CONTEMPORARY BRITISH POLITICS

Also by Bill Coxall

Politics, Compromise and Conflict in Liberal Democracy
Parties and Pressure Groups

Also edited by Lynton Robins

Introductory Political Science
The American Way
Political Institutions in Britain
Politics and Policy-Making in Britain

Contemporary British Politics

An Introduction

Bill Coxall and Lynton Robins

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Preface

Traditionally, textbooks on British government and politics have focused on institutions and behaviour whilst ignoring or paying mere lip-service to the controversies and issues which are the stuff of politics. This book seeks to remedy that omission. It is based on the conviction that political institutions and issues are inseparable and need to be discussed together. Accordingly, Parts II and III, which deal respectively with institutions, participation, and issues, form the core of the book. The authors also believe that, to be fully comprehensible, such a discussion requires context. Hence Part I establishes a framework consisting of the concept of politics, the major shaping influences of culture and ideology and a brief analysis of the leading types of government to be found in the modern world of states. Put simply and somewhat schematically, where textbooks of the 1970s moved beyond a formal constitutional and institutional subject-matter to deal with political behaviour (parties, pressure groups and the media) we have sought a further expansion of the political universe to encompass ideologies and controversies in addition to the more conventional content. Part IV aims to bring the concerns of Parts I–III of the book together: it explores ideological approaches (pluralist and Marxist) to understanding the political system and analyses of the impact of Thatcherism upon the agenda of British politics.

The book is designed to be of particular use to A level and BTEC students but the authors will be disappointed if it is not of value to others also, including first-year undergraduate students and even that elusive person, the general reader.

BILL COXALL
LYNTON ROBINS

A postscript has been added in this reprint to bring the book up to date to the 1992 General Election.

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