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Red faces

LABOUR couldn't organise a booze-up in a brewery.

Their plan to get more women on the Shadow Cabinet backfires with one **woman FEWER** being elected.

Hopeless Harriet Harman is voted out... but John Smith lets her keep her job!

Labour MPs wouldn't vote for Miss Harman...

So what makes Mr Smith think the electors will?

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Labour's troublesome women

The shadow cabinet vote was a setback for the party's attempts to modernise, says Anna Coote

Sisters on the platform: Jo Richardson (centre), former spokesperson on women's rights, Clare Short (left) and Joan Lestor *Photograph: Brian Harris*

THE LABOUR Party is a contradictory beast. In September Harriet Harman was catapulted on to the National Executive Committee, from nowhere to second place — a big vote of confidence from the constituencies. Out there, it seems, the party members rate her highly. But the lads they send to Parliament are this month in a different mood and have kicked her out of the Shadow Cabinet.

It is hard to know which factor tipped the balance against her. Was it not matching up to Portillo? Or being a middle-class Southerner? Or a high-flying moderniser? Or a woman with three children who hasn't time to fraternise in the bars? Certainly, a significant number of Labour MPs deeply resent having to vote for women at all.

This unexpectedly fierce backlash will probably do little damage to Harriet Harman or Ann Clwyd — who will no doubt bounce back next year. What it has exposed, though, is a real conflict in the party over the problem that has dogged it from its infancy: what to do about women.

Traditionally, Labour and the Tories have taken different routes to the hearts and votes of women. Women inside the Conservative Party were given a role which corresponded to their life at home: they were put in charge of domestic organisation. This was in line with Conservative ideology about women's role in life generally, which set them down squarely at the heart of the family, inhabiting a separate sphere from men, complementing rather than competing with them.

As wives and mothers they have had a special place in defending and upholding the essence of traditional Conservatism. As Ian Gilmour put it in his book *Inside Right*: "Conservatives rely chiefly upon the family and private property ... man is a member of the family before he is a member of anything else. The family is the centre of his affections and the transmitter of traditions."

When the Tories talk about equal rights for women it never quite rings true, but they have found the hearth-and-home approach quite adequate, and it still stands them in good stead today, Teresa Gorman notwithstanding.

Labour has had more trouble forming a distinctive relationship with women. It has never been able to beat the Tories at the family game, although it has tried. Its only real hope has been to appeal to women not simply as wives and mothers, but as equal citizens. In this sense, it can present itself as a "natural" home for them, because it has always been identified with egalitarian goals. It inherited the mantle of 19th-century socialist movements which, as Eric Hobsbawm wrote in *The Age of Empire*, "provided much the most favourable public environment for women ... to develop their personalities and talents". They promised a transformation of society and demanded a change in the "ancient patterns of the relation between the sexes".

But the Labour Party was set up with the explicit purpose of representing the trade unions at Westminster, to speak for the organised male working class. Its personality was formed in an exclusively masculine, production-based culture. It was assumed that the unions provided the party with all the working-class connections it needed, and so Labour never developed strong links with people who were not organised, paid workers. For most women, that meant their relationship with Labour was oblique, and relied on a class loyalty that took no account of their relative powerlessness within it.

The first Labour women who made it into Parliament posed no threat to any of this. Some were formidable fighters, but there were far too few to make an impact *as women*. Things seemed to take a turn for the better in the mid-Seventies, when Harold Wilson's government introduced a substantial programme of equality laws. Labour seemed to be responding to a new mood among women, recognising that they had needs distinct from men's, and votes that mattered.

Still, the old atmosphere hung about the party like smoke from the leader's pipe. Women's demands for equal rights at that time were met without disturbing the balance of power between men and women inside the party. With attention focused chiefly on pay and conditions at work — traditional trade union territory — it was possible to overlook more awkward realities, such as the fact that men still ran the unions and the party. Labour returned fewer women to Parliament in 1979 than in 1945.

In the Eighties, the women's movement began to make its presence felt. In opposition, Labour could no longer be lobbied to pass laws, so the focus shifted. On the one hand, women began to exercise some power in Labour-controlled local authorities; it was always marginal, and "municipal feminism" received a dreadful hammering in the press, but women were able to make tangible improvements to the work of some local councils and got a taste and some training for power.

At the same time, women looked to the party itself and began to demand changes that would give them a real voice within it. After some vicious battles, not least among women themselves, they won the right to have a woman on every shortlist for selecting a parliamentary candidate. Women very gradually grew stronger in the party, and a record number of female MPs (37) was returned to Parliament in 1992.

New arrangements for electing the Shadow Cabinet this year obliged all members of the PLP to vote for at least four women (while not guaranteeing four women's seats). And it was agreed at the party conference last month that half of the winnable seats at the next general election, and half the seats vacated by retiring Labour MPs, should have all-women shortlists.

After a decade in which Labour was slowly and painfully "feminised", the nature of women's political demands was also showing signs of change. Demands for equal rights had begun to give way to a new focus on the role of men — and the need for men to adapt to changes in women's lives. As Harriet Harman argues in her book *The Century Gap*, women had moved on and men had not caught up. In particular, they were not pulling their weight in the family: children were suffering not because more mothers were going out to work, but because fathers were still absent from the home.

This new focus has interesting potential as a pitch to women voters, because it blends Labour's egalitarian appeal with the Tories' domestic message. It also gives a promising new twist to Labour's call for "full employment" because it holds out the possibility of men as well as women working shorter hours, to combine paid employment with their parenting responsibility. But it hasn't gone down too well in one British workplace where there is a particularly high concentration of absentee fathers. The backwoodsmen in the Parliamentary Labour Party have taken their revenge. It is a setback not just for a couple of female MPs but for the party's attempts to modernise.

The author is the Hamlyn Fellow in Social Policy at the Institute for Public Policy Research.

This is not a disaster: quotas will still make us stronger

THE CHANGE from four to three in the number of women in Labour's Shadow Cabinet is neither a disaster nor a setback for Labour's commitment that men and women should share power equally in our party. It is, of course, hurtful for the women who lost their seats, but politics involves winning and losing. One new woman — Joan Lestor — was re-elected, having lost her seat previously. And everyone will have a chance to stand for election again next year.

Our system for electing the Shadow Cabinet is part of a major process of change taking place in the Labour Party at all levels. Our sister parties throughout the world are engaging in the same process of change. After years of exhortation for increased representation of women, but with very slow progress, we concluded that it was necessary to find a mechanism that would guarantee progress. The mechanism was pioneered by our sister parties in Scandinavia and Canada. It involves introducing quotas that require participants in all elections to vote for a fixed proportion of women. Political and individual choice remains, but the outcome of shared power is guaranteed.

Our quota in party elections is 40 per cent. Our sister party in Norway adopted the same quota some years ago. It was so successful that the proportion of women in powerful positions grew well beyond 40 per cent. The men then requested their own quota so that they would not be under-represented. This was granted — thus in Norway men and women are working as equals in the government.

In the case of Labour's shadow cabinet elections, we considered either reserving a fixed number of seats for women, or requiring that everyone who votes must vote for a minimum number of women. We decided that the quota should be on votes, not outcome. We always understood that this did not guarantee the number elected.

In this year's elections we moved from a quota of three, introduced in 1989, to four. There was a small — and noisy — rump of men in the Parliamentary Labour Party who opposed this change. They ensured that it was considered twice at PLP meetings. On both occasions the proposal was carried by a large majority — demonstrating that most male Labour MPs support the party's commitment to shared power.

The reason that only three women were elected this year was that a large number of women stood, the votes were widely spread, and therefore only three crossed the winning line. It is however, interesting that the four places just outside the Shadow Cabinet were all taken by women.

My own conclusion is that the system is working well. There is talk of plots by the men to get lots of women to stand and then dump votes on unelectable women to reduce the numbers that succeed. I have no doubt that the rump that resents the commitment of the party to shared power did engage in such plots. But each woman who stood must take responsibility for herself. There are always some who think politics is about plotting and fixing rather than voting for the best candidates. But democracy is the best system we've got.

It is hardly surprising that Labour's commitment to this significant change to shared power should cause some grumbling and groaning. There are still some very backward-looking men in the Labour Party, as elsewhere. But this process of change is not only about having a few token women at the top. It is about regenerating the party at all levels by ensuring that men and women get used to the idea of working side by side, as equals.

There are always conservatives who resist any deep change. What they do not understand is the way in which this change will strengthen the Labour Party internally and also its capacity to represent all the people of Britain.

Clare Short

The writer is Labour MP for Birmingham Ladywood

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Smith's gender trap

Trenchant view from the Left on how Labour men made 'jobs for the girls' vote a fiasco

POLITICAL COMMENTARY
By SARAH BAXTER
Political Editor of the New Statesman

THERE were a lot of male chauvinist Labour MPs with huge grins when the Shadow Cabinet election results were announced.

The women, they gloated, had been put in their place.

The conduct of these neanderthal men says more about them than the quality of the women who were standing for election. They have been revealed as nakedly sexist and more than a little malicious to boot.

I say this not because Harriet Harman and Ann Clwyd were voted off the Shadow Cabinet (although Miss Harman kept her front-bench job). For proof of the men's crass behaviour, look at the votes scored by Gwyneth Dunwoody and Mildred Gordon.

Gwyneth Dunwoody, the Right-wing 63-year-old MP for Crewe and Nantwich, is best known for acting as consultant to the fur trade — anathema to animal lovers. Mildred Gordon, 70-year-old MP for Bow and Poplar, is her exact opposite: a far-Left member of the Campaign Group.

Embarrassing

Left to their own devices, these two women could count on the support of a dozen MPs at most. In fact, they both won just over 80 votes. That means there were 70-odd Labour MPs — as many as one in four — who were prepared to vote for them out of pure spite. I find that chilling.

As they filled in their ballot papers, they may have thought that they were striking a blow against positive discrimination. Instead, they made fools of the Labour Party and fools of themselves.

Positive discrimination was introduced into Shadow Cabinet elections because Labour men could not be trusted to elect any women at all. This was profoundly embarrassing for a party which professed to be anti-sexist. Sooner or later, that cover was bound to be blown. But it is hypocrisy for everyone to pretend now that people are voted on or off the Shadow Cabinet according to merit.

The truth is that Labour men have a secret 'assisted places' scheme of their own. An undercover 'block vote' operates in favour of MPs from North-East England, Scotland and Wales, who meet regularly in regional groups. This explains the strong vote for virtual unknowns, such as defence spokesman David Clark, who represents South Shields; new overseas development spokesman Tom Clarke, a Scot; and Welsh spokesman Ron Davies. All three increased their vote despite lacklustre performances. Nobody has heard of them, so nobody has bothered to vilify them.

The women, by contrast, have had to endure a public campaign against them. They are much better known because there are fewer of them. They stand out because they wear colourful suits rather than the male MPs' grey uniform. They have been criticised for under-performing but, with the exception of Ann Taylor, the shadow education secretary, they had all been given non-jobs.

Harriet Harman, the shadow chief secretary to the Treasury, had to play second-fiddle all year to shadow chancellor Gordon Brown. Ann Clwyd and Mo Mowlam had to shadow John Major's new non-departments, National Heritage and the Citizen's Charter. Mo Mowlam did well in the elections because she is a hit with the men and hails from North-East England. She is also extremely talented, but that is beside the point.

Ann Taylor is universally agreed to have performed badly this year, but she represents a northern constituency and is no threat. So she kept her place. The veteran MP for Eccles, Joan Lestor, who did not stand last time, got elected by opposing the women's quota and earning the sexists' favour.

Harriet Harman and Ann Clwyd lost because they are regarded as 'uppity'. I have heard Miss Harman described by Labour men as 'lazy' because she tries to see her children before they go to bed (and then returns for the vote at 10pm). She works three times as hard as any of them. Miss Clwyd made no secret last year of her desire to be shadow foreign secretary and has been slapped down accordingly.

A group of male die-hards, led by Right-wing John Spellar and Left-wing Bob Cryer, have always opposed positive discrimination for women. They fought hard against the new quota and very nearly succeeded in blocking it. John Smith forced it through and, this week, the die-hards got their revenge. They succeeded in persuading moderate types that women would win six to eight seats if the vote was not spread between them.

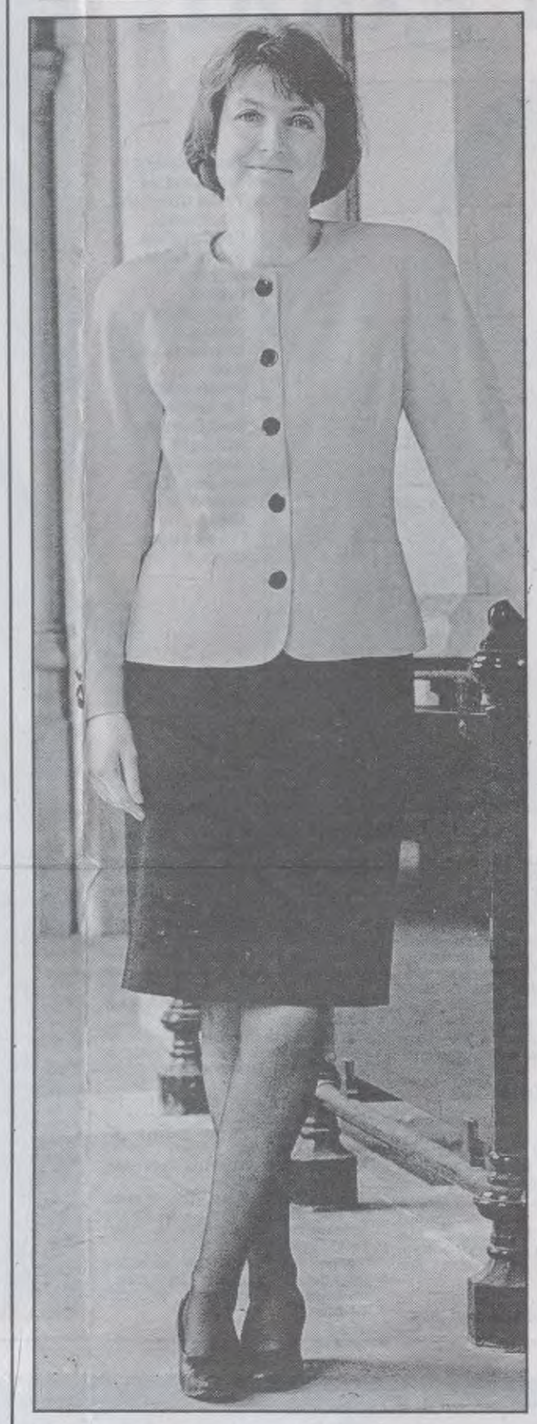
As a result, the Labour Party now looks very silly. It also faces more embarrassing battles over positive discrimination in parliamentary selections. The party conference voted last month in favour of women-only shortlists in half the safe Labour seats that become vacant.

This rebuff will make it very difficult for Labour to close the 'gender gap'. Only 35 per cent of women voted Labour at the last election, while 45 per cent voted Conservative. Men split 40-38 per cent for the Tories. If the 'gender gap' had been narrower, Neil Kinnock could now be heading a minority government.

Instead, Labour has been drifting alarmingly in opposition and this snub to women reinforces the image of a party going backwards.

It is no way to persuade floating voters that it is ready for government.

WINNERS AND LOSERS IN THE SHADOW CABINET



OUT/IN: Harriet Harman, 43, MP for Peckham.
Vote 99 (last time 135)
Position: 22 (last time 7)
ARTICULATE, reforming, modernising Smith supporter who became a chief target for the resentful male traditionalists. 'Caring' face of Labour, good on issues such as health but hopeless in the Treasury job Mr Smith decided she should keep despite the poll humiliation. Educated St Paul's School and York University and originally identified with the dungaree-wearing middle-class Left-wing women of the party. Was legal officer for the National Council for Civil Liberties from 1978 to 1982 after working at Brent Community Law centre for three years. Married to Transport and General Workers Union national secretary Jack Dromey. Two sons and one daughter.

IN: Joan Lestor, 61, MP for Eccles.
Vote: 110.
Position: 15
Did not stand last time
FIERY ex-Minister, veteran campaigner on apartheid and nursery education. Nicknamed 'Queen of the Soft Left' has surprised colleagues by not demanding higher-profile jobs. Education and Science Minister in 1969 in Wilson Government. Foreign Office Minister in 1974 but dropped for protests over Royal Navy manoeuvres off South Africa. Switched to Education but resigned in 1976 over nursery cuts. Divorced with two adopted children.

UP: Mildred Gordon, 70, MP for Bow and Poplar.
Votes 81 (47)
Position: 27 (34)
HARD-LEFT, radical feminist, who became an MP only in 1987 after retiring from teaching. Short, grandmotherly figure born and bred in London's East End. Once sponsored a motion calling for the rehabilitation of Leon Trotsky. Champion of women's quotas idea following its success advancing women in politics in Norway, home country of her second husband. Previously married for 34 years to Sam Gordon, described as a 'leading U.S. Trotskyist', who died in 1982. One son.

OUT: Ann Clwyd, 56, MP for Cynon Valley.
Vote 104 (133)
Position: 19 (10)
REBELLIOUS Leftist, former Guardian, Observer and BBC journalist. Initially shone in Commons with her moving eye-witness descriptions of the suffering of the Kurds but plummeted after being switched from Overseas Development brief to shadow Peter Brooke at Heritage. Married, Welsh-speaking, ardent on equality and anti-nuclear policies. Was dismissed in 1988 from junior post after defying Neil Kinnock on defence. First elected to Shadow Cabinet in 1989.

DOWN: Ann Taylor, 46, MP for Dewsbury.
Vote 116 (129)
Position: 14 (11)
SMART, wily, once considered a formidable Commons performer but fumbled brief at Education. Entered Parliament in 1974 and rapidly gained reputation as rising star. Has steadily moved Rightwards. Lost seat in Tory 1983 landslide, but re-entered Commons in 1987. As Environment spokesman mounted highly effective campaign against water privatisation, but has failed to capitalise on mistakes of foundering Education Secretary John Patten. Married with a son and daughter.

DOWN: Dawn Primarolo, MP for Bristol South.
Votes 87 (71)
Position 25 (23)
ARTICULATE but strident Left-winger nicknamed Red Dawn. Effective performance as junior Health spokesman. Slim, well turned-out, a favourite of young male Labour MPs. Came to national attention in mid-80s after being selected as candidate by Bristol South party which ditched MP Michael Cocks, Labour's former tough Chief Whip, in a bitterly fought contest. Once constituency secretary to Anthony Wedgwood Benn when he was a Bristol MP. Twice married, no children.

UP: Marjorie 'Mo' Mowlam, 43, MP for Redcar.
Vote 156 (135)
Position: 5 (8)
ARTICULATE, highly intelligent, soft-Left, cheeky extrovert. Emerged as star during Labour's 'prawn cocktail offensive' by charming City boardrooms with mixture of numeracy and dirty jokes. Has struggled to make a similar mark shadowing lacklustre Citizen's Charter Minister William Waldegrave. Seen as Labour's safest pair of female hands following eclipse of once high-flying Ann Taylor but will have to lift her game substantially to continue rising. Unmarried.

UP: Gwyneth Dunwoody, 62, MP for Crewe and Nantwich
Vote 82
Position: 26
Did not stand last time
PUNCHY, brave, centre-Right frontbencher from late 70s to mid-80s. Makes up in verbal handbagging for lightness of preparation. Nicknamed Madame Defarge, after French Revolution guillotine knitter, for embroidering during hearings into expelling Militants. Divorced, three children. Daughter of Baroness Phillips and late Labour general secretary Morgan Phillips.

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Does the g still hold back omen?

Statistics show that it is a man's world at the top

DROPPED: Ann Clwyd

SNUB: Harriet Harman

By ROSEMARY CARPENTER

IT'S hardly a shock as great as the toppling of Margaret Thatcher, but the possibility that Harriet Harman might be dropped from the Labour Shadow Cabinet sent frissons of disbelief and amazement through Westminster.

In what might be seen as a backlash against political correctness, the members of the Parliamentary Labour Party, having been told that they had to vote for at least four women, spread their votes among the 15 who stood, making sure that only two received enough votes. Harriet Harman and Ann Clwyd were two casualties of this so-called tea-room conspiracy, although John Smith overruled the result to keep Harman in her job.

For a long time we have been told that women can go anywhere, do anything. We are told that the metaphorical glass ceiling which prevents women from getting to the very top does not exist. But do the facts really bear this out?

As Sunday Express Editor Eve Pollard outlined in a speech yesterday at the Institute of Directors, in a Cabinet of 22 people we have only two women. Since 1918, only 164 women have been elected to Parliament and currently there are only 60 women MPs. We have yet to see a female Chancellor, Foreign Secretary, Home Secretary or Defence Secretary.

Although women make up 50 per cent of staff in the non-industrial civil service, they account for only nine per cent of the top civil servants. Half of all secondary school teachers in England are women, yet only one in five headteachers is a woman.

In law and medicine the statistics are as depressing. Seventy-three per cent of the partners of law firms are men, as are 79 per cent of practising barristers and 95 per cent of QCs. Only four of the 92 High Court Judges and 28 of the 495 Circuit Judges are women. In the police force there are 16,000 women out of a total of 138,000. Yet there is not a single female among the 90 Chief Constables and Deputy Chief Constables. In medicine, 85 per cent of hospital consultants are men.

Only two women now chair companies listed on the Stock Exchange and there are only 12 female chief executives.

So what does all this mean? That in spite of some notable exceptions, and they are few enough for everyone to be able to name them, women are not getting to the top.

YVE NEWBOLD, 52, Company Secretary of Hanson plc says: "The glass ceiling is very much a fact for us women battling on the career front. Even when you become Prime Minister, as Lady Thatcher reveals in her memoirs, you're still thinking you're surrounded by men who are marginalising you and not taking you seriously

committee chairman

'Women who have broken through in any area or profession not only become accepted but preferred'

of Jewish Care held at Institute of Directors presented the Woman Distinction 1993 award Eve Pollard. Helena phasised the need for re women on the ch. "Common law is ed on precedent, on gments made by male yers. We need a female rspective."

he had recently been to conference of women ges in New Zealand, d the English judge who s trying the case she s working on just fore she left was surised that there were ough women judges to a room, let alone peoe a conference. "I suppose you'll be burning our judicial bras," he id. "No," Helena replied, "We'll be smoking and telling dirty jokes."

In Eve Pollard's acceptance speech, although she pointed out how few women have achieved powerful and successful positions, she had one or two words of optimism.

"When women are good, they're better than men," she insisted. "Once women have broken through in any area or profession they become not only accepted but preferred. When a constituency elects a woman MP for the first time, a man is unlikely to be elected there again if there is a woman candidate."

With the glass ceiling still firmly in place, it's the breaking through that's the problem.

ROLL CALL OF HIGH ACHIEVERS

MANAGEMENT: Polizzi

PUBLIC SERVICE: Porter

BIG BUSINESS: Hughes

THESE are some of the women who bucked the trend and reached the top:

- **Margaret Thatcher, Britain's first woman Prime Minister.**
- **Barbara Mills, Director of Public Prosecutions, a field traditionally dominated by men.**
- **Betty Boothroyd became the first woman Speaker in the Commons.**
- **Kate Adie has demonstrated skill and bravery in war reporting, an area in which women are rarely involved.**
- **Elizabeth Butler-Sloss has done tremendous work as the first female Lord Justice of Appeal.**
- **Anita Roddick has exceptional business and entrepreneurial skills.**
- **Dame Cicely Saunders, founder of the modern hospice movement and of St Christopher's Hospice.**
- **Penny Hughes, a Sheffield University graduate who, at 33, has risen to be president of Coca-Cola Great Britain.**
- **Dame Shirley Porter, chairman of LBC amd former Mayor of Westminster, has outstanding achievements in public service.**
- **Olga Polizzi, who owns £21 million shares in Forte, the hotel group and is actively involved in management as building and design director on the main board.**
- **Liz Forgan, managing director of the BBC radio network.**

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EXPRESSIONS

glass ceiling still working women?

HONOURED: Helena Kennedy, left, Eve Pollard with Jenifer Rosenberg, Women of Distinction committee chairman

'Women who have broken through in any area or profession not only become accepted but preferred'

because you're a woman. I would say about 70 per cent of all career men are certainly not dedicated to the advancement of women. And whenever I hear men making placatory statements such as 'I don't object to women', I think, like the Earl of Chesterfield, 'The louder he talked of his honour, the faster we counted our spoons' and I suspect I'm in the presence of a male chauvinist."

Mrs Newbold says that Hanson is trying to fill an interesting top job at the moment. "We're not seeing women come forward. I think many of them feel it's such a bloody battle that they're not prepared to do it."

Another who says that many women are just not prepared to enter the masculine fray is Baroness Detta O'Cathain, 55, managing director of the Barbican Centre.

She says: "Ask any woman and, if she is truly honest, she will tell you that it is not top priority for her to get to the top. Higher on her list of priorities will be thoughts of a good home life and well-adjusted children.

"I've said to many high-flying women, 'Go that extra push to the top'. They consider it and refuse, they don't think it is worth it. Last weekend I went to Japan. It was an 80-hour trip and 40 of those were spent in airplanes or at airports. Not a lot of women are prepared to do that. Especially those with young children."

GAIL REEBUCK, 41, Chief Executive of Random Century is not surprised at the implications of the Labour Shadow Cabinet election. "What we're looking at is a backlash. Women have proved themselves to be competent and it's not to everyone's liking. All this proves is that those who previously pooh-poohed the notion of a backlash are wrong. There *are* women who are successful but I don't think all is won and that we can relax. We just have to carry on until we do have equality."

Helena Kennedy QC also spoke at the luncheon in aid of Jewish Care held at the Institute of Directors and presented the Woman of Distinction 1993 award to Eve Pollard. Helena emphasised the need for more women on the bench. "Common law is based on precedent, on judgments made by male lawyers. We need a female perspective."

She had recently been to a conference of women judges in New Zealand, and the English judge who was trying the case she was working on just before she left was surprised that there were enough women judges to fill a room, let alone people a conference. "I suppose you'll be burning your judicial bras," he said. "No," Helena replied, "We'll be smoking and telling dirty jokes."

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With the glass ceiling still firmly in place, it's the breaking through that's the problem.

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ies law, NUM told ● Labour feminists blame men for shadow cabinet poll

Vote recriminations fall on both sexes

Male conspiracy or female incompetence?

Patrick Wintour asks MPs what went wrong

FEMINIST MPs last night blamed male northern working class MPs, organised by some whips, for the failure of positive discrimination rules to put more women into the shadow cabinet.

However, the feminists conceded that some women contributed to the setback through so many of them standing.

Angela Eagle, MP for the Wirral, said: "I think it was quite cynical. There was clearly an organised attempt to disperse votes for women so they would have least effect.

"There were male MPs opposed to positive discrimination quite deliberately canvassing women to stand in the knowledge that they could not win.

"They organised a slate for that purpose. They even came and asked me to stand. At the risk of offending people, there were also some women MPs who, by standing, did our cause no good at all."

Kate Hoey and Joan Ruddock, for instance, both stood, even though, despite their various talents, they had no chance of being elected.

Conspiracy theorists claim that an alliance of the right, opposed to change, and the Campaign Group, opposed to the modernisers, co-operated for a slate that included women such as Irene Adams, MP for Paisley North only since 1990, and Mildred Gordon, of the Campaign Group.

Wittingly or unwittingly, both attracted votes from male MPs disaffected by the rule obliging them to vote for four women.

Mrs Adams polled 88 votes, only 19 fewer than the shadow foreign secretary, and Ms Gordon 81.

Joe Ashton, MP for Bassetlaw, acknowledged that too many women candidates split the vote, and characterised some female candidates as having "more ambition than ability".

Ms Gordon was yesterday unrepentant and unabashed. "The idea that I was being used is very insulting and stupid. Male MPs would not vote for me frivolously. It's too important that we have good people in the shadow cabinet."

However, some female opponents of the discrimination rule share many men's dislike of the London "wine bar tendency", apparently personified by Harriet Harman.

Gwyneth Dunwoody, MP for Crewe, said that it was not a question of gender. "People who had made idiots of themselves have been punished. They were punished not as women, but as idiots."

She claimed the rule had been engineered to get "not women in general, but certain very particular women" on to the front bench, women "who were of the opinion, unfortunately fostered by the previous Labour leader, that they had a god-given right to be amongst the chosen".

Diane Abbott, MP for Hackney North and no ally of Ms Harman, disagreed: "The lesson is some women completely underestimated how male chauvinist the parliamentary party is.

"They thought they could bring about a change by technical constitutional means and leave it to mens' good nature.

"It was ridiculous that 50 per cent of the eligible women MPs stood."

Janet Anderson, MP for Rossendale, concurred. "We have to act as a disciplined group next year."

Lynn Jones, MP for Selly Oak, also agreed: "Far too many of the women stood, and it allowed the misogynist tendency to throw away their votes."

One North-east MP gave his verdict. "The fact is that a lot of northern male MPs feel the party no longer wants them, and that the party is becoming a place for middle class women. They kicked back."

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PRESCOTT: Promotion

Anger as poll flop Harman is rewarded in shuffle

HARMAN: Keeps post

Top job for Prescott on Smith team

LABOUR bruiser John Prescott was rewarded with promotion in a shake-up of John Smith's Shadow Cabinet last night.

Mr Smith angered the party by refusing to bow to pressure to demote MPs who flopped in the annual popularity poll.

Harriet Harman unexpectedly keeps her job as Shadow Treasury Chief Secretary despite being voted off the Shadow Cabinet in a party poll.

But the other casualty in Wednesday's vote, former heritage spokeswoman Ann Clwyd, has been dumped from Mr Smith's frontbench team.

She is replaced by the flamboyant Mo Mowlam, who leapt from eight to fifth place in the poll and had been tipped to replace Miss Harman. Shadow Foreign Secretary Jack Cunningham, who scraped back on to the Shadow Cabinet in last place, surprisingly keeps his job. So does Shadow Education Secretary Ann Taylor.

By JON CRAIG Political Editor

And controversial Northern Ireland spokesman Kevin McNamara, who failed to win election to the Shadow Cabinet, stays on to the dismay of many Labour MPs.

Mr Prescott becomes Shadow Employment Secretary, a job his friends have claimed he wanted since his barnstorming party conference speech.

The promotion is a reward for his courageous performance in Brighton in which he rescued Mr Smith from almost certain defeat in the debate on party reforms.

He replaces Frank Dobson, who swaps places at transport with Mr Prescott but also becomes Labour spokesman on London with local elections due next year.

Last night the firebrand Mr Prescott declared: "Unemployment is going to be a major political issue and I'm going to put it right up front."

There are no changes among the top jobs. Shadow Trade and Industry Secretary Robin Cook, Shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown and Shadow Home Secretary Tony Blair all stay.

Newly elected George Robertson, Labour's highly rated spokesman on Europe in the Commons battles on Maastricht, becomes Shadow Scottish Secretary.

The other Shadow Cabinet newcomer, veteran Left-winger Joan Lestor, is made spokeswoman on children and the family.

Mr Smith's aides claimed it was a key post, since next year is to be the Year of the Family.

In another controversial move, Mr Smith appointed Left-winger Clare Short as spokeswoman on women, replacing Miss Mowlam.

She has already quit the front bench twice over differences on policy, first on Ulster, then the Gulf.

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Smith defies MPs' bid to dump Harriet

LABOUR leader John Smith last night defied his own MPs and refused to sack Shadow Cabinet beauty Harriet Harman.

He kept her as Treasury spokesman despite the vote by backbenchers to boot her off the Front Bench.

Male MPs attacked her lacklustre performance as they rebelled against a bid to put more women in top Labour jobs.

Transport spokesman John Prescott is promoted to Employment.

The Sun Says — Page Six

DAILY MIRROR
Holborn Circus, London EC1P 1DQ
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SHORT Women's champion, 47 formerly at social security **PRESCOTT** New employment spokesman, aged 55 **HARMAN** Stays as shadow No 2 at Treasury, aged 43

Defiant Smith gives top Labour jobs to the girls

By SHEREE DODD

JOHN Smith yesterday snubbed the men who voted Labour's golden girls off the shadow cabinet. He answered the challenge of male Labour MPs by appointing MORE women to his front bench team.

Harriet Harman, sensationally dumped in the annual poll, receives a special vote of confidence by being kept in the Treasury No 2 post.

RESHUFFLE: Smith

A Labour spokesman said: "Mr Smith believes she is an important person now and in the future."

The Labour leader also paid off his debt of gratitude to left-winger John Prescott, darling of the Labour conference.

Mr Prescott is promoted to employment spokesman. Male MPs had protested at new rules compelling them to vote for at least four women.

They spread their votes around, giving them to no-hope candidates.

Dumped

Mr Smith's reshuffle increases the number of women in leading positions from five to six.

But there is no place for the second dumped woman, Ann Clwyd.

Outspoken left-winger Clare Short is appointed to the front bench with responsibility for women.

Veteran MP Joan Lestor returns to a post she held in Neil Kinnock's team – spokeswoman for children and the family.

Mo Mowlam, who came fifth in the poll of MPs, has been given a higher profile job as heritage spokeswoman.

The party's main posts are unchanged.

Jack Cunningham, who only just scraped into the shadow cabinet, stays as shadow foreign secretary. Frank Dobson swaps with Mr Prescott at transport.

Shadow cabinet newcomer George Robertson takes over as Scottish spokesman.

He replaces Tom Clarke who goes to Overseas Aid.

● Four male officials of Kingswinford borough Labour Party at Dudley, West Midlands, have quit in protest at the new rules – and also reported the party to the Equal Opportunities Commission for alleged sex discrimination.

THE STAR
245 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 9UX
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John's top job swop

LABOUR darling John Prescott swopped jobs with Frank Dobson in a shadow cabinet reshuffle last night.

Prescott became shadow employment secretary, while Dobson took over transport and London.

Harriet Harman — dumped in the annual poll — kept her front bench job after a vote of confidence from leader John Smith.

THE GUARDIAN
119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER
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Women's lists 'not illegal'

Martin Linton

LABOUR's new policy of having women-only shortlists does not contravene sex discrimination legislation, the Equal Opportunities Commission said yesterday. The ruling was based on legal advice that political parties are exempt from the Sex Discrimination Act.

The EOC received complaints from the National Union of Mineworkers and several party members after the Brighton conference agreed to introduce women-only parliamentary candidate shortlists in half its winnable seats.

The NUM, whose members are 90 per cent men, feared they would lose some of their 12 sponsored seats if the constituency parties were not allowed to consider male candidates when the present MPs retired.

The EOC also said it could not act on complaints from party members aggrieved at a rule change earlier this year under which half the officers in a constituency Labour Party have to be women.

Four members of Dudley Labour party resigned their posts this week as a protest against the rule under which one of them was barred from continuing as the Kingswinford North branch treasurer even though no woman volunteered for the job.

Jim Sutton, a member since 1945, had continued keeping books in an unofficial capacity since February, but said he found the situation untenable: "I am not in competition for the job with any other member, but I am barred from office because I am a man."

The EOC's announcement is bound to fuel the row in the Parliamentary Labour Party over this week's shadow cabinet elections in which two women lost their seats despite a new rule that MPs must vote for at least four women.

Ann Carlton, a lone campaigner against special treatment for women in the party, said MPs had voted for the rule change on a show of hands but for the shadow cabinet in secret. "On the rule change, a lot of men and women were scared to speak up. In the shadow cabinet election they showed their real feelings about candidates on the basis of their parliamentary performance."

Under the new rule, Labour will have to select their candidates from women-only shortlists in 50 per cent of their marginal seats and seats where sitting Labour MPs retire.

Joe Ashton, MP for Bassetlaw, says any attempt to force a shortlist of outside women on a rock-solid mining area might result in a constituency refusing to endorse any candidate.

Fionna Fox, of the EOC, said yesterday's ruling "does not mean that a man could not take a case to the industrial tribunal. It just means that the EOC would not back them, because our legal advice is that they would not win."

The new shadow cabinet

Opposition Leader: John Smith, 55; **Deputy Leader**: Margaret Beckett, 50; **Treasury and economic affairs**: Gordon Brown, 42; **Foreign and Commonwealth affairs**: Jack Cunningham, 54; **Home affairs**: Tony Blair, 40; **Trade and industry**: Robin Cook, 47; **Health**: David Blunkett, 46; **Employment**: John Prescott, 55; **Transport and London**: Frank Dobson, 53; **Defence**: David Clark, 54; **Education**: Ann Taylor, 44; **Social Security**: Donald Dewar, 56; **Scotland**: George Robertson, 47; **Children and family**: Joan Lestor, 61; **Wales**: Ron Davies, 47; **Citizen's Charter**: Michael Meacher, 53; **National Heritage**: Marjorie Mowlam, 44; **Local government**: Jack Straw, 47; **Environmental protection**: Chris Smith, 42; **Development and co-operation**: Tom Clarke, 52.

Appointments outside the shadow cabinet are:

Chief secretary to the Treasury: Harriet Harman, 43; **Women**: Clare Short, 47; **Agriculture**: Gavin Strang, 50; **Northern Ireland**: Kevin McNamara, 59.

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Friday October 22 1993

Smith retains Harman in finance role

Patrick Wintour
Political Correspondent

JOHN SMITH, the Labour Party leader, overruled his parliamentary party last night when he retained Harriet Harman as shadow Treasury chief secretary, despite Labour MPs throwing her off the shadow cabinet in a backlash against both her and the cause of positive discrimination with which she is closely associated.

Mr Smith's decision initally went down badly with many Labour MPs, including some of Ms Harman's friends, one of whom said: "It's like throwing the Christians to the lions. Michael Portillo, the Chief Secretary, is going to say how can the country trust her with the economy when her own MPs don't?"

Gordon Brown, the shadow chancellor, battled to keep her, however, and she now has one more year to prove she can master the detail of an economics portfolio. Mr Smith still has confidence and recognises that she is a good deal more popular in the country at large than she is in the Commons tea rooms.

Ms Harman said in a statement last night: "I am very pleased to have been reappointed to this important post."

The other victim of the backlash, Ann Clwyd, has not been offered a job, although her vote was higher than Ms Harman's.

Elsewhere in a wide-ranging reshuffle, Mr Smith bowed to John Prescott's unabashed call to be shifted from the transport to the employment portfolio, so giving the indefatigible Mr Prescott a chance to campaign not only against mass unemployment but also inside the party's economic sub-committees for a Labour policy heavily geared to job creation.

Mr Prescott's shift is a reward for his delivery of the unions behind one-member-one-vote over the summer, but it is also a blow to Frank Dobson, the incumbent, who was disenchanted with Mr Prescott's open campaign for his job.

Mr Dobson might have expected to keep employment on the basis that he came joint second in Wednesday's poll. Mr Smith had to sweeten the pill of transferring him back to transport by adding the post of shadow minister for London, an important job with the local elections imminent.

Elsewhere, George Robertson, new to the shadow cabinet, was given the post of shadow Scottish secretary, replacing Tom Clarke, who was transferred to overseas development.

Michael Meacher, previous overseas development spokesman, was switched to the Citizen's Charter where he will monitor William Waldegrave. This frees Marjorie Mowlam, fifth in the poll, to be shadow national heritage spokeswoman in succession to Ms Clwyd.

Some MPs hoped to see Ms Mowlam given the task of tackling Mr Portillo, but her relations with Mr Brown are cool. Clare Short is given the task of women's spokeswoman from outside the shadow cabinet, while Joan Lestor, re-elected for the first time in two years, is given her old brief of children.

Three of the most criticised spokesmen, John Cunningham on foreign affairs, David Clark on defence and Ann Taylor on education, all retain their jobs.

Elsewhere in the party, Tom Sawyer, No. 2 at the National Union of Public Employees, quashed speculation that he was interested in succeeding the party general secretary, Larry Whitty.

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Labour's tearoom plotters have proved that positive discrimination won't work

Injured parties

LIBBY PURVES

And let it be a lesson to us all! Personally, I have a lot of time for Harriet Harman, Ann Clwyd, and Clare Short. All three seem to me perfectly suited to administration: they would do it with less fuss and venality than many of the shifty bunch in trousers who people the front benches. They are good women for the job, and no actual purpose has been served by the Labour party's having kept them out of the shadow cabinet.

Nonetheless, my heart took a small, surprising leap when it became apparent that in a tearoom plot this week, Labour MPs meekly obeyed the letter of the new party rule — about voting for at least four women — while utterly disregarding its spirit.

Crafty tactical voting was made possible by the candidature of one or two women no modern Labourite would vote for with a bargepole; on these women they insincerely lavished votes which ought to have gone to the likes of Harriet Harman. The net result, of course, was that no sooner was "positive discrimination" solemnly written into the party rules than the number of women in the shadow cabinet fell from four to three.

Admittedly, it would have been even funnier if the chaps had got their wires crossed and ended up electing — say — Mildred Gordon, thus saddling themselves with a far-leftist who was also female. But never mind. The thing they did to the Labour women on the Night of the Long Teaspoons was unfair but ultimately quite useful. It will jangle some alarm bells without permanently impeding any careers. The rebels demonstrated the salutary truth that for senior jobs, formal positive discrimination never works.

Informal positive discrimination, of course, works a treat. Women are fairly new to public and professional leadership in Britain, and even the best of them sometimes needs to be shored up. Not by a cumbersome quota system, but by a lot of quiet encouragement: an enlightened appointments policy which makes an effort to understand its own prejudices; a discreet and trustworthy mentor, and perhaps a supportive lieutenant of the Willie Whitelaw kind.

The only place to play around with quotas is at the very bottom of the ladder, where it actually works in a simple, unworrying way. Take the headmaster who set aside computer and workshop time for girls only, the rest of the time being shared. His motives were entirely pragmatic: he did it because the boys were visibly hogging the equipment, being at an aggressive stage. If the girls had not used their special time, it would have been taken away.

Similarly, it makes sense for traditionally male professions to work hard at recruiting women trainees, if only to widen the pool of talent. In engineering apprenticeship this is being done with considerably energy: there are even moments when employers let a good woman beat an equally good man *pour encourager les autres*. Indeed, a group of young women engineers once told me that their main problem was not male teasing, but the boring insistence of their employers that they keep leaving their VDUs or taking off their hard hats to talk to the media or to schools about the glory of being a woman in engineering.

After such a kick-start, however, and given reasonable support (which we are not) by the tax system, women are better on their own. Positive discrimination for senior positions only makes men defensive and paranoid, and women aggressive, because they are never quite sure in their inmost hearts that they got the job on merit. No sneer cuts deeper than "token woman"; nothing sours a triumph faster than the suggestion "they wanted a woman". If an institution is stupid enough to put any such desire in the rulebook, those sneers will poison the whole system. Deplorable, but true.

But as the years go by, the education of girls is taken increasingly seriously, and small, useful leg-ups given early on. I bet that on the employment mountain we shall see ever more women appearing above the tree-line, crying "Excelsior!" as convincingly as any man and heading for the high plateaux.

Some, after all, already have. Who can erase, in National Thatcher Week, the extraordinary impression of the BBC documentary abut her early years? Every interview with every poor old Tory grandee confirmed it: lapels quivered, eyes watered and the smell of terror overcame that of bay-rum and cigars as she cut through swathes of lordly gents like a shapely scythe. She ate them up and spat them out: she was Bertie Wooster's Aunt Agatha, she was Lady Bracknell, Boadicea and Gloriana.

Couldn't stand most of her policies, myself; but she did prove, like Barbara Castle before her, that a fiery woman can burn her way through the densest masculine flannel like a hot iron through blankets. And any help she had will lie way back, half-forgotten: in memories of a father, encouragement of a husband, perhaps in some early selection board's giving her the benefit of the doubt when she was young and gauche. Beyond that, let her be unsexed, and taken on her merits.

MORNING STAR
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Vote in res

HARRIET HARMAN was ret Treasury secretary last night des off the shadow Cabinet.

by MIKE AMBROSE

Labour leader John Smith gave John Prescott the employment job following his party conference speech which helped save Mr Smith from defeat over OMOV.

Frank Dobson is shifted to transport although, as a sweetener, he will also be Labour's "Mr London" in the run up to next year's council elections.

Party officials said that Ms Harman's appointment was a vote of confidence in her, but denied that the appointment was a snub to Labour MPs, who had voted her out.

But there was no reprieve for Ann Clwyd, who also lost out in the MPs' poll.

And Joan Lestor, who returned to the shadow Cabinet, was denied a full portfolio and will have responsibility for "children and the family."

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ISSUE DATE 22 OCT 199

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Labour's leader missed a chance to strengthen h

IT WAS what you might call a Majorite reshuffle: cautious, unambitious, and carefully calculated not to upset the competing interests of different wings of the party.

So the new line-up for

THE new shadow cabinet is: John Smith, opposition leader; Margaret Beckett, deputy leader and shadow leader of the house; Gordon Brown, Treasury and economic affairs; Jack Cunningham, foreign and commonwealth affairs; Tony Blair, home affairs; Robin Cook,

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THE SCOTSMAN !
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Clarke axed as Scots Labour leader

New man Robertson vows fighting style

By Joy Copley
Political Correspondent

GEORGE Robertson was last night appointed shadow Scottish Secretary as Tom Clarke was dramatically switched to overseas development.

The change in the Scottish portfolio was one of the first decisions John Smith, the Labour leader, made after the results of the shadow cabinet elections were revealed on Wednesday night.

Mr Smith suprised MPs by defying his parliamentary party and allowing Harriet Harman to keep her job as shadow chief secretary to the Treasury in spite of not collecting enough votes to remain in the shadow cabinet.

John Prescott, the darling of the Labour conference, got the job he wanted as shadow employment secretary and Frank Dobson was switched, reluctantly, to be spokesman for transport and London.

George Robertson: Looking forward to fighting opposition

Mr Robertson, 47, who was Labour's European affairs spokesman, said he was delighted with the job and described himself as a "passionate and patriotic Scot".

"It's great to be back and I am looking forward to leading a powerful and fighting opposition," he said.

Promising to display a combative style, he vowed: "I intend to cause the maximum trouble to this Governemment and anyone else who causes damage to the Scottish people."

Mr Robertson's masterminding of Labour's assault on the Maastricht Treaty bill boosted his reputation massively as a tough and eloquent parliamentarian.

He was credited with being an extraordinary tactitian who engineered amendments that successfully brought Tory rebels on board causing Government defeats and ultimately forcing a vote of confidence over John Major's leadership.

Mr Clarke, who has been criticised for being lacklusture over the last 15 months, was called in to see Mr Smith shortly after the election results were announced on Wednesday night.

He said that he saw his new job as a fresh challenge. "I have very, very much enjoyed the Scottish job. But this is the nature of politics. If asked by the leader, then you move on to the next challenge.

"I said that I would take any job the leader thought appropriate. He invited me to do overseas development and I intend to do it effectively."

Mr Clarke said he was proud of his achievements as shadow Scottish secretary. "The job has been a great challenge and during that time we have seen an increased lead in the opinion polls, won by-elections and achieved a new unity within the Labour group. We also halted the privatisation of water."

Mr Clarke increased the number of votes he polled to 120 from 105 last year. The result confounded his critics but, according to sources close to the leadership, "Robertson was still the best man for the job".

In the early 1980s, Mr Robertson was seen as the scourge of the Left but last night the initial reaction from leading left-wingers was reassuring.

John McAllion, a leading member of Scotland United, said: "George is a very able parliamentary performer and I am sure he will give Ian Lang [the Scottish Secretary] a hard time, and that is the most important thing. He also signed the Claim of Right and supported the Consitutional Convention's scheme for a powerful Scottish parliament with entrenched powers, so I do not expect any change of policies."

Tom Clarke: Accepted offer of overseas development

The decision to retain Ms Harman came in spite of the fact she polled only 99 votes.

Ms Harman said: "My task now is to get on with the job and speak for all those who have been betrayed by the Tories; leading the campaign to block VAT on gas and electricty and making it clear that Labour has a better way."

Marjorie Mowlam was promoted from being spokeswoman on the Citizens' Charter and women's rights to become shadow national heritage secretary.

Michael Meacher switches from overseas development to the Citizens' Charter. Joan Lestor, the other new face in the team, takes up the children and family portfolio.

Passionate patriot; Change of tack, Page 6

Editorial, Page 18

party.

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Vote ignored in reshuffle

HARRIET HARMAN was retained as shadow Treasury secretary last night despite being kicked off the shadow Cabinet.

by MIKE AMBROSE

Labour leader John Smith gave John Prescott the employment job following his party conference speech which helped save Mr Smith from defeat over OMOV.

Frank Dobson is shifted to transport although, as a sweetener, he will also be Labour's "Mr London" in the run up to next year's council elections.

Party officials said that Ms Harman's appointment was a vote of confidence in her, but denied that the appointment was a snub to Labour MPs, who had voted her out.

But there was no reprieve for Ann Clwyd, who also lost out in the MPs' poll.

And Joan Lestor, who returned to the shadow Cabinet, was denied a full portfolio and will have responsibility for "children and the family."

DOWN BUT NOT OUT: Harriet Harman, still shadow Treasury secretary .

George Robertson is made Scottish spokesman following his first success in the poll.

Consequent shifts mean that Tom Clarke moves to Overseas Development, Michael Meacher to Citizen's Charter and Marjorie Mowlam to National Heritage.

The election result was a grave embarrassment to the party leadership as only three women were elected despite new rules saying that all MPs must vote for four women.

Right-wing male chauvinists voted for women candidates with no chance of winning in a protest vote aimed at keeping women out.

Left MP Dennis Skinner said that the rules should be changed to ensure that the women with the most votes went onto the shadow Cabinet.

While Ms Harman' s defeat was partially attributable to the male chauvinists, there was also considerable criticism of her failing to make an impact as part of Labour's economic team.

There was little political change following the election with right-wing traditionalist George Robertson replacing moderniser Harriet Harman and Joan Lestor replacing fellow Tribune MP Ann Clwyd.

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Steady as she goes in Smith's reshuffle

Labour's leader missed a chance to strengthen his team, writes **Philip Stephens**

IT WAS what you might call a Majorite reshuffle: cautious, unambitious, and carefully calculated not to upset the competing interests of different wings of the party.

So the new line-up for Labour's shadow cabinet announced by Mr John Smith will not signal any significant tilt in the balance of advantage between government and opposition front benches in the House of Commons. Neither anyway claims to be overflowing with talent.

Mr Smith can plead of course that, unlike the prime minister, a Labour leader in opposition cannot choose his own team. The membership of the shadow cabinet was decided earlier this week by the votes and vicissitudes of Labour MPs. All Mr Smith was left to do was re-allocate the portfolios.

As expected the pugnacious Mr John Prescott – credited with rescuing the leadership during last month's party conference confrontation with the unions over internal democracy – got his reward.

Placed third in the shadow cabinet elections, his transfer to employment gave him the economic portfolio he wanted.

Mr Frank Dobson was compensated for his switch to transport with the additional responsibility for policy towards London. But beyond repaying his debt to the (generally underrated) Mr Prescott, Mr Smith was anxious not to rock too many boats.

As expected Mr Gordon Brown and Mr Tony Blair, the two leading "modernisers", kept their portfolios as shadow chancellor and shadow home secretary respectively. Mr Robin Cook remains at trade and industry.

By common consent at Westminster the shadow cabinet has had three crucial weaknesses since the general election – in the posts of foreign affairs, education and chief secretary to the Treasury. Mr Smith has decided against remedying them.

Mr Jack Cunningham, scarcely visible since the general election as shadow foreign secretary, retains his post in spite of a slump in his vote in this week's elections.

In the words of one of their colleagues, Mr Smith and Mr Cunningham "go back a long way".

Ms Harriet Harman's televisual skills were not enough to keep her place on the shadow cabinet. She is judged by her peers as no match for Mr Michael Portillo as the shadow to the chief secretary to the Treasury.

But Mr Smith exercised his prerogative to keep her in place anyway, although without a seat at the shadow cabinet table. His officials said it was a mark of Mr Smith's political authority that he was prepared to override the views of the parliamentary party.

Others were far from convinced, arguing that the pivotal job of shaping Labour's approach to public spending demanded a political heavyweight. Mr Chris Smith, wasted as the party's environment spokesman, would have been an ideal replacement.

At education Mrs Ann Taylor has been similarly at sea, in spite of the open goal offered by Mr John Patten's battles over the schools curriculum and testing. She remains in place.

There were other curious decisions. Ms Marjorie Mowlam is deemed one of the more effective members of the front-bench team.

But even though she same fifth in this week's poll she was moved sideways from science and the civil service to national heritage.

Nor did Mr Smith take full advantage of Mr George Robertson's long-overdue elevation to Labour's senior front-bench team.

The former European affairs spokesman masterminded Labour's tactics during the protracted struggle over ratification of the Maastricht treaty. He will be an effective shadow for Mr Ian Lang, Scottish secretary. But many in his party believe Mr Robertson's talents would have been better employed in a more wide-ranging job.

Overall, the election results and Mr Smith's limited musical chairs reinforced the mood at the Brighton conference which put Labour's modernisers on the defensive.

In internal debates over economic policy Mr Prescott will join Mr Cook as a critic of Mr Brown's efforts to dump the party's remaining ideological baggage.

The new employment spokesman is one of the most outspoken of what he terms his party's "beautiful people".

The modernisers will draw from Mr Smith's approach the message that he prefers caution to boldness. For the time being the party's "one-more-heave" tendency are back in Labour's driving seat.

THE new shadow cabinet is: John Smith, opposition leader; Margaret Beckett, deputy leader and shadow leader of the house; Gordon Brown, Treasury and economic affairs; Jack Cunningham, foreign and commonwealth affairs; Tony Blair, home affairs; Robin Cook, trade and industry; David Blunkett, health; John Prescott, employment; Frank Dobson, transport and London; David Clark, defence; Ann Taylor, education; Donald Dewar, social security; George Robertson, Scotland; Joan Lestor, children and family; Ron Davies, Wales; Michael Meacher, Citizen's Charter; Mo Mowlam, national heritage; Jack Straw, local government; Chris Smith, environmental protection; Tom Clarke, development and co-operation.

Appointments outside the shadow cabinet: Harriet Harman, chief secretary to the Treasury; Clare Short, women; Gavin Strang, agriculture; Kevin McNamara, Northern Ireland.

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THE TIMES
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Delighted of Dulwich

MARGARET THATCHER may have spent only a few nights in the Barratt home she once owned in Dulwich, but evidently she still has a soft spot for the genteel London suburb. She has just donated a cheque for £1,000 to the Dulwich Picture Gallery, Britain's oldest public art gallery.

Her cheque came in response to a request for material for an exhibition about Dulwich and its better-known residents. Baroness Thatcher replied that she could not send photographs or information, because her stay in the area was so short. "Lady Thatcher has asked me to say how much she liked the Dulwich area," wrote her assistant, Cynthia Crawford. "Unfortunately, it took a longer time generally than envisaged to get to the House of Commons when she departed from Number 10 . . . I enclose here a cheque for £1,000 towards the funds for the gallery."

The gallery, which was saved earlier this year from closure by a £200,000 donation from the Clore Foundation, earned Thatcher's gratitude after it lent her two paintings for No 10. "We lent her William Hogarth's *Portrait of an Unknown Man* and another portrait by Thomas Gainsborough," says a gallery spokesman. "She was very keen they should be British artists."

The gallery has found its own photo of Lady Thatcher for the exhibition, but in hanging it has risked offending her patriotic sensibilities. It is placed beside another famous Dulwich resident, Lord Haw Haw, who was executed in 1946 for treason, after broadcasting German propaganda.

● *Sentiment clearly plays no part in this government's decision-making. The South West London Hospital Review Steering Group has recommended that both in-patient services and the accident and emergency department at Queen Mary's Hospital, Roehampton, be closed. This despite the fact that John Major was born there, as was at least one of Virginia Bottomley's children.*

Jingle all the way

CHART-TOPPING English National Opera soprano Lesley Garrett, better known for her corsets than her contralto, has come to the musical aid of Classic FM. Garrett has just completed six vocal jingles for the radio station.

"She kept commenting whenever she came in that it wasn't fair that we didn't have singing jingles. In the end she just volunteered to do them and we took her off to the studio," says Will Sussman, producer of the programme *Classic Report*. It must, however, have required a little more planning than that, for Garrett is backed by the Royal Philharmonic.

Speech impediment

MARGARET THATCHER set the trend when she stole John Major's thunder at the Tory party conference. Now Lord Lawson is likely to grab the Chancellor's glory, by returning to his old stamping ground, the Mansion House, to deliver a speech to City businessmen just before Kenneth Clarke's Budget on November 30.

Lawson has agreed to be the guest speaker at a City luncheon held by the British Dyslexia Association on November 16. The event will be one of the first functions at the Mansion House since its £11 million refurbishment.

"It's a pre-Budget City lunch, and I am sure the present Chancellor will find it interesting," says Diana Baring, vice-president of the association. She adds that Lawson "is obviously tremendously in favour of literary issues. I spoke to him today and I think he will be very stimulating."

Lawson will of course be all too familiar with his surroundings at the lunch. It was there, in the autumn of 1989, that he announced that the British people had "temporarily forgotten the habit of thrift". Faced with the huge budget deficit, Clarke might well feel the same of the government in 1993.

● *Enoch Powell's provocative assessment in Edinburgh yesterday that Lady Thatcher was "no thinker" but had some sort of female "instinct" was hardly gallant. And something of a surprise coming from the man who after her Falklands victory so famously certified that Thatcher was made of "ferrous matter of the highest quality". But that was before ferrous intuition led Thatcher to the Anglo-Irish agreement, of course.*

Who's left behind?

IS Harriet Harman's drubbing in the shadow cabinet elections the revenge of male colleagues for her criticism of their sex in her latest book?

In *The Century Gap*, the Labour Treasury spokesperson, who clocked up only 99 votes, argues that women have entered the 21st century while men remain trapped in the 20th century. It's time they grew up, is her message.

She praises the quota system which guarantees women five seats in the shadow cabinet, because "the problem was that Labour MPs would not vote in large enough numbers for their female colleagues". But she adds presciently: "Men will be especially unwilling to share power if they feel that the women are not up to the job . . ."

Lynch mob

EITHER Mark Frost is a supreme diplomat or there is good news on its way for British actors and directors. For Frost, best known for creating the surreal *Twin Peaks* television series with David Lynch, wants Brits to feature large in the film version of his new novel, *The List of Seven*.

Universal has bought the film rights to the Victorian epic, which makes free with the life of Conan Doyle. "British actors would be very much in order," says Frost. "The main characters are between 25 and 35, so perhaps Daniel Day Lewis or Kenneth Branagh."

Despite serious reservations about the second series of *Twin Peaks*, Frost is already advanced on a sequel to the novel, provisionally entitled *The Six Messiahs*. "It's set ten years later, when Conan Doyle goes to the States and meets people like Thomas Edison." Sounds like we're talking a one film deal for the Brits.

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Harman to retain shadow Treasury job despite vote

By David Owen

MR JOHN SMITH decided last night to retain Ms Harriet Harman as shadow chief Treasury secretary despite her failure in Wednesday night's annual shadow cabinet election.

The Labour leader made only limited changes to his team, although Mr John Prescott was rewarded for his performance at last month's Labour conference with promotion to shadow employment secretary – one of the three core economic jobs.

Labour officials characterised the decision to keep Ms Harman on as a signal of Mr Smith's determination not to be pushed around by the parliamentary party. The decision means the shadow chief secretary's job will be held by someone outside the shadow cabinet for the first time in seven years.

But Mr Smith's caution was greeted with dismay by some shadow cabinet members who had expected a wider-ranging shake-up.

The changes will take effect after next month's Queen's speech, leaving Mr Prescott, as the present transport spokesman, free to spearhead Labour's opposition to the railways bill when it returns to the Commons.

Mr Smith made no changes in the four senior portfolios, with Mr Jack Cunningham reconfirmed as shadow foreign secretary, in spite of retaining his shadow cabinet place by a margin of just three votes.

Mr Robin Cook, who topped the poll, will remain as shadow trade and industry secretary. Mr Gordon Brown and Mr Tony Blair, the party's foremost modernisers who both dropped down the rankings, stay as shadow chancellor and shadow home secretary respectively.

Mr George Robertson, elected to the shadow cabinet for the first time, was moved straight into a prominent position as shadow Scottish secretary. The experienced Ms Joan Lestor, the other newcomer, was given a newly created portfolio with responsibility for children and the family.

Mr Prescott swapped jobs with Mr Frank Dobson, another leading figure from the party's centre-left, with whom he tied for second place in Wednesday night's ballot. But Mr Dobson will retain responsibility for London in moving from employment to transport. Ms Marjorie Mowlam was moved from the public services portfolio to national heritage in place of Ms Ann Clwyd, who lost her shadow cabinet seat. Mr Tom Clarke was moved from Scotland to overseas development, replacing Mr Michael Meacher who will take over the public services beat.

Officials said there would be no procedural changes for next year's election. In spite of a rule change introduced this year which was designed to increase female representation on the shadow cabinet, the number of women elected fell from four to three.

polls by allowing him to swap jobs with Frank Dobson. Mr Prescott was moved from transport to take over the employment portfolio.

Mr Smith cocked a snook at the men who had plotted to minimise the number of women on the shadow cabinet by reappointing Harriet Harman as shadow chief Treasury secretary and keeping Ann Taylor in her job at education. Ms Harman was ousted from the shadow cabinet on Wednesday night and Mrs Taylor's vote dropped from the previous year. Both women have come under heavy criticism for their performances in their respective posts and it was widely rumoured that they would be moved even if they were re-elected.

Mr Smith was determined not to be bullied by the party, particulary as he had to intervene personally to ensure that MPs voted for four women candidates. The shadow cabinet results, which led to only three women being elected, amounted to a personal slap in the face.

The shadow Treasury team rallied round Ms Harman yesterday after speculation by some MPs that she was going to be replaced by Marjorie Mowlam. That appointment would have been strongly resisted by the Treasury team led by Gordon Brown.

A senior Labour official said that the decision to keep Ms Harman as shadow chief secretary reflected Mr Smith's appreciation of her talents. "It's a vote of confidence in her. He believes she is an important person now and in the future."

The decision will irritate many MPs who believe that Ms Harman has been ineffective over the past year and has

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By Alice
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1 Pennington Street, London E1
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Smith ignores MPs by keeping women in shadow posts

BY JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHN Smith blatantly ignored the views of Labour MPs yesterday and kept the party's top women in their jobs despite their poor showing in the shadow cabinet elections.

He rewarded John Prescott's vigorous performance at Brighton and his rise in the polls by allowing him to swap jobs with Frank Dobson. Mr Prescott was moved from transport to take over the employment portfolio.

Mr Smith cocked a snook at the men who had plotted to minimise the number of women on the shadow cabinet by reappointing Harriet Harman as shadow chief Treasury secretary and keeping Ann Taylor in her job at education. Ms Harman was ousted from the shadow cabinet on Wednesday night and Mrs Taylor's vote dropped from the previous year. Both women have come under heavy criticism for their performances in their respective posts and it was widely rumoured that they would be moved even if they were re-elected.

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A senior Labour official said that the decision to keep Ms Harman as shadow chief secretary reflected Mr Smith's appreciation of her talents. "It's a vote of confidence in her. He believes she is an important person now and in the future."

The decision will irritate many MPs who believe that Ms Harman has been ineffective over the past year and has never grasped her brief at the Treasury. "Give her any brief but an economic one," said one MP.

Ms Mowlam, who came fifth in the poll, moves from her post as spokeswoman on the Citizen's Charter and women's rights to shadow national heritage secretary. The previous incumbent, Ann Clwyd, failed to win re-election to the shadow cabinet but is expected to get a high-profile frontbench job, possibly European affairs.

George Robertson, who had that job, enters the shadow cabinet for the first time, as shadow Scottish secretary. Joan Lestor, who returns to the shadow cabinet after a short break, takes up the children and family portfolio, which she has had before.

Tom Clarke moves from the Scottish job to overseas development and Clare Short, who narrowly missed being elected, takes over responsibility for women's issues. Jack Cunningham stays in one of the top posts, as shadow foreign secretary, despite polling the lowest number of votes. Michael Meacher switches from overseas development to the Citizen's Charter.

Mr Dobson will add a London portfolio to his transport role. The leadership is said to be concerned about the party's failure to draw up a coherent London policy this year. A policy document on the city was rejected before the party conference.

The new shadow cabinet: **John Smith**, Opposition leader; **Margaret Beckett**, deputy leader and shadow leader of the House; **Gordon Brown**, Treasury and economic affairs; **Jack Cunningham**, Foreign and Commonwealth affairs; **Tony Blair**, home affairs; **Robin Cook**, trade and industry; **David Blunkett**, health; **John Prescott**, employment; **Frank Dobson**, transport and London; **David Clark**, defence; **Jack Straw**, environment; **Chris Smith**, environmental protection; **Donald Dewar**, social security; **Ann Taylor**, education; **Marjorie Mowlam**, national heritage; **George Robertson**, Scotland; **Ron Davies**, Wales; **Michael Meacher**, Citizen's Charter; **Tom Clarke**, overseas aid; **Joan Lestor**, children and the family.

Four appointments were announced outside the shadow cabinet: **Clare Short**, women; **Harriet Harman**, chief secretary to the Treasury; **Gavin Strang**, food, agriculture and rural affairs; **Kevin McNamara**, Northern Ireland.

Libby Purves, page 19
Diary, and
Peter Brookes, page 20
Leading article, page 21

Belated recognition for a backbench heroine

BY ALICE THOMSON
POLITICAL REPORTER

AFTER Harriet Harman and Ann Clwyd were given the thumbs-down by Labour MPs, the unlikely figure of Mildred Gordon was yesterday celebrating her new role as Labour's latest golden girl.

Mrs Gordon is not an obvious star. Unlike Joan Lestor she did not make it into the shadow cabinet top 18. Nor does she yet have the clout of a Virginia Bottomley to ask Marks & Spencer to open early.

But while most of the Labour women have suffered in the frontbench elections, Mrs Gordon was the only woman almost to double her vote, bringing her total to 81.

With each MP bound to list at least four women, everyone suddenly seemed to plump for the previously unsung heroine of the backbenches. Was it her staunch defence of women's rights? Would she appeal to voters? Or, in a backlash against the power of women in the Labour party, were some male MPs voting for her as a "no hope" candidate?

Mrs Gordon, 70, is not a stunner. Nor could she be accused of being a bimbo or being easily pushed around. She first became left wing during the Spanish civil war but waited until she had her retirement pension as a teacher before entering Parliament as MP for Bow and Poplar at 63.

She was married for 34 years to the late Sam Gordon, a leading American Trotskyist, and always kept to the left of the party. She opposed the expulsion of the Liverpool Militants, voted against sending troops to the Gulf war and refused to pay her poll tax.

Her radical feminism puts Ms Harman to shame. She is an advocate of the Wages For Housework Campaign and declines to disclose her mother's maiden name. Her one concession is a passion for making jewellery. While members of the shadow cabinet were filing into John Smith's office yesterday to haggle over their positions, Mrs Gordon was at home celebrating in her constituency.

She did not agree that there was resentment among male MPs. "To say MPs voted for me out of pique is an insult to me and to my colleagues," she said. "If we want to win the next general election it is vital we have the best people at the top. No one in the Labour party would jeopardise that out of petty vindictiveness."

Mrs Gordon said that one "extreme rightwinger" voted for her, "because he was so impressed by my record in fighting against racism". Others said it was because of her experience in education. "At last my qualities are being recognised," she said.

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POLITICS

SHADOW CABINET RESHUFFLE

Smith defies party and keeps Harman at Treasury post

By Robert Shrimsley, Political Staff

MR SMITH defied his party last night by keeping Ms Harriet Harman in her job as shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury, even though she was voted off the shadow Cabinet.

One MP described his decision to keep Ms Harman as an effective "two fingers" to those who have criticised her performance in the post and to the traditionalist forces which combined to cause her defeat in Wednesday's shadow Cabinet ballot.

Mr Smith was said to be shocked to see her vote fall from 135 to 99, as she fell from seventh to 22nd place in the ballot, and decided that she was too big an asset to be cast overboard. However, even MPs generally favourable to her have said she would be better placed in another post.

She was retained after Mr Gordon Brown, shadow Chancellor, asked to keep her as his deputy. Senior party sources said it was a "vote of confidence in her and not a vote of no confidence in the parliamentary party".

She becomes one of four spokesmen to hold shadow Cabinet jobs in spite of failing to win election. Speaking afterwards, she said: "I am very pleased at this vote of confidence from John Smith and Gordon Brown."

In a limited reshuffle, Mr Smith promoted Mr John Prescott from transport to a top economic job as shadow Employment Secretary, in a straight swap with Mr Frank Dobson.

After his barnstorming performance at the Labour conference, in which he was credited with saving Mr Smith from defeat over trade union voting reforms, Mr Prescott was not easily denied his wish.

He believes that with unemployment at the centre of Labour's platform, the job has been greatly enhanced and he is also relishing the chance to square up to Mr David Hunt, regarded as a rising Tory star.

Mr Dobson is understood to be angry at the move, given that he finished joint second in the shadow Cabinet poll with Mr Prescott, even though it was sweetened by his additional responsibility as Labour's spokesman on London.

While Ms Harman retains her job, Mr Smith was less sympathetic to Ms Ann Clwyd, the other woman to lose her seat in the ballot. Her place as heritage spokesman was given to Ms Mo Mowlam, citizen's charter and women's spokesman, who had been hoping for something more — possibly Ms Harman's job.

Ms Mowlam's old job has been split. The citizen's charter side goes to Mr Michael Meacher and the women's post to Ms Clare Short.

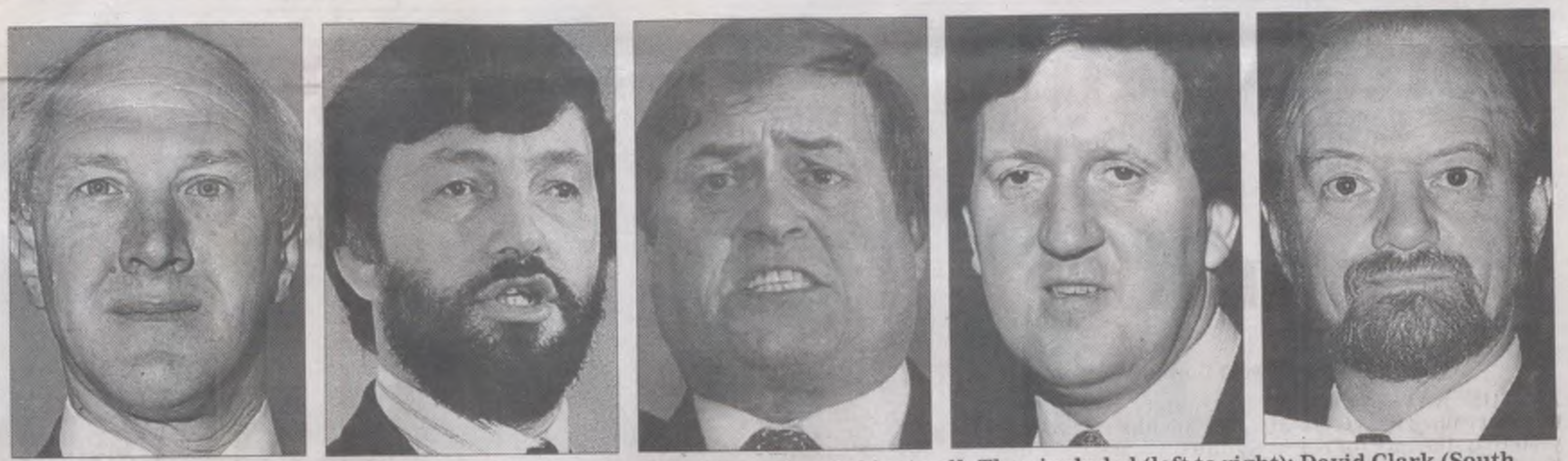
The overseas development post held by Mr Meacher goes to Mr Tom Clarke, whose job as shadow Scottish Secretary will now be filled by one of the two newcomers, Mr George Robertson. Mr Smith has created a post, Children and the Family, for Ms Joan Lestor, the other newcomer.

Mrs Ann Taylor, the education spokesman, was kept on in spite of criticisms of a lacklustre performance, as Mr Smith demonstrated his determination to stick by his initial judgments and appointments. Similarly, Mr John Cunningham kept his shadow Foreign Secretary post, even though he came bottom of those elected.

A further reshuffle of the more junior posts is expected on Monday.

THE SHADOW CABINET

Margaret Beckett, Leader of the House and Campaigns Co-ordinator;
Robin Cook, Trade and Industry;
Frank Dobson, Transport and London;
John Prescott, Employment;
Gordon Brown, Chancellor;
Mo Mowlam, National Heritage;
Tony Blair, Home Affairs;
David Clark, Defence;
Jack Straw, Local Government;
Chris Smith, Environmental Protection;
Michael Meacher, Citizen's Charter;
Ron Davies, Wales;
Donald Dewar Social Security;
Tom Clarke, Overseas Development;
Ann Taylor, Education;
Joan Lestor, Children and the Family;
George Robertson, Scotland;
David Blunkett, Health;
John Cunningham, Foreign Affairs.
Non shadow Cabinet posts:
Clare Short, Women;
Harriet Harman, Chief Secretary to the Treasury;
Gavin Strang, Agriculture;
Kevin McNamara, Northern Ireland.



Men from the North of England and Scotland fared well in the shadow Cabinet poll. They included (left to right): David Clark (South Shields); David Blunkett (Sheffield Brightside); John Prescott (Hull E); George Robertson (Hamilton); and Robin Cook (Livingston)

Women blame alliance of Northern Men

LABOUR'S women yesterday blamed an "unholy alliance" of Left and Right-wing northern traditionalists for the shadow Cabinet election results, which are understood to have shocked the Labour leader, *writes Robert Shrimsley.*

Wednesday's annual poll saw Ms Harriet Harman, Treasury spokesman, widely regarded as a major electoral asset for Labour, and Ms Ann Clwyd, national heritage, thrown out of the shadow Cabinet in a backlash at a rule change compelling MPs to vote for at least four women instead of three.

The change was pushed through against the opposition of up to 100 male MPs, including some leading whips. As a result of Wednesday's election, the number of women elected fell from four to three.

Mr Smith was said by a senior colleague to have been "shell-shocked" by the result, which he believes is a setback for his efforts to modernise the party.

The only bright spot was the long-overdue election of Mr George Robertson (Hamilton), Scottish spokesman.

Although they were expecting a backlash, the results left many Labour women stunned and bitter. "They are bastards," said one of the three victorious women as she comforted a defeated colleague. Few had any doubt to whom she was referring.

A so-called tea-room conspiracy hatched among the older, sometimes under-promoted, northern men saw many Labour MPs deliberately voting for those women regarded as having no chance of election.

Although suggestions of a brilliantly masterminded campaign are rejected, most believe there was a strong collusion of like-minds, which led to a whispering campaign and a large degree of orchestration.

The result was that the votes for women were spread across a number of candidates, preventing more than three from securing enough to be elected.

Women filled the first four runners-up positions. Both Mrs Clwyd and Ms Joyce Quin, employment spokesman, were only three votes short of being elected.

Also clear was the intention to target Ms Harman because she was identified both as a leading moderniser and as one of the main exponents of quotas for women.

The clearest indication of a plot to distort the ballot is the large number of votes secured by seemingly no-hope candidates. Ms Mildred Gordon, the Left-wing MP for Bow and Poplar, who managed to secure 47 votes last year, saw her vote rise to 81 this year.

Mrs Irene Adams, MP for Paisley North, who had never run before, notched up 88 votes, only 11 less than Ms Harman. Even the experienced Ms Joan Lestor admitted that she was "surprised" to have been elected. However, she opposed the rule change.

Scrutineers for the election reported that nearly 50 of the 270 ballot papers had less than 10 names filled in, when there were 18 possible places. In many cases they saw ballot papers with four of the "low level" women and only two men filled in.

Nearly all the 37 women in the Parliamentary party reported being encouraged by men they did not consider close colleagues to stand for the annual ballot. A new MP said she was asked by a number of different men to run, even though she had been in the Commons for little more than a year.

Some agreed to run because they were flattered by the suggestion. Others did so in the knowledge that they were helping friends to take a snipe at the party's modernisers.

Mrs Adams was coaxed into running by hardline Scottish MPs, while Ms Gordon was persuaded to standing by Left wingers such as Mr Dennis Skinner. Women MPs are pinpointing an axis of past and present Labour whips as the key movers in the efforts show up the inadequacies of the rule change.

Mr Joe Ashton (Bassetlaw), an ex-whip, said: "The women got too bossy."

Yesterday, Mrs Llin Golding, a former whip, now social security spokesman, who stood in the ballot, distanced herself from the women behind the move: "They changed the system ... and it has backfired on them. I was strongly resentful of it because I thought women were doing well without it."

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THE INDEPENDENT

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...n (left) ...es for the ...siev ...other Nazarbek (below right). Nkrtitch Martirossian (above) hanged himself in prison
Photographs: Photo News

...Langham Hotel, the Armenians failed to persuade the Chechens to end the arms deal.

Outsiev's refusal to end the arms deal was his death warrant. An assassin was hired in Los Angeles, named in court as Ashot Detmendzian, a member of the local Armenian community.

On 20 February, Martirossian returned to London and waited for Detmendzian. A house was rented by the two Armenians in Pinner, north-west London; Ms Ponting provided a reference using a BBC fax machine, the prosecution alleged.

On 26 February, Nazarbek Outsiev went into hospital for a sinus operation, providing the perfect opportunity for his older brother's murder. But, Martirossian told police, Detmendzian was held up by visa problems.

Detectives were never able to establish who fired the three shots to the head at point blank range that killed Outsiev, but it seems unlikely to have been Ter-Oganisyan, who had taken a German translator on a diversionary shopping trip. In his first interviews with police, Martirossian almost admitted the crime. Later, he retracted, saying: "The KGB will not forgive anyone."

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...breast-feeding for years. The World Health Organisation recommends feeding babies exclusively on breast milk for the first five or six months of life, but in the 1990s there is a backlash against the breast.

The biggest objection to breast-feeding in this country comes from 15 to 24 year olds, who are the ones most likely to find the practice "disgusting". Men in the north of England are more strongly opposed to bre... feeding in public tha... elsewhere in the co...

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FRIDAY OCTOBER 22 1993

Politically correct and inept

John Smith is in a straitjacket, says **Peter Riddell**

The bluff has, for once, been called on political correctness. Labour's attempt to increase the number of women in its shadow cabinet has backfired — to the irritation of many female MPs, to the raucous laughter of some male MPs, and to the public embarrassment of party leaders. But the results could easily have turned out very differently — with more, rather than fewer, women being elected.

The saga illustrates not only the self-defeating folly of quotas to assist particular groups, but also the drawbacks of electing the whole team shadowing the government.

The annual elections are little to do with ability as potential ministers. Commons performances obviously help: Robin Cook's success in topping the poll followed his sharp attacks on the government. But several poor performers did well. Success reflects personal and regional alliances as much as ideology and record. Despite the high votes of Mr Cook, Robin Prescott and Frank Dobson, there is no real evidence of a shift to the left. The leading advocates of modernising Labour's approach, Gordon Brown and Tony Blair, slipped back slightly, to just below the top. But they retain their positions as shadow chancellor and home secretary, and still have the opportunity to regain the initiative after being on the defensive recently.

Until the early 1980s, Labour MPs elected a shadow cabinet of 12 in addition to the leader and deputy leader. Since Labour leaders have to pick their initial cabinets from the shadow cabinet before the election, an incoming prime minister had freedom not just in shifting people around but also in bringing in some talented MPs from outside to make up a full cabinet of 20 to 22. In October 1964, Harold Wilson brought into his first cabinet Richard Crossman and, less successfully, Anthony Greenwood. In March 1974, he brought in Barbara Castle, Roy Mason and Eric Varley.

But this flexibility was reduced as the shadow cabinet rose from 12 to 15 in 1981, and then up to 18 in 1989. That was when MPs were first required to vote for at least three women among their number, which was quickly dubbed the "assisted places scheme" by male MPs.

Even after a big rise at the last election, fewer than one in six Labour MPs are female. And, despite the party's commitment to advancing women, chauvinist tendencies persist among some male MPs from the north, Scotland and Wales. Some male MPs complained during the summer about the performance of the four women members of the shadow cabinet, Harriet Harman, Ann Taylor, Ann Clwyd and Marjorie Mowlam (in addition to deputy leader Margaret Beckett). Ms Harman and Mrs Taylor have been out of their depth shadowing public spending and education, but they were no worse than several male spokesman such as David Clark (defence) or Tom Clarke (embarrassingly bad on Scottish affairs).

So when some male, and a few female Labour MPs failed to block moves to increase from three to four the number of women who have to receive votes, there were attempts to undermine the change. This was assisted by the record number of women standing — 15 — so votes could be spread. Some male MPs also deliberately "wasted" their votes on some women not reckoned to have a chance — such as the fringe left-wingers Irene Adams and Mildred Gordon, both of whom did very well — to reduce the chances of stronger runners. This worked, just, but if only a few votes had been switched, David Blunkett, Jack Cunningham and overdue newcomer George Robertson would have been defeated, and six rather than three women (down from four) would have been elected. This could easily happen next year.

The change in the shadow cabinet rules is only one part of a general movement to boost the number of women at the top of the Labour party and in Parliament by mandatory quotas. At least one woman has to be elected to the party's ruling national executive committee. From next year it will be two, which could in theory squeeze out Mr Blair, one of the party's best performers. Last month's party conference agreed that there would be women-only shortlists in half the winnable seats. Worried that the proposal would be electorally unattractive, as well as impracticable, some Labour leaders hoped that the Equal Opportunities Commission would come to the rescue. But yesterday the commission ruled that the plan did not contravene the Sex Discrimination Act.

More significant than the furore over women is the straitjacket which electing an 18-strong team imposes on the party leader. John Smith was discovering again yesterday that he has little freedom of manoeuvre in allocating portfolios. He sought to reassure the women's lobby by reappointing Ms Harman as shadow chief secretary and Mrs Taylor at education despite the criticisms of their performance. He still has at least one dud (Mr Clarke) and a further six who present no trouble to their Tory opposite numbers.

Mr Smith has managed to hide most of the weak performers, and has put the stars (Messrs Brown, Cook and Blair) in the key posts. It may not excite, but it is probably about the best that can be managed after so long in opposition. Labour, like the Tories, is suffering from a long period of one-party rule.

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FRIDAY 22 OCTOBER 1993 THE INDEPENDENT

LABOUR FRONT BENCH: Leader remains loyal to Harman and rewards Prescott □ Fears grow that Scot

Smith defies critics in reshuffle

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES
Political Correspondent

JOHN SMITH, the Labour leader, last night defied his parliamentary party by retaining Harriet Harman as shadow chief secretary in spite of her defeat in Wednesday's elections and doubts over her performance.

Ann Taylor also fought back against sharp criticism to hold on to her job as education shadow in a narrower than anticipated reshuffle. After his starring role at the party conference, John Prescott is rewarded with employment, the portfolio he sought with the object of turning it into a countrywide campaigning role.

The outgoing employment spokesman, Frank Dobson, takes on Mr Prescott's former transport job, boosted by a special brief for London as consolation.

In a third manifestation of Mr Smith's refusal to bow to critics, Jack Cunningham also clings on to his post among the top three jobs as shadow foreign secretary, despite his fall in the ratings.

The shadow cabinet newcomers, George Robertson and veteran left-winger Joan Lestor, become respectively spokesmen for Scotland and, children and the family, a job Ms Lestor held under Neil Kinnock with mixed fortunes.

The changes will come into effect after the Queen's Speech on 18 November, enabling Mr Prescott to handle the remaining stages of the rail privatisation Bill.

Although technically not a shadow cabinet member, Ms Harman's role is unchanged. She and Ms Taylor have been accused of failing to match Michael Portillo and John Patten.

With only 99 votes in the shadow cabinet elections, Ms Harman may have fallen victim to tactical voting by men angered by rules designed to increase women's chances.

Mr Smith's office insisted Ms Taylor was only halfway through Labour's consultation process on education policy.

Following wide speculation that Ms Taylor would be moved to national heritage, Mr Smith yielded after she reportedly dug in her heels. Mo Mowlam moves from citizen's charter to national heritage.

Ann Clwyd: fell from Shadow Cabinet through tactical voting and skulduggery *Photograph: Glynn Griffiths*

In one of three further non-shadow cabinet appointments Clare Short takes on a new, upgraded responsibility for women.

Although he fought the move, Mr Dobson declared himself delighted at his appointment, saying: "What happens in London and the South-east is crucial."

Michael Meacher moves from overseas development to citizens' charter, while Tom Clarke, the deposed Scottish shadow goes to overseas development. The full parliamentary committee is:

Leader: John Smith, 55; Deputy Leader and Shadow Leader of the House: Margaret Beckett, 50; Treasury & Economic Affairs: Gordon Brown, 42; Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs: Jack Cunningham, 42; Home Affairs: Tony Blair, 40; Trade & Industry, Robin Cook, 47; Employment: John Prescott, 55; Health: David Blunkett, 46; Transport & London: Frank Dobson, 53; Social Security: Donald Dewar, 56; National Heritage: Mo Mowlam, 44; Defence: David Clark, 54; Environment (local government): Jack Straw, 47; Environmental Protection: Chris Smith, 42; Citizens' Charter: Michael Meacher, 53; Overseas Development: Tom Clarke, 52; Education: Ann Taylor, 46; Children and the Family, Joan Lestor, 61; Scotland: George Robertson, 47; Wales: Ron Davies, 55.

Posts outside shadow cabinet: Women: Clare Short, 47; Chief Secretary to the Treasury: Harriet Harman, 43; Food, Agriculture & Rural Affairs: Gavin Strang, 50; Northern Ireland: Kevin McNamara, 59.

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Fowler accuses Smith of bungling reshuffle

By Alice Thomson
Political Reporter

JOHN Smith, the Labour leader, faced renewed criticism yesterday over his decision not to have an extensive reshuffle of the shadow cabinet.

Many Labour MPs are privately unhappy at his decision to retain several senior shadows despite what they view as their lacklustre performance over the past year. They are also bemused that their vote of no-confidence in them in the shadow cabinet elections has been ignored.

Harriet Harman, who failed to be re-elected, said she was proud that Mr Smith had kept her in her job as shadow Treasury chief secretary. She denied that after such a vote of no-confidence, putting her up against Michael Portillo was like throwing a Christian to the lions.

Norman Fowler, the Conservative party chairman, said Mr Smith had bungled the reshuffle. In a speech to his Sutton Coldfield constituents, Mr Fowler said: "This week's game of musical chairs has left Labour looking more unelectable than ever."

Referring to Ms Harman's appointment, he said: "If Labour MPs do not believe that one of their number is up to the job, why should the electorate?" He mocked Mr Smith's decision saying the one person whose job it was to say no to Labour's spending promises would not even be in the room when decisions were taken. He said the rule change that obliged MPs to choose at least four women was "a monument to political correctness".

Ms Harman said: "I have got the full authority of the leader and the shadow Chancellor to do my job and the important thing is to get on with the work."

She said the shadow chief secretary's job was performed from within and outside the shadow cabinet. She also defended the system where MPs voted for at least four women for the 18 shadow cabinet posts. "It would be unlikely as a result of that voting system ever to have an all-male shadow cabinet. Therefore our shadow cabinet is likely to be more representative of what is going on in the country."

William Waldegrave, minister for the citizen's charter, said that John Prescott's move to employment was a disaster. "John Prescott is a critic of one of Labour's key employment policies, the minimum wage."

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All systems grow in recovery Britain

By NICHOLAS ASSINDER

FRESH signs of the strength of Britain's recovery appeared yesterday.

Figures show 18 months of uninterrupted growth, with GDP up by 0.6 per cent in the third quarter of the year.

It puts the economy firmly on track to meet forecasts of an annual growth rate this year of two per cent.

The figures boosted John Major, who has recently seen conflicting indications about the strength of the recovery.

Downing Street sources seized on the "very encouraging news", claiming it disproved claims that the recovery was faltering.

It also gave Chancellor Kenneth Clarke some more breathing space in planning his November Budget, and eased the pressure for an immediate cut in interest rates.

And it increased the likelihood that he will be able to cut rates at the time of the Budget to reduce the pain caused by any tax increases.

There was further good news as France and Spain cut their lending rates in the wake of Germany's decision to lower its interest rates.

The move should help Europe fight its way out of recession — the biggest threat to Britain's long-term recovery.

In his March Budget the then Chancellor, Norman Lamont, forecast growth this year of 1.25 per cent.

The only hint of bad news for the Chancellor was manufacturing output fell over the same period.

Shadow chief secretary to the Treasury Harriet Harman claimed the figures gave no cause for complacency.

"Manufacturing output is once again falling and the overall level of growth is not high enough to make serious inroads into the stubbornly high level of unemployment," she said.

"Instead of allowing these figures to lull him into a false sense of security, the Chancellor must use his Budget to take steps to strengthen and sustain recovery."

Meanwhile Labour stepped up its campaign against VAT on fuel. Shadow chancellor Gordon Brown said a battle to be launched next week would be part of a "national crusade about fairness in our society".

BITTER: Lawson

FORMER Chancellor Nigel Lawson last night launched a bitter attack on Margaret Thatcher. He claimed her memoirs "set standards of self-regard hitherto unknown". He sought to justify his own policies, which are widely seen as the main cause of the Government's currrent economic woes.

And he branded as "cock and bull" Lady Thatcher's claim that she did not know of his policy to let the £ shadow the German mark for a year after March 1987.

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Clywd attacks shadow cabinet vote stitch-up

By Roland Rudd

MS ANN CLWYD, who lost her job as Labour's national heritage spokeswoman when she was voted out of the shadow cabinet, yesterday described the election as a "stitch-up".

Her outburst over the vote, which resulted in the election of fewer female members to Labour's frontbench team, came as the government sought to exploit Labour's divisions.

Sir Norman Fowler, Conservative party chairman, accused the Labour leader of "bungling" the changes to his team.

Mrs Clwyd narrowly missed being re-elected to the shadow cabinet but unlike Ms Harriet Harman, who scored fewer votes, failed to keep her job.

She warned she would "take the lid off the manoeuvres and macho-machinations within the parliamentary Labour party, the press and the lobby which robs women of their proper representation in parliament".

Sir Norman said: "This week's game of musical chairs in the shadow cabinet has left Labour looking more unelectable than ever. John Smith has shown very clearly why he would be wholly unsuited to the office of prime minister."

Mr Smith's cautious reshuffle has been greeted with dismay by some shadow cabinet members, who had expected a more wide-ranging shake-up.

Sir Norman described the rule changes for electing the shadow cabinet, which obliged MPs to choose at least four women with their 18 votes, as "a monument to political correctness".

Mr William Waldegrave, science minister, said Mr Smith had botched the reshuffle by keeping Ms Harriet Harman as shadow chief Treasury secretary in spite of her failure in the election.

"His shadow chief secretary has kept her job – despite losing the confidence of her colleagues," said Mr Waldegrave.

The Labour front bench yesterday ignored the continuing row over the election, preferring to renew its attack on government plans to impose value added tax on fuel.

Mr Gordon Brown, shadow chancellor, pledged a national crusade against the tax move.

He also attacked the possibility of VAT being imposed on newspapers and books in next month's Budget – "the first attacks on the Bible" – and said Mr Kenneth Clarke would be the first chancellor to tax his own words.

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A rare case of common sense

Rattling the bars

Ian Aitken

COMMON sense is not always a collective characteristic of the Parliamentary Labour Party, but something of the sort seems to have gripped Labour MPs on Monday when they were filling up their ballot papers for the new shadow cabinet. First, they elected Joan Lestor. Then they demoted Harriet Harman.

In saying this, I mean no harm to Ms Harman, who is an able and intelligent woman. She will survive losing her elected place, and will probably be back next year. But her lack of grasp as shadow chief secretary was embarrassing — so embarrassing that one wonders what John Smith was thinking about when he defied the PLP vote and simply reappointed her as Gordon Brown's deputy.

The one excuse Ms Harman is entitled to offer in defence of her inadequacy is that the economic policy she speaks for is even more inadequate than she is. Asked by Brown to defend a timid policy, it isn't surprising if she sounds timid as well.

So I raise a louder cheer for the re-election of Joan Lestor. There is nothing timid about the majestic Ms Lestor. She isn't just a person; she is also a symbol of all that is decent, warm-hearted and sensibly radical about the Labour movement.

For this reason, many experienced Labour politicians regard her as a useful political litmus paper. Dip her into any given situation, they say, and whatever colour she comes out will be a reliable guide to how the party is going to react as a whole.

True, this test did not work during the period of the party's collective Bennite madness, for Lestor remained staunchly sane throughout that dismal episode. Indeed, like Neil Kinnock, she blotted her copybook with the hard left by refusing to back Tony Benn's bid for the deputy leadership in 1981. All the same, she survived.

So Harman, who is sometimes described as Labour's Ice Maiden, might learn something from the fact that she was beaten by the party's Earth Mother. And it might provide some comfort, too. For Lestor has lost more elections than Harman has had hot dinners — but she always comes back.

□ ONE woman who seems irremovable whatever she does is Virginia Bottomley — or Golden Virginia, as Labour's David Blunkett dubbed her after she refused to ban cigarette advertising. There is more than a touch of imperial insensitivity about her demand that Marks & Spencer should open early to allow her to do her shopping untroubled by the likes of you and me.

But one begins to wonder about the quality of the political advice she is getting when one reads how her request for special treatment was defended by her personal aide, one Richard Marsh. Marsh explained to the Daily Telegraph that his boss found it difficult to get on with her purchases because of the crowds of shoppers who wanted to tell her how wonderful the health service was. Experience suggests that the jostling crowds were more likely to be complaining about the results of her dreadful NHS "reforms".

If Marsh is right then one must assume that the people chucking eggs at Mrs B last week were trying to help her to assemble the makings for an omelette.

□ OPPOSITION whips in the Lords have come in for a lot of admiring bouquets recently after their success in forcing through damaging amendments to John MacGregor's rail privatisation bill. They did it again on Wednesday, when they carried an amendment to protect railmen's pensions from the sticky fingers of prospective buyers.

But if the whips were pleased with themselves over this success, they had no right to be. Shortly after the successful division there was another on a second opposition amendment. It was lost by just one vote.

Several Labour peers went home rejoicing after their triumph in the first division, not realising there was to be another vote. This is the kind of thing whips are there to prevent. One wonders what they were doing.

THE TIMES
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Week of Msunderstanding

MATTHEW BOND
DIARY

"A KISS is just a kiss," pleaded the unfortunate Miss X. If only she had listened more carefully to Sam, the Casablanca crooner who knew only too well that kisses are *still* kisses and that no matter how much time goes by, the things that apply remain distinctly fundamental.

And boy, or rather, and young male person, have they been applying this week. Dooley Wilson's contention that "woman needs man and man must have his mate" may be appallingly politically incorrect these days, but it still explains an awful lot of very curious behaviour. In short, the sexes have been at each other's throats again.

From the moment that Jesse the buzzard fell of her perch in fright at the Royal Opera House, it looked like being a week that the men would get the better of. Backlashes were everywhere — against female Labour MPs, against female motorway drivers and against female students who after three pints of cider, two vodkas and two Drambuies couldn't quite manage "Of all the student pick-up joints in all the world, you walk into mine — now, booger off, I don't fancy you". A smack in the mouth often offends, but it's a good deal less confusing than a tongue around the tonsils.

But I digress, although doubtless Harriet Harman could be forgiven for harbouring a deep desire to give one or two of her male colleagues a smack in the mouth after a bit of old-fashioned negative discrimination dumped her from the shadow cabinet. But at least we all discovered that Omov did, after all, stand for One Man One Vote. Everyone gets to cast a vote, but only one man's counts — John Smith's. Harman kept her job.

Britain's motorway police have not been averse to a bit of old-fashioned discrimination either. Minor misdemeanours such as changing a tyre in the fast lane of the M6 or cycling up the M1 merited no more than a gentle ticking off — as long as you were male. But park on the hard shoulder because you feel faint (that's no excuse at all, madam) and it's straight off to the magistrates. Even the woman clocked defiantly doing 32 mph up the motorway on her bike got her comeuppance. The police grabbed her the moment she came off the slip-road, and did her for speeding.

The first sign, however, that the men would not be having the week all their own way came at sea, where the Royal Navy celebrated its new found sexual equality by formally scrapping the Wrens and sending one Wren to the brig for doing on HMS *Campbeltown* what comes naturally after three pints of cider, two vodkas and two Drambuies. In all, eight ratings were punished — four male and four female — for "disgraceful conduct". Very egalitarian, but what an awful lot of Drambuie.

But the task of swinging the battle of the sexes firmly back in favour of the women fell to the Tories — and to three Tory blondes to be both specific and sexist. First off was Louise Hobkinson, the statueque research assistant recruited by Bill Cash, the leading Euro-sceptic. Before Cash offered her employment, the 25-year-old Swansea graduate had earned her living as a model. Now the charms that once provided a living have won her a host of male admirers in the Commons and sent an army of male gossip columnists scurrying in search of skeletons, preferably unclad. But so far the combined talents of Fleet Street's finest have revealed, exclusively of course, that she's never taken her top off for a photographer and never slept with a man old enough to be her father. This they call gossip?

Also proving increasingly successful in getting others to dance to her tune has been Virginia Bottomley, who now does her Marks & Spencer shopping before the general public are let in at 9 am. Bottomley complains that if she shops in normal hours she is distracted by questions about the health service. If she shops alone, she can concentrate. It clearly works: having returned from her latest early morning gambol along the chilled food cabinet, she promptly abolished regional health authorities. Next week, it's Harrods and free healthcare.

But the week belonged to Tory blonde No 1, gloriously glowing proof of the efficacy of limelight replacement therapy. Enoch Powell briefly soured things by accusing her of having more "instinct" than "thought", but her army of male admirers, transported to paroxysms of delight by the 11 seconds her shapely wrist takes to sign her memoirs, know exactly what instinct she appeals to — a very basic instinct. Let the battle continue. Play it again, Sam.

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RRIET
TALKS TO THE
DAILY Mirror

HARRIET Harman yesterday warned Labour's male dinosaurs: Get used to having women at the top of the

NEW ORDE
Harriet has no tim for Jurassic MPs w try to block wome getting to the top
Picture: HARRY P

THE GUARDIAN
119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER
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Smallweed

ONE intriguing theory in the shadow cabinet corridor yesterday was that the curious results of this week's elections were in part the work of the IMF. Not the IMF to which Denis Healey went cap in hand all those years ago, but the Inverted Mandelson Factor.

That wasn't the only ingredient, of course: glad-handing, as opposed to coolness or even alleged disdain, had a part in it too, as did regional loyalties. Even so: the three Labour MPs who came top — Robin Cook, John Prescott and Frank Dobson — are all seen as very much outside the Peter Mandelson magic circle.

The same is true of Mo Mowlam, much the most successful of the women candidates. Others, who slid or fell — Harriet Harman, who lost her place, and Gordon Brown and Tony Blair — are seen as part of that circle, and could have been victims of IMF thinking among their colleagues. Resentful railers against red rosery had an extra incentive, too: Thursday was the great Labour redimensioner's 40th birthday.

ALL October, Smallweed has been haunted by a vague, unquantifiable sense of deprivation. What could it be? Then, on Monday, with Thatch's strictures on Gumm, it came flooding back. Didn't our Environment Secretary, faced in July with Eurocomplaints that Blackpool beach was disgusting, promise to swim in the sea during party conference? So where were the longed-for pictures of him proudly breasting the brine in the manner of Ursula Andress?

Sadly, Gummer is in the clear. According to the department, his promise was if the weather had been "clement". Clement weather? In Blackpool, in October? Not much danger of that. This fellow is shrewder than Maggie supposes.

EYELESS on Gazza: Ian Hamilton, author of a 120-page epic called Gazza Agonistes, to be published next month by Granta, was surprised to learn from the Times that his composition, which he had hitherto believed to be in prose rather than blank verse, included the following lines:

"Swift as the lightening
glance he executes
His errand on the wicked,
who surprised
Lose their defence,
distracted and amazed."

These lines were cited by the Times as an example of the way that Hamilton had taken his literary inspiration from Milton. The truth is rather simpler. They *are* Milton. Had the Times looked a little more closely, it might have seen that the passage cited was what we in the scribbling trade call a quote.

IF you can't find the Thatcher memoirs in your neighbourhood bookshop under politics or biography, try looking under Country Pursuits. Someone may well have decided that's the place to put books about thatchers. There's at least a more obvious logic to that than there is in the inclusion of Alan Clark's diaries in one London bookshop in its "commerce and economics" section. Presumably someone remembered Clark as the man who was famously economical with the *actualité*.

ON Thursday the Sun asked readers to ring various numbers to record their views on the Austen Donnellan case. Question one: should a woman who cries rape be named when her alleged attacker is cleared? A massive 2,193 readers, the paper reported yesterday, called its telephone hotline to answer "yes."

A rather more troublesome question came at the end of the sequence. Did readers, the paper asked, accept that "no" really meant "no?" Seventy five per cent of male respondents apparently said that it did. So assuming that nobody phoned the Sun to register a "don't know", 25 per cent said no to the proposition that "no" means "no". But there seems to be a paradox here. Since people who say "no" to this question are people for whom, by definition, "no" doesn't mean "no", might they not, in a sense, be casting their votes for "yes"? Is it not time the Sun employed, alongside its house lawyers, a house philosopher?

QUITE apart from his sense of injustice, Lord (Conrad) Russell, the Liberal peer who came to Donnellan's aid, and is now congratulated by strangers on trains (Times interview yesterday), may have had an hereditary reason for opposing the attempts of the college authorities to hush the issue up and send the young man down. His father, Bertrand Russell, was the victim of similar academic manoeuvres as college authorities who had asked him to lecture began to choke on his free-wheeling, free-thinking views.

Right-wing disapproval forced him out of a job at the University of California in 1939; when he took refuge at City College, New York, a suit was successfully brought against the New York Board of Higher Education for offering employment to an atheist who believed in free love. Russell, who needed the money, then accepted the offer of a lectureship at an institution in Philadelphia run by a rich inventor. Here too he was soon forced out: though in this case, according to Anthony Quinton's affectionate portrait of Russell in the Dictionary of National Biography, less because of his views than because his wife Peter (mother of said Conrad) had infuriated his patron by knitting throughout his lectures.

WHEN the weather turned benign last weekend, many were astonished, but not Smallweed, who early one morning on a BBC programme for farmers heard exactly this outcome predicted by someone called Old Mulch, or something similar. According to Mulch, things always get balmier on or around the feast of St Luke (October 18). This is known as St Luke's Little Summer.

Rain or worse, he further averred, is equally sure to arrive on the feast of SS Simon and Jude (October 28). As a longstanding sceptic of this kind of country lore, Smallweed will be waiting with raised umbrella on Thursday to see if the old boy has pulled off an autumn double.

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'Labour had better get used to having women at the top'

MP HARRIET TALKS TO THE DAILY Mirror

NEW ORDER
Harriet has no time for Jurassic MPs who try to block women getting to the top
Picture: HARRY PAGE

HARRIET Harman yesterday warned Labour's male dinosaurs: Get used to having women at the top of the party.

Between seeing the children off to school and racing from her south London home to Parliament to denounce the latest grim economic figures, Labour's Treasury No 2 still had time to fire a broadside at prehistoric MPs within her own party.

"People have to understand that plots motivated by male chauvinism are not acceptable any more," she said.

"It is important for Labour to have a woman talking about economics to help convince women the economy is not a male preserve but something relevant to their daily lives. It's about their jobs and how much they have to live on.

"Women's roles have changed and the party must reflect that. It's no longer good enough for men to say they can speak up for women."

By SHEREE DODD

Harriet, 43, has fallen from favour with Labour's Jurassic tendency in her fight for the future of women in the party.

She was the victim of a growing protest from male MPs angry that their women colleagues are being pushed forward.

Plummet

Forced to vote for four women in the annual Shadow Cabinet elections, a large proportion spread their votes around no-hopers.

Harriet suddenly saw her personal polling plummet from 135 to 99 votes in just one year and only weeks after she was voted on to the ruling national executive committee.

But leader John Smith refused to dump the woman he describes as "an important person now and in the future" and has kept her at her Treasury post.

The trouble is that Harriet Harman makes men jealous.

But she has no intention of soothing their bruised egos by stopping her campaign to win women a front line role in politics.

"I intend to keep bringing these issues up," she said.

And rather than dwelling on the upset of the poll she is more irritated by a report on her reaction to it.

"One newspaper wrongly said that I was close to tears after the result – how typical.

"When Robin Cook lost his place they said he was fuming but because I'm a woman I was close to tears."

Judge

She has no fears that her poll failure will weaken her fight against the Tories.

"People are not worried about how well Harriet Harman did in the Shadow Cabinet elections," she said.

"They are going to judge us by how well we expose the Government on VAT, tax rises and the economy.

"It's business as usual. I have a job to do and I'm doing it."

GOLDEN GIRLS ARE DUMPED

SHOCK: Flashback to vote against the girls

THE OBSERVER
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Richard Ingrams

All puffed up in an evil haze

PROFESSOR Gordon McVie, who is the scientific director of the Cancer Research Campaign, last week launched a fierce attack on Joanna Lumley for smoking in her role as fashion journalist in the BBC comedy series *Absolutely Fabulous*.

The professor is very alarmed at the thought of young girls emulating Miss Lumley: 'She is very skinny and glamorous in a way that probably appeals to girls to the point that they would be tempted to copy her.'

The professor's outburst well illustrates the absurdity of official attitudes to drugs and, in particular, cigarette smoking. It is not only that he ignores the fact that both the main characters in this series are hopeless alcoholics. They also indulge quite recklessly in other drugs and in one recent episode were shown smoking joints, sniffing coke and taking ecstasy tablets.

Yet the portrayal of coke-sniffing as if it were a perfectly acceptable habit — indeed, a subject for jokes — is not something to excite any protest from the likes of Professor McVie, whose anger is aroused, it seems, only by the smoking of cigarettes.

It would be silly to try to outlaw all drugs. Yet there is no such thing as a safe one. Our society sanctions alcohol and nicotine. The latter is highly addictive, but does not adversely affect the personality of the addict.

Yet so powerful is the propaganda against cigarettes that the impression is given that other, illegal drugs may be comparatively harmless.

EVERYONE had a good laugh when William Waldegrave, the Minister who has pledged to introduce 'open government', appeared to have been engaged in concealing the facts about the arms-to-Iraq policy from Parliament.

But now a rather more serious possibility has emerged that Mr Waldegrave himself was being kept in the dark by his own officials in the Foreign Office.

Two of these gentlemen testified last week to the Scott inquiry that they had deliberately not shown a vital report to their boss. One of them ingenuously suggested that there was no point in so doing because he knew all about it already.

It emerged, too, that Mr Waldegrave was ignorant about a secret GCHQ report relating to the sale of an entire Chilean arms factory to the Iraqis — a factory that was to be equipped by British firms.

It is beginning to look very much as if there was a conspiracy, operated by a group of civil servants, MI6 men and their ministerial supporters, to break the arms embargo and withhold vital information from any Ministers who weren't all that keen on arming Saddam Hussein.

Whether the Scott inquiry can get to the bottom of it is another matter, especially since it has no power to subpoena witnesses. The vital figure, Alan Clark, has apparently still to decide whether he will deign to give evidence. Meanwhile, it makes little sense to talk about open government if the Government itself doesn't know what is going on.

MY FAITH in the good sense of the Labour Party was partially restored when MPs contrived to ensure that fewer rather than more women were voted into the Shadow Cabinet last week.

Mr Smith was said to be 'shell-shocked' by the result which left even glamour girl Harriet Harman without the necessary number of votes. At the same time there was talk of an organised conspiracy by male MPs who, it was claimed, had deliberately voted for no-hopers to stop more women getting in.

The Labour Party's token women, from Margaret Beckett downwards, have not been conspicuous successes. Last week's vote may therefore have improved the party's chances of winning power.

Mr Smith's mistake is to think that this kind of reverse discrimination is somehow helping to modernise the party. It is not. The modern idea is that men and women are equal. But Mr Smith's ill-fated scheme gave an unfair advantage to women.

OF ALL the silly arguments used to justify putting more people into prison the silliest must be that by doing so you stop them committing crimes.

Both Michael Howard and John Major have said this now in support of their latest 'crackdown'. Yet everything that is reported suggests crime is rife within just about every prison in the land.

This is not only a matter of drug dealing. Prisoners regularly smash up their prisons, assault prison officers and, as the recent killing of a sex offender showed, are capable of murdering fellow inmates.

You can argue that while they are locked up, we, the law-abiding majority are safe from their attentions. But this is not much comfort if, so soon as they are released, they are just as likely, if not more so, to resume a life of crime.

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SUNDAY 24 OCTOBER 1993

Sue Arnold

Nanny knows best, I know nothing

FOLLOWING the huge success of a modest six-part television series, Britain's favourite dear little old white-haired lady, Nanny Smith, has just been signed up to write an agony column for a national newspaper.

I only caught a glimpse of one programme, in which a distraught mother had written to nanny declaring she was at her wits' end — her three-year-old son refused to wear any other colour but blue. Heavens, how perfectly dreadful. No wonder the poor woman was in tears.

The episode struck a chord. When my sons were babies, they only wore pink but that was because they had three elder sisters and a lot of clothes to grow into. If they all end up as cross-dressers, it will be my fault.

So anyway, there was the demented mother of 'little boy blue' flinging open cupboards and pulling out drawers full of yellow socks and green T-shirts wailing, 'Oh dear, oh dear, he just won't have any of it,' when along comes Nanny Smith.

Running her wise old eyes over the rejected motley, she suggests a solution. Why not allow the beastly brat to wear what he wants because, like most other childish problems, he will grow out of it?

In a week where banner-waving Cypriots booed the Queen and the Labour Party's feminist policies were thrown into confusion, there is something soothingly reassuring about Nanny Smith's no-nonsense remedies. 'Don't worry, Mrs Harman,' you can almost hear her saying, 'those naughty boys who didn't vote for you will grow out of it. You just sit tight now. It will never get well if you pick it.'

I went to see Nanny Smith myself last week. Not because of any particular child-related problem, but because we have both been invited to say a few words at the opening of a new exhibition at the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood this Wednesday. It's called *The Early Years*, and is the second in a series of permanent displays documenting the social history of childhood.

The first, 'Birth and Infancy', was opened last November by Sheila Kitzinger, whose outspoken views on obstetrics are well known.

It will be the second time I've followed Dr Kitzinger on stage. Some years ago, I was asked to participate in a seminar given by a branch of the National Childbirth Trust.

When I arrived, the delegates were looking shell-shocked. They had just listened to a lecture by Dr Kitzinger advocating home births, soft lights and sweet music — having a baby in hospital, she said, was tantamount to being raped.

Why? I asked a worried-looking woman expecting her first child in a couple of weeks. 'Because of all those men doing things to you. It's humiliating, it's violent, it's traumatic, just like being raped,' she said.

'How do you know? Have you ever been raped?' I said. Which didn't go down too well. Neither did my talk about hospitals, drugs, bright lights and male domination. A little liaison with my fellow speaker this time might help.

I've said I didn't have a particular child-related problem when I set out. I did when I arrived. I was due in Twickenham at 4.30, time enough, I thought, to collect my youngest from nursery school and take him with me.

State nursery schools, incidentally, have become every bit as performance oriented as Mr Patten's other institutions. The previous afternoon. I had a half-hour parent-teacher interview to discuss my son's progress under such headings as Social Interaction, Creative Role Play, General Motor Skills, Sign Motor Skills and, most baffling of all, Science and Technology. He isn't four yet.

We waited for a Richmond train. Forty minutes later we were still waiting. There had been a security alert at Monument, signal failure at Victoria and an obstruction on the track at Turnham Green. I hoped Nanny would understand. It would all come out in the wash.

An hour and a half after leaving school we were still on the train and, not to put too fine a point on it, my son was in distress. 'Dear Nanny: What do you do when your three-year-old needs a pee on a crowded tube which has been sitting on the track between Gunnersbury and Kew for 20 minutes?'

The woman beside me was sympathetic. 'It's ridiculous. They should have toilets on trains,' she said. 'Tch, tch, poor little fellow. Look, why doesn't he do it in this?' And she picked up an empty Coke can from the floor.

It wouldn't have been so bad, my husband said, if they'd looked like Britt Ekland.

I considered the can. In particular, I considered the tiny sharp-edged hole at the top. Is this what they meant by fine motor skills or even science and technology? It wasn't going to be easy.

In Twickenham at last, I asked Nanny Smith how she would have coped. She folded her hands in her lap and said that it was surprising how long children could, as she delicately put it, hold on. Why, one of her charges, abhorring for some reason the facilities provided at her infant school, would regularly hold on for eight hours every day. I felt suitably chastened and wished my son was wearing matching socks.

If only we had had proper old-fashioned nannies instead of that erratic stream of *au pair* girls, there might have been more discipline. It wouldn't have been so bad, complained my husband, if they'd all looked like Britt Ekland or the woodcutter's beautiful, sultry daughter in the fairy tales. Ours always looked like the woodcutter.

I'd better buy Nanny Smith's book, *Nanny Knows Best*. If they need a follow-up, *Mother Knows Nothing*, I could do it.

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH
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ain and racing six nights a week. For good measure, a couple of afternoon meetings will also be run each week. So far Britain's top three trainers have pledged to join the new venture.

Mr Parker believes that Hackney will succeed because nobody has attempted to market the sport in a professional way. He cites the example of the American tracks, especially a newly-opened one outside Dallas that cost $55 million and is reported to be doing extremely well, as an inspiration. Huge radio and press campaigns will coincide with the opening of "Britain's greatest greyhound spectacular".

But Hackney is not Dallas and the appeal of Waterden London tracks that has queues of 100 people every night and it's more like a motorway diner than a proper restaurant. We're not contending against much."

At Walthamstow last week casual dog racing enthusiasts were greatly amused at the suggestion that Hackney would be the place to go next summer. "I once went to that old dump and I'd never go there again," said one. When told about the renovation, he paused, considered the possibility of another visit, but then shook his head and said: "It'll still always be Hackney though, won't it?"

Probably not. Mr Parker, keen to expunge memories of the decline of the past three decades, prefers the ring of London City Stadium.

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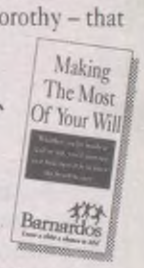

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Lady T's book tour gathers pace as the Labour vote sparks a bout of Mildred mania

Roadshow rolls out old magic

by John Gaskell

WE EXPECTED a bit of a fuss. But this? Baroness Thatcher's roadshow is in the middle of a fortnight's tour that makes Lord Archer, "the extrovert's extrovert", look like a wallflower.

Apart from the television and the radio, apart from the individual interviews in her office, Lady Thatcher has been signing books and attending a Foyle's literary luncheon.

Friday was Chester, yesterday was Edinburgh. Tomorrow begins with London signings at Sloane Square followed by Trafalgar Square; then on Tuesday Broadgate and Leadenhall Market before Cambridge on Wednesday.

In all she will make 70 appearances, then consider a world itinerary. Her advance from HarperCollins was £2·5 million. Hardback sales of *Margaret Thatcher: The Downing Street Years* at £25 a copy are running at 300,000. She will almost certainly outstrip Madonna. On the road her discreet security far outguns Salman Rushdie's. Even, say seasoned observers, the Prime Minister's own.

On Thursday last week it was Cheltenham Town Hall, after the local Waterstone's manager, Andrew Stilwell, had spent more than two weeks ironing out security arrangements.

In the long queues were Gordon and Nancy Price, a retired business couple from Walsall, who had stayed on after the mid-week race meeting.

"I was just asking my wife if she could guess what all this reminded me of," said Mr Price looking pleased.

Go on.

"Desert Orchid. You know, a former champion, but still making guest appearances for all the fans. Red Rum's the same."

The "fans" who heard this seemed a mite irritated. Nancy gave Gordon one of her looks. "And they both wrote books too," said Mr Price gaily.

"I hardly think they signed them though," said the sober-suited young man in front, one of many under-25s in an audience which included several schoolkids, but relatively few people beyond the age of 70.

With precisely 1,008 tickets sold there was standing room only inside. Perfectly coiffured and elegant in a blue suit with gold buttons, silver brooch and a string of pearls, Lady Thatcher entered to a standing ovation.

Cheltenham held many happy political memories for her, she said, recalling a political meeting at the race course. One could imagine Mr Price scouring his *Timeform* for an entry.

Local links forged, she warned of the difficulty in trying to fit her Downing Street Years into 30 minutes.

"But let me try to give you a flavour," she said softly. The lights were dimmed and the odyssey began, starting with those cold dark days of 1979, trade union domination . . . top tax rates of 83 per cent on earned income and 98 per cent on savings income . . . strike after strike leading to the winter of discontent. It sounded like Siberia with barely a brazier. We hugged our coats around us.

She warmed her listeners with some homely first impressions of 10 Downing Street and its deceptively modest terrace exterior.

"Then right at the top of this big building, a flat in the attic. And that's where the Prime Minister and spouse live." There were no permanent staff to service it, she said. "Because it was always expected that the Prime Minister would have a *wife!*" Cheltenham ladies loved that.

At the Barbican on Monday a questioner had dared to ask: "Which was your biggest mistake?"

"I am sorry," she said. "My biggest *what?*"

At Cheltenham, fielding questions from a doting audience, she was asked: "Would you still defend poll tax and if so, why?" Lady Thatcher took a deep breath. A handbagging loomed.

"There was NO SUCH THING as poll tax," she roared to a stunned silence.

"Christ!", said a frightened man in the balcony.

"There was a community charge," she continued. "I have not the slightest shadow of doubt that it was the right principle."

It led to "one or two difficulties", she conceded. But no, she wouldn't have done it differently. They were to have been remedied by money she had allocated.

"Now we have 17·5 per cent VAT to pay for it, compared to 15 per cent when I was in Downing Street."

Had she ever been lonely?

"It wasn't until the last few days, when I decided not to go for the second ballot, that I realised the enormity of what had happened. Then of course there was a certain amount, as you will expect, of emotional stress. But then I had to think who my successor might be and get on with arranging that."

Sad? The possibility of "losing control" might have happened if the House had been generous on her last day as Prime Minister, she said, but after she had dealt with Questions, Neil Kinnock delivered his usual rant. "Immediately I was back in the debate, fighting," she said, shaking her fist in the air to applause.

On her last day it was her enemies she could rely on.

But Thursday in Cheltenham did elicit some emotion. Her book ends with a car taking her and Denis through Downing Street's gates for the last time.

As she recalled the moment, her speech faltered, she swallowed, she blinked. Lady Thatcher was on the brink of tears or turning in a performance worthy of a fine actress. But it was soon upbeat again as yet another acolyte ached for her return to power. Would she?

"I don't think life happens that way. But if by a billion to one chance it should, then I'll remember what you say."

Niall Ferguson – Page 27
Frank Johnson – Page 28

Waiting for the word: fans queue to buy the book

PHOTOGRAPHS: JULIAN SIMMONDS

Signed and delivered: Lady Thatcher greets a book buyer at Cheltenham Town Hall after delivering a rousing 'taster' to a capacity audience

Tossed head and wild eyes – the lady was not for turning off

RADIO

David Sexton

ALAN Clark says that only in a few places do Lady Thatcher's memoirs speak with her own voice. No such complaint can be made of the interviews she gave to promote them.

She started Monday by duelling with the Brian Redhead on the *Today* programme (Radio 4). "It's lovely to see you get up early still," he began before slotting the knife home, "but when you wake up do you think to yourself, 'Oh, I wish I was still in Number 10?' "

"No", replied Thatcher. "I don't, not in any way. I accepted what happened and you really can't live your life on an 'if only' basis."

"Do you feel the party betrayed you?" Redhead tried again, eliciting a superbly blunt redefinition from Thatcher. *"Betrayed* me? No. Naturally when you've been in power as long as I had, when you'd done the very firm things that I had, when you'd put Britain in a different direction, there were some people who were your *enemies*."

Redhead tried again and was wrongfooted. There are, he began to say, two kinds of Conservatism, "yours and a kind of Ian Gilmour kind . . . how can I put this . . ."

"Oh don't try to be delicate, it's not in character," cut in Lady Thatcher.

"Well, let me tell you the rude word then, it was more a suburban prejudice than real Conservatism," finished Redhead crassly.

She rode over these taunts to deliver sermons, about individual responsibility, and Europe's "enormous gifts of civilisation to the world" and the historic achievements of the "Anglo-American relationship". Book-pushing seemed forgotten.

Her next engagement, with Jenni Murray on *Woman's Hour* (Radio 4) was less rewarding. Ms Murray was so eager to press the case for women as an oppressed group that she failed to notice that Lady Thatcher does not think in that fashion about anybody.

Lady Thatcher explained that she had been too busy to notice prejudice, that she promoted on merit, that she did not see "women's issues" as "something wholly separate from the life of the community . . . it's not separate men and women". "And I get really rather fed up with this," she declared. "Don't try to give the impression we need special treatment — we don't."

The irony of saying this on a programme dedicated exclusively to special treatment for women seemed to have escaped her.

Mrs Thatcher's most amicable and anecdotal interview came in the evening, with John Dunn on Radio 2. Dunn has a soothing manner and his interviewee used this last appearance to get what she wanted to say said. She paid tribute to the Empire, praised courage in politics and attacked federalism.

Once again she refused an invitation to offer a direct tribute to John Major, saying of the leadership contest only: "Life is a choice of alternatives and in my view John was the best of the three." "Preferable to Michael Heseltine?" queried Dunn mildly, as though trying to remember the names. "Yes, very much so," she replied.

TELEVISION

A. N. Wilson

WHETHER she makes you cheer or weep or hurl things at the set, Margaret Thatcher makes the most watchable television. Indeed, after David Frost's masterly interview with her last Sunday, I found it hard to think of anything else until the broadcasting of *Thatcher: The Downing Street Years* on Wednesday. Taken together, they must contain the strangest revelations yet made about the political fabric of this country.

"Goodness me, David," said the great Lady on Sunday morning, when asked if she had ever made any mistakes, "I'm sure I was wrong on a number of things, but I cannot think of anything immediately."

With great courtesy, Sir David then recalled the moment in her book when two journalists from the *Financial Times* broke the news to her that Government economic policy had changed, and that the pound was now "shadowing" the Deutschmark.

Nigel Lawson has dismissed this version of events and said that his Prime Minister knew perfectly well what was happening. She denies this — with patent and agitated sincerity. Surely this meant, Frostie gently asked her, that far from being "very much a hands-on Prime Minister" she actually, by that stage, had little control, and less idea, of what was actually going on. She could not answer that. Cue for Wednesday's strange programme, which depicted her as a class warrior at war, not so much with miners or dole scroungers, as with the Old Boys in her cabinet.

Ronald Millar ungallantly compared her to Julie Andrews and said that he had given her the famous Prayer of St Francis with which to open her act. (She wept when he first quoted it to her). Jim Prior was soon laying into the "humbug" of Margaret claiming to bring harmony when she thrived on confrontation.

> ‘She emerges a more impressive figure than any of her detractors’

By the end of the programme she herself was looking odder and odder. The right side of her face appeared to be frozen and one wondered whether this was the result of a mild seizure or some unwise intake of stimulants. Her eyes were wild and she was admitting that, while she had always believed that she could get her policies through with the help of just six good men and true, she had never quite managed to assemble such a number together at one time in a Cabinet.

The odd thing is that she emerged from this programme, for all her overemphasis on inappropriate words, tossing of the head and baring of the teeth, as a far more impressive figure than any of her detractors.

The funniest scene was when Ian Gilmour and Lord Carrington remembered calling at Chequers to announce the good news that they had negotiated a repayment to Britain by the EEC of £1·75 billion, only to be torn off a strip for not getting £2 billion. "She was incandescent," said Gilmour with lofty satisfaction.

But even the nice men, like these two Foreign Office smarmies, seemed to confirm her chippiness. No wonder she wanted to replace them with the car salesmen, and to determine, when she finally had to go, that she would be succeeded not by a public schoolboy but the Brixton Lad.

The level of self-revelation on this one question of class shocked me and made me half fall in love with her. It also made me wish that Alderman Roberts had been a Socialist. She would really have been happier in the People's Party — its quarrelsomeness, its chippiness, its doctrines. And what a Labour Prime Minister she would have made!

Scheming Labour MPs take rise out of women

by Toby Helm and Paul Goodman

STEP forward, the Labour Party's fastest rising star. No, not Robin Cook, who topped the poll in last week's Shadow Cabinet elections. Not John Smith's party conference saviour, John Prescott. Not even the young and media-friendly moderniser, Tony Blair.

The undisputed heroine of last week's party poll is 70 years old, a Trotskyite and unknown on the national stage. She is Mildred Gordon, the previously unsung MP for Bow and Poplar.

In only her second attempt to get into the Shadow Cabinet, the rabidly Left-wing Mrs Gordon more than doubled her support. Were this to happen again next year, she would walk into senior front-bench office.

Mrs Gordon is exulting in her electoral success, and told *The Sunday Telegraph* yesterday that she has been assured by Labour Whips of a post as a junior spokesman.

"At last my qualities are being recognised," she said.

Her vote, which soared from 40 to 81, was the most startling single result of the Shadow Cabinet elections, and has made a deep impression on MPs of all parties. At Prime Minister's Questions last Thursday, no less a person than Margaret Beckett, Labour's Deputy Leader, found herself the victim of Mildred Mania. As she rose from her seat to take on Tony Newton, the backbench cries went up: "Where's Mildred? We want Mildred."

Of course, some would say Mrs Gordon is an unfortunate advertisement for the modern Labour Party. She has never been considered even for junior frontbench office before, has been an uninhibited critic of the leadership and is regarded even by the Left as a member of the "dinosaur" tendency.

Popular: Mildred Gordon

The fact is, of course, that Mildred Gordon's success had nothing to do with support for her Trotskyist views. Nor did it represent a triumph for Labour's women — whose cause she has consistently promoted since entering Parliament seven years ago.

Rather it is a massive victory for Labour's cohort of old-fashioned male MPs, who were furious at being ordered, for the first time, to vote for at least four of the 37 female Labour MPs.

There had been well-founded rumours in the weeks leading up to this week's Shadow Cabinet elections that groups of male MPs were plotting to ensure that support for women candidates would be spread as widely as possible in order to reduce the votes won by each.

To further this process female MPs were egged on to stand for office. Many who had previously taken a modest view of their abilities were astounded by the number of their male colleagues urging them to throw their handbags into the ring.

The whispering campaign worked to perfection. It was so successful that not only did 15 women stand (compared to nine last year) but only three were elected — one less than last year.

John Smith, who is eager to court the female vote, in part by elevating more women to senior positions, is said to be incandescent.

While Mo Mowlam and Ann Taylor held their own, and the veteran MP Joan Lestor improved on her total of last year, others were humiliated. The most prominent casualty was Harriet Harman.

The chief beneficiaries to the whole messy saga have been, of course, the Conservatives — who, like so many of their Labour counterparts, have a low view of Ms Harman's abilities.

The affair has highlighted a profound tension — much of it rooted in class — between Labour's high profile women, many of whom come from middle class backgrounds, and its core constituency of working class, northern-based male MPS. "The fact that male MPs were forced to vote for four of their female colleagues created a very sour mood within the party," said one source. "The women had proved themselves to be as mean, venal, selfish and ambitious as any of us blokes."

Mildred Gordon, however, is unshaken by the dispute as she awaits the call from John Smith to frontbench duties. "I'm just pleased to have gained so much support," she said. "It's an insult to me and to those who voted for me to suggest that they did so frivolously or with any devious motive in mind."

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THE OBSERVER
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ABC CIRC. 551,475
ISSUE DATE 24 OCT 1993

Labour men rigged votes to sabotage election of women

Andy McSmith

LABOUR MPs wasted more than a thousand votes in an elaborate operation to punish women for changing the rules for elections to the Shadow Cabinet.

The victims were Shadow Treasury Secretary Harriet Harman, later reappointed by John Smith, and former media spokeswoman Ann Clwyd. Both lost their elected places.

Ms Clywd, MP for Cynon Valley, yesterday launched a bitter attack on her colleagues' tactics, saying the election had been a stitch-up.

She told the Welsh Labour Party's annual women's conference in Cardiff that she laid the blame firmly with her male colleagues, who outnumber Labour women in the House by 234 to 37.

One MP used only five of the 18 votes he was allowed. The rules required him to vote for a minimum of four women. His fifth vote went to Shadow Welsh Secretary Ron Davies.

Mr Davies said: 'I find it frankly laughable to think there's somebody so in love with me that they will vote for me and no one else. It certainly wasn't done in my best interests.'

Four other ballot papers had only six crosses on them. In each, the two extra votes, apart from those cast for women, went to Shadow Defence Secretary Dr David Clark and the former Shadow Scottish Secretary, Tom Clarke. Dr Clark said: 'There may have been four people who thought that highly of me and Tom Clarke.'

Clwyd: The election was 'a stitch-up'.

The 270 Labour MPs used 1,147 fewer votes than they were entitled to. A quarter used fewer than 10 votes each.

The results show that a recent attempt to tighten the rules has failed to stop practices known as 'plumping' and 'dumping'.

'Plumping' has been going on as long as Labour has been in opposition. Friends and allies of candidate X, who has a marginal chance of being elected, agree to boost his chances by voting only for him.

'Dumping' began in 1989, when a new rule required every MP to vote for at least three women. That figure was raised this year to four, causing a backlash among male MPs.

As many as 80 MPs may have deliberately spread their votes among women candidates who they thought would never be elected, such as the elderly left-winger Mildred Gordon.

There were 11 women among the top 30 in last week's result, all with more than 80 votes. Only three did well enough to be elected — including the redoubtable Joan Lestor.

At various points in a long career, Miss Lestor has lost her seats in parliament, on Labour's national executive and on the shadow cabinet, but has recaptured all three. She is now Shadow Minister for Family Affairs, although there is no Cabinet Minister for her to shadow.

Ms Harman, the biggest loser in last week's election, is vigorously defending the new rules: 'There is broad agreement about the objective, which is to make the parliamentary Labour Party reflect the changes in the world outside.

'I think there are very few people who would say now that it would be a good thing to have an all-male Shadow Cabinet. That is a change for the better. There were clearly some people who felt uncomfortable about the procedure and tried to buck it.'

But Ms Clywd said bluntly in her speech yesterday: 'The process exposed some male Labour MPs as the unreformed male chauvinists we always knew them to be.'

SCOTLAND ON SUNDAY
20 North Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1YT
CIRC. 67,351 ISSUE DATE 24.10.93

Women more equal than other MPs

A female Shadow Cabinet quota irks even women MPs, Westminster Editor Tom Condon discovers

SO was it really a plot by all those beer drinking male chauvinist Scottish MPs that caused the spectacular foul-up last week of John Smith's plans to bring more women into his Shadow Cabinet through positive discrimination?

A rotund Scottish MP, with his "half and half" in Annie's Bar in the Commons, was in no doubt why Harriet Harman and Ann Clwyd failed to get elected under the "assisted places" scheme which operated for last Wednesday's election.

"They lost because they were nae bloody good, it's as simple as that. It's got nothing to do with the fact they were women.

"They only got the jobs in the first place because they were women. I don't see why they should keep them because of their sex if they are not up to scratch."

Up to a point, Lord Copper. There was a real feeling that both Harman and Clwyd had not performed well during the past year in their respective positions of shadow chief secretary to the Treasury and shadow heritage secretary.

But their downfall was also down to a good old-fashioned class war in the People's Party. Lots of Scottish and Northern working class MPs have long been fed up with what John Prescott calls the "beautiful people" headed by the two leading modernisers, Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, and advised by Neil Kinnock's former image maker, Peter Mandelson, now MP for blue collar Hartlepool.

Last week, both on the left and the right, they took their revenge on the middle class intellectuals who are ditching socialism just as fast as they can while introducing such new fangled ideas as positive discrimination to bring more women on to the front bench and improve the party's image with floating voters.

By encouraging 14 women to run for the four shadow cabinet seats set aside just for women, the women's vote was spread across the board and only three were elected to the 18 strong front bench, Mo Mowlam, Ann Taylor and Joan Lestor.

Irene Adams, the Paisley North MP who polled 88 votes in her first attempt to be elected to the shadow cabinet, only 11 less than Harman, denied that she had been persuaded to run to allow the left to get back at the modernisers.

"I think Harriet is suffering from a case of sour grapes," she said. "No one twisted my arm to stand. I decided to stand on my own. I am against quotas in any form; people should be elected because of their ability and nothing else.

"But when the new rules stated you must vote for four women, I decided to stand and I think I received support from about half the Scottish Party and the rest of my votes came from the left.

Harriet Harman: kept on despite the party's verdict

"I think Harriet has great ability but she was plainly in the wrong job when it came to being number two to Gordon Brown. MPs were giving their verdict on how she had been performing. It had nothing to with chauvinism."

She said the new rules were ridiculous because while they insisted Labour MPs had to vote for four women among the 18 shadow cabinet places there was no compulsion to vote for any men. An MP could simply vote for four women and no one else.

"I opposed the scheme when John Smith forced it through the party and I think after the events of last week we will have to look at it again," she added.

Smith, who this year raised the number on the "assisted places" scheme from three to four, is in no hurry to change the system of election as far as women MPs are concerned.

He made his own views known by simply ignoring the party's verdict on Harman. He reappointed her as Brown's number two after the Dunfermline East MP asked him to keep her in the economic team as his deputy.

Clwyd was not so fortunate. She lost her job as heritage spokesman because she has no support among Smith's advisers and she was replaced by Mo Mowlam, who came fifth from top of the poll.

Many MPs hoped Mowlam would replace Harman as Brown's number two but she is not a fan of Brown's and found herself exiled to heritage despite being only four votes behind the shadow chancellor in the election.

Quotas or no quotas, Labour operates behind the scenes just like the Tories. It is not what you know but who you know.

SUNDAY TIMES
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Quayle writes a hot potatoe

Delighting political satirists everywhere, **Dan Quayle**, the former American vice-president (qv "potatoe") said he was considering running for the presidency in 1996. Quayle is currently writing a book including chapters titled How to Lose an Election and Murphy (Brown) and Me. We can recommend a good spelling checker. Those who can't wait for Quayle's book are invited to an Indiana museum dedicated to his life where the exhibits include his law degree, as chewed by his dog Barnaby.

People concerned with safe sex might now wish to consider taking a video camera on dates and insisting on taping any activity that might subsequently become the subject of legal action. After **Austen Donnellan**, a London student, was acquitted of rape when he insisted the allegation against him by a fellow student was no more than a form of post-coital remorse, it is difficult to identify other measures by which women can positively protect their virtue and men their honour.

The alternative of a written contract, in which partners in sexual activity can indicate in advance the specific activities in which they are prepared to engage, presents a number of difficulties. It is hard to imagine how the "moment" would survive a complex contract negotiation between the parties. Video is much more fun, anyway.

The Queen might not wish to spend much time viewing the videotapes of her trip to the Commonwealth heads of government meeting on Cyprus, where demonstrators reminded her of death sentences carried out by British authorities on the island. They also complained about the continuing inability of the Commonwealth, or anyone else, to sort out the Turkish occupation of much of Cyprus. **Douglas Hurd**, the foreign and Commonwealth secretary, insisted there is a continuing role for the

7 DAYS

Commonwealth, but without much conviction since he is the one who is said by those in the know to have determined withdrawal of government funding for the Commonwealth Institute in London. One leader not in Cyprus was a man described on his nation's exhibit at the Commonwealth Institute as the president for life of Malawi, **Dr Hastings Banda**, who flew instead, now that sanctions are being lifted, to South Africa for brain surgery.

Richard Branson's Virgin Atlantic airline filed a $1 billion antitrust lawsuit against British Airways in the American courts, alleging illegal and anti-competitive activities including attempts to destroy Virgin with "predatory practices and acts".

Michael Heseltine, president of the Board of Trade, returned to work after recuperating from a heart attack; he is said to have spent much of his time watching television, and to have been appalled by it. **Virginia Bottomley**, the health secretary, said 2,000 administrative jobs in the health service must be cut; **David Blunkett**, her Labour shadow, protested. Labour staged shadow cabinet elections using a system intended to put more women on the front bench; it resulted in a net loss of women, as **Harriet Harman** and **Ann Clwyd** failed to keep their places. **John Smith**, the Labour leader, said Harman could none the less continue to shadow **Michael Portillo**, chief secretary to the Treasury. **The Bundesbank** cut interest rates by half a percent and the "seven wise men" who advise **Kenneth Clarke**, the chancellor, recommended the same for Britain.

Brazil wants Britain to extradite **Paulo Cesar Farias**, its most wanted man, who has been discovered living in Britain, and suggested that in return they might send us **Ronnie Biggs**, the great train robber who has lived in Brazil for almost 30 years.

After winning but a single game, **Nigel Short's** campaign to wrest the world championship from **Garry Kasparov** ended in London.

Jonathan Miller