Mapping legislative socialisation

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Abstract. Legislative socialisation has long been an important force for political deradicalisation in capitalist democracies worldwide. It remains barely explored, however, in large part because it is a process very difficult to track by conventional observational or survey methods. We circumvent these problems by taking advantage of an unusually propitious vote on televising the proceedings of the British House of Commons to chart the institutional deradicalisation of its Labour members. Socialisation effects are shown to be non-linear and, while the difference is not statistically significant, to be marginally stronger among Members of Parliament (MPs) with frontbench experience. The somewhat greater conservatism of frontbenchers, however, cannot be explained by anticipatory socialisation. Rather, it seems to be a function of doing well under 'rules of the parliamentary game' threatened by proposals for institutional reform.

Introduction

A much noted characteristic of liberal democracies worldwide has been their ability to persist and usually prosper despite the popularity of radical political parties intent on bringing about their social, economic, political or territorial dislocation and redefinition. Parties rejecting basic principles of economic and political organisation have often moderated their goals to the point of willingly assuming responsibility for governing a polity still founded on those same principles. The best-known example of this kind of transformation is the deradicalisation of left-wing socialist parties.[1] Once these parties determined to contest elections and take part in the other trappings of 'bourgeois liberal democracy', they accepted to all intents and purposes responsibility for maintaining a capitalist economic and political order to whose fundamental restructuring they had once been committed. They set themselves apart from their right-wing counterparts for being better and fairer managers of capitalism. Revolution gave way to reform and democratic socialism to social democracy (see, for example, Michels 1962; Miliband 1972; Panebianco 1988; Przeworski & Sprague 1986).

The explanation of this process of deradicalisation is complex. Most commonly, it has been sought in the properties of individuals, such as the limited,

reformist consciousness of members of the working class (Lenin 1932) or the *embourgeoisement* of social democratic leaders (Michels 1962). But part of it is also to be found in the assimilationist properties of the democratic political institutions in which radical leaders find themselves compelled to operate. In this regard, parliaments have played a critical role in democracy's accommodation of new social forces at times of fundamental change in society at large. They are institutions whose established conventions, parliamentary practices and ways of 'doing things' have time and again been embraced and internalised by radical members, contributing to the moderation of their political demands and policy goals. Indeed, the success of legislatures in co-opting new members and tempering their radical policy instincts has been nothing short of remarkable: 'Parliaments are even better at indoctrinating their members with their own norms than are public schools or miners' lodges, as a whole list of angry firebrands who later mellowed into sage and gradualist parliamentary statesmen bears witness' (Marquand 1979: 75).

The problem

That parliamentary membership generally moderates radicalism cannot be doubted. The evidence is overwhelming. A recent study of Britain, for example, concludes that 'the relationship between political involvement and support for changing the economic and social status quo is curvilinear . . . . The full curvilinear picture is evident in nearly every case, with either attentive publics or (failed parliamentary) candidates taking the most extreme positions on policy matters and Members of Parliament (MPs) doing the most backtracking' (Searing 1986: 373; see also Mughan & Patterson 1992: 167–170; Putnam 1976: 96–98). Work has also been done on why legislative socialisation is so effective. In his in-depth study of the Appropriations Committee in the US House of Representatives, Fenno (1962) lists four factors that would seem to characterise effective institutional socialisation generally. They are: (1) a deep, clear and shared consensus on goals, (2) an ability to co-opt task-oriented members, (3) the great attractiveness that service holds for members of the institution, and (4) a stable membership.

A limitation shared by such socialisation studies, though, is that they paint only part of the larger picture. Snapshots are taken at one point in time; they are static, with conservatisation treated as a state of affairs already arrived at rather than as a process that unfolds. The trajectory of this process remains a mystery because the socialisation of professional politicians is all but impossible to chart by conventional observational or survey methods. This is so for three related reasons. First, it is not readily visible at any single point in time. Second, legislators may not themselves be aware of their attitudinal

conservatisation. Behavioural anomalies can always be rationalised away by 'the circumstances' and need not be admitted to reflect more profound changes in ways of thinking. Third, even if legislators admit to themselves that their radical instincts have waned, they will commonly deny it for any number of good reasons – loss of self respect for 'selling out', concern about not being renominated by more radical constituency parties, fear of electoral reprisal, and so on.

The upshot is that legislative socialisation is understood less as a process and more as an outcome so that basic questions about its timing have been left unaddressed. Does institutional conservatisation occur gradually or rapidly? Does it accrete linearly over time? Does the achievement of leadership status compound an ongoing process, leave it unaffected or set it in reverse? This study is the first to address these questions. It circumvents many of the methodological problems inherent in the study of legislative socialisation by taking advantage of the unusual characteristics of a 1988 vote on whether or not to allow permanent television coverage of the proceedings of the British House of Commons. Specifically, it hypothesises socialisation to be a function primarily of the length of institutional membership and models the rate of attrition of radicalism among Labour MPs. It also addresses the question of whether such attrition is greater for individuals who achieve positions of influence and power in the institution.

The vote

This is a study of institutional conservatisation, of growing commitment to the established 'rules of the parliamentary game'. It is likely, however, to have implications for policy deradicalisation as well. Interview-based research has already shown that legislative socialisation in the British House of Commons, as presumably elsewhere, is 'a conservative force inculcating both institutional support in procedural rules of the game *and* (our emphasis) deradicalisation in public policy' (Searing 1986: 341). Moreover, the institutional and policy dimensions of deradicalisation are related in a 'direct, positive and reciprocal' manner (Searing 1986: 376). Thus, conclusions reached about one dimension can plausibly be assumed to have some relevance for the understanding of the other. Unfortunately, though, legislators' behaviour on the two dimensions cannot be compared directly since votes on important policy issues in parliamentary systems of government are inevitably whipped. The result is that the deradicalisation on such issues that can come with effective legislative socialisation is unable to manifest itself since all party members vote the same way. On occasion, however, 'free' votes are allowed on important issues that cut across party lines and do not threaten the government's larger legislative

Table 1. Voting patterns of returning and new MPs by party

	Conservative MPs		Labour MPs	
	Returning	New	Returning	New
% voting yes	33.2	32.7	79.9	98.3
% voting no	66.8	67.3	20.1	1.7
Number of cases	289	52	149	60

programme. The votes are free in the sense that party discipline is relaxed and legislators are allowed to vote their conscience (Marsh & Read 1988; Mughan & Scully 1997).

This analysis is made possible by the highly fortuitous combination of circumstances attaching to a vote on an important, controversial and divisive institutional reform, the televising of proceedings.[2] The first important characteristic of this vote is that MPs perceived it to be important, as is evidenced by fully 582 (or 89.5%) of their total number taking part in the division. It was hardly a consensual vote either; the combined Conservative and Labour majority in favour was only 32 votes.[3] The nub of the issue was the tension between Labour MPs' ideological radicalism and the likely development over time of a commitment to tried and tested parliamentary practice. The proposal to televise had been defeated with cross-party support several times previously. The issue presented Labour members in particular with a difficult choice since it pitted their often principled commitment to more open government and policy making (Searing 1982) against an institutional conservatism common to experienced MPs of all parties. The essence of this conservativism was a resistance to change out of conviction that current arrangements worked well enough, while altering them entailed risks that were not worth the possible gains. In particular, it was felt that the efficiency and mystique of the Commons might suffer as members became concerned less with the business of governing and more with 'playing to the cameras' and their own self-aggrandisement (Franklin 1992)

Second, the vote was held early in February 1988, only a few months into the life of the Parliament that had been returned in the June 1987 general election. Unlike their returning counterparts (or as would have been the situation if the vote had been taken later in the Parliament), new MPs had had little time to become institutionally socialised. Finally, and relatedly, the voting patterns of new and returning Labour MPs are markedly different. The sharpness of this difference is immediately clear from Table 1. The two groups of Tories are all but indistinguishable in their largely negative reaction to the television proposal, whereas the picture for their Labour counterparts is very different. All but one of the 60 new ones voting in 1988 supported the televising of

proceedings, compared to no more than 4 out of 5 of the party's returning MPs. The virtual unanimity of Labour newcomers, together with the early timing of this vote in the 1987–1992 Parliament, offer an unequalled opportunity to model the institutional conservatisation process, to ask how long, other things being equal, it would take Labour's new intake to behave like previous ones.

The model

The dependent variable, institutional conservatism, is defined as voting *against* the proposal to allow the television cameras into the Commons. Commitment to the institutional *status quo*, and therefore opposition to television, is hypothesised to be primarily a function of two factors, length of time as a member of the institution and achievement of a position of influence within it. Length of tenure is measured by number of years as an MP. Influence is a function of holding a position of authority in the institution and two such positions are identified. The first is frontbench status, either junior or senior, in government or in opposition.[4] It is measured as a dummy scored '1' if achieved presently or in the past and '0' if a perpetual backbencher. The second, and separate, position of influence is membership of one or more of the select committees that oversee government actions (Drewry 1989). This variable is again measured as a dummy, scored '1' if the MP is, or has been, a member of a select committee and '0' if not.[5]

   Since these are unlikely to be the only influences on the vote, two other sets of variables are controlled for in the analysis. The first of them is a set of predictors that other research has shown to have an impact on free vote outcomes in the Commons. These are the MP's party affiliation, gender, age and two dummies: education ('1' if a university graduate) and a regional variable scored '0' for the Southern England and '1' for the rest of the country (Marsh & Read 1988: 86–107).[6] The second set taps the electoral self-interest of MPs. A substantial literature has documented the rise of career-oriented MPs in the Commons and their efforts to build up a personal vote to help ensure their own re-election independently of the fortunes of their party (King 1981; Cain et al. 1987). Individuals who feel less secure electorally might welcome television as a means of making themselves better known to their constituents, thereby enhancing their re-election prospects (Fenno 1990; Mughan & Swarts 1996). Electoral security is measured in two ways. The first is the marginality of the seat and the second a dummy variable scored '1' if the Alliance, unpredictable and fighting only its second general election, came a disconcerting runner-up in the 1987 constituency race.[7]

   These, then, are the individual predictors included in the model. Its overall specification is a separate matter, however, and three matters need elaboration

in regard to it. The first is its central assumption of consistency across recent generations of Labour MPs. In the absence of reason to believe otherwise, it is assumed that, in the aggregate, the 1987 intake is not significantly different from previous ones in its initial political radicalism or in the socialisation experiences to which it will be subjected once in the Commons. Second, the two parties are not treated equally. Generally speaking, and as shown by Table 1, Conservatives can be expected to enter the Commons institutionally conservative, whereas Labour members are more likely to become so with experience and the passage of time. Third is the trajectory of this conservatisation that Labour members tend to experience. Does it start early and proceed linearly over the course of time? Or is it a non-linear change process? Specifically, is there an incubation period during which little changes, but which is then followed by an acceleration in Labour members' institutional conservatisation?

The trajectory question is ultimately important because it determines the specification of the model. If, for example, socialisation is thought to proceed uniformly with each year spent as an MP, then its specification will be linear. Our expectation, however, is one of diminishing returns. The mass public literature indicates that much political socialisation takes place in childhood and that lessons learned early tend not to change in adult life (Dawson, Prewitt & Dawson 1977). The same conclusion also characterises the study of socialisation in complex organisations (Louis 1980). There is no reason why the pattern of socialisation should be expected to be different in legislatures. Time spent in the House of Commons should show diminishing returns in the sense that socialisation into institutional norms should occur early and at some point tail off as these norms become internalised. In theoretical terms, therefore, the appropriate specification of the relationship is logarithmic.

This expectation was confirmed when we put various models to the empirical test; the logarithmic one gave the best fit to the data.[8] Thus, in addition to the predictors described earlier, our model includes an interaction term, which is the product of party affiliation (scored '1' for Labour) and number of years in the Commons, to capture differential party conservatisation trends. Table 2 presents the logit estimation results. In reference to the model as a whole, a likelihood-ratio chi-squared test is used to test the null hypothesis that all coefficients in the model are zero in the population. The test statistic is 179.67, with 13 degrees of freedom, which is highly significant. The pseudo-R^2 is 0.51.[9] In reference to the individual variables, the coefficient, b_j, estimates the change in the *log odds* of voting yes for a one-unit increase in the jth predictor, controlling for all other variables in the model.

The logit results are striking in three respects. First, by far the strongest predictor of position taken on the television issue is party affiliation. Labour

Table 2. Logistic regression results for the vote on televising the House of Commons.
(Dependent variable, Vote: 1 = No, 0 = Yes)

Variable	Coefficient (standard error)	p-value
Constant	0.330 (0.688)	0.63
Labour Party	−4.122 (0.580)	0.00
Age	0.030 (0.016)	0.09
Female	−1.158 (0.493)	0.02
University	−0.333 (0.226)	0.14
Marginality	−0.012 (0.009)	0.16
Alliance second	−0.251 (0.244)	0.30
Region	0.249 (0.256)	0.33
Committee membership	0.269 (0.215)	0.21
Frontbench experience	0.206 (0.249)	0.41
Time as MP (logged)	−0.236 (0.149)	0.11
Interaction (time as MP*Labour Party)	0.701 (0.223)	0.00

Log-likelihood = −289.08; Chi-squared (11 df) = 179.67 ($p < 0.001$); Pseudo-R^2 =
0.51.
N = 548.

MPs are substantially more likely to favour the introduction of the cameras
than Conservatives. Inter-party differences run deep in the British House of
Commons and strongly shape MPs' responses to free vote issues that osten-
sibly transcend traditional ideological differences between the Conservative
and Labour parties (Marsh & Read 1988; Mughan & Scully 1996).

Second, the only variables other than party and the interactive timing vari-
ables that differentiate opponents and supporters at the 5% significance level
or better are age and gender. At least in the instance of this particular vote,
electoral self-interest would just not seem to be a relevant consideration for
the parliamentary representatives of the two main parties. By contrast, age
is relevant and its importance would not seem difficult to explain; it is a
conservatising force in its own right. Net of the other variables, older parlia-
mentarians are just a little more resistant to change, a little less receptive to
doing the same things in new ways.

The explanation of gender's impact is less straightforward. It is clear that,
in contrast to men, women do not become less radical the longer they stay in
the Commons. Those above the mean tenure for women (6.2 years) vote for
television in similar proportions to those below it.[10] It may be that women are
just different in that they are more accepting of reform than men. Their rel-
ative radicalism may reflect generally more progressive attitudes that incline
them to favour reforms changing institutional norms that evolved in heavily
male-dominated chambers (Thomas 1994: 63–65, 106–112).[11] Career con-

siderations are another possible explanation. It may be that women favour making themselves known to a wider audience as an alternative means of advancing parliamentary careers that have generally not prospered under the institutional status quo. For example, Britain may have had its first ever female prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, at the time of the television vote, but she showed no sign of favouring women in her senior appointments. Indeed, not one Tory female from the House of Commons was made a member of the full Cabinet during her 11 years in Downing Street.[12]

Third, there is the issue central to the discussion of legislative socialisation and conservatisation, the effect on political radicalism of being in the institution over a period of time. In this regard, three features of Table 2 are highly pertinent. One is the conservatisation trajectory. Taken over Conservative and Labour MPs as a whole, service in the Commons is statistically insignificant. When allowed to interact with Labour party affiliation, however, it becomes a very powerful deradicalising force. What this means is, on the one hand, that Labour MPs show clear signs of institutional conservatisation the longer they stay in the Commons and, on the other, that their deradicalisation does not proceed at a uniform pace. Two, as hypothesised, it proceeds relatively quickly in the early years, but slows down somewhat later. Length of time as a member clearly reaches a point of diminishing returns as far as socialisation to institutional norms is concerned. Three, while the difference between frontbenchers and backbenchers is not statistically significant, there is nonetheless some mild tendency for elevation to a leadership position to compound the deradicalisation that tends to afflict Labour MPs simply by virtue of entering the Commons and staying there.[13]

The socialisation trajectory

Two general characteristics of the legislative socialisation process have been established, then. The first is that institutional conservatisation is not a linear phenomenon; it affects MPs more in their early years and less in their later ones. The second is that conservatisation is marginally more pronounced among radical party frontbenchers than backbenchers. It is perhaps not surprising that those who do well under a set of institutional arrangements tend to be more resistant to changing them. But insofar as these findings stimulate other important questions about legislative socialisation, they represent a beginning and not an end to enquiry. First, what is the trajectory that socialisation takes in the sense of when is it precisely in the parliamentary career that conservatisation picks up speed? Second, why is it that frontbenchers become that little bit more conservative than backbenchers over time? Can anticipatory socialisation be at work? Put differently, is it that those who
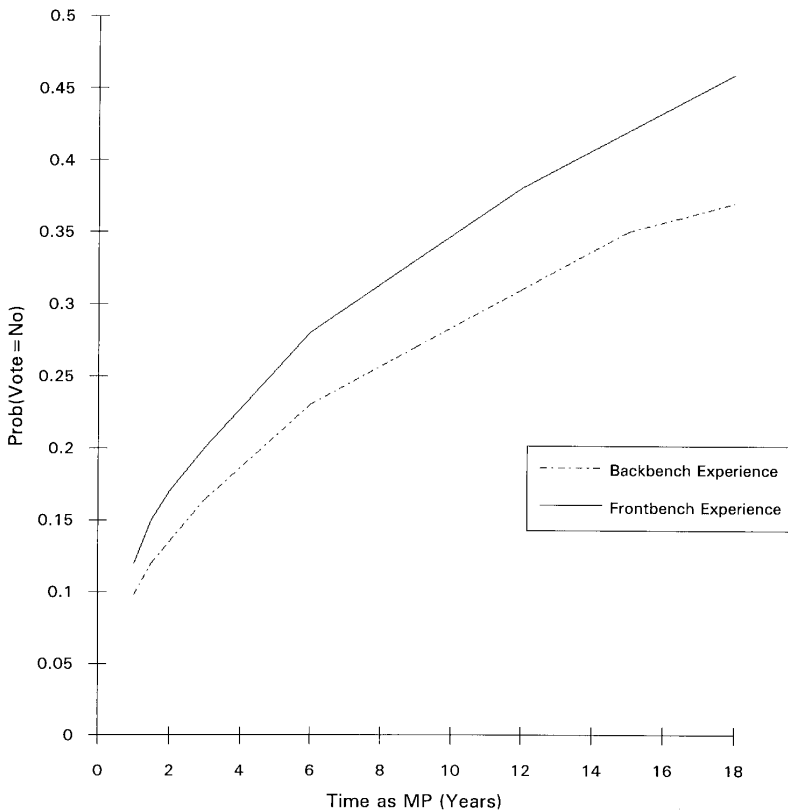
Figure 1. Effect of time on predicted probabilities

make it to the frontbench are different in that they set foot in the Commons keener to 'get ahead' and readier to embrace, play by, and defend the existing rules of the game to do so? If this is the case, they should be substantially more likely than backbenchers to vote against television right from the time of their arrival in the Commons. Alternatively, their conservatisation might be little else than a function of time spent, and career advancement in, the institution. They enter it no less radical, but absorption into, and success in playing, the parliamentary game strengthens both their familiarity with its established rules and their reluctance to change them. In this scenario, the gap between them and backbenchers should be small or nonexistent at the beginning, but should widen somewhat with the passage of time.

   Figure 1 allows us to address these questions. Basically, it plots conservatisation against time by using the findings in Table 2 to estimate the probability that a Labour MP will vote against television for each year spent in the Commons. These estimated probabilities are then graphed to show the socialisation

trajectory for Labour MPs as a whole and the separate trajectories for front-benchers and backbenchers. The endpoints of the graph are 0 and 18 years. The latter figure is simply the mean number of years spent in the Commons by the Labour MPs actually voting in the 1988 division (10.1 years) plus one standard deviation (8.2 years). The resulting curve depicts the change, controlling for the other variables in Table 2, in the probability of voting against television per unit change (one year) in time as a Labour MP.

To take the question of differential frontbench and backbench deradicalisation first, Figure 1 does not support its explanation in terms of anticipatory socialisation. Quite clearly, there is little difference in the behaviour of the two groups of Labour members in the early years of their parliamentary careers. But the gap between them does widen a little with the passage of time. That frontbenchers deradicalise a little more than backbenchers would thus seem to be a function not of their lesser radicalism at the outset, but rather of their remaining in the institution, doing well in it and developing a stronger commitment to its tried and trusted ways of doing things. Strikingly, though, this commitment is only secondarily a product of leadership status. Conservatisation is largely a function of just being there.

What these findings highlight is the potency of legislative socialisation. Even radical legislators just starting their parliamentary career fall prey to its influence. Moreover, there would seem to be no institutional means for radical parties to overcome the tendency of their parliamentary representatives to become more moderate. Term limits would not seem to be the answer since socialisation hits its peak after little more than two five-year parliamentary terms. Perhaps the only way to maintain the radical impetus is to nominate candidates who, apparently like women (although not necessarily for the same reasons), feel somewhat estranged from the institution and important values it upholds. The problem here is that such distance may make for ideological purity, but it may also on the one hand result in marginalised and ineffective MPs until or unless a critical mass is reached, and, on the other, make radical party candidates unacceptable to essentially conservative electorates like the British one.

Conclusion

This analysis has yielded valuable insights into the process of legislative socialisation. Most generally, insofar as institutional conservatisation characterises Labour frontbench and backbench behaviour to a similar degree, it suggests that deradicalisation is by and large a function of just being a member of the Commons. A caveat, though, is that socialisation pressures may be strong, but they are not overwhelming. Those in positions of leadership may

be a little more prone to them, but female MPs resist them quite successfully. Women simply do not manifest the same institutional conservatism that their male counterparts do. The reason may be that they have more progressive attitudes and value systems or it may be that they do not have the same commitment to a set of institutional arrangements that has traditionally failed to afford women the same career opportunities as men. But whatever the reason(s), the larger point is that deradicalisation is not an irresistible force sweeping all before it. Radical MPs attack or defend existing institutional arrangements because they choose to (Mughan & Swarts 1996).

The more specific finding is that legislative socialisation is not a linear process. Figure 1 indicates that Labour MPs begin their deradicalisation from the very early days of their parliamentary careers with a gradual decline in the slope of the curve over time. Their initial radicalism notwithstanding, familiarity breeds commitment more than contempt. It is even possible to be more precise about the timing of this odyssey to institutional conservatism. About eight pro-television, Labour votes would have been lost had the vote been taken towards the end of a Parliament that had run its full course of five years.[14]

Because disciplined voting is the norm in parliamentary systems of government generally, the question of the factors making for legislative success is one rarely asked in the academic literature. Such success is usually seen as being fully a function of the wishes of the party leadership. If the government wants legislation enacted, it invokes discipline to do so. This may be too simple a picture, however. Even if, unlike the television one, the vote is not free, MPs have opportunities to confound the party leadership. They can, for example, work behind the scenes to prevent a legislative proposal being brought to the floor and they can abstain or even vote against it there if these efforts fail (Read, Marsh & Richards 1994). Such opposition is more likely the more contentious and radical the legislative proposal. In the specific case of Britain, reform of the House of Lords is one such proposal. No better example of institutional conservatism can be found than a senior Labour minister's utterly pragmatic defence of this bastion of a class system nominally repellent to his party and his own political ideology 'The fact that the House of Lords has many irrational features is not in itself fatal in British eyes, for we have a considerable capacity for making the irrational work; and if a thing works we tend rather to like it, or at any rate to put up with it' (Morrison 1964: 205).

The proven deradicalisation of nominally reformist parliamentarians means that the timing of legislative proposals can thus be an important determinant of their success or failure, even in parliamentary systems of government. Reformist political parties have the best chance of legislative success when

they have an unusually large cohort of new, 'unspoiled' MPs and they move on their radical proposals quickly so as to avoid the consequences of the deradicalisation that sets in very early in their parliamentary careers. Despite the commonly held uniqueness of its separation of powers system, this observation suggests two interesting comparisons with the USA. First, recent experience underlines that deradicalisation may not be a concern only for left-wing political parties. After the Republicans' sweeping victory in the 1994 congressional elections, many conservative ideologues outside Congress sought to impress on the party leadership the need to pass the 'Contract with America' into legislation before new Republican congressmen succumbed to the pragmatism and bipartisan cooperation that was previously the hallmark of politics in Washington DC. Second, and more generally, the notion of a 'honeymoon' period with Congress for an aggressive, change-oriented president is common. Albeit perhaps in more muted form, this same relationship would also seem to characterise executive-legislative relations in reformist parliamentary governments.

Acknowledgments

Notes

1. A good example of a non-left-wing party that compromised its founding principles in assuming the role of party of government is the German Green party. See Poguntke (1993).
2. The television issue is even rare among free votes. These focus for the most part on relatively trivial matters enjoying support from MPs generally, as well as from the government. When they have been contentious, they have usually involved 'morality' issues, like abortion, capital punishment and homosexuality (Marsh & Read 1988). Because these are matters of long-term conscience and impinge on neither parliamentary procedure nor party policy, opinions on such issues are unlikely to be subject to the same socialisation and deradicalisation influences.
3. When the minor parties in the Commons are taken into account, the majority in favour is 54. These minor parties are excluded from the analysis in the body of the paper, however, because, comprising a total of only 32 MPs, they represent a small and diverse number of cases unsuitable for multivariate analysis.
4. This definition of frontbench status *excludes* Parliamentary Private Secretaries. The information on the achievement of frontbench status comes from Butler & Butler (1994; 1–125) and various issues of *Dod's Parliamentary Companion* and *Who's Who*?
5. The positional variables are coded as dummies for simplicity of presentation. Their impact was also tested in other forms. Frontbench status, for example, was measured in years and a distinction between junior and senior made, Similarly, select committee

membership was estimated using the number of such committees on which the individual served. These different specifications do not affect the substance of our conclusions.

6. The rest of the country comprises Northern England, Scotland and Wales.

7. Marginality is measured as the absolute difference in the percentage vote shares of the first- and second-placed parties in each constituency. The larger this number, the safer the seat.

8. In addition to the linear and logarithmic specifications, we also experimented with polynomial and step function forms of the relationship. The step function test was undertaken for caution's sake. A potential problem with the length of time in the Commons variable was that MPs could be clustered around a small number of time points corresponding to the timing of the more recent general elections. After all, most of the Conservative and Labour MPs figuring in this analysis would have entered the Commons as the result of winning in general elections. Such clustering proved not to be a serious problem, however. Number of months in the Commons ranged from 8 to 455, and only 74.4% (409 of the 550) of those voting clustered around the poles created by the 1987, 1983, 1979 and 1974 and 1970 elections. It would seem that by-elections and some MPs returning after defeat to represent a different constituency obviated the clustering problem. The distribution itself is available from the authors on request.

9. The pseudo-R^2 was calculated as: $(-2\log_e L)/(N + -2\log_e L)$. See Knoke & Bohrnstedt (1994); see also Hagle & Mitchell (1992) for a discussion of alternative pseudo-R^2s.

10. This fact should be interpreted with caution because of the small numbers of female MPs involved, a total of 39. Of these, 28 fall below the mean tenure figure and 11 above. The proportions in each group voting for television are 79 and 72% respectively.

11. This instinct for reform may have been sharpened by the House of Commons' longstanding reputation as 'the best gentlemen's club in Europe'.

12. Her only female cabinet minister was in fact Lady Young, who was leader of the House of Lords in the early 1980s.

13. Table 2 also indicates that this same observation can be made as well of the second leadership position in the Commons, select committee membership. So as not to encumber the text and its interpretation, this variable is ignored from this point on. It should be recognised, though that observations made of the importance of frontbench status generally apply equally to select committee membership.

14. The expected number of votes lost can be calculated by multiplying the predicted probability of voting no for the average Labour MP times the number of new members.

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