the discourses concerning political philisophy which inform the notion of a political community, presume also the existence of a sovereign, that is the existence of the community as a single body.

A community in the context of political discourse has an obvious relation to the processes of representative government, whilst sociological discourse does not necessarily have this relation. This is obvious in the translation of will into position, which can then be articulated as a voice amongst others in the processes of political arbitration. In Britain these primarily focus on parliament and on political parties and pressure groups. All political institutions attempt to influence the pronouncements made on behalf of the society as a whole. This may be through parliament, or through a challenge to parliament. Political representation refers to spokesmanship at the point of access of policy making or the movement to usurp that process and replace it with another. It is a direct translation of will into the terms of debate and practices of current issues posed as integral to the processes of government or the usurpation of government. Political communities are those which have a position expressed on their behalf in the processes of arbritation. Asians may be seen as a political community in relation to their opposition to the new nationality legislation, and as a sociological community in relation to a process of social stratification, in which they are simply represented as disadvantaged with no other specific aim in view but a general comment

on inequality.

Political communities are therefore peculiar kinds of plural units within the society as a whole. Political communities in fact reconstitute the social formation in terms of their central importance to it. This is clear in examining the Labour Party's representation of workers as central to the social formation as a whole, in recognition of their value in the social formation. This would amount to the overt recognition of the central importance of Labour in the creation of a general will and sovereign. The multi racial society in political discourse is a plurality in which the importance of cultural and physical diversity is presented as constituting the society which results from it. Multi racialism is a statement in political discourse which argues against the devaluation of people from other societies, just as the Labour Party's support for workers is posed against the construction of a society in which their efforts are marginalised.

A political community as a group of peoples with a will and a voice presented and constructed in the act of political discourse may well be a construction which is informed by divisions of the body politic made within sociological discourse, but it is functionally different from a community in sociological discourse because it is constructed in the act of representation in debates which concern themselves with the government of the society as a whole and the challenges presented to that mode of government. Political community may also be distinguished as a unit of any magnitude. It does not necessarily refer to the divisions within a nation; it may refer to the nation itself, as nation is but a particular construction of the political community as indicated in discourses concerning political philosophy. Nations as well as international associations such as the commonwealth are political communities constructed in the act of representation in relation to specific issues. Just as the commonwealth is a construction of national units, so the nations of which it is composed are also composed of other plural units.

Just as the Asian community is represented in the act of presenting a position against a multiplicity of other positions in a relation to the processes of government, so the Asian political community is itself constituted in relation to the quality of its life as a political community. What makes plural units referred to as 'races' distinct from other divisions is their relation to national political communities outside Britain and the quality of government and democracy of those political communities measured against that of Britain. Those referred to as ethnic or racial minorities in current British political discourses are not able to escape that status which informs their construction as political communities. Workers for example do not have a relation to a foreign political community. Those referred to as ethnic or racial minorities in political discourse are therefore a unique form of political community as they have a referrent outside of Britain whereas other political communities do not. The commonwealth which the Labour Party was instrumental in creating was a political community in which the constituent parts were differentiated in terms of the qualities of the political communities from which they came. The British Labour Party created in the British commonwealth, a political community in which Britain was still to some extent the sovereign and ex-colonies the plural units of the British family of nations.

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