

**Making sense of changes in political coverage  
Press coverage of parliament and politics: 1966 to 1996**

Ralph Negrine

**Part 1 Introduction**

Between 1993 and 1999, several studies of media coverage of the British parliament were published. (Franklin, 1998; McKie, 1999; Negrine, 1998) Most of these sought to make comparisons of coverage over time and, perhaps not surprisingly, most were able to document the fact that things had been better in the past: better in respects of more coverage given over to parliament and MPs and, more simply, more 'serious' political coverage. A turning point for many of these studies was the decision by broadsheet newspaper editors to abandon the coverage of debates in parliament and, consequently, to abandon the tradition of having a section of the paper devoted to 'yesterday in parliament'. From 1991 onwards, parliamentary coverage was no different from political coverage. Parliament had to fight its way onto the news agenda whereas in previous decades parliamentary debates had a regular section or page in newspapers and were therefore more likely to gain some coverage. Overall, then, political coverage was certainly less prominent in the 1990s than it had been in the 1980s or earlier.

The decision to abandon the parliamentary page was justified on the grounds that it was of no value and that almost no one actually read it. Under pressure to give space to other areas and subjects of interest and perhaps also reflecting a degree of cynicism about the nature of politics ('sleaze', infighting, absence of resolutions, etc.), newspaper editors reined in political coverage and gave up on some of it altogether.

For the researcher, the interesting question was whether the changes identified between 1986 and 1996 could be traced further back or, indeed, projected into the future. Consequently, a decision was made to adopt the same methodology as had been used in one of these studies (Negrine, 1998) and to look at newspapers from the 1960s. In this way, we would have data for three years spaced well apart. Paradoxically, whilst this work was being carried out, two newspaper editors (of *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph*) took the decision to re-introduce the sort of parliamentary coverage that had been abandoned in the early 1990s: what was right for the early 1990s was obviously not so for the end of that decade. Why that change came about will be examined briefly in Part 4.

The next section explores some of the methodological questions which arose in the context of this research. Part 3 deals with the analysis of the media coverage of political and parliamentary coverage between 1966 and 1996.

These sorts of changes may, at first glance, appear to be of no consequence but, in practice, they alter the established patterns and give rise to newer and different ones. As we shall see below, changes in design and layout have similar consequences. It is not that the newer pattern is necessarily worse than the one before it but that it is different. How we explore those differences may, however, permit us to say whether the newer pattern is better or worse than the older one.

This is not an argument in favour of some sort of relativism. It is an argument in favour of a large measure of sensitivity to the full range of factors that have fed into making our society – and media – the way they are today. To attempt to identify single causes, even if that were possible, is therefore a fruitless exercise. Even in our present case, it is impossible to claim that the changes in the world of politics have led to changes in media or, indeed, vice versa. Other factors have undoubtedly fed into this equation: the rise of newer media, new areas of journalism, different forms of journalism, and so on. As I argued elsewhere (Negrine, 1998), we need to document – or, at the very least, be aware of - changes in politics, changes in journalism, and of changes in the relationship between the two within larger changes in society.

The main point of this digression is to draw attention to the difficulty of making meaningful comparisons over time. Reading newspapers in the 1960s, as many of us did, one was not aware of deficiencies in their style and content. Looking at those very same newspapers from the vantage point of today, they look different and odd. But at the time they were anything but. Today's newspapers will, I would venture, also look odd in time. How we make sense of this is a real intractable problem.

### **Part 3 Indicators of change**

#### **(i) Exploring the quantitative changes in coverage**

Changes in design and layout are perhaps the easiest changes to identify because they are so visible and their impact is so immediate. We only need to glance at the front pages of these newspapers to become aware of how much has changed: by 1996, there were considerably fewer items on front pages, and there were often more, or larger, photographs. What is less apparent from this visual analysis is the fact that the number of political items on front pages has also gone down. (Figure 1, Appendix 1) If we were to handle these newspapers today, we would also find that they were much smaller than those of today. But have these changes – in design, in layout, in size – given rise to more or fewer political items?

As with the earlier study we coded all items in which a political actor, defined as a parliamentary actor, was present. These items were further sub-divided into three main categories: primary political items were ones in which a political actor played a prominent part in the item; secondary political items were ones in which such actors played a minor role only, and, parliamentary items were items which featured on the

parliamentary page of the newspapers. (Table 2) Figure 2 (Appendix 1) illustrates how the creation of a physically larger newspaper does not necessarily provide for more political coverage. It has the ability to do so but, on the evidence of the analysis we carried out, it is political coverage that loses out.

Table 2: Primary political and parliamentary news items coded in sample.

	1966*		1986		1996	
	Primary political	parliamentary	Primary political	parliamentary	Primary political	parliamentary
Guardian	171	62	208	65	171	-
Telegraph	152	57	206	59	163	-

\* 10 day sample.

This change can be seen in two other ways: first, by looking at the actual space devoted to political coverage and, second, at the distribution of space within that coverage. (Table 3) Note, for example, that in 1966, the total space devoted to items on the parliamentary pages of *The Daily Telegraph* was as large as its ordinary day-to-day political coverage (some of which was itself related to parliament).

Table 3: Sum and median of text of primary political and parliamentary items. cms. Sq.

	1966		1986		1996	
	Primary	Parliamentary	Primary	Parliamentary	Primary	Parliamentary
Sum	14,000*	14,000*	21,000	6,000	22,000	0
Median	50		90		123	

\* based on 10 day sample; others based on 15 days sample.

Items have also changed in other ways. There are more photos, headlines are larger and the size of individual items has also changed. Table 3 also shows how the median text size of primary political items has changed over the years

Are there more substantive quantitative changes? Whilst it is relatively easy to carry out the sort of analysis which pinpoints obvious changes, it is much more difficult to identify changes in subject matter as being particularly significant. One obvious reason for this is that, over time, different subjects cause controversies: the Westland affair in 1986, Rhodesia in 1966, BSE in 1996. Changing circumstances, changing political arrangements and changing news priorities impact on coverage in a way which make comparisons of the subjects covered over time difficult and, to some extent, of limited value. This is not to say that an analysis of subject matter cannot be useful, but for it to so it would need to be very detailed and finely tuned to take in both macro and micro factors.

However, there is one sense in which changing subject matter does throw up some interesting points for comparison. Two examples, both drawn from 1966, illustrate this.

1. The Guardian reported in its 'In Brief' section a tea party given by Mrs Wilson, the Prime Minister's wife.
2. The Telegraph covered a statement about an inquiry into potato prices. (Appendix 2a)

Giving space to these items tells us a great deal about how the world of politics was conceived and the sorts of news values that operated. Would either of these items have featured in 1996 or, conversely, would Cherie Blair's pregnancy have occasioned so much coverage in 1966? In framing such questions we begin to explore the subtly changing nature of news values and the changing emphasis placed on different aspects of political news.

Shifts, subtle or otherwise, in the distribution of subject matter are less obvious than the shifts in the location of the news items. It is here that we can begin to detect the changing importance of parliament as a general location for primary political items and the impact of the loss of the parliamentary page on political coverage as a whole. Figure 3 (Appendix 1) identifies the main location of political items, that is, whether the events described or commented upon takes place in a political location or elsewhere.

It is clear that the parliamentary location as a location and source of news has declined in importance over the years. Indeed, if one looks at how much of an item is made up of content taking place in a parliamentary location, this becomes abundantly clear. Note, however, that Figure 4 (Appendix 1) does not include parliamentary items in the sample. These were almost all located in parliament: there were 52 such items in the case of the 1986 *Guardian* and 61 in 1966, and 56 and 57 respectively for *The Daily Telegraph*.

What is the significance of this change? Simply put, it demonstrates the changing focus of political coverage and the lessening importance of parliament as a source, location or venue of political coverage. By 1996, a political story had an equal chance of recording events taking place outside parliament as in parliament. One could argue that these changes merely reflected the lessened importance of parliament as a geographical and political institution: because it was less important in 1996, it would get less coverage. But, does its decreased importance itself reflect the media's lack of interest in parliament? This was certainly the view of the editors who revived that form of journalism.

What these changes also underline is the way in which the work of parliament - ranging from written answers to committee sittings - is now no longer in the public domain. We know less about what goes on in parliament and what we do know is the result of a specific news agenda that emphasises newsworthy elements over regularity and continuity of coverage. To take two examples from other studies:

- In a study of the coverage of select committees, it was obvious that they were covered inconsistently. This produced a lack of continuity and did not provide the opportunity for readers to follow all the deliberations of a particular committee. (Negrine, 1996).

- In a study of the coverage given to reports by the National Audit Office, a body that scrutinises government expenditure, in a specific year it was found that although some reports did get considerable coverage, many did not or got hardly any. (Negrine, 1996)

In both these case studies the issue is as much about the lack of continuity of coverage as about the impact of these changes on the richness of political life.

(ii) Exploring qualitative changes

The quantitative dimension of the changes over the last thirty years are easy to demonstrate and these have formed the basis of the previous section. Perhaps more interesting, but more difficult to carry out, is the analysis of the texts themselves. Have there been specific changes in the language used or in the style of journalism that can be identified and, if so, what are they?

There are numerous problems in attempting to raise such issues. First, the nature of the work is necessarily complex and it requires certain skills of linguistic analysis which are difficult to apply. Second, and more pertinent in this particular context, is the issue of which pieces are taken to be 'representative' of a quite larger body of data. Focusing on front page stories will not give the flavour of other pieces within the main body of the paper and vice versa. There is, therefore, no such thing as a typical story that can be analysed at length and be taken to represent the political journalism of the 1960s or the 1990s. Certainly, our content analysis was not sophisticated enough (or designed in such a way) as to pinpoint subtle changes in approaches to political journalism.

That said, it is obvious that certain categories of items have disappeared and, consequently, a certain form of journalism has too. The prime example here would be the report of a written answer given in the 1960s. At its simplest, this would be no more than a summary of the written answer given to MPs. The absence of these items from the 1990s, but to a lesser extent from the newspapers of the 1980s, suggests at least two things: first, that written answers today may be deemed un-newsworthy; second, that the form of the written answer is not considered to be political journalism. It is merely (self-serving) information.

Yet it may be possible to argue that political journalism as 'a relaying of information' is perhaps more typical of the 1960s than of the 1980s and certainly of the 1990s. Two items from the newspapers of the 1960s illustrate this form of journalism well. (Appendix 2a and b)

Several things stand out:

1. Only one MP was reported in these pieces.
2. What they had to say was reported without any comment or editorialising.
3. What they had to say was reported without any contradictory voices being heard.

4. These pieces are not representative of the political journalism of crisis or strife (though there are obviously such items within the newspapers of 1966. The issue is one of the preponderance of such pieces.).

Whilst such pieces were common in the 1960s – and there is no easy way of quantitatively identifying these (more of this below) – by the 1990s these sorts of pieces cannot be found. Looking at a full week of *The Daily Telegraph* newspapers drawn from our sample for 1996, I came across only two pieces that closely matched these. Both were short. (Appendix 2d & 2e ) Importantly, the longer the piece the more likely that oppositional voices are introduced. (Appendix 2c)

Are there other ways of quantitatively identifying these changes?

One obvious, though imperfect, way is to point out the absence of screaming headlines from the earlier period. Compared even to the 1980s, the newspapers of 1966 are thoroughly restrained: the headlines are considerably smaller and less obviously crisis laden. Taking, at random, all the headlines from the political stories on the front page of three issues of the *Guardian* from 1966 and 1996, one can begin to appreciate these points a little better. The words that stand out are underlined:

#### 1966 headlines

Mr Lee angers the commons on Gibraltar  
MPs bewildered over plans to help Rock

No betrayal of full employment – Mr Crossman

Labour MPs to defy Premier in Vietnam debate

Pause before new talks on Rhodesia  
Interval to be used for ‘hard thought’

Mr Wilson promises new austerities  
Bank rate up to 7 per cent: ‘nil norm’ for pay rises

Tories’ contempt for policy weaknesses

#### 1996 headlines

Major set for cattle cull U-turn

Lyell in the firing line  
Cabinet ready for Scott sacrifice

Fury over Major’s Ulster sop

The news items themselves also tend to mirror the headlines. Once again, identifying those adjectives and adverbs that contribute ‘colour’ and ‘context’ to the events throws up some interesting comparisons.

In 1966, the words that stand out on those three include: angers, indignation, enraged, bitter criticism, rebels, ‘defied the Whips’, a direct challenge, the argument, severely critical, expressed concern, MPs were ‘depressed’ and ‘puzzled’. The gentlemanly nature of the events described – supported by extensive extracts from parliamentary proceedings – included this report of Mr Heath (the Opposition Leader), confronting his opponent. Mr Heath, according to the journalist, ‘came back to this point (of debate) in later questions

to ask if this was the enunciation of an additional principle. If so, it should be clearly defied.'

By contrast, 1996 items included the following: pushed, disorderly retreat, frantically, bitter exchanges, confrontation, irate MPs, rage of Euro-sceptics, a chance to 'hammer home' their policies, a devastating indictment, disappointment, condemned Mr Major's manouevre, stunned fury, and disenchanting.

Can one say that these differences are significant? *a reflection of some significant change*

One other difference between 1966 and 1996 can be identified, albeit somewhat anecdotally. In the journalism of the 1990s, the journalistic reference to unnamed sources is much more in evidence than in the 1960s. The 'one senior Tory said' or 'Lady Young's supporters have' type of journalism that masks the identity of sources is not in evidence in 1966. That is not to say that unidentified sources do not exist but they are more institutionally based, for example, 'a Whitehall spokesman' or 'security sources confirmed'.

There are, then, differences in the descriptions of political events. The 1960s were more focused on parliament and parliamentary actors, often letting the events speak for themselves. Hence the content of the pieces appended; hence, the long list of rebels, abstainers or whatever which would find its way in the items. Similarly, it was not unusual to find in an item both the government's motion verbatim alongside the amendment to the motion. In the 1990s and 2000s, such detail is considered of minimal interest and simply a piece of information which obtrudes into the tale that is told: a tale of conflict rather than a tale of discussion and difference. Another way to describe, inevitably impressionistically, the differences across thirty years is to liken the items of the 1960s to a linear form of journalism that is principally focused on a small world of politics, whilst the journalism of the 1990s zig zags across different venues, actors and statements far beyond the world of Westminster. Put a little differently, the 1960s coverage was coverage of what was visible, the 1990s is of what is visible but it is also infused by an interest in the process, the meaning and the implications of things.

Another interesting comparison of the material from the three decades relates to the number of different actors who are given access to the pages of the newspapers. All the actors mentioned in an item were coded in the order in which they appeared. Some items would, for instance, list a whole group of MPs who might have taken part in a debate or whatever. This would lead to a list of 10 or more actors. For the 1966 papers, only up to 10 actors were coded and listed. For the other years, up to 15 actors could be coded and listed. The analysis of this material shows that for 1966 and 1986 the number of actors listed declined very sharply, whilst for the 1996 items this was not so. (See [Figure 5](#), Appendix 1) So, to take the example of the *Guardian*:

in 1996, 82 items (48%) had nine or fewer actors mentioned  
 in 1986, 68 primary political items (48%) had five or fewer actors mentioned  
 in 1966, 83 primary political items (49%) had four or fewer actors mentioned.

One way to interpret this data is to suggest that by 1996, journalists had developed a greater tendency to pull in many more actors into their pieces than they had done previously. This could be explained, in part, by the greater incidence of joint by-lines in 1996 than in 1966. Looking at *The Daily Telegraph* as a specific example, no pieces in our sample of 10 days in 1966 contained an item with two by-lines but by 1996 24 primary political items (or 15%) had two reporters listed.

What about the representation of political actors? In the 1998 study, we showed that the number of political actors represented in the items that we analysed had declined in the period between 1986 and 1996. What of 1966? Unlike the 1998 study, we recalculated the data with respect to individual members of the Cabinet (but including the designation of government, ministers and cabinet) and whether or not members of the cabinet were more, or less, likely to be quoted directly, indirectly or both across the years. Table 3 shows that members of the cabinet rapidly decline in importance as primary actors speaking directly or indirectly but that as they decline others are given access. In fact, more are given access later in the items running order in 1986 than in 1996 and 1966.

Table 4: Numbers of actors quoted directly, indirectly or both across the first seven positions in primary political items. *The Guardian*.

	1966 n=171	1966 n=171	1986 n=208	1986 n=208	1996 n=171	1996 n=171
Position of actors	All actors	Cabinet	All actors	Cabinet	All actors	Cabinet
1	109	62	76	22	72	28
2	81	28	64	21	52	13
3	68	14	76	10	53	9
4	56	6	55	3	37	6
5	38	6	67	10	50	7
6	31	*	58	*	45	*
7	27	*	51	*	49	*
Position 10	11		28		33	

#### Part 4: Why reintroduce the coverage of parliamentary debates?

Such changes may be seen as part and parcel of the gradual evolution of newspapers, parliamentary systems and politics, so why did two broadsheets return to a modified style of parliamentary coverage that was more typical of earlier decades?

In discussions with the editors concerned, one could detect two main reasons why these newspapers felt the need to re-introduce a form of coverage which is not unlike that of decades gone by: a coverage of parliamentary debates which comprises large extracts from those debates with due reference being made to the individuals concerned.

One reason is certainly pragmatic. One newspaper had expanded its sections and consequently felt that it could afford to devote more space to parliamentary coverage. That said, today's coverage is seen to be different from that of yesteryear: it is seen as more lively and entertaining, more modern than that of the past. It is also more cost effective in that it does not depend on a team of Gallery reporters as in the past. Pressure from MPs also cannot be discounted as a catalyst of change.

The other reason is a more high-minded one. It was felt that the paper had gone too far in neglecting parliament and focusing too much on the lobby side of things. This had the effect of letting the executive lead with the stories. By returning to parliament, other voices could begin to set the agenda. As one editor put it, 'it was felt that the press was becoming part of the problem of political and parliamentary reporting.'

'Parliamentary coverage needed revising but once we got rid of it, it became clear that there were various effects which followed; it actually added to the disrepute of parliament. It was not just that it reflected that parliament was less important, it made parliament less important and this in turn affected the behaviour of MPs. Fewer of them would make speeches in parliament. And it also affected the behaviour of governments because again they would be more and more in control of the supply of information. We were in effect inviting them to do that. The whole arrangement of covering politics defeated the object of the exercise in that it gave more power to the executive and to the vanity of journalists.'

Underpinning both these reasons is a third, namely, that in a competitive environment once one newspaper introduced something different, the other would follow. So, perhaps it was no coincidence that both *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* re-introduced their parliamentary coverage on the same day!

## Part 5 Conclusion

What does research such as this actually 'mean' and what is its significance? At one level, it identifies the sorts of changes which have taken place in the coverage of politics. More sophisticated and detailed research would probably also have identified a different mix of political actors: fewer political actors and more actors drawn from other walks of life gaining access to the media. There are some hints of that in this research but that detailed work still remains to be done.

The other significant aspect of this research is that it is suggestive of the importance of political coverage for building up an informed democratic polity. As one editor noted, the coverage which was typical of the mid 1990s did not reveal the many things that were going on in parliament and the many bills that were being discussed, decision taken or, more simply, the information circulating within that institution.

The concern in Britain over the recent disappearance of a form of parliamentary journalism and of the 'downgrading' of political content in newspapers will continue to

alert both political actors and interested readers to the paucity of information about parliament and its work which is currently publicly available in the press. If broadcasters were to follow suit, then a whole set of assumptions about the role of the media in the political sphere would be in need of a radical revision, as would a whole set of assumptions about the purposes and functions of newspapers in the modern world.

This is not to say that parliament is the pre-eminent institution that it once was. There is lessened interest in the physical location of that institution as a source of news – perhaps because other institutions or physical locations have become more powerful – but it still remains an important institution in terms of its role within the political system. To ignore it, as the editor quoted above suggested, is to contribute to its demise and not simply to reflect its changed status.

Finally, despite these 'ups and downs' in coverage, it is also clear from the data that political actors continue to occupy a prominent place in the media, even in the British media. A drop in the number of items may not be a sign of total abandonment but perhaps no more than a sign of a readjustment in the pattern of coverage and a realisation that parliament and its debating chamber as a forum for debate and decision-making has itself changed. Which does bring us back to a question that lurks beneath much of what has been written on this topic in recent years, namely, what is the most appropriate form of political coverage in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? What are the media doing to arrive at the appropriate answers and what is parliament itself doing to meet the needs of the media and the citizen? And are they prepared to challenge these perceptions of their work?

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*Morgan?*

Appendix 1

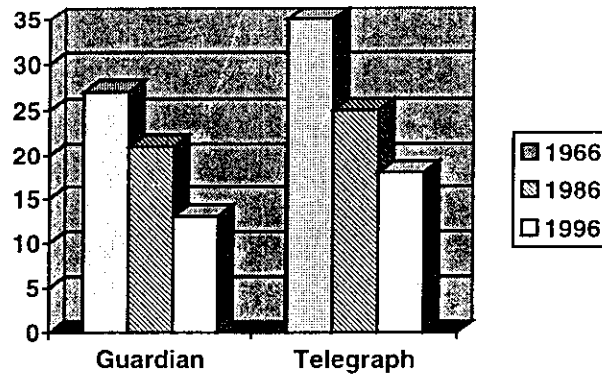


Figure 1 Percent of political items on front page

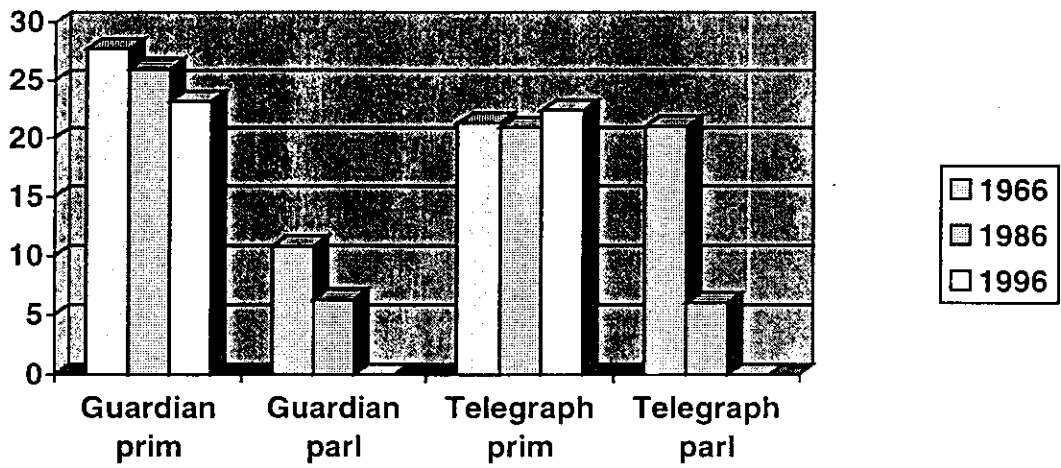


Figure 2 Total text space ('000 cms sq.) devoted to primary and parliamentary and political items. (Figures for 1966, averaged over 15 days)

Appendix 1

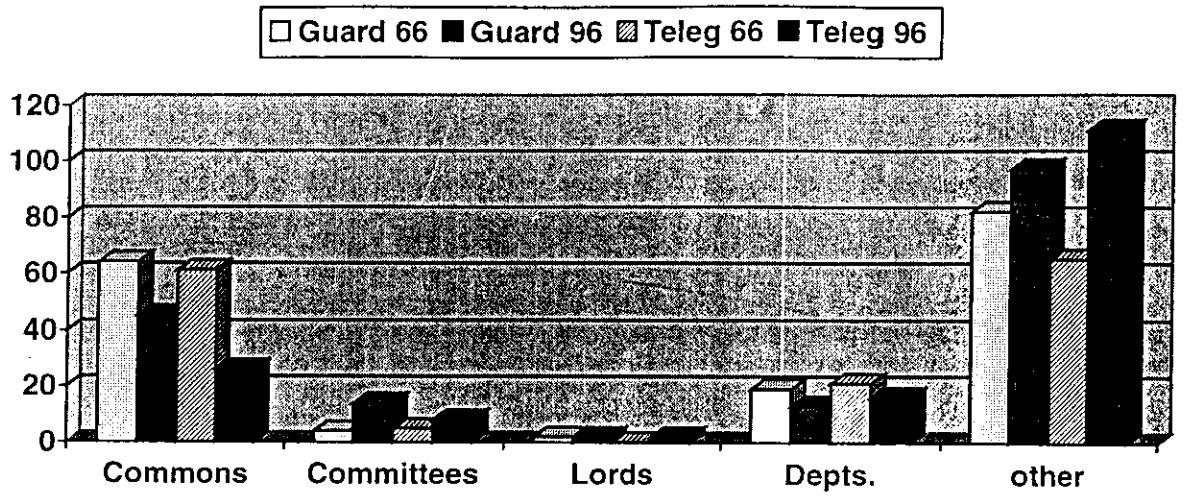


Figure 3 Political locations of primary political items.

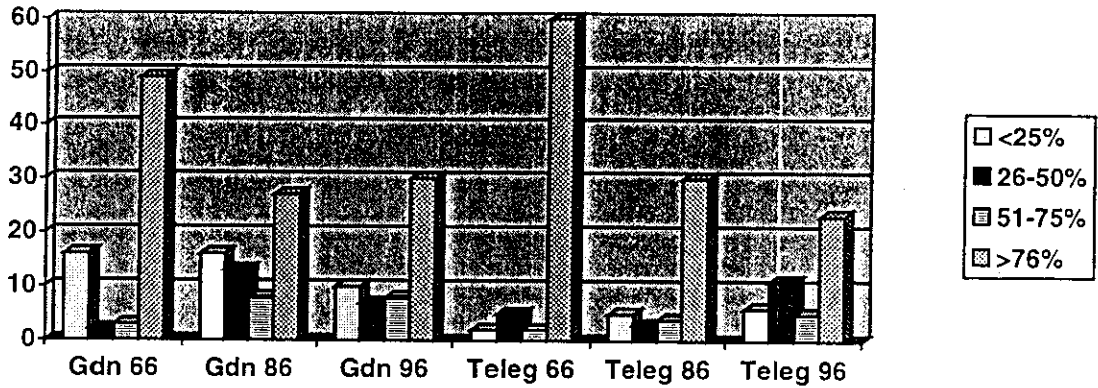


Figure 4 Primary political items and the percent of each item located in parliament (as defined by where the event is 'taking place').

Appendix I

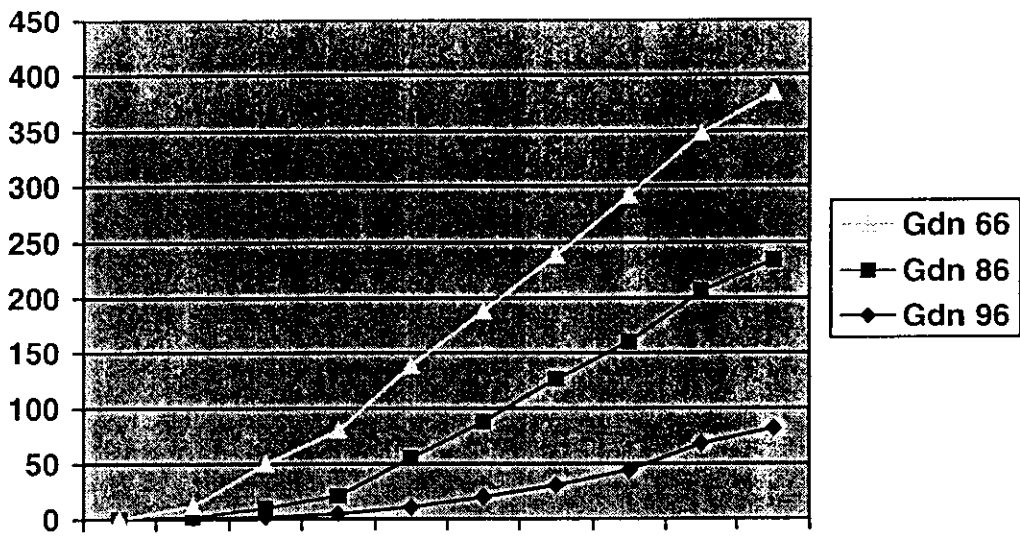
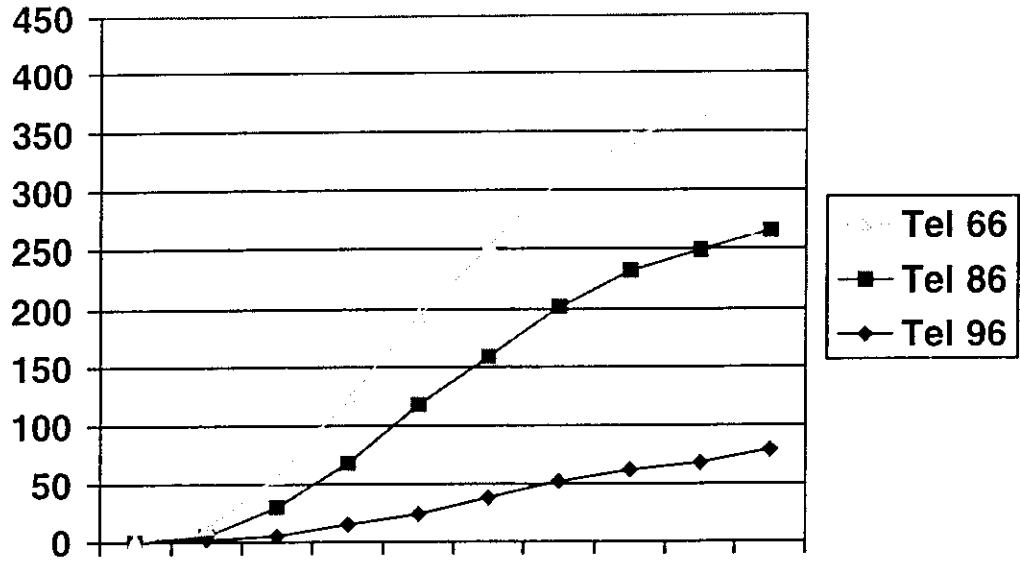


Figure 5: Decline in the number of actors quoted

Appendix 2

Ralph Negrine

Changes in political coverage

a.

**Potato price inquiry by woman M.P.**

**Daily Telegraph Reporter**

Mrs. Joyce Butler, Labour MP for Wood Green, is to investigate the Potato Marketing Board's "buying programmes" which took surpluses off the market to force up prices.

These programmes cost the taxpayer £6 million in the season ending June 30. The Board entered the market on three occasions and took 782,640 tons.

Prices paid to farmers for them ranged from £11 10s a ton to £20 a ton. Of these, 424,086 tons were sold for stockfeed at £3 a ton or just over 1/4d lb showing a loss of about £4 million.

At least 67,000 tons were left on farms to rot because the Board could not dispose of them. The balance was sold for processing except for 70,000 tons sent for export.

Mrs Butler said yesterday: "It is a scandal that the housewife never gets the benefit of a surplus and I have had a lot of complaints.

"I am writing to the Minister of Agriculture and will be putting down questions to him."

Telegraph 14.11.66, p.19. Top half. 12 lines. 165 words.

b.

**'Minority' oppose Mr Crosland**

By our Political Staff

Mr Crosland, Secretary for Education and Science, is to make a detailed announcement before the recess about the response of local education authorities to the Government's comprehensive education proposals.

In the Commons yesterday, he said that replies from the 162 authorities were still being received. It was too early to say finally how many had refused to submit plans, or the action he proposed to take.

But only a small minority was refusing to accept the policy. So far, three authorities had declined to submit plans and a "tiny handful" was submitting plans patently based on the retention of selection.

Ministry officials and officers of Manchester Education Authority are to meet on July 27 to discuss the implementation of the city's scheme for reorganising secondary education.

Guardian 22.07.66, p.5 top half. 12 lines 126 words.

*Ralph Negrine*

Ralph Negrine

Changes in political coverage

c.

### **Howard ready to build more jails**

Robert Shrimpsley, Chief Political Correspondent

More prisons may be needed as a result of the Government's proposals for tougher sentences, Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, said yesterday.

He said that his plans for longer jail terms for recidivists would mean an increase in the number of prisoners.

"It may well be that we will have to build more prisons," he said on BBC1's *Breakfast with Frost* programme. "If we are to have minimum mandatory sentences for persistent burglars and for traffickers in hard drugs then we will need an increase in prison accommodation."

The full details will not be known until the publication, due at the end of this month, of a White Paper on sentencing reforms, but there are already plans for three new privately-run prisons. The Home Secretary is unmoved by the wave of criticism of his plans from senior judges, notably Lord Taylor, the Lord Chief Justice.

Statistics showed that up to 20 per cent of those repeatedly convicted of violent or sexual offences committed a third rape or serious assault once released, he said.

"That is 40 or 50 victims of these very serious offences a year. I believe these people need greater protection.

"If we stop even a proportion of these people becoming victims of these very serious crimes as a result of my proposals, they will have achieved their objective."

He said the imposition of mandatory life sentences would mean that offenders could not be released until they had been assessed by the Parole Board which would decide whether they were still a risk to the public.

Telegraph 11.03.96, p. 9, bottom half. 21 lines 258 words.

d.

### **Tory MP to stand down**

Richard Ryder, the former Conservative Chief Whip, announced last night that he is standing down as Conservative MP for Mid-Norfolk at the next general election.

Mr Ryder, 46, is the 53<sup>rd</sup> Tory MP to declare that he will not fight the next election. He has represented Mid-Norfolk since 1983 but has suffered from a serious back injury in recent months.

Telegraph 29.02.96 In Brief, p.2 Top. 5 lines 60 words.

e.

### **Germany blast**

Germany came under fire yesterday from Ian Lang, Trade and Industry Secretary, for failing to implement EU directives fast enough.

Mr Lang told the German-British Chamber of Commerce in London that Germany's record in translating EU directives into national law was the second poorest among member states.

Telegraph 27.03.96 Bottom of page. 5 lines 47 words