

CHAPTER 8

THE EUROPEAN POLICIES OF LEFT-WING POLITICAL PARTIES

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the data on the European policies of left and centre-left political parties other than the Labour Party. The first seven sections focus on the policies adopted by Anarchist organisations, the Communist parties, the Co-operative Party, the Green parties, the Nationalists, the SDP and the Socialist parties. As with the previous chapter, lack of access to a complete set of documentary records for each of these political parties precluded a comprehensive analysis. However, the data generated exposed the divisions within the left and the centre-left on the issue of European integration, facilitating an analysis of policy change over time, and, occasionally, the reasons why policies were altered. The eighth section concludes.

8.1 ANARCHIST ORGANISATIONS

The two main Anarchist organisation in post-war Britain were the Class War Federation (CWF), established in 1985, and the Solidarity Federation (SF), formed in 1994.

The Class War Federation (1985-)

Although the CWF possessed no formal position on European integration, it published a number of critical articles on the EU JHA policy, the Social Chapter and the Single Market. However, one article concluded that ‘if a United Europe is unavoidable, it at least offers the potential to develop a European working class with a genuine internationalist outlook’ (CWF, 1992a). With this in mind, the CWF organised a pan-European conference in September 1991 to discuss the creation of an International Class War Federation.

The years 2001 and 2002 witnessed an ongoing debate about the single currency. Members generally agreed that, whether Britain adopted the euro or not, the capitalist system of exploitation would continue. Furthermore, the debates concerning euro entry, continued membership and national sovereignty were generally dismissed as irrelevant and/or a source of division between different fractions of capital. However, some members warned that adopting the euro would aid the further centralisation of power in Brussels.

The Solidarity Federation (1994-)

A group of Anarchists in Lancashire, who went on to form one section of the Direct Action Movement, the predecessor of the SF, campaigned for a No vote in the 1975 Referendum. Their stance was based on the argument that ‘we would have more of a chance of influencing a small state than a united, European one.’¹

In 1998 the SF published a critical article on EMU, claiming that the debate about the single currency was nationalistic in tone and that the political elite was divided on the issue. The article condemned the MCC and dismissed the free market orthodoxy in favour of large currency zones. The EU failed to satisfy the essential conditions for such a zone, namely the absence of cultural, legal and linguistic barriers to the free movement of labour. Furthermore, it argued that the anticipated savings from the lower transaction costs upon entry would be minimal, and that the loss of devaluation as a policy option would place a downward pressure on wages, encourage labour market deregulation, and lead to public spending cuts. It warned that economic rivalry between the three trading blocs, based on the German, Japanese and US economies, risked a return to war, and concluded that ‘Europe’s working class will pay the price for EMU’ (SF, 1998).

The National Secretary summed up why European integration was a low salience issue for the SF. ‘The EU is just part of the capitalist system and we need an analysis of the system as a whole. The EU is therefore a lower order issue compared to the need for a higher order analysis of capitalism.’²

8.2 THE COMMUNIST PARTIES

The first major split in the original Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) witnessed the creation of the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) (CPB-ML) in 1968. The second major split produced the New Communist Party of Britain (NCP) in 1977, whilst the third major split resulted in the Communist Party of Britain (CPB) in 1988. Following the end of the Cold War, the original CPGB disintegrated into two new factions, the Democratic Left and the re-established Communist Party of Great Britain. The original Revolutionary Communist Party was disbanded in 1949. However, the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) (RCPB-ML) was founded in 1979, following the ejection of the group from the International Socialists.

¹ Correspondence from the National Secretary, 20th August 2002.

² Correspondence from the National Secretary, 13th August 2002.

The Communist Party of Great Britain (1920-1991)

Although a relatively small party, the CPGB exercised considerable influence amongst the Labour Left and within sections of the trade union movement during the Cold War period. The European policy of the CPGB, as adopted by the National Congress, is summarised in Figure 22.

Figure 22: The European Policy of the Communist Party of Great Britain (1947-1991)

Year	National Congress Policy
1947	Socialist third force
1948	Opposition to the ERP
1963	Opposition to entry
1967	
1969	
1971	↓
1973	Opposition to membership
1977	Opposition to the CAP and Direct Elections, plus support for withdrawal
1979	Opposition to CAP, Direct Elections, an EU industrial strategy, an EU military role, the implementation of any EU directive without parliamentary assent, plus support for withdrawal
1990	Support for a 'social Europe' and the democratisation of EU institutions

The 1947 Congress carried two resolutions. The first resolution condemned British subservience to US support for reactionary forces in Europe, preferring economic and political relations with the Soviet Union and other countries committed to economic planning, whilst the second resolution pledged support for the democratisation and unification of Germany. Congress also adopted the Political Report and the Executive Committee Report. The former opposed US economic domination and favoured closer economic and political ties with Europe and the Soviet Union in order to forge a genuine system of international co-operation. The latter revealed that the CPGB had discussed working class unity in Europe, establishing a European sub-committee in order to undertake detailed work. The CPGB therefore supported a *socialist third force* policy.

Following the Soviet Union's rejection of the Marshall Plan at the 1947 Paris Conference, the 1948 Congress carried a resolution that *rejected the ERP*. It stated that, economically, 'it takes away more than it gives', whilst politically, 'it is a menace to national independence and peace in the world' (Pollitt, 1948, p.21).

In 1951 the CPGB adopted *The British Road to Socialism (BRS)* as the party programme. It committed the CPGB to a national, parliamentary road rather than a revolutionary road; to 'the election of a new kind of Labour government which will carry out a left policy' to 'bring about far-reaching democratic change in society, opening up the road

to socialism' (CPGB, 1978, p.4). The original (1951) version of the *BRS* complained that the US was 'dictating what policies the countries of Western Europe, including Britain shall pursue in rearmament and foreign trade' (CPGB, 1951, p.7). It opposed the Brussels Treaty and the rearmament of Germany, although it supported democratisation and reunification.

In 1961 the CPGB published its first pamphlet on the EU. *The Alternative to the EU* characterised the EU as the economic and political counterpart to NATO. Economically, it charged that entry would damage Commonwealth trade, lead to higher food prices, reduce wage levels, increase unemployment, undermine social services, strengthen monopolies and increase the exploitation of Europe's colonies. Politically, it argued that the EU was an anti-Communist bloc that threatened parliamentary sovereignty, the right to plan the economy and the freedom to introduce import and exchange controls. Critically, it claimed that the EU constituted a barrier to the development of socialism in Britain. Similar arguments were recycled in pamphlets subsequently produced by the CPGB (see Figure 23).

Figure 23: Communist Party of Great Britain Publications on European Integration (1961-1980)

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| <p><i>The Alternative to the Common Market</i> (1961)
<i>Say 'No' to the Common Market</i> (1962)
<i>Keep Out of the Common Market</i> (1967)
<i>The Common Market: Why Britain Should Not Join</i> (1969)
<i>Common Market: The Tory White Paper Exposed</i> (1971)
<i>The Common Market Fraud</i> (1975)
<i>Quit the Market – Join the World</i> (1975)
<i>The Common Market: Let's Get Out</i> (1980)</p> |
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The 1963 Congress adopted the Executive Committee Report which *condemned the Conservatives' 1962 application* to join the EU, on the basis that entry would entail the loss of national independence and would be detrimental to the Commonwealth, living standards and trade. The 1967 Congress carried a resolution that was *opposed to Labour's 1967 application* to join the EU. It also adopted the Executive Committee Report that declared that the CPGB was an active member of the broad front of organisations opposed to entry. Congress reaffirmed its opposition to entry/continued membership in 1969, 1971 and 1973.

In July 1971 the CPGB issued a broadsheet, 'No to the Common Market sell-out, general election now.' It criticised the Conservatives' White Paper on entry and called for a co-ordinated campaign in conjunction with the Co-operative movement, the Labour Party and the trade union movement to thwart the passage of the European Communities Bill.

The CPGB published two pamphlets prior to the 1975 Referendum. *Quit the Market – Join the World* reviewed the damage inflicted by two years of British membership. It highlighted the limits imposed on the government's freedom of action, dismissed Labour's renegotiation as a fraud, and recommended a No vote. *The Common Market Fraud* argued that MNCs favoured the EU as a weapon against the working class, that the foreign policy of the EU amounted to neo-colonialism, and that the planned European Assembly elections posed a threat to Westminster.

The revised *BRS*, adopted by the 1977 Congress, stated that the British people were 'under attack from international capital – an attack facilitated by Britain's entry.' It argued that leaving the EU would bring to 'an end to the economic and political restrictions' imposed by the EU, 'would enable Britain to determine its economic strategy and develop its trade on a world scale' (CPGB, 1977, p.38). The 1977 Congress also adopted the Executive Committee Report that rejected further integration, specifically the proposals for an elected European Assembly. It also opposed the CAP and called for Britain's *withdrawal*. However, it reiterated its support for co-operation between European states, 'with respect for the full sovereignty of national parliaments' (CPGB, 1978, p.453).

The 1979 Congress carried a resolution reaffirming the policy of withdrawal. It set out why the CPGB was opposed to the CAP, any extension of the powers of the European Assembly, an EU industrial strategy, any military role for the EU, and the implementation of any EU directive without the assent of Parliament. It also recommended the implementation of the AES, as adopted by the Labour Party, the TUC and the wider trade union movement. The 1980 pamphlet produced by the EU Study Group – *The Common Market: Let's Get Out* – was opposed to entry to the EMS, defended the concept of sovereignty, and dismissed the need for another referendum before withdrawal.

The early 1980s witnessed the emergence of dissent within the CPGB about its withdrawal policy. One branch member argued that the policy was 'short-sighted and damaging.' 'Rather than mimicking the Labour Party's appeal to the 'Little Englander' mentality, Communists should be combating such nationalism with a more far-sighted political internationalism', in the form of a European socialist strategy. Furthermore, 'given proportional representation, the Euro-elections, linking us to our comrades on the continent, and the CP group in the Assembly, could provide a more plausible forum for electoral advance than most of our domestic democratic institutions' (Ackers, 1981).

Such dissent was symptomatic of the growing divide within the CPGB regarding its purpose and direction. A minority, closely associated with Eurocommunism and the New Left movement, parted company with the majority, orthodox (anti-EU, pro-Moscow) members predominantly based within the trade union movement. The former used the *Marxism Today* journal to propagate its ideas, whilst the latter adopted *The Morning Star* newspaper as its organ. Such division precipitated the third split within the CPGB. For several years, the Eurocommunist leadership expelled orthodox branches from the party. These branches founded the CPB in 1988 on the basis of the original programme, principles and rules of the CPGB. The issue of European integration was a major factor in the split. Robert Griffiths, CPB General Secretary, stated that ‘the *Morning Star* continued to uphold the party’s long-standing opposition to the EU. However, we increasingly saw in the pages of *Marxism Today*, and from some sections of the revisionist leadership, subtle and not so subtle attempts to change the policy.’³

Prior to the 1990 Congress, several branches submitted resolutions in defence of the long-standing anti-EU policy of the CPGB. Nevertheless, Congress adopted the *Manifesto for New Times*, which stated that ‘Britain’s membership of the EU was a reality’, necessitating ‘a progressive role for Britain within Europe’ (CPGB, 1990, p.70). It backed the struggle to *construct a ‘social Europe’* and highlighted the need to *tackle the EU democratic deficit*, by making the European Commission accountable to the European Parliament.

Following the collapse of Soviet Communism in 1991, the remaining members of the CPGB renamed themselves the Democratic Left. Griffiths charged that ‘these people were not comfortable in the Communist Party and instead of doing the decent thing and leaving, they decided that they would abolish it.’⁴

The Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

The party programme of the CPB-ML, *The British Working Class and its Party*, which was adopted by the 1971 Congress, contained no reference to European integration. However, in a subsequent statement of fundamental principles, the CPB-ML declared that the EU, ‘the brainchild of Mosley, Mussolini and Hitler, is the huddling together of failed capitalists and would-be capitalists. It has nothing to do with socialism or reform’ (CPB-ML, 2005). The CPB-ML therefore supported withdrawal.

³ Interview with Robert Griffiths, 7th March 2003.

⁴ Ibid.

In 1997 the CPB-ML published the *Britain and the EU: Time to Leave* pamphlet, which stressed the importance of economic and political sovereignty, opposed the development of a militaristic power bloc, and dismissed the Social Chapter, warning against ‘the concept of relying on progressive legislation from abroad’ (CPB-ML, 1997a, p.4). It also criticised the MCC, estimating that withdrawal could save around £24 billion annually. The CPB-ML also produced the ‘No to the Euro’ leaflet in 1997, warned that euro entry would mean the end of Britain as an independent nation-state.

The *Class, Country and Control* document, adopted by the 2000 Congress, set out the case against the euro and continued membership, charging that New Labour’s devolution and regionalisation agenda represented an attempt to transform the nation into regions, the basic governmental unit of the EU. The *Peace, Jobs and Power* document, adopted by the 2003 Congress, concluded that ‘the EU is nothing more than a life-support machine’ to sustain ‘the body of capitalism’ (CPB-ML, 2003). The CPB-ML was critical of enlargement, arguing that it was ‘costly and would place a downward pressure on wages’ (CPB-ML, 2004a). It also pledged to campaign for a No vote in a future referendum on the European Constitution, on the basis that it would ‘would further erode democracy and sovereignty’ whilst ‘entrenching the power of capitalists’ (CPB-ML, 2004c, 2000d).

The New Communist Party of Britain

The 2001 Congress of the NCP declared its opposition to the post-war process of European integration, arguing that each stage ‘has been paid for by working people in higher indirect taxes, lost jobs and lost benefits.’ It was opposed to continued membership of the EU, which, being ‘neither federal nor democratic’, was not capable of reform. It rejected plans for a European army, the evolution of ‘Fortress Europe’, and the imposition of VAT. It also called for the boycott of European Elections. The NCP was opposed to EMU, stating that it would campaign for a No vote in a future euro referendum. In July 2004 the NCP General Secretary declared that the party would campaign for a No vote in a future referendum on the European Constitution.

The Communist Party of Britain

The 1989 Congress resurrected the *BRS* as the CPB party programme. It stated that the EU was ‘a major obstacle to the development of full employment and the defence and extension of the welfare state. The argument that “now we are in, we may as well accept it”, or that the EU can be transformed into an instrument for advancing socialism, ignores the realities – who controls the EU, how they control it, and the actual strengthening of the position of

MNCs' (CPB, 1989, p.36). It argued that the attacks on trade union rights, wages and conditions and the welfare state were being waged by EU-based MNCs in their struggle against Japanese- and US-based MNCs. It opposed the euro, controlled by unelected central bankers, and called for the implementation of an Alternative Economic and Political Strategy (AEPS), based on national economic and political sovereignty. The CPB therefore supported withdrawal, a policy reaffirmed by Congress in 1997 and 2000. However, although he defended the policy of withdrawal, General Secretary Robert Griffiths conceded that 'leaving the EU was not the immediate question on the agenda. There would have to be some very significant developments before that became a realistic proposition.'⁵

The CPB position was promoted in several pamphlets – *Britain's Next Steps* (1995), *Maastricht* (1996) and *No to the Euro* (2003). It was also set out in *Britain's Road to Socialism*, the renamed *BRS*, which was issued in 2000. Commenting on the 'contamination thesis', Griffiths argued that sections of the left traditionally 'recoiled from anything that could be remotely branded as British nationalism.' However, he claimed that 'the position we managed to establish in a number of trade unions', specifically the TGWU and UNISON, 'paved the way for a number of left organisations to take a clear line against the euro and the EU more generally.'⁶ Another important thesis was put forward by party member Anne Kane, who claimed that the Conservatives had 'tried to compete in Europe on the basis of a low-wage, low-skill economy' but that the party was 'not strong enough to carry through this reactionary agenda'. Consequently, 'sections of capital wanted to transform' Labour 'along "European" lines. The first step in this process is to destroy the influence of the trade union and activist base within the Labour Party' (Kane, 1996). The CPB was affiliated to the Campaign Against Euro-Federalism.

The Communist Party of Great Britain (Post-1991)

The party programme of the reformed, post-1991 CPGB contained no reference to European integration. However, it stated that 'Communists want a positive solution to the national question in the interests of the working class, the merging of nations', and that it 'opposed every form of British-English national chauvinism' (CPGB, 1991). The CPGB later declared that 'Communists are internationalists' and that it was 'an internationalist duty to fight for revolution against the existing state. To the extent that the EU becomes a state, then that necessitates EU-wide trade unions, a Socialist Alliance of the EU and a Communist Party of the EU' (CPGB, 2002a). The CPGB was therefore in favour of European integration.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

The CPGB position was set out in the 2002 *Europe: Meeting the Challenge of Continental Unity*. It considered Trotsky's call for a 'United States of Europe' to be a progressive objective, concluding that 'European integration and the euro objectively unite the working class on a larger scale and across a huge territory.' As such, they induce the "struggle which will itself eventuate the emancipation of the proletarians". In this revolutionary sense alone, we in the CPGB are in favour of the EU' (Conrad, 2002, p.110). The CPGB supported neither the euro nor the pound and called for an 'active boycott' position, that is, spoiling the ballot paper and demonstrating, in a future referendum.

The Democratic Left

The Democratic Left (DL) was established as the legal successor to the CPGB in 1991, as both a network and a political party. It was very much associated with the pro-EU *Marxism Today*. However, the party was officially dissolved in 1999, leaving behind the New Times Network (later renamed the New Politics Network), a think-tank closely associated with New Labour. Griffiths charged that the motives of some of those involved in the DL were 'suspicious', whilst 'other people were genuinely misled or went with the old leadership out of misplaced loyalty.'⁷ One Socialist Campaign Group MP, commenting on the wrecking strategy adopted by the post-1988 CPGB leadership, suggested they may have been a 'front' organisation for the British and US security services.⁸

The Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

The party programme of the RCPB-ML, *Draft Programme for the Working Class*, which was adopted in 1995, emphasised the need for national sovereignty and self-determination, and therefore called for withdrawal. The RCPB-ML published a number of critical articles on the EU, stressing the need for a national socialist strategy and independent working class action.

8.3 THE CO-OPERATIVE PARTY

The European policy of the Co-operative Party (which was affiliated to the Labour Party) as agreed by the Annual Conference, is summarised in Figure 24.

⁷ Interview with Robert Griffiths, 7th March 2003.

⁸ Interview with Kelvin Hopkins, 15th October 2002.

Figure 24: The European Policy of the Co-operative Party (1948-1983)

Year	Annual Conference Policy
1948	Support for a federal United States of Europe
1950	Support for peace and trade within and between Western Europe and Russia
1962	Conditional support for entry
1965	
1966	
1967	
1968	
1970	↓
1971	Support for entry
1972	Opposition to entry
1974	Renegotiate the terms and submit to the British people in a referendum
1975	Campaign for No vote in the 1975 Referendum
1976	Concerned about Article 224 of Treaty of Rome
1977	Support for Direct Elections
1983	Support for a Co-operative Commonwealth of Europe

Note: Data post-1983 was unavailable.

The 1948 Conference carried an emergency resolution in favour of a *federal United States of Europe*, to ensure economic co-operation between European nations on a planned basis, and to ensure peace in Europe. However, it rejected an addendum that additionally called for close trading relations with Eastern Europe.

The 1950 Conference carried a resolution that criticised Bevin's proposed Western Union on the basis that it would divide Europe, and debated a resolution calling for a conference of the nations of Europe, including Russia, to promote peace and trade. The latter was carried by 3,676,000 votes to 3,348,000.

The 1962 Conference debated one resolution and one amendment. The resolution, supported by the NEC and several Co-operative MPs, offered *conditional support for entry*, subject to safeguards on agriculture, Commonwealth and EFTA trade, plus the ability to plan and control the British economy and extend social ownership. It also called for a study into the impact of changes in agricultural price support systems, anti-monopoly legislation, and tariffs on the British consumer. The amendment, supported by several local parties, opposed entry on the basis that the EU represented a super-capitalist structure. The resolution was carried, whilst the amendment was defeated by 5,522,000 votes to 2,983,000.

The 1965 Conference carried a resolution, supported by the NEC, which re-affirmed the Co-operative Party's conditional support for entry. However, this support was subject to safeguards on agriculture, Commonwealth and EFTA trade and political self-determination, so that the co-operative movement's political alignment would not be jeopardised.

The 1966 Conference carried a resolution, backed by the NEC, which supported closer co-operation between the EFTA and the EU. It also called for the executive to prepare a report of the implications of closer European unity for the Co-operative movement.

The 1967 Conference debated the NEC report, *Co-operation and the Common Market*, plus four resolutions. The report, which was adopted, offered conditional support for entry, subject to safeguards on the cost of living, whilst pointing out the possible benefits of increased collaboration with European Co-operative movements. However, it conceded that 'some of the country's economic problems might become much more acute' upon entry, 'if only temporarily' (Co-operative Party, 1967, p.8). It stated that the NEC was conducting a study into the possible impact of entry, and that it was represented on the government committee looking at the EU. The first resolution, which was withdrawn, recommended a consultation exercise in order to anticipate the effects of entry. The mover argued that joining the EU would necessitate many changes in Britain. The second resolution, which was carried, re-affirmed the decision of the 1962 Conference. The third resolution, offering unconditional support for entry on the basis that a powerful EU would be a stabilising force for peace and progress, was remitted to the NEC. The fourth resolution, which was defeated, opposed entry on the grounds that the disadvantages of joining, including higher food prices and the loss of political independence, outweighed any benefits.

The 1968 Conference carried a resolution instructing the NEC to ensure that, upon entry, Co-operative MPs would be represented in the European Assembly. The party leadership also renewed the official policy of conditional support for entry.

The 1970 Conference carried a resolution reaffirming the decision of the 1962 Conference. It welcomed the entry negotiations, but insisted that the eventual decision on whether or not to join was dependent on the actual terms and conditions. It accepted some degree of tax harmonisation, but opposed the imposition of VAT. It also declared that, unless a favourable transition period could be negotiated, the estimated increases in the cost of living and food prices, and the consequent burden on the payments of payments, as set out in the 1970 White Paper, were such that the Co-operative Party should oppose entry. In December 1970 the London Co-op Political Committee published *The Common Market: Why We Should Keep Out*.

The 1971 Conference debated two resolutions. The first resolution, which was defeated, opposed entry on the basis that the agricultural and taxation policies of the EU would undermine the Co-operative movement. It also warned that entry would lead to the creation of a third nuclear force, which would worsen the Cold War. The second resolution, which was carried, reaffirmed the decision of the 1970 Conference.

Following the publication of the 1971 White Paper, the Co-operative Party held a Special Co-operative Congress, attended by representatives from local parties and delegates from the Co-operative Union, to agree the official policy. The Congress, held in September 1971, carried a motion *accepting entry on the terms negotiated*, plus an amendment calling upon the Conservatives to establish a Parliamentary Select Committee to consider the implications of entry, whilst an amendment which opposed the terms was defeated. However, the NEC meeting in December agreed that ‘there was no clear-cut Co-operative opinion on British entry’, and instructed Co-operative MPs to help Labour defeat the Conservatives ‘on any issue which was available, including enabling legislation stemming from the application to join’ the EU (Co-operative Party, 1972, p.11).

The 1972 Congress of the Co-operative Party and the Co-operative Union carried an NEC-sponsored motion that instructed the Conservatives to *withdraw Britain’s application on the present terms*. However, the NEC made it clear that the Co-operative Party was opposed to the terms, but not the principle of entry.

The Co-operative Party manifesto for the February 1974 General Election endorsed Labour’s maxim of ‘let the people decide’. It supported Labour’s policy of renegotiating the terms and submitting them to the British people in a referendum.

The 1975 Conference carried two resolutions. The first resolution opposed the renegotiated terms and joined Labour and the TUC in calling for *withdrawal*. The second resolution demanded legislation to ensure equal radio and television coverage for the No and Yes campaigns, plus spending controls on the propaganda produced each campaign.

The 1976 Conference carried a resolution highlighting the threat posed by Article 224 of the Treaty of Rome. The mover claimed that the Article would enable other member states to intervene in British affairs in the event of a civil disturbance.

The 1977 Conference debated a resolution that was opposed to Direct Elections, arguing that it would lead towards a European federation in which Britain would be a mere province. The resolution, opposed by the NEC on the basis that Direct Elections would strengthen the European Parliament’s ability to reform key policies of the EU, was defeated by 7,616 votes to 6,793.

The 1980 Conference Report noted that Co-operative MEPs had voted against the EU Budget because of the lack of progress on CAP reform. It also noted that Co-operative MEPs were attempting to create a Co-op group within the Socialist Group of the European Parliament, with the help of the Euro-Co-op group.

The 1983 Conference debated two resolutions. The first resolution, which was carried, criticised the half-hearted participation of the labour movement in the 1979 European Election and called for a more determined effort for the 1984 election. It also favoured the creation of a *Co-operative Commonwealth of Europe*, rather than Labour's policy of withdrawal. The second resolution, which favoured unconditional withdrawal, was defeated.

8.4 THE GREEN PARTIES

The Alliance for Green Socialism (AGS) was formed in 2003, following the merger of the Green Socialist Network, composed of former members of the CPGB, and the Leeds Left Alliance. PEOPLE was formed in 1973, in order to contest the 1974 General Election. It was re-branded as the Ecology Party, or 'ECO' for short, in 1975, whilst in 1985 it was renamed the Green Party. In 1990 the Green Party divided into the Scottish Green Party and the Green Party of England and Wales.

The Alliance for Green Socialism

The 2004 Conference of the AGS carried a resolution that opposed the European Constitution and euro entry, on the basis that the EU was undemocratic and that such developments would worsen the democratic deficit, whilst welcoming the holding of referenda on these issues. However, it rejected a 'little Englander' approach and stated that the AGS did not support withdrawal.

The Ecology Party/The Green Party of England and Wales

The European policy of the Ecology Party/Green Party is summarised in Figure 25.

Figure 25: The European Policy of the Ecology Party/Green Party

Year	Manifesto/Conference Policy
1979	Reform of the EU from within
1980 (S)	Withdrawal
1983	Short-term: Withdrawal Long-term: Creation of a non-aligned federation based on the regions of Europe
1984 (S)	Short-term: The election of candidates to the European Parliament Medium-term: Withdrawal AND reform of the EU from within Long-term: The creation of a federal Europe of Regions with a co-ordinating body at the European level
1984 (A)	Opposed to continued membership
1986 (A)	Opposed to continued membership
1987 (S)	Opposed to continued membership, plus support for a new treaty to establish a loose European federation, which would replace the Treaty of Rome
1987 (A)	Opposition to continued membership unless the EU was reconstituted on sound ecological principles

Year	Manifesto/Conference Policy
1988 (A)	Reform of the CAP, plus opposition to continued membership unless the EU was reconstituted on sound ecological principles
1989	Opposed to continued membership unless the EU was reconstituted as a non-aligned confederation of European regions based on sound ecological principles
1990 (S)	Reform of the EU from within
1991 (S)	Reform of the EU from within, opposition to the CAP, the ECSC and EURATOM, plus support for an EU environmental policy
1993 (S)	Opposition to the EMS, the creation of an EU welfare state and the imposition of VAT, conditional support for enlargement, plus support for the restoration of capital controls, tackling the democratic deficit and expanding EU regional and social funds
1992 (S)	Support for a referendum on the Maastricht Treaty and a pledge to campaign for a No vote
1993 (A)	Reform the EU from within, but, if unsuccessful, oppose continued membership
1994 (A)	Review the policy
1995 (S)	Reform of CAP and CFP, plus support for the reform the EU from within, but, if unsuccessful, oppose continued membership
1996 (S)	Opposition to a common immigration/migration policy
1998 (S)	Opposition to EMU and euro entry, but support for the reform of the EU from within
1999	Conditional support for enlargement, but opposition to development of 'Fortress Europe'
2001	Support for the democratisation of EU institutions
2002	No position on continued membership
2003 (A)	Support for the fundamental reform of the EU into a Confederation of Regions, plus opposition to the CAP, the CFP, the CFSP, the ECSC, EMU, EURATOM and the creation of a European army.
2004 (A)	No vote in a future referendum on the European Constitution

Notes: (S) = Spring Conference. (A) = Autumn Conference.

The Ecology Party manifesto for the 1979 General Election declared that Britain had an important role to play in Europe. However, it criticised the EU as an over-centralised and economic growth-oriented bureaucracy, described the CAP as a disaster, and proposed reforming the EU into a federation of self-reliant regions. It supported *reforming the EU from within*, that is supporting continued membership whilst promoting a radical programme of reform.

The 1980 Spring Conference debated a motion opposing continued membership. Opponents of the EU viewed it as a bureaucratic, centralist and monolithic disaster, claiming that, as a power bloc, it was too large to reform, whilst supporters advocated its reform from within – the position of most European Green parties. The motion was carried and the Ecology Party thereby committed itself to *withdrawal*.

The Ecology Party manifesto for the 1983 General Election reaffirmed its support for withdrawal in the short-term. However in the long-term, it favoured a *non-aligned federation based on the regions of Europe* rather than nation-states.

The 1984 Spring Conference debated two voting papers. *The EEC and Beyond* was critical of the EU, particularly its objective of economic growth, its centralising tendencies, and its undemocratic nature. The EU was characterised as fundamentally flawed and the document argued that it was unlikely ‘that the sort of changes necessary to make the EEC an acceptable ecological body could be brought about by reform of the EEC from within.’ However, as withdrawal was not seen as an immediate possibility, in the short-term the Ecology Party favoured the *election of representatives to the European Parliament* to campaign for limited reforms, whilst in the medium-term, it supported withdrawal. Nevertheless, it warned that such a policy could lead to a decline in investment and trade, and possibly increased unemployment, whilst claiming that the party programme would be easier to implement when ‘the economy was more directly under the control of the British government’ (Ecology Party, 1984a). In the long-term it stressed the need for a Europe based on regions, which would directly elect representatives to the European Parliament by proportional representation, with a co-ordinating body at the European level to ameliorate regional imbalances.

The second draft voting paper, *Think Globally, Act Locally – Towards a Green Europe*, constituted the draft joint manifesto of the European Green Parties for the 1984 European Election. It was presented to Conference on the understanding that it was not open to amendment; delegates had to either accept or reject it. It endorsed the long-term objective of ‘integral federalism’ which, with popular consent, would lead to a Europe of Regions. It set out two means of achieving this. The first involved the adoption of a new European treaty to create a parliamentary assembly of the Regions of Europe. The second, and recommended, method was to democratise and reform the existing EU institutions. Consequently, these documents were at odds. Although they agreed on the end goal, the first favoured withdrawal whilst the second supported the reform of the EU from within. Nevertheless, Conference adopted both documents, which were incorporated into the party programme, entitled the *Manifesto for a Sustainable Society (MfSS)*. The joint manifesto, which was adopted, precipitated the creation of the European Green Alliance in the European Parliament. According to Jean Lambert, elected as a Green MEP in 1999, the Ecology Party campaigned on a platform of ‘better out than in.’⁹

⁹ Interview with Jean Lambert, 30th August 2002.

The 1984 Autumn Conference carried a motion that opposed the development of an inward-looking and xenophobic Britain. It favoured international co-operation at all levels, including the European level. However, it was *opposed to continued membership*. This policy position was reaffirmed by the draft voting paper adopted by the 1986 Autumn Conference.

The 1987 Spring Conference carried a motion declaring that the Green Party was opposed to continued membership of the EU as then constituted. It favoured replacing the Treaty of Rome with a treaty to establish a loose federation of European countries. Such objectives were included in the Green Party manifesto for the 1987 General Election.

The 1987 Autumn Conference amended the *MfSS*. The revised document *opposed continued membership unless the EU was reconstituted on sound ecological principles*. However, rather than calling for outright withdrawal, the revised policy left open the possibility of reforming the EU from within.

The 1988 Autumn Conference adopted a voting paper on the CAP, which called for an end to intervention buying and for food prices to be determined by the market. It also adopted the draft manifesto for the 1989 European Election. In the short-term the manifesto supported withdrawal from the CAP, the creation of an EU Environment Agency, greater regulation of MNCs, the expansion of EU regional and social funds, and a nuclear-free Europe. It also favoured the abolition of the Council of Ministers and the use of proportional representation in future European elections. In the long-term the manifesto favoured replacing the Treaty of Rome with a treaty to establish a confederation of democratic, autonomous regions with directly elected representatives to the European Parliament. Such a confederation should be politically neutral, so as to allow Soviet bloc countries to join.

In the summer of 1989 the party conducted a postal voting experiment, asking delegates to consider which policies they supported. Two motions were put forward. Motion 15 stated that the EU was fundamentally flawed, and that the party was opposed to continued membership unless the EU was reconstituted as a non-aligned Confederation of European Regions. It opposed the Single Market, and called for the amendment of the 1972 European Communities Act to enable Britain to re-impose trade barriers so as to encourage self-reliance. It favoured Britain's gradual withdrawal from the EU. Motion 16 declared that a Green economic strategy was unworkable whilst Britain was a member of the EU. It argued that the Single Market favoured MNCs and would reduce self-reliance and the power of nations and local communities over their economic circumstances. However, Motion 15 was defeated by 400 votes to 346 with 134 abstentions, whilst Motion 16 was also defeated, by 383 votes to 359 with 158 abstentions.

Results such as this seem to confirm Lambert's view that 'European integration is possibly one of the most contentious issues in the party. If you look at the votes at conference, there are times when it really is half a dozen votes that will tip it one way or another.'¹⁰ Likewise, Caroline Lucas, also elected as a Green MEP in 1999, estimated that 'about 60 per cent of party members were in favour of maintaining our membership of the EU' compared to about '40 per cent who feel that, on balance, membership has not been a positive thing. It's a fairly even split, but with a majority, for most of the time, being in favour of staying in the EU but trying to reform it from within.'¹¹

The 1989 version of the *MfSS*, as amended by Conference, stated that the party *opposed continued membership unless the EU was reconstituted as a non-aligned confederation of European regions, based on sound ecological principles.*

The 1990 Spring Conference voted to amend the *MfSS*. The revised document pledged to replace the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament with a confederal body, composed of delegates from regional parliaments, and to reduce the power of the European Commission. The 1990 Autumn Conference carried a motion declaring that the EU was effectively thwarting policies adopted at the national level and was pursuing unsustainable economic policies, such as the Single Market and single currency. It stressed the need for an alternative, based on self-reliant regions.

The 1991 Spring Conference adopted a draft voting paper stating that EU institutions should support sustainable development based on the regions of Europe. Green Party policy in the long-term was therefore one of support for the *reform of the EU from within*. However, the document pledged that, if there was no progress on fundamentally reforming the EU, then the Green Party would support another referendum on continued membership. If the public voted for No, then the Green Party would support a clear timetable for withdrawal, starting with the amendment of the 1972 European Communities Act. The document also opposed to the CAP, the ECSC and EURATOM and recommended the development of an EU environment policy.

The 1992 Spring Conference carried a motion demanding a *referendum on the Maastricht Treaty*. It also declared that the Green Party would *campaign for a No vote* in any referendum.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Interview with Caroline Lucas, 13th October 2003.

The Green Party manifesto for the 1992 General Election opposed the CAP, the CFP, and the single currency. The latter was described as a project that would centralise power at the EU level at the expense of local and national economies. 'Although the European Parliament is directly elected, the real power to make policy has been concentrated with unelected officials. This has resulted in a lack of accountability, which is working against the interests of its people and environment.' It argued that the EU 'should be reformed as a Confederation of Regions' and 'until the major reforms we advocate' are adopted, 'we will argue for withdrawal' (Green Party, 1992b, p.12).

The 1993 Spring Conference carried a motion that supported the holding of referenda by each member state when reforms had been agreed. It endorsed enlargement, subject to a British referendum with equal funding for both sides, as long as the entrant states accepted EU environmental and social standards, plus the sharing of economic sovereignty by local and national governments. It opposed the creation of an EU welfare state, as an example of excessive centralisation, and the imposition of VAT. It supported intra-EU trade, but opposed economic integration on the grounds that it would lead to domination by the large, wealthy member states. It defended the need for national currencies, favouring a common currency for intra-EU trade only, and supported, in the long-term, the devolution of monetary policy to regional banks, which would administer regional currencies. It was therefore opposed to British entry to the EMS. It favoured the restoration of capital controls to curb speculation, measures that should be implemented at a regional level in the long-term. It also recommended tackling the democratic deficit of the EU, and expanding its regional and social funds.

The 1993 Autumn Conference debated three motions. The first, which favoured withdrawal, was defeated. The second, which supported a pro-membership position, was also defeated. The third, which was carried, united the two previously separate sections of the *MfSS* that dealt with the EU. The party's position, however, remained the same: to *reform the EU from within, but if unsuccessful, then to oppose continued membership*.

The Green Party manifesto for the 1994 European Election set out the case for Green economics, including some protectionist measures, whilst reaffirming its support for national and local currencies. The Green Party was therefore opposed to the ERM and the proposed single currency. The 1994 Autumn Conference carried a motion and adopted a draft voting paper, both of which instructed the International Policy Committee to *review the Green Party's European policy*.

The 1995 Spring Conference carried a draft voting paper advocating the reform of the CAP and the CFP so as to encourage sustainable fishing within each member states' own territorial waters. The 1995 Autumn Conference carried a motion concerning the Action Plan for Green Party participation in the 1996 IGC on the future of the EU. In light of the decision to review the party's European policy, as agreed at the 1994 Autumn Conference, a background paper was prepared for delegates and three workshops were organised. Conference considered three options: positive disengagement from the EU, negotiating the reconstitution of the EU as a confederation of regions and small nations, and accepting a federal EU. There was little support for the third option, and delegates were divided over the first two. The motion declared that the party did not support the current constitution of the EU and stated that it wished to see it reconstituted and that it would work from within to achieve the desired reforms. However, it declared that, in the long-term, the party would oppose continued membership if such reforms were not achieved.

The 1996 Spring Conference carried a motion on EU citizenship and racism in Europe. It stated that the party was *opposed to a common immigration/migration policy*.

The 1998 Spring Conference carried a motion that was opposed to EMU and British entry to the euro. Economically, it stated that the party was not opposed in principle to measures that would reduce or eliminate transaction costs and exchange rate uncertainty, lead to lower interest rates, and bring about price stability. However, whilst it supported economic co-operation between nations, it rejected all forms of competition, whether in the form of devaluation, reduced taxation or lower environmental and social standards. It was opposed to the Single Market and any further centralisation of economic decision-making. It specifically opposed the monetarism of the MCC and SGP. It also favoured a reduction in the volume of trade between member states. It noted that economic conditions varied widely across the EU, thus requiring different economic policies, and concluded that economic convergence in the near future was unlikely. Politically, the motion argued that EMU would increase internal divisions and make entry more difficult for possible entrant states. It rejected the creation of a unitary European state, preferring a decentralised confederal or federal structure, and it opposed the operation of the ECB without any democratic controls. Whilst supportive of a referendum on euro entry, the Green Party opposed EMU on economic and political grounds. However, it stated that the Green Party was not committed to the pound, and that if EMU was reformed, it may change its position in the future. It also warned that the Green Party would not participate in any anti-euro campaign that was jingoistic, nationalistic, or which advocated a return to a mere free trade zone.

On the issue of continued membership, the Green Party dropped its opposition at the 1998 Spring Conference. However, it retained its objective of *reforming the EU from within*. However, Lambert reported that ‘within a year, that position, of saying yes to membership, was reversed’, whilst in 2002 the Green Party ‘had no position on membership of the EU.’

The Green Party manifesto for the 1999 European Election stated that it was opposed to the development of ‘Fortress Europe’, particularly the Schengen Convention and EUROPOL, deemed as a threat to civil liberties. It also reaffirmed the party’s commitment to *enlargement*, provided there was economic assistance for sustainable development.

Lucas co-authored two pamphlets in 2000: *The Euro or a Sustainable Future for Britain* and *From Seattle to Nice*. The former advanced a Green critique of EMU, held responsible for accelerating the globalisation process, whilst the latter focused on enlargement, which would serve as a structural adjustment programme for the EU and which would exacerbate the already adverse effects of neo-liberalism. Both pamphlets set out the Green alternative: a strategy of localisation. Such a strategy would include the development of a decentralised industrial policy, the re-introduction of localised currencies, capital controls, quotas, tariffs, and the reform of aid and trade regimes. ‘The difficulty with the EU’, explained Lucas, ‘is that it is so paradoxical. Some of the best environmental law making in the world comes out of the EU, making it a positive force for change. At the same time, however, you have the CAP and the Single Market, which in many ways are exacerbating Europe’s environmental problems.’ Lucas also highlighted the problem of the ‘contamination’ thesis: ‘the difficulty of positioning yourself as a Eurosceptic is that you are put in a box with the right-wing, with a ‘little Englander’ and xenophobic tag.’

The Green Party manifesto for the 2001 General Election stated that British Greens supported the development of a peaceful and sustainable Europe, but argued that the EU frustrated this objective as vested economic interests dominated its undemocratic institutions. The Green Party favoured the *democratisation of EU institutions* and the evolution of a ‘multi-track’ Europe.

By the time of the 2003 Autumn Conference, the *MfSS* represented the most coherent and detailed European policy of all the actors that constitute the British Left. It favoured the creation of a Confederation of Regions and the fundamental reform of EU institutions. It rejected the CAP, the CFP, the CFSP, the ECSC, EURATOM and the creation of a European army, was opposed to EMU (backing a No vote in a future euro referendum) and was critical of the Single Market. However, it was committed to continued membership, pledging to reform the EU from within. It declared that any decision to withdraw must be subject to a referendum.

In 2003 the party presented a submission on New Labour's five economic tests to the Treasury Select Committee. It criticised each of the tests in turn, contrasting the real needs of the economy with the environmental and social damage inflicted by capitalist economics.

In July 2004 the Party Council adopted the *Proposed EU Constitutional Treaty* policy statement, which supported the principle of a constitutional treaty but opposed the European Constitution on the basis of its commitment to neo-liberalism. It argued that it would exacerbate the adverse effects of economic globalisation, undermine the creation of sustainable economies, damage public services by imposing privatisation and spending cuts, and help convert the EU into a military superpower. However, it welcomed the holding of a future referendum on the issue. The 2004 Autumn Conference carried an amendment to the *MfSS*, stating that it would campaign for a *No vote in a future referendum on the European Constitution* as part of the official No campaign.

8.5 THE NATIONALIST PARTIES

There were four nationalist parties in Scotland and three nationalist parties in Wales during the post-war period. These included the Communist Party of Scotland, set up in 1991, the Scottish Green Party, created in 1990, the Scottish National Party (SNP), established in 1934, and the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP), founded in 1999. They also included Cymru Goch, launched in 1987 to campaign for a Welsh socialist republic, Plaid Cymru, inaugurated in 1925, and the Welsh Socialist Alliance, organised in 2001.

The Communist Party of Scotland

Although the Communist Party of Scotland believes in the democratic right of all nations to self-determination, on the issue of the EU, it was ambiguous. It pledged to 'challenge the EU as a closed, capitalist market system constraining and repressing the interests of the workers and the peoples of the constituent nations' (Communist Party of Scotland, 2000).

Cymru Goch

One party member believed that Cymru Goch was 'agnostic' about the EU, supporting a 'socialist Europe of the peoples' and opposing 'the Euro-capitalist superstate, whilst refusing to tow the 'little Englander' line of some left groups.' He argued that 'much of the debate on the EU has been framed in terms of weakening British sovereignty, which is something we advocate. Unfortunately, however, the weakening has been in the wrong direction – up to Europe, not down to Wales.' He also stated that the party was agnostic about euro entry.¹²

¹² Correspondence from Marc Jones, 22nd August 2002.

Plaid Cymru

The European policy of Plaid Cymru, as agreed by the Annual Conference and as set out in its election manifestos, is summarised in Figure 26.

Figure 26: The European Policy of Plaid Cymru (1969-2004)

Year	Annual Conference/Manifesto Policy
1967	Entry negotiations should be a matter for a Welsh government
1969	Opposition to the entry negotiations, and preferred the EFTA to the EU
1970	Opposition to entry without representation
1973	Support for a referendum, plus opposition to continued membership unless its concerns about the nature and future direction of the EU were addressed
1975	Opposition to Direct Elections and campaign for a No vote in the 1975 Referendum Post-referendum: support for independence in Europe
1977	Support for Direct Elections
1978	Support for Direct Elections
1983	Support for a further referendum on continued membership
1988	Support for independence in Europe, plus a review of the implications of the Single Market for Wales
1989	Support for independence in Europe
1990	Support for fundamental EU institutional reform, plus conditional support for REM entry and EMU
1992	Support for a referendum on the Maastricht Treaty
1993	Support for independence in Europe
1994	Support for EU institutional reform
1997	Opposition to euro entry without safeguards
1998	Conditional support for enlargement
1999	Support for an EU constitution and Bill of Rights
2000	Support for euro entry, EU institutional reform, and the inclusion of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in any new treaty
2001	Opposed to the outcome of the 2001 IGC: the Treaty of Nice
2004	Conditional support for a European constitution and euro entry

The 1967 and 1969 Conferences carried motions insisting that any *entry negotiations should be a matter for a Welsh government*. The 1969 motion also favoured strengthening the EFTA rather than the EU and was opposed any attempt to create a federal Europe.

The 1970 Conference demanded a full account of the entry negotiations, an assessment of the likely effect upon Wales, and an assurance from central government that entry would not restrict the devolution of government or regional economic policies. It warned the negotiators that a future government in Wales might reject the eventual terms of entry, and called for a referendum before any decision was made. Furthermore, the referendum result would only be accepted if there was a majority in each of the four nations. Plaid policy was therefore one of *opposition to entry without representation*.

The 1973 Conference debated a motion submitted by the NEC, plus seven branch amendment/motions. The NEC motion stated that a future Welsh government would review the terms of the Treaty of Rome and decide whether to seek full or associate membership whilst maintaining a commitment to free trade across Britain. It opposed the development of the EU into a unitary state and rejected any moves towards a European army. However, it supported the election of Welsh representatives to the European Assembly and called for an office to be established by the Secretary of State in Brussels. The first amendment called for a referendum on continued membership. The second amendment favoured Welsh withdrawal from NATO. Three motions were opposed to membership in principle, with two demanding a referendum on the issue, whilst two motions supported the development of an EU that benefited communities and workers rather than MNCs. The NEC motion, amended to include a commitment to hold a referendum, was carried. Plaid thereby committed itself to *holding a referendum* and to *campaigning against continued membership, unless its concerns about the nature and future direction of the EU were addressed*.

In 1975 the Plaid Cymru Research Group produced a series of papers on the EU in order to stimulate debate. These considered what reforms would need to be enacted before Plaid could accept continued membership, namely abandoning the objective of a unitary state and an EU military role, whilst allowing member states to maintain control over economic and social policy. Although the NEC agreed to hold a special conference before the 1975 Referendum in order to determine the party's position, the idea was abandoned. The NEC decided to oppose continued membership, plus Direct Election to the European Assembly, and to *campaign for a No vote*.

Having agreed a 16-point policy document setting out in opposition to the EU, Plaid participated in the 'Wales Get Britain Out Campaign', alongside the Welsh Communist Party, the Welsh Council for Labour and the Welsh TUC. Plaid's principal concern included the 'capitalist club' nature of the EU, the potential for the EU to develop into a nuclear bloc, and the lack of Welsh representation in EU institutions. However, somewhat confusingly, Plaid's slogan during the campaign was 'Europe Yes, EEC No'.¹³ Furthermore, to add to the ambiguity, some senior party figures, such as the pro-EU Dafydd Wigley who did not support official party policy, abstained from campaigning.

¹³ Interview with Dafydd Elis-Thomas, 16th October 2003.

Following the Yes vote, Plaid turned its attention to securing the representation of Welsh interests in the EU. At the 1975 Conference, held after the referendum, Plaid abandoned its opposition to Direct Election and declared that it sought full national status for Wales within the EU. Conference also supported Welsh representation within the European Assembly and other EU institutions, plus amendments to the Treaty of Rome. Plaid was thus committed to *independence in Europe*.

Motions offering *support for Direct Elections* were carried at the 1977 and 1978 Conferences. However, there was dissent from this position, manifest in the several critical motions that were submitted. Plaid was a member of the European Free Alliance group (of centre-left regional and nationalist parties) in the European Parliament.

The 1983 debated three motions. The first motion, which was defeated, advocated withdrawal on the basis that continued membership was a barrier to Welsh self-determination. The second motion, which was also defeated, called for the fundamental reform of the EU from within, by amending the Treaty of Rome so as to facilitate the implementation of a socialist strategy for Wales, including capital and import controls, and the adoption of neutrality by the EU. The third motion, which was carried, was critical of EU institutional and policy failures, demanding a *further referendum on continued membership*. However, it did not specify whether Plaid should support continued membership or withdrawal.

The 1988 Conference carried two motions relating to the EU. The first demanded self-government for Wales so as to establish a 'firm base for playing a full role in Europe', plus a 'firm base for the socialist policies of Plaid Cymru' (Plaid Cymru, 1988, p.5). Accordingly, Plaid returned to its independence in Europe position. The second motion recommended that a detailed survey be conducted to assess the implications of the Single Market for Wales. It also reiterated Plaid's support for the establishment of a Welsh Office in Brussels.

The 1989 Conference carried a motion in favour of independence for Wales within the EU and a Europe of the regions. It was envisaged that the EU, composed of nation-states, would be gradually transformed into an EU made up of regions.

The 1990 Conference carried a motion demanding *fundamental EU institutional reform*. It specifically supported an expansion in the powers of the European Parliament, the establishment of common electoral system throughout the EU, and the creation of a new second chamber, a European Senate, composed of representatives from regional and national assemblies. It recommended that, in the long-term, the strengthened European Parliament and the European Senate should replace the Council of Ministers and the European Commission in terms of the initiation and scrutiny of policy. It also offered *conditional*

support to ERM entry and EMU, subject to substantial increases in EU regional and structural funds, arguing that ‘fiscal discipline is the only way to stabilise interest rates and reduce inflation in the long-term’ (Plaid Cymru, 1990, p.46). However, it insisted that any European central bank should be democratically accountable to the European Parliament and a future European Senate. Plaid set out its objectives for EMU and EU institutional reform in two pamphlets, *Constitutional Options for Europe*, published in 1990, and *Wales and Maastricht*, published in 1991. The 1991 Conference carried a motion calling for the EU institutional reforms recommended by Plaid to be instituted by the IGC planned for 1995.

The 1992 Conference carried a motion condemning the democratic deficit within Britain, whilst recommending a referendum in Wales on the Maastricht Treaty. The 1993 Conference carried a motion declaring that ‘after five years the Welsh Parliament shall be entitled to call down the remaining ‘reserved’ powers from Westminster and thus ensure full national status within the EU’ (Plaid Cymru, 1993, p.16). The 1994 Conference carried a motion calling for the European Committee of the Regions to be transformed into a legislative European Senate of nations and regions.

The 1997 Conference carried a motion, supported by the NEC, which rejected the MCC, favoured full employment as an EU treaty objective, insisted upon democratic control of the ECB, and called for the democratisation of the EU. It stated that Plaid was *opposed to euro entry* ‘if it became clear that the criteria would be crippling to the Welsh economy and in direct opposition to Plaid’s principles of community socialism’ (Plaid Cymru, 1997, p.25). It also carried an emergency motion supporting the EU principle of subsidiarity, whilst reaffirming its objective of reforming the European Committee of the Regions.

The 1998 Conference carried a motion that was concerned about Wales’ loss of structural funds, decriing the fact that member states, regardless of enlargement, were reluctant to increase the EU Budget for regional and structural funds. It stated that the party was in general favour of the expansion of the EU, but not at the expense of the poor. Its policy was therefore one of *conditional support for enlargement*.

The 1999 Conference carried a motion recommending the establishment of a multifunctional Welsh ‘embassy’ in Brussels, the democratisation of the EU, the granting of greater legislative powers to the European Parliament, and the creation of a European Senate. It also favoured the *preparation of a written constitution and Bill of Rights* of the EU.

The 2000 Conference carried a motion, backed by the NEC, which set out the well-established objectives of the party for the 2001 IGC, specifically EU institutional reform and the inclusion of the *Charter of Fundamental Rights in any new treaty*. It also instructed the NEC to organise a special conference on the EU once the IGC negotiations were complete.

Conference also carried a motion condemning the high value of sterling *vis-à-vis* the euro and the setting of interest rates by the Bank of England – rates that reflect the needs of Southeast England rather than the manufacturing base of the Welsh economy. It stated that, excluded from the eurozone, Britain would be subject to damaging exchange rate volatility, with adverse effects on long-term inward investment. Plaid therefore *supported euro entry at the earliest opportunity*, once sterling had regained its competitiveness.

The 2001 Conference carried a motion *condemning the outcome of the 2001 IGC*, namely the Treaty of Nice, particularly the agreement to maintain the national veto in areas such as asylum and migration, social policy, structural funds and tax harmonisation. It also lamented that the powers of the ECJ and the European Parliament had not been expanded, calling for an end to the intergovernmental method of treaty reform. In its place, Plaid favoured a convention of stakeholders.

The Plaid manifesto for the 2004 European Election supported enlargement and cautiously *welcomed the concept of a European constitution* – although backing would be dependent on whether the eventual constitution furthered the democratic accountability of the EU and the interests of Wales. It also offered *conditional support to euro entry*, subject to safeguards on democratic control and the guarantee of protection for smaller states.

The Scottish Green Party

The Scottish Green Party manifesto for the 1997 General Election pledged its support for CAP reform. Its manifesto for the 1999 European Election argued that the EU should use its power to control MNCs. However, it declared that the Scottish Green Party was opposed to EMU, as a result of the undemocratic ECB and the need to retain national control over economic policy-making. It was also opposed to the development of a European army, EUROPOL and the Schengen Convention. However, it supported the reform of the CPSP and backed enlargement.

Its manifesto for the 2001 General Election stated that the Scottish Green Party was opposed to Scottish entry to the euro, whilst in 2002 it joined the cross-party ‘Scottish Democracy Against the Euro’ campaign. A statement was issued, arguing that the ECB prioritised the control of inflation rather than job creation, that the ECB had no democratic accountability, and that a ‘one size fits all’ interest rate and monetary policy was highly problematic.

The amended version of the party programme, *Towards a Green Scotland*, was adopted by the 2002 Conference. It criticised the EU as bureaucratic, centralist and undemocratic, and stated its preference for a new confederal structure. It stated that, upon independence for Scotland, the party would press for a referendum on continued membership of the EU. It also ruled out euro entry.

The manifesto for the 2004 European Election declared that the Scottish Green party, along with its allies in the European Parliament, would campaign for the inclusion of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in any EU constitution. However, it reserved its support for such a constitution until its contents were known.

The Scottish National Party

The European Policy of the SNP, as agreed by its Annual Conference and as set out in its election manifestos, is summarised in Figure 27.

Figure 27: The European Policy of the Scottish National Party (1971-2004)

Year	Annual Conference/Manifesto Policy
1971	Opposition to entry
1973	Support for a referendum on continued membership
1975	Campaign for a No vote in the 1975 Referendum
1981	Opposition to the CFP, plus support for withdrawal
1982	Support for withdrawal, following a post-independence referendum
1983	Conditional support for continued membership in a post-independence referendum
1984	Conditional support for continued membership in a post-independence referendum
1988	Independence in Europe
1990	Support for an independent European central bank, enlargement, the democratisation of EU institutions, and the Social Chapter
1996	Support for strengthening the CFSP, an EU-wide electoral system, EU institutional reform, the Schengen Agreement and the Social Chapter
2004	Support for the future referenda on the European Constitution and the euro

European integration was not a salient issue for the SNP in the 1960s. There was, for example, no reference to it in the party's manifesto for the 1966 General Election.

The 1971 Conference carried a resolution that considered the EU a bureaucratic and undemocratic institution. It lamented the absence of Scottish representation during the entry negotiations and pledged its *opposition to entry*, preferring membership of the EFTA and the construction of a confederal community of nations. However, it promised that if Westminster forced Scotland to join, the SNP would strive to secure Scottish representation in the institutions of the EU. It also maintained the right of an independent Scotland to reverse the decision.

The anti-EU party chairperson led three SNP delegations on fact-finding trips to the European Commission during 1971. In 1972 the pro-EU wing of the SNP submitted a resolution in favour of independence in Europe to Conference. However, it was not debated.

The 1973 Conference carried two resolutions. The first declared that a future Scottish government would *hold a referendum on continued membership*. If a majority voted in favour, the SNP pledged to renegotiate the terms. If a majority voted against, then the party would implement Scotland's withdrawal. The resolution stated that the SNP would press its immediate demand for separate representation on EU institutions and would campaign for Scotland's recognition as a nation rather than a mere region. The second rejected the economic growth-orientation of the EU and its commitment to the free movement of labour, which it considered socially destructive.

The SNP manifesto for the February 1974 General Election argued that Scotland would be better off following Norway's example of staying outside the EU, with a free trade agreement for industrial products. It reiterated its support for a referendum on continued membership, and insisted that 'unlike the UK, Scotland can afford to withdraw' (SNP, 1974a). The manifesto for the October General Election stated that the SNP favoured withdrawal, but that it would put the issue to the Scottish electorate in a referendum.

The 1975 Conference carried a motion that opposed continued membership. The SNP therefore *campaigns for a No vote in the 1975 Referendum*, on the theme of 'No voice, no entry'. Following the Yes vote, Jim Sillars, one of the leading figures in the short-lived Scottish Labour Party, argued that continued membership 'removed the negative aspects formerly associated with separatism and made independence for Scotland within the European Community a more fruitful constitutional option' (Sillars, 1976). Sillars, and arguments such as this, later played an important role in the formulation of SNP policy.

Following the 1979 General Election, the left organised themselves as the Socialist 79 Group to campaign for independence, the socialist redistribution of income, power and wealth, and the establishment of a Scottish Republic. Of these objectives, only the first was official SNP policy. A more traditionalist Campaign for Nationalism in Scotland was formed in 1982, in order to counter to rise of the left.

The 1981 Conference carried a resolution which opposed the CFP and which favoured *withdrawal* as a solution for the Scottish fishing industry. Similarly the 1982 Conference carried a resolution believing that continued membership was incompatible with Scotland's national interests. It pledged to withdraw following the attainment of Scottish independence and an *affirmative referendum of the Scottish people*.

The SNP manifesto for the 1983 General Election reaffirmed the party's opposition, favouring co-operation with other European nations rather than continued membership, which was 'extremely damaging to many of Scotland's interests.' Furthermore, 'centralist thinking from Brussels is as ill-suited for Scotland as that from London.' However, although the party supported withdrawal, it pledged to hold a Scottish referendum first.

The 1983 Conference agreed to change the SNP position from hostility to acceptance. Conference carried a resolution supporting a post-independence referendum, stating that the SNP would *support continued membership if the negotiations were satisfactory*.

The 1984 Conference carried a resolution reaffirming the decision of the previous year. The anti-EU left attempted to reverse the official policy by submitting a resolution that was critical of economic integration, particularly EMU. However, the resolution was defeated by 158 votes to 115.

Sillars, once an ardent anti-nationalist Labour MP, defected to the SNP in the early 1980s. Working on behalf of the party leadership, Sillars published a series of pamphlets setting out the intellectual case for independence in Europe. His work contributed to the ultimately successful concerted campaign by the party leadership to change the European policy of the SNP by shifting the views of the party membership.¹⁴ *Moving On and Up in Europe*, published in 1985, argued that the solution to the dislocation threatened by separatism lay in continued membership. 'Once the SNP states that its objective is to gain Scottish independence as a member state of, that is within the European Community, we resolve the concerns of Scottish employers and workers, and destroy the accusations that independence is the same as separation. By definition, continued membership excludes any possibility of separatism.' However, continued membership 'means that Scotland's present partnership with England, Northern Ireland and Wales is redefined but undisturbed, as with other countries of the Community. But that partnership becomes one that is based on equality. All member states enjoy independence, but none is separate from the rest' (Sillars, 1985, p.5). Sillars published two further pamphlets on the theme: *No Turning Back* in 1988 and *Independence in Europe* in 1989.

In 1986 the pro-EU party leadership, acting through the National Executive, adopted a policy document which supported the SEA. It argued that the creation of the Single Market did not threaten national sovereignty, was compatible with the party's European policy, and represented an opportunity to attain independence without separation. The policy document was presented to the National Council in June for endorsement. However, it was rejected in favour of a comprehensive study into the likely effects of the SEA on Scotland.

¹⁴ Interview with Craig Milroy, 28th August 2003.

The SNP manifesto for the 1987 General Election stated that the party would recommend a vote for continued membership in a post-independence referendum, subject to safeguards on agriculture, fishing, industry, oil and steel. It also called for Scottish representation in the European Commission and the European Parliament.

The 1988 Conference formally endorsed the policy of *independence in Europe*. Conference carried two resolutions. The first implored the Scottish people to face up to the reality of continued membership. It called upon the National Executive to raise awareness of the objective of creating a single market by 1992. It also instructed the National Executive to ‘continue its efforts to emphasise that within the context of the EU the achievement of Scottish independence will accelerate Scotland to a full say in all Community policy without any adverse effect upon trade relations with all other members of the Community.’ It also warned that ‘unless Scotland achieves independence within the EU, and is able to protect Scottish interests, the single market will have devastating consequences for what is left of Scottish control of our economy.’ Conference also carried a resolution in favour of a determined SNP vote in the 1989 European Election, in order to ‘give Scotland a clear voice’ (SNP, 1988). The vast majority of party members supported the new policy: 74 per cent favoured Scottish independence in Europe with only 16 per cent supporting independence outside Europe. However, some anti-EU members who opposed the new policy left to form the short-lived Scottish Sovereignty Movement. Although Scottish voters increasingly favoured independence during the 1980s, the electorate was divided over whether to support independence within or outside of the EU, as shown in Table 16.

Table 16: Public Support for Scottish Independence and Independence in Europe

(a) Opinion polls before the adoption of the independence in Europe policy (pre-1988)

Policy	March 1979	November 1982	February 1986	March 1987
Independence	14	22	33	2
Devolution	42	47	47	50
Status quo	35	26	14	15
Don't know	9	5	6	3

(b) Opinion polls after the adoption of the independence in Europe policy (post-1988)

Policy	February 1989	April 1991	May 1993	May 1994	May 1996
Independence outside Europe	11	9	16	10	
Independence in Europe	24	23	18	19	33
Devolution	42	51	49	52	44
Status quo	20	16	15	16	20
Don't know	3	1			1

Sources: Parry (1982), McCrone (1992), McCrone (1994), and *The Scotsman* (9th May 1996).

In 1990 Sillars prepared a paper on EMU for the National Council. It argued that the SNP needed to be realistic about EMU and continued membership more generally. Scotland, being a small country, could not expect to fundamentally reform the EU through accession negotiations; it would therefore have to accept the existing institutions and policies. It also argued that any loss of sovereignty upon entry would be offset by the gaining sovereignty from Britain through independence, as the EU was a union of nation-states governed by the intergovernmental Council of Ministers. Such thinking informed the party's special conference on the EU in March 1991, which confirmed the party's support for a confederal Europe. It also carried resolutions in favour of an *independent European central bank, enlargement, the democratisation of EU institutions, and the Social Chapter*

In December 1991, on the eve of the IGC that produced the Maastricht Treaty, the SNP published *Scotland's Memo to Maastricht*. The pamphlet set out the SNP case for nationhood within the EU and for national recognition by other member states. During the treaty's ratification, the SNP repeatedly called for a referendum.

The SNP manifesto for the 1992 General Election detailed the six steps to Scottish independence, one of which was independence in Europe. As part of the 1992 campaign, the pro-EU SNP Leader, Alex Salmond, published a pamphlet, *Scotland: A European Nation*. The SNP also published the *Recovery in Scotland* document, containing its Medium Term Recovery Strategy. The latter argued that Scotland 'is suffering from the high exchange rates needed to protect the weak investment currency of sterling within the ERM of the EMS. A Scottish currency – supported by our strong exports performance in manufactured goods and financial services, and backed by oil – would be in an entirely different position in the ERM.' It further argued that 'an independent Scotland could cut interest rates. Rather than being victims of a policy designed for the economy of Southeast England, the Scottish people would be the beneficiaries of a policy designed for Scotland' (SNP, 1992b).

The SNP manifesto for the 1994 European Election declared that 'an independent Scotland will not need to apply for continued membership – all that will be required is a change in our status from powerless province to an independent member state.' Indeed, it revealed that Delors had asked 'civil servants in Brussels to start work on the possibility of Scotland becoming an independent member state' (SNP, 1994, p.7). It also claimed that continued membership would not affect Scotland's legal system or its economic and social policies.

Prior to the 1996 IGC, which produced the Amsterdam Treaty, the SNP held another special conference on the EU. It carried a resolution that condemned the Conservatives' 'little Englander' approach, whilst setting out its alternative objectives for the IGC. These included EU institutional reform, including expanding the powers of the European Parliament and *introducing an EU-wide electoral system*, to facilitate the transformation of the EU to a confederation. They also included *strengthening the CFSP*, in the context of a nuclear-free Europe, *euro entry* – subject to ratification by a Scottish Parliament and the Scottish people in a referendum – and *signing the Schengen Agreement* and the Social Chapter.

In March 2002 the National Council adopted a policy document which welcomed the establishment of the Convention on the Future of Europe. In June 2003, following the publication of the draft European Constitution, the National Council adopted another policy document welcoming the draft whilst calling for a referendum before ratification.

The SNP manifesto for the 2004 European Election welcomed the draft European Constitution and its institutional framework for the EU. It claimed that it would produce the kind of democratic confederation of states sought by the SNP. However, it was concerned that the treaty granted the EU control over fishing policy, to which the party was opposed. Therefore, although it *supported holding a referendum on the constitutional treaty*, the manifesto did not state whether the SNP would campaign for a No or a Yes. On the issue of the euro, the manifesto believed that the single currency offered significant economic benefits to Scotland, arguing that it would be preferable to sterling. However, it stated that it would abide by the decision of the Scottish people in a referendum.

The Scottish Socialist Party

The founding Conference of the SSP declared that it was in favour of a democratic, socialist alliance of European states. The SSP manifesto for the 2001 General Election stated that within the EU, 'political power is concentrated into the hands of unelected Commissioners and national government ministers who take decisions without being held accountable by their own parliaments. We promote an alternative vision of a united, socialist Europe where all the key institutions are democratically elected and accountable to the people of Europe.' On the specific issue of the euro, it explained that 'how we respond to any future referendum will be determined first and foremost by the interests of the working class and the poor' (SSP, 2001). However, it was opposed to any public spending cuts associated with the SGP.

In 2002 the SSP held a special conference on the euro to determine its position. Conference carried a motion, by a margin of three to one,¹⁵ in favour of a No vote in a future euro referendum. It also agreed that the SSP would not share any platforms with capitalist parties that promoted chauvinistic and xenophobic arguments during the No campaign. A motion in favour of abstaining, by boycotting the referendum, was defeated.

The 2004 Conference carried a motion in support of the European Social Forum, which had agreed to launch a campaign against the neo-liberal European Constitution. The SSP manifesto for the 2004 European Election reiterated its opposition to the constitutional treaty, arguing that it would ‘reinforce the bureaucratic centralist and pro-big business character’ of the EU. It supported holding a Scotland-wide referendum and pledged to campaign for a No vote. It was particularly concerned about the development of a European army, maintaining the national veto over foreign policy, and defending the right to neutrality. On the euro, it declared that it had no objection in principle to a single currency. However, it warned that an independent Scotland ‘would be forced to join the eurozone or be expelled from the EU’, and that it ‘would become an economic prisoner, held under house arrest by the bankers of Frankfurt.’ It favoured the reform of the CAP and the EU institutions, whilst opposing the CFP and the ECB, the latter being ‘driven by a right-wing, free market ideology’ (SSP, 2004).

The Welsh Socialist Alliance

In January 2003 the Welsh Socialist Alliance held a special conference on the euro which debated two motions. Motion 4 pledged to campaign for a No vote in a future euro referendum, under the slogan ‘For a workers’ Europe, not a bosses’ Europe’. Motion 5 supported an ‘active boycott’ position, favouring the creation of a democratic United States of Europe. The former obtained 75 per cent of the vote and was carried, whilst the latter managed only 25 per cent. The Welsh Socialist Alliance therefore opposed euro entry.

8.6 THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Four former Labour Ministers, namely Roy Jenkins, David Owen, William Rodgers and Shirley Williams, known as the ‘Gang of Four’, established the SDP in March 1981 as the new centre-left party in British politics. Eleven Labour MPs initially defected to join the party. By the summer of 1982, however, following further defections, the parliamentary group of the SDP had 28 members.

¹⁵ Correspondence from Hugh Kerr, 3rd December 2003.

The SDP was formed in response to Labour's 'capture', as the founders perceived it, by the left and the party's subsequent endorsement of internal constitutional reforms, plus its adoption of radical policies such as unilateral disarmament and withdrawal. For Owen and Williams, the issue of the EU played a significant role in their decision to leave. For the Gang of Four, the 'rescue' of social democracy, if not democracy itself, necessitated the creation of a new party. To Benn, however, the SDP was 'a British Establishment- and US-backed party whose aims were to split the progressive vote and thus prevent the election of a radical Labour government.'¹⁶

In July 1982 the party membership elected Jenkins, who obtained 56 per cent of the vote compared to Owen's 44 per cent, as Party Leader. Members of the Gang of Four were also divided over the issue of European integration. Jenkins was an avowed federalist, whereas Owen (1992, p.67), who insisted that 'I have never been at any stage a federalist or a believer in a United States of Europe', supported intergovernmentalism. Likewise, SDP supporters were also divided: a MORI poll in April 1981 found that 54 per cent supported continued membership while 37 per cent favoured withdrawal. Nevertheless, the party itself was broadly in favour of continued membership, with 95 per cent of party members opposed to withdrawal (BBC, 1981).

The Gang of Four issued a statement establishing the Council for Social Democracy in January 1981. It stated that 'Britain needs to recover its self-confidence and be outward looking, rather than isolationist, xenophobic or neutralist. We want Britain to play a full and constructive role within the framework of the European Community, NATO, the United Nations and the Commonwealth' (Council for Social Democracy, 1981).

In February 1981 the Gang of Four launched formal electoral pact negotiations with the Liberal Party. In March an informal steering group of social democratic MPs and supporters agreed to hold a conference to consider a number of policy questions and to set the parameters of the policy groups which would produce a series of SDP 'green papers' for consultation with the new party membership. There was no mention of the EU at the conference, held in May. The membership of the European Community Policy Group included Edmund Dell, (Chair of Channel Four), Robin Garran (Secretary of the Association for a Social Democratic Europe (ASDE)), Richard Leonard (European editor of *The Economist*), Simon Nuttall (member of the European Commission Secretariat-General) and Ernest Wistrich (Director of the European Movement).

¹⁶ Interview with Tony Benn, 25th April 2002.

In May 1982 the Policy Committee agreed to establish the International Affairs Committee, which was chaired by Owen, whilst in June the SDP and the Liberal Party published the joint statement: *A Fresh Start for Britain*. It declared that 'we are committed to continued membership of the EU, which should be reformed from within' (SDP-Liberal Alliance, 1981).

In June 1982 the Policy Committee agreed that the EU dimension should form an integral part of all policy documents produced by the party. 'The Committee considers that this arrangement will be a more effective in putting across the SDP's commitment to the EEC than the alternative of developing EEC policy separately in a particular group' (Buckley, 1982a). The party produced a number of 'green papers' on the EU. These included *Defence and Disarmament in Europe* (Policy Paper No.8, 1982), *Farming in the Rural Economy* (No.27, 1986), *The Harvest of the Sea* (No.28, 1986) and *Farming in Europe* (No.29, 1986).

SDP members founded the ASDE in 1982 with funding from the European Movement. The ASDE Study Group produced a policy paper in July 1982 that attempted to shape the future European policy of the SDP. It stated that 'for Social Democrats, Britain's wholehearted commitment to the European Community and to the task of creating a European Union is more than honouring international obligations. It is an inspiration, and guarantee, for political reforms at home.' Economically, it suggested that the SDP should support the harmonisation of employment policies, a common industrial policy, and a common regional policy 'that facilitates an adequate transfer of resources within the EU to permit full economic and political union before the end of the century.' It suggested that member states should 'replace their separate national industrial bases by a single industrial base for the Community as a whole.' This required the 'creation of a single European home market through the removal of fiscal, legal and technical barriers at the national level that hinder economic integration at the European level.' Politically, it argued that 'Social Democrats believe that the Europeans have the capacity to create original constitutional arrangements for the eventual European Union that will depart from known patterns of "confederal" and "federal" constitution.' It recommended 'greater reliance on the use of the Court of Justice, rather than legislation, as the main procedure through which the European Commission and member states co-operate to implement the Treaties' (ASDE, 1982).

In October 1982 the International Affairs Committee established the European Institutional Reform Group, which agreed to establish the SDP green papers as they were published to review how far the European dimension had been included. Furthermore, 'papers already published by the ASDE would be circulated within the group. Attention

would be given to trying to put the benefits of the EEC across to the British public as the group proceeded with its work' (Buckley, 1982b). The group subsequently studied a number of papers on the EU. These included papers on the EU Budget, a common defence policy, common economic policies, an EU-wide electoral system, a common foreign policy, a common industrial policy, EU institutional reform (both immediate and long-term reforms), and common social policies.

In November 1983 the European Community Policy Group submitted a report of its work to the Policy Committee. It stated that 'the SDP shares the goals of the EU, as expressed in the 1957 Treaty of Rome.' It also said that 'the SDP is pro-European for sound, pragmatic reasons. The EU should take on only those tasks that can be performed more effectively in common than by each member state separately. But in an increasingly interdependent world, these tasks are growing not diminishing. Britain can safeguard its interests only by working together with its European partners on the range of problems over which it alone can never have total control, in particular, economic and security problems. British membership of the EU should be an important and positive factor in shaping the future of the country' (SDP, 1983).

The report set out a number of proposals, which it urged the party to adopt. These included the abolition of all capital controls within the EU, the reform of the CAP and the CFP, the development of common aid, commercial, defence, industrial, social and transport policies, the completion of the internal market, and the free movement of peoples within the EU. It also supported enlargement, the further development of EPC and the expansion of the European Regional Development Fund and Social Fund. Economically, it recommended that Britain should join the EMS and should promote the co-ordination of expansionary policies by member states. Institutionally, it called for the greater use of majority voting in the Council of Ministers, whilst defending the right of the European Commission to initiate legislation. It favoured the development of an EU-wide electoral system, the regional list system using the D'Hont method, and advocated the gradual increase in the powers of the European Parliament until it exercises joint legislative control with the Council of Ministers. The report was adopted and these proposals formed the basis of subsequent election manifestos, including those of the SDP-Liberal Alliance.

In April 1984 the Association of Social Democratic Trade Unions successfully applied to join the Council for Social Democracy. The 1984 Conference carried a motion endorsing the draft SDP-Liberal Alliance manifesto for the 1984 European Election. It also carried a motion agreeing that a future Alliance government would work within EU law and would accept majority voting in the Council of Ministers.

The evidence points to a somewhat confused situation regarding the salience of the EU as an issue for SDP members and voters. Following the relatively poor results of the SDP-Liberal Alliance in the 1984 European Election, one of the SDP candidates sent a memorandum to the Policy Committee. She argued that ‘our disappointing result in the European Election was due to two factors: our pro-European platform and the low turnout.’ In terms of policy, she concluded that ‘we were fighting on an essentially unpopular platform. Public attitudes to Europe (shared to a considerable extent by our own members) range from a total lack of interest, to an inability to see its relevance, to open hostility’ (Beckett, 1984). However, a survey of SDP members between October 1984 and January 1985 found that 55 per cent strongly agreed that ‘Europe should have a larger voice, independent of the United States, in defence policy affecting Europe, even if this causes strains within NATO’ (Horack, 1985). In a paper on Alliance electoral strategy for the Policy Committee in March 1985, Roger Liddle (1985) insisted that ‘as for Europe, everyone knows we are Euro-fanatics, and there is no point in hiding it.’ In early 1988, following a ballot of party members, the SDP formally merged with the Liberals to create the Social and Liberal Democrats (later renamed the Liberal Democrats).

8.7 THE SOCIALIST PARTIES

There were eight Socialist parties in post-war Britain, including four Trotskyist parties. The Alliance for Workers’ Liberty (AWL) was established in 1966 following its expulsion from the International Socialists in 1971 as a result of the group’s stance on European integration. The International Marxist Group was founded in 1968 and was renamed the International Socialist Group (ISG) in 1987. The Militant Tendency, an entryist organisation operating within the Labour Party, was created in 1964. It was renamed as Militant Labour in 1992 and became the Socialist Party in 1997. The International Socialists, formed in 1962, was renamed the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in 1977. The other four parties were the Independent Labour Party (ILP), which existed between 1893 and 1975, the Socialist Alliance, organised in 1999 but disbanded in early 2005, the Socialist Labour Party (SLP), set up in 1996, and the Socialist Party of Great Britain (SPGB), inaugurated in 1904.

The Alliance for Workers' Liberty

The AWL opposed the unelected ECB and favoured the construction of a democratic, workers' Europe, a Socialist United States of Europe. The AWL was not opposed to a European single currency in principle, but it did not support euro entry. Instead, it supported an 'active boycott' position, favouring neither the euro nor the pound. Likewise, it did not support the proposed European Constitution, preferring the development of a left-wing alternative to the constitutional treaty. It specifically recommended the formation of a European constituent assembly, a democratically elected body with constitution-making powers that would enjoy sovereign control over the EU (AWL, 2003).

The Independent Labour Party

In 1946 the ILP published the *Unite or Perish* pamphlet which set out the case for a Socialist United States of Europe to act as a libertarian socialist third force between the totalitarian state of Stalin and the dictatorship of Wall Street and US imperialism. It rejected the concept of sovereignty and recommended the replacement of backward nation states with a European federation. This would involve the construction of a unified political regime based on common economic planning, political freedom and workers' control. It was hoped that a socialist Europe and a socialist Russia could eventually merge.

In February 1947 the ILP hosted an international conference in support of a United Socialist States of Europe. The conference carried two resolutions, one in favour of a United Socialist States of Europe, and another agreeing to set up an international committee.

In 1949, by a majority vote at Conference, the ILP decided to affiliate to the European Movement. In April, an ILP representative attended the Westminster Conference of the European Movement on behalf of the International Committee for a United Socialist States of Europe. The representative submitted a resolution on European unity to the conference, which was carried, endorsing the development of 'a great European home market. Such a policy implies removal of national barriers' and the 'economic integration of Europe's key industries' (ILP, 1950, p.40). The party also affiliated to the Socialist Movement for a United States of Europe and attended the fifth Congress of the Socialist Movement in Frankfurt in 1951, attended by representatives from 20 countries. The British delegation, including several ILP members, voted in favour of a resolution calling for a democratic and federal Europe.

The International Socialist Group

The ISG published *The Socialist Case against the Euro* in 2002. It opposed the ‘active boycott’ position of the AWL and the CPGB and advocated an alternative, anti-nationalistic campaign against euro entry, in conjunction with the Green Party, the SSP and the anti-euro trade unions.

The International Socialists/Socialist Workers Party

Alex Callinicos, a member of the SWP Central Committee since the late-1970s, argued that ‘the predominant tendency within the SWP on the issue of European integration was towards abstention. We could not take a pro- position because the EU was an international capitalist cartel. On the other hand, we could not take an anti- position because that would imply a ‘little Englander’ stance and would pit the UK against international capitalism. Both of these positions were seen as bankrupt. That position began to shift and had changed by the time of the 1975 Referendum. The position we took then was based less on abstract issues of particular forms of capitalism, national versus international, and focused more on the politics of the debate within the labour movement. We took the view that the issue of continued membership had become a left-right split and that the increasingly dominant right-wing forces within the Labour government were pushing for a Yes vote.’¹⁷

In 1962 the *International Socialism* journal carried an editorial that stated that ‘the Common Market is designed as an economic arm of NATO’, whilst arguing that ‘Britain outside the Common Market is equally an economic arm of NATO’. It concluded that ‘in itself the Common Market cannot tilt the class balance against us.’ However, it warned that ‘if we get lost in arguments for or against, instead of ensuring that workers neither pay for the preparations nor suffer the consequences in employment, prices or wages, it can and might’ (International Socialists, 1971b). The *abstention* policy, of neither opposing nor supporting the EU, held for 12 years. In 1971, however, the National Committee changed its ‘line’.

Tony Cliff and Chris Harman presented their *Theses on the Common Market* to the National Committee in June 1971. They argued that the British ruling class had decided to seek entry in order to help British-based MNCs to develop on a Europe-wide basis, out of fear of being excluded from an expanding market, and in the hope that the shock of entry would assist the rationalisation of British industry. They warned that, in the coming battle over accession, ‘revolutionaries must not be seen to abstain.’ They also warned that ‘it will not be possible to merely talk about the ‘United States of Europe’. For that demand on its

¹⁷ Interview with Alex Callinicos, 28th October 2002.

own is not something we can agitate for in the labour movement as an alternative to either capitalist rationalisation through the Common Market or the false alternative of an isolated British capitalism. For us the question of the struggle over the Common Market will be above all a question of ideological struggle within the labour movement.'

Cliff and Harman recommended that 'our aim in union conferences and the like should be to fight for resolutions to this effect, thus making it clear both our opposition to the Common Market and our separation from the confused chauvinism of the Tribunites, the CPGB, etc. However, if we are defeated on such a stand, we should then vote with the Tribune-Stalinists in *opposition to entry*' (International Socialists, 1971a). The revised National Committee 'line' was duly endorsed by the 1971 Conference, which agreed to campaign on the slogans 'No to the Europe of monopoly capital', 'No to the blind alley of *Daily Express* nationalism, and 'Yes to a Socialist United States of Europe' (International Socialists, 1971e). The policy change did not go unchallenged, however. Several contributors to subsequent issues of the *IS Bulletin* characterised the shift as an 'opportunist turn' (International Socialists, 1971d). Furthermore, several dissident branches unsuccessfully attempted to refer back the Cliff-Herman document in order to restore the pre-1971 policy.

In January 1973 the National Committee adopted *The Common Market* report prepared by the Executive Committee. It warned that 'the issue of 'national sovereignty' will be used in a chauvinistic fashion and 'democracy' will be equated with the 'supremacy of Parliament' by the CPGB, the Labour Party and the trade union movement. However, the International Socialists' position was one of support for the boycott of EU institutions, opposition to the renegotiations, and the rejection of EU democratisation as impossible.

In January 1975 the National Committee adopted the *Common Market Renegotiation and its Consequences* document. Surveying the likely line-up in the forthcoming referendum campaign, the document declared that 'our place is firmly and unequivocally in the No camp.' It decided that the party's slogan would be 'No to the Common Market, Yes to the Socialist United States of Europe' (International Socialists, 1975a). The party produced a leaflet for the campaign, *What Does the Common Market Mean to Us?* It argued that 'what is at stake is not, as many people pretend, 'internationalism' or 'national sovereignty', whether we are ruled from 'Brussels' or 'Westminster'. The real issue is whether workers will accept the alliance of the Tories and the Labour right wing'. It warned that 'a Yes vote means more – and worse – of what we've got at the moment', whilst 'a No vote will be a decisive rebuttal for the alliance which Wilson, Healey and Jenkins are forging with the Tories' (International

Socialists, 1975b). The International Socialists therefore *campaigns for a No vote in the 1975 Referendum*.

Callinicos observed that most ‘SWP members share with the general public a complete lack of interest in the EU.’ This may account for why the SWP did not formally debate European integration, or more specifically euro entry, until fairly recently. ‘Post-Maastricht, it became increasingly clear to us that the EU was developing in a neo-liberal direction, which was something that we had to oppose.’¹⁸ The SWP is therefore opposed to EMU, to British entry to the euro and to the proposed European Constitution. It therefore *supports a No vote in the future referenda on the European Constitution and the euro*.

The Militant Tendency/Militant Labour/The Socialist Party

The Militant Tendency, and later Militant Labour, was not formally organised political party. Instead, it operated as an entryist pressure group until the expulsion of Militant supporters from the Labour Party in the early to mid-1980s. The Militant Tendency/Militant Labour/Socialist Party published a number of articles that opposed the EU in favour of a Socialist United States of Europe in its journal and newspaper, as shown in Figure 28.

Figure 28: Anti-EU Articles Published by the Militant Tendency/Militant Labour/Socialist Party (1967-2001).

<p><i>Militant</i></p> <p>‘Common Market – impasse of British imperialism’ (June 1967)</p> <p>‘Common Market – no, Socialist United States of Europe – yes’ (11th April 1974)</p> <p>‘Common Market – for bosses. Workers must fight for socialist Europe’ (5th January 1975)</p> <p>‘Vote No to bosses’ Common Market – fight for a socialist Britain and Europe’ (30th May 1975)</p> <p>‘Only workers can unite Europe’ (1st June 1979)</p> <p>‘On the road to European unity?’ (6th December 1991)</p> <p><i>Socialism Today</i></p> <p>‘European capitalist unity in crisis’ (No.6, May 1996)</p> <p>‘The price of the euro’ (No.15, February 1997)</p> <p>‘Eurocrash!’ (No.20, July 1997)</p> <p>‘Euro-phoria – how long will it last?’ (No.35, February 1999)</p> <p>‘Euro elections: no vote victory’ (No.40, July 1999)</p> <p>‘EU Summit of nothing’ (No.58, July 2001)</p>

¹⁸ Ibid.

Militant Tendency/Militant Labour/The Socialist Party consistently opposed the post-war process of European integration, including the treaties of Rome, Maastricht, Amsterdam and Nice, on the basis that the EU represented the interests of employers rather than workers. Militant supporters therefore campaigned for a No vote in the 1975 Referendum. As an alternative, the tendency/party favoured withdrawal followed by 'European integration on a socialist basis'. It did not support the 'national road to socialism', although it offered critical support to the AES, but rather the 'construction of a democratic, socialist confederation or federation of Europe.'¹⁹

In 1995 the Committee for a Workers' International, to which Militant Labour was affiliated, published *No to Maastricht, No to a Bosses' Europe, Fight for a Socialist Europe*, stating that Militant Labour was opposed to EMU and the Maastricht Treaty. The Socialist Party manifesto for the 2004 European Election opposed the EU on the basis that it was 'an exclusive club run in the interests of the European ruling classes – a bosses' Europe' (Socialist Party, 2004, p.1). It criticised the neo-liberal turn in Europe, and declared its opposition to the European Constitution and euro entry.

The Socialist Alliance

As an electoral coalition, the Socialist Alliance was composed of the AWL, the CPGB, the SWP, Workers' Power, and, for a short time, the Socialist Party. The Socialist Alliance manifesto for the 2001 General Election called for a democratic and federal Europe. It was opposed to an unelected ECB and the monetarist criteria for EMU, the development of 'Fortress Europe', British nationalism, and the re-raising of national barriers. In terms of the single currency, the Socialist Alliance (2001, p.19) initially favoured abstention: 'we neither advocate the euro nor defend the pound.'

Anticipating a referendum on the euro, the Socialist Alliance held a special conference in October 2002 to determine its position. Four motions were debated. Motion 1, submitted by the ISG and backed by the SWP, supported a No vote on the basis of an anti-nationalist, socialist campaign. Motion 2, submitted by the CPGB, favoured an 'active boycott' position. Motion 3 constituted a short anti-euro motion. Motion 4, submitted by the Socialist Alliance, preferred the established policy of abstention, allowing the different factions to campaign either for or against. Motion 1 was carried by 203 votes to 108, Motion 2 was defeated by 200 votes to 197, whilst Motion 3 was defeated by 213 votes to 77. There was no count for Motion 4, which was lost.²⁰

¹⁹ Interview with Ken Smith, 3rd September 2002.

²⁰ The author attended this conference and was thus able to record the proceedings.

The Socialist Labour Party

NUM President Arthur Scargill established the SLP in 1996. The founding conference pledged to withdraw, as the party was opposed to both existing EU institutions and policies, and its future plans. The Social Chapter was presented as a threat to collective bargaining and independent trade unionism, whilst the treaties of the EU 'make any moves towards socialism difficult if not impossible' (SLP, 1996, p.34). The 1997 Conference agreed to campaign for a No vote in a future referendum on the euro.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain

In 1971 the SPGB declared that 'whether or not Britain joins' the EU was 'a capitalist and not a working class issue.' Critically, 'we are neither for nor against entry and regard this as an irrelevant issue.' It recommended abstention, 'or rather the rejection of the false choice by writing 'world socialism' across the ballot paper' (SPGB, 1971a, p.108). During the 1975 Referendum the SPGB issued a statement urging voters to write 'socialism – common ownership' across the ballot paper. The SPGB extended its commitment to abstention to the European Constitution and the euro, neither opposing nor supporting these developments.

CONCLUSION

The European policies of left and centre-left parties exhibit three main features. The first two features were the extent of division *within* and *between* these parties over European integration. Anarchists were generally unconcerned with 'lower order' manifestations of contemporary capitalism such as the EU. The Communist parties consistently opposed European integration during the Cold War. However, the demise of the Soviet bloc precipitated division about whether to pursue a national or European socialist strategy. The Co-operative Party tended to shadow Labour's European policy. The Green Party was particularly divided on the issue of the EU. During the 1960s and 1970s, the Nationalist parties opposed the EU, whereas in 1988, along with Labour and the TUC, they changed their position to one of support for independence in Europe. The SDP was in favour of European integration; indeed it was one of the reasons why the party was established. With the exception of the federalist ILP and the anti-EU Militant Tendency/Militant Labour/Socialist Party and SLP, most of the Socialist parties favoured a policy of abstention. The third feature is that, although a marginal force in British politics, in electoral terms, these parties played a significant role in shaping the European policies of the Labour Party, the TUC and the wider trade union movement, as the 'left opposition'.