WINSTON CHURCHILL AND THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY 1929-1937

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Declaration

In accordance with the requirements of the Board of Graduate Studies, I affirm that this dissertation is the result of my own work, and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration. The dissertation does not exceed the regulation length of 80,000 words, not including footnotes or bibliography.
Summary: Winston Churchill and the Conservative Party 1929-1937

The Prologue surveys some of the major publications on Churchill and their argument that his contradictory and divisive campaigns in the 1930s were the main cause of his exclusion from office. Churchill’s position in the Conservative Party in 1929 is appraised and the options then open to him for attaining the Party leadership are explored. This prepares the ground for the conclusion of the thesis, that even in 1929 Churchill had little prospect of assuming a greater role in the Party and that his subsequent actions were not the main reason for his exclusion from office during these ‘wilderness years’.

Part One argues that the Conservatives’ loss of office in 1929 further undermined Churchill’s position. Moreover his economic strategy was progressively abandoned by his own Party. Advocacy of an understanding with Lloyd George emerged as Churchill’s strategy to overcome both these setbacks. This encouraged him to follow his instincts in opposing his Party leaders’ enthusiasm for Indian constitutional reform. When support from Lloyd George failed to materialise, Churchill attempted to find a constituency among the Party’s ‘diehards’ with whom he was now in agreement over India. The formation of the National Government in August 1931 ensured a Cabinet of those with broadly liberal inclinations from which Churchill and the diehards were to be excluded.

Part Two concentrates on Churchill’s fight against Indian constitutional reform. With the diehards, he attempted to overturn Government objectives both in parliament and through an extra-parliamentary campaign conducted in the constituencies and the caucus. It is argued that his ambition was to divide the Party sufficiently for the diehards (led by himself) to be brought into the Cabinet as a way of reuniting the Party and broadening the political spectrum of the National Government.

Part Three deals with Churchill’s critique of Government defence and foreign policy. The scale of the National Government’s 1935 Election victory prevented the realisation of his existing strategy for returning to office. The divisions over foreign policy in the Conservative Party are analysed as are the lessons to be learned from Churchill’s failure to return to the Cabinet. Faced with this impasse, Churchill’s resulting strategy was the broadening of his appeal to include those of different political persuasions. It is argued that his attitude over the Abdication crisis though a strategic folly, was motivated by honourable intentions. The difficulties which Churchill faced in keeping the momentum of his campaign going during 1937 are brought out. The thesis concludes that his Indian campaign was less harmful to his rearmament crusade than has been argued by other historians.
Preface

It was my supervisor, Professor Peter Clarke who first alerted me to the opportunities afforded by the imminent availability of Winston Churchill's archives to researchers as 1992 approached. Furthermore, he supported my application to St. John's College and, despite a busy schedule of his own, proved unfailingly helpful towards me and my thesis as it gradually began to materialise. I greatly profited from my afternoons up in his study discussing Churchill's parliamentary tactics.

The staff of the libraries and archive centres in which I have worked on this thesis all proved extremely knowledgeable and courteous throughout my barrage of enquiries and visits. In particular, those at the Cambridge University Library and at Churchill College and St John's College, Cambridge must be thanked.

Many of my friends made suggestions and gave me valuable insights for this thesis during my time at Cambridge, especially Simon Cave, Jean-Marc Ciancimino, Rana Mitter, Stewart Paterson, Alexandra Ranson, Alexander Rose, Nicholas Boys Smith, Neil Sheldon and Paul Stephenson. I would particularly like to thank Bunny Galloway who proof read the text in its entirety. I also greatly valued discussing my research with Dr Henry Pelling of St John's College and Professor Derek Beales of Sidney Sussex who made many valuable suggestions. Lady Donner also advised me on her late husband's correspondence and dealings with Churchill.

The Stewart Society, The Stanley Baldwin Fund, St John's College and Cambridge University all kindly made contributions towards the financing of my research. It was a particular pleasure whilst at Cambridge to enjoy membership of St. John's College whose ambience and architecture were a delightful backdrop to both my studies and relaxations.

This work is dedicated to my Mother and Father who have been a constant support throughout my life.
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Prologue:
The scope of this thesis and Churchill's standing in the 1929 Conservative Party

In 1925, Asquith had described his former colleague, Churchill, as 'a Chimborazo or Everest among the sandhills of the Baldwin Cabinet.' Yet it was with some truth that Victor Wallace Germaines, an otherwise relatively minor military critic, in his counter-blast to Churchill's World Crisis, asserted that his career was the 'tragedy of the brilliant failure, who has repeatedly seen men whom he secretly despises pass him on the road to office and power.' Germaines' book, The Tragedy of Winston Churchill, was published in 1931, by which time Churchill's career appeared to be in terminal decline. This judgement ultimately proved premature and, with his wartime premiership, especially as embellished in his own war memoirs, Churchill's reputation as the 'Greatest Englishman' of the century seemed secure by the time of his widely mourned death in 1965.

Nearly forty years after Germaines had written about Churchill's deficiencies as they were perceived between the wars, Robert Rhodes James in Churchill: A Study in Failure 1900-1939 resurrected the image of the pre-finest hour Churchill whose judgement and career pitfalls had made him a frustrated figure. In this respect Rhodes James' work went a considerable way towards trying to explain to the post-war generation why it was that less able men had outmanoeuvred him prior to 1940. Yet, whilst this important revisionist text produced a plausible explanation for Churchill's difficulties with the political establishment as well as the more general mistrust that he generated, it will be argued in this thesis that Rhodes James misinterpreted Churchill's true position between 1929 and 1937. Rhodes James argued that Churchill ruined his Cabinet chances and disabled his ability to form an anti-appeasement coalition by his lurch to the Right from 1929 to 1935. A future Conservative politician on the Left of the Party, Rhodes James was extremely

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dismissive of the inter-war ‘diehards’ who opposed the strides towards Indian Home Rule and disparaged their strength amongst Tories. Concomitant with this, he emphasised the importance of left-wing Tory anti-appeasers like Macmillan and Boothby in the 1930s and he worked on the assumption that there was no common ground between diehards and anti-appeasers.

It will be argued here that such a judgement is too simplistic. In fact, the statistics presented in this thesis will suggest that generally the background and career development of the diehards, so frequently dismissed as Colonel Blimp figures, was not noticeably dissimilar from that of the band of anti-appeasers whom Rhodes James regarded as being from the Tory progressive stable with which he himself identified. Nor were there disproportionately more ‘moderate’ Tory MPs than diehards in what was to become the anti-appeasement lobby in Parliament. Furthermore, and this is central to this thesis’s argument, Churchill’s move to the Right after 1929 was the result of his marginalisation from his Party’s front bench and not the cause of it. His resulting advocacy of Right wing causes was not primarily the reason why he remained out of major Cabinet office during the decade. Indeed, it was his opposition to the centrepiece of Right wing economics - food taxes - that did much to marginalise his position between 1928 and 1932 in the Conservative Party. Ironically, it was his attempt in 1929 to counterbalance this by seeking support from Lloyd George and the ex-Coalitionists, that spurred his move to the Right on Imperial questions.

The official biography of Churchill, the massive task begun by his son and continued by Martin Gilbert, has provided historians with the largest volume of material available on their subject. Perhaps even more valuable than the text itself, the companion volumes reprinted most of the significant papers in Churchill’s pre-Prime Ministerial archives, which were at that time closed to other researchers. This thesis is the first since the official biography to have unlimited access to all the papers in the Churchill archive.
between 1929 and 1937. It includes evidence from material not printed by Gilbert and hence hitherto unavailable to the other historians of the period.

Gilbert's work is undoubtedly a great monument to Churchill, the man and statesman. The subject would not have disapproved of the picture that emerges, not least because so much of the material for it was the fruit of his own private papers, works and speeches. Yet, whilst chronicling Churchill's fights with his opponents, the official biography concurs with Rhodes James' underestimate of the strength of the factions on Churchill's side of the political argument. In part, this may be a reflection of the biographical nature of the study. Churchill's personality is so compelling and dominating that it would be easy to underestimate the other, less extraordinary, politicians that also supported the causes he championed. With regard to the latter, Neville Thompson's *The Anti-Appeasers*, published in 1971, is still the best published account of the Tory factions opposed to their Party's foreign policy. It is an objective of this thesis to build upon Thompson's work with the evidence that can now be brought to light by the private papers, in particular Churchill's, which were not available to him at the time of his research. Furthermore, this thesis will place the anti-appeasement lobby in the context of the India diehards, a task which was outside the remit of Thompson's book.

No assessment of Churchill in the Conservative Party after 1929 can proceed without saying something about the vicissitudes of his career before that date. Given his desertion to the Liberals in 1904, his acceptance of the Chancellorship in the Conservative Government of 1924 was understandably contentious. Indeed, his removal from office had been a major condition of Tories considering joining the war-time Coalition Government in 1915. His career development had already experienced many twists and stood starkly in contrast to that of the Prime Minister with whom he had now to serve.

Baldwin's twenty-five month experience of Cabinet Government, first at the Board of Trade then as Chancellor of the Exchequer, was memorable chiefly for his embarrassing
indiscretions to the press about his negotiations with the United States over the war debt.\(^3\)

Undaunted by this, he emerged in May 1923 as Prime Minister. It is little wonder that his opponents like Lord Rothermere, the owner of the hostile *Daily Mail*, regarded him as 'a completely incompetent person who, by the accident of post-war politics, flunked his way into high office.'\(^4\) In fact Baldwin offered not leadership so much as management and his promotion to the Premiership had everything to do with the Carlton Club *coup* which had removed a whole generation of more senior contenders. Given this and the declining health of the Insurgents' Prime Minister, Bonar Law, Baldwin found himself one of only two remaining candidates for the post. The fact that he was considered less arrogant and divisive to party unity than the only obvious alternative candidate (who furthermore had the disadvantage of sitting in the House of Lords) gave him the edge. Whether they 'emerged' as before, or were elected, as after 1965, most of the thirteen Conservative Party Leadership changes which have taken place this century have been decided upon by the desire to find a leader who, it was thought, would keep the Party united.\(^5\) The candidacy for the leadership of any politician tainted with favouring a return to the Lloyd George Coalition would have alienated the overwhelming majority of the backbench Tories. Indeed, the possibility that Baldwin's rival for the Leadership in 1923, Lord Curzon, would be a stalking-horse for the 'Old Gang's' return had certainly been a fear amongst the pro-Insurgent majority in the Party.

It is often forgotten, when we view Churchill as one of the so-called 'Old Gang' of Lloyd George's vintage, that he was seven years Baldwin's junior and five years younger than Neville Chamberlain. Yet, in the time it had taken Baldwin to receive his first Cabinet post, Churchill had already been a journalist, author, soldier, prisoner-of-war escapee,


\(^4\) Rothermere interviewed in the *Daily News*, 8 February 1930.

\(^5\) Whilst Edward Heath in 1965 and Margaret Thatcher in 1975 were the main exceptions to this rule, perceived divisiveness hampered the prospects of Joseph Chamberlain in 1902, Austen Chamberlain in both 1911 and 1922, R.A. Butler in 1957 and again, with also Lord Hailsham, in 1963 and Michael Heseltine in 1990, see Vernon Bogdanor 'The Selection of the Party Leader' in *Conservative Century, The Conservative Party since 1900*, edited by Anthony Seldon and Stuart Ball, 1994, p. 95.
President of the Board of Trade, Home Secretary, First Lord of the Admiralty, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Munitions Minister, Secretary of State for War, for Air and for the Colonies. By the time Neville Chamberlain entered the Commons, Churchill had been sitting there for eighteen years. There was, however, a contrast. By 1922, having been Lord Mayor of Birmingham and a junior office holder in the Government, Chamberlain’s worst failure was at being a plantationist whilst Baldwin had not spectacularly succeeded at anything beyond his own quiet rise. Churchill, however, had crossed the floor, alienating himself from the Conservatives on the issues of protectionism, Ireland and the House of Lords and had received much of the blame for the badly executed Gallipoli fiasco. Furthermore the name Churchill, not least for the behaviour of his father, Lord Randolph, was synonymous with scandal and party political opportunism.6

Churchill’s problem was not merely that he had often upheld policies that were objectionable to the Conservatives. Perhaps worse, with the exception of his belief in free trade, there was no guarantee of his sincerity even when he was pursuing many of these policies. His enthusiasm for propounding whatever case his portfolio demanded, from social reformer, to Imperial naval builder to Ulster represser, ensured that he never held the constant support of any one group throughout the entirety of his career. In Edwardian domestic portfolios, he had demanded the diversion of funds from the proposed naval budget in order to finance social reform, yet as soon as he had gone to the Admiralty he had argued for the reverse. Likewise the Churchillian rhetoric for higher defence spending in the 1930s was undermined by his record at the Treasury between 1924 and 1929 when he had cut spending to the bone.7 This inconsistency would not encourage colleagues to trust his judgement. Not least as a result of this, Lloyd George’s secretary and mistress recorded in her diary as early as 1915 that it was ‘strange that Churchill should have been in politics

7 John Charmley Churchill, the end of glory, 1993, pp. 208-211.
all these years, and yet not have won the confidence of a single party in the country, or a single colleague in the Cabinet.\textsuperscript{8}

Baldwin probably never possessed the flair to conjure up something as daring and imaginative as the Dardanelles campaign. In this he was fortunate. As Germains luridly wrote, ‘the ghosts of the Gallipoli dead will always rise up to damn [Churchill] anew in times of national emergency’ and inferred that had he been left to his own devices during the General Strike of 1926, his over-zealous crisis management would have ended in a blood bath.\textsuperscript{9} That Churchill and his Coalition colleagues appeared prepared to launch Britain into another war over Chanak when the Tory backbenchers met in the Carlton Club to terminate the Coalition only seemed to emphasise this point.

Andrew Roberts has written that the downfall of the Lloyd George Coalition at the hands of the Tory backbenchers marked out the political battle-lines which lasted into the Second World War.\textsuperscript{10} There is much truth in this at the psychological level and certainly it cleared the way for the ascendancy of men like Baldwin, Neville Chamberlain and Samuel Hoare over the ‘Old Gang’ who had presided over the winning of the War and the switching of the Irish Question from British to Irish politics. It should, however, not be forgotten that, whilst their long-term strategy had been severed in 1922, within two years leading ex-Coalitionists like Churchill and Austen Chamberlain were sufficiently rehabilitated to take up the offer of Cabinet positions superior to that which they had enjoyed in the Coalition. Admittedly, this did not compensate for Chamberlain’s loss of the Party leadership, with the resultant all-important powers of patronage falling to the Carlton Club Insurgents. The loss for Churchill however, was less pronounced since he had been a controversial member of the junior political group, the Lloyd George Liberals, in the old Coalition in a Government which, as 1922 proved, was always going to be at the mercy of the Conservative majority. If patronage had stayed in the Coalitionist hands then he

\textsuperscript{8} Stevenson diary, 24 May 1915 quoted in Charmley Churchill, p. 136.

\textsuperscript{9} Germains Tragedy, p. 278; see also The New Statesman, 22 May 1926.

\textsuperscript{10} Andrew Roberts The Holy Fox: a biography of Lord Halifax, 1991, p. 305.
could still hardly have been offered a post higher than Chancellor of the Exchequer. Baldwin’s great electoral miscalculation was important as far as Churchill’s rehabilitation was concerned. But for the rejection of the Tories’ protectionist gamble by the electorate in 1923, Churchill would not have found so easily his way back into the Conservative and Unionist Party he had deserted over its adoption of protectionism twenty years previously. Baldwin’s subsequent promise that the next Conservative government would not pursue full-blooded protectionism both contributed to the Party’s return to office within a year of the loss of its majority and presented Churchill with the opportunity to make his peace, declaring that his support for a Conservative Government rested on the rejection of food taxes and the general tariff. It was on this basis that he felt able to make irrevocable his desertion of the self-destructing Liberal Party. The eclipse of the Liberals by Labour also gave Churchill, the combative opponent of Bolshevism, a new scope to expand upon his exhaustive line in anti-socialist invective.

Once Neville Chamberlain had refused the Treasury in favour of the Health portfolio, Baldwin’s seemingly extraordinary appointment of Churchill as Chancellor of the Exchequer rested partly on his desire to appear to be healing the wounds created by the 1922 Carlton Club division whilst confirming the new Government’s pledge not to introduce food taxes. Austen Chamberlain had warned Baldwin that Churchill would organise ‘a Tory rump’ within six months of returning to the fold if he was not offered a seat in the Cabinet. Churchill’s wife encouraged her husband to believe that his return to the governing Party ‘endangered’ Baldwin’s leadership especially with support from his long term friend and Coalitionist accomplice Lord Birkenhead whom he ‘would bring back ...

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12 Baldwin ensured that the other leading ex-Coalitionists were also appeased. Sir Austen Chamberlain became Foreign Secretary, Sir Laming Worthington-Evans went to the War Office, Lord Birkenhead became Secretary of State for India and the following year Lord Balfour accepted the Lord Presidency in Council.
13 This was very much to the fury of committed protectionists like Leo Amery. See L.S. Amery *My Political Life.*, vol.II., 1953, p. 299.
14 Sir Austen Chamberlain to Stanley Baldwin quoted in Middlemas and Barnes *Baldwin*, p. 280.
a possible Leader.\textsuperscript{15} The latter was wishful thinking and the former warning may have been tinged with another ‘Old Gang’ member’s deliberate political calculation, but there was, at any rate, another justification for Baldwin’s decision to install Churchill in 11 Downing Street. By accepting him, Baldwin gained a front bench debater of the first rank to rival his bête noire, Lloyd George. Leaving Churchill out might lead to opposition from a first rank debater supporting Lloyd George.\textsuperscript{16} As we shall see, this danger appeared credible well into the 1930s, further emphasising for us the indelible scar left by the Carlton Club putsch. With his contribution to the Norway debate in 1940, Lloyd George helped to get his own back on the generation of Carlton Club Insurgents who had terminated his period in power. In the act, he helped Churchill, the only other surviving member of his ‘Old Gang’, to become Prime Minister.

It is hard to see how in 1924 Churchill could have emulated his father in bidding for the leadership by appealing directly from the Exchequer to the Tory foot soldiers, particularly in the Party caucus, since, despite the political calculations which underpinned it, his appointment as Chancellor was far from being universally popular throughout the Party.\textsuperscript{17} The caucus, in particular, was pro-protection. Therefore, if he was determined to stay in the Conservative Party and eschew realignment with Lloyd George, Churchill needed Baldwin’s patronage much more than the other way around.

Yet, Churchill’s dilemma ran deeper still, since he had the difficulty not merely of appealing both to the parliamentary party and to the caucus but also simultaneously to the two components of the parliamentary party itself - the back and the front bench. Baldwin’s moderate ‘New Conservatism’ had obvious electoral advantages in attracting the


\textsuperscript{16} Neville Chamberlain diary, 5 November 1924, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/21.

\textsuperscript{17} see Bridgeman (First Lord of the Admiralty) to his wife, 9 March 1924 in Philip Williamson (ed.) \textit{The Modernisation of Conservative Politics: The Diaries and Letters of William Bridgeman 1904-35}, 1988, p. 176; Neville Chamberlain diary entry for 5 November 1924, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/21; Charmley also offers the views of Bridgeman, Amery, Austen and Neville Chamberlain in \textit{Churchill}, pp. 194-7.
recently enfranchised working class electorate and in being acceptable to one
time Liberal supporters, disillusioned with their increasingly divided and marginalised
Party. This was, after all, a policy that attracted Churchill, the most famous of the
floating ex-Liberal voters. On the other hand, as the passage of the Trades Disputes Bill
demonstrated, there was still a wide gulf between the moderation of the Executive and the
more bellicose Toryism of a large section of the backbench. Churchill’s biting rhetoric, his
conduct during the General Strike (reminiscent of his similarly over zealous command
against the Sidney Street anarchists during his Home Secretaryship) and his strident
criticism of Bolshevik Russia were more the line of attack they preferred. Against this, his
previous support for the ‘Red Friday’ coal subsidy extension and subsequent distaste for the
vengeance politics of the Trades Disputes Act placed him firmly as a Baldwinite in this
respect. 18 He supported Neville Chamberlain’s social legislation programme and
increased borrowing to accommodate the spiralling costs of unemployment benefit. Indeed,
he wrote to his wife that his work ‘might be the fulfilment of all that [Disraeli] and my
father aimed at in their political work’.19 Churchill may have wanted to believe that
Baldwin’s ‘New Conservatism’ was the result of his father’s stand for ‘Tory Democracy’ but
it was more than coincidental that Lord Randolph and Disraeli possessed what Churchill’s
detractors saw in him - considerable political opportunism.

Although Churchill’s chances of attaining the ultimate prize depended upon the support at
the appropriate moment of the so-called ‘magic circle’ of Cabinet ministers and Tory
grandees who effectively selected the Party Leader, as has been mentioned, that selection
was based upon finding a candidate acceptable to the rest of the Party. Bonar Law had
emerged as Leader in 1911 as a compromise candidate selected by the two most obvious
candidates, Austen Chamberlain and Walter Long who, after private consultation, had
both stood down in his favour. Whilst Bonar Law’s leadership was subsequently ratified as
afait accompli by a meeting of the parliamentary party in the Carlton Club, it was the

18 see Paul Addison Churchill on the Home Front, 1900-55, 1992, pp. 252-3 and 259;
anticipation of backbench views which encouraged his selection in the first place. On Bonar Law’s temporary retirement through ill health, Lloyd George selected the obvious choice of Austen Chamberlain with support from the ‘magic circle’ of Tory frontbenchers and grandees, and this appointment was in turn rubber stamped by a meeting of the parliamentary party. When the Coalition Government fell, and thus Chamberlain’s leadership with it, Bonar Law, whom the King called to form a Government, would only do so after the parliamentary party had voted him Leader. Of course, since he was the only candidate, it was not so much a vote as a ratification, but this was the first time that the Party and not the Monarch had decided upon who would be Leader of the Conservative Party as distinct from merely Leader in the Commons or Leader in the Lords. On Bonar Law’s virtual death-bed retirement, the King once again sought the advice of the Tory ‘magic circle’, in particular Balfour and the Lord President, Salisbury, as to who should succeed. There was no public scrap between Curzon and Baldwin, and when the King asked Baldwin to form the Government and thereby to assume the Leadership of the Conservative Party, this decision was again ratified by a vote of the parliamentary party. At no time then, had the parliamentary party been directly requested to demonstrate support for any one candidate in preference to another. There was no precedent for successful public leadership contests.

The legacy of the nineteenth century was that the Conservative Party had no single leader when in Opposition. Rather it would have a Leader in the Commons and a Leader in the Lords and, upon winning a General Election the Monarch would select as Prime Minister one of these two men, the choice being determined by which could be presumed to command the support of the larger section of the whole parliamentary party. The Prime Minister would then become outright Leader of the Party. Whilst the parliamentary party was never balloted to express a preference between candidates, as we have seen, if it subsequently transpired that the Prime Minister did not command their allegiance then matters would obviously come to a head. With the further extension of the franchise and the social change to which it was the accompaniment, together with the 1911 Parliament Act, the
diminishing importance of the House of Lords made the Leader in the Commons the more likely selection for the King to call upon to form a Government. However, his choice of the Leader in the Lords was still perfectly possible as the general desire for Lord Halifax to assume the Premiership in 1940 demonstrated.20 Defeated in the General Election of 1929, Baldwin’s continued sole Leadership of the Party was reconfirmed by the parliamentary party, thus preventing the usual uncertainty of command between the Commons’ and the Lords’ leaders. Had he chosen to mark the election defeat with his resignation (as he contemplated doing in March 1931) a new Leader in the Commons would have been chosen but until the next General Election victory and the subsequent choice of Premier made by the Monarch, the Leader in the Lords would still have enjoyed, at least technical, parity. The word ‘technical’ here is important since there is no conceivable way that the then Lords’ Leader, the frail Lord Salisbury, would have been viewed (or desired to be viewed) as the equal of the Leader in the Commons. However, once he retired in favour of someone more credible as a Premier, as happened in 1930, then the question of parity would have re-emerged.21

Despite being Chancellor and a former Home Secretary, Churchill was not Baldwin’s natural heir apparent. The Prime Minister knew that no matter how much Tory MPs might ‘settle down in the stalls with anticipatory grins’ for the inevitable Churchillian ‘star turn’ in the Commons, they did not want him at their policy-making helm.22 Yet, for the Party Leadership in the Commons, Churchill was the only credible candidate to challenge Neville Chamberlain.23 Cherishing the memory of his father Joseph, on whose political

21 The selection procedure for the Party Leader is best discussed by Bogdanor in Conservative Century especially pp. 69-74 and also by R.T. McKenzie British Political Parties (1964 edition) Chapter II. Bogdanor, in particular, argues that although the process of selection before 1965 appears at face value to have been elitist and secretive, in its desire to find a unifying figure it in fact tended to represent successfully the majority will of the parliamentary party.
22 Baldwin to Lord Irwin, 15 September 1927, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.1, p. 1050.
23 Beaverbrook regarded the reactionary Home Secretary, Sir William Joynson Hicks, as a possibility for the Leadership but most shared the view of the Prime Minister who appointed him that ‘the general opinion of Jix was that he was the buffoon of the Party’. See Beaverbrook to Mackenzie King, August 1928, quoted in Kenneth Young Churchill and
legacy Churchill had turned his back in 1904, Neville Chamberlain, despite his outward appearance of lack of personal ambition, had no intention of allowing the free trader the Party Leadership. Whilst Churchill was the more senior and experienced politician, Chamberlain had the clear advantage of having been a consistent member of the Party, whilst also having appeal to its protectionist majority and with fewer outright enemies than Churchill. As we have observed, a candidate's alleged ability to preserve party unity has been seen to be fundamental to his attaining the Leadership. The precedent set by the leadership contest of 1911 (the last time the Party in opposition had been forced to make the choice) was for the obvious candidates to come to an understanding together as to which could best command the support of the Party as Austen Chamberlain and Walter Long had done in deciding to allow through Bonar Law. Using this procedure, it is certainly hard to see how Churchill between 1929 and 1931 could have convinced Neville Chamberlain that the Party was united behind him. Had he nonetheless somehow 'emerged' as the Leader, Churchill might not have been able to have his position officially ratified by the parliamentary party, if his assumptions made about his own unifying credentials proved inaccurate. Therefore, to win in any foreseeable circumstances at this time, Churchill would have to have found a different way of being selected. There were two clear ways in which he might have achieved this. One way was if, to retain power after an election, the Conservatives had to form a new Coalition with Lloyd George and the Liberals. In this way, Churchill would surely have been recognised as the appropriate Leader, and the evidence which is presented in Part One of this thesis and elsewhere suggests that Neville Chamberlain (who, like Baldwin, despised Lloyd George as 'The Goat') would not even have fought him for the Leadership had such a Coalition been successfully brought about. The other way in which Churchill might win would be if he

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Beaverbrook, 1966, pp. 103-4; Baldwin to Neville Chamberlain recorded by the latter in his diary for 11 March 1929, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/22; Churchill thought 'Jix' was as old fashioned and as electorally unappealing as Amery, which, curiously enough, was exactly what Amery thought of Churchill: Churchill to Baldwin, 2 September 1928, Baldwin Papers 36/77; Amery diary, 12 December 1928 in John Barnes and David Nicholson (ed). The Leo Amery Diaries, vol. 1., 1896-1929, 1980.

24 Neville Chamberlain's diary entry for 11 March 1929, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/22. Sir Austen Chamberlain might possibly have formed a Tory-Liberal Coalition in
could force Baldwin out of the Leadership on the back of a crisis in which Churchill commanded the support of the Party in the heat of the moment.

This hypothesis still left unresolved the question of whether, in the event of a Conservative victory at the polls, the Leader in the Commons would necessarily be chosen over the Leader in the Lords to form a Government and assume overall command of the Party. Salisbury’s replacement in this role by Lord Hailsham in 1930 ensured that there was a credible alternative from the upper house who had been acting Premier in 1928. At that time, Neville Chamberlain had been terrified that Churchill and his friend at the India Office, Birkenhead, would rather support Hailsham (then in the Commons as Sir Douglas Hogg) than himself in a future leadership contest, and he approached Hogg to declare his disinclination to ‘see W. Churchill Prime Minister.’ As we will see, had Baldwin resigned whilst in Opposition in 1930 or 1931, the most likely result would have been a dual ticket of Chamberlain leading the Commons in tandem with Hailsham (who took his peerage as Lord Chancellor in March 1928) in the Lords. It was not clear until after his move from Central Office following the debacle of March 1931 that a Chamberlain leadership in the Commons was anything other than a party management position in support of Hailsham’s overall leadership, a result which might radically have changed the future course of events.

The manner in which Churchill tried to manoeuvre himself into becoming a more credible contender for the leadership is one of the key currents in this thesis. Yet, by the 1930s, he

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25 Neville Chamberlain diary entry 30 March 1928, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/22.
26 The fact that Lord Hailsham proved not to be a pivotal figure during the period is a retrospective judgement based, in part, on the fact that he played little part in the causes or conduct of the two world wars or the development of the post-1944 domestic order. This is not to say that he did not command a respected position in the mid-inter-war Party from which his leadership would have been possible. With political inclinations towards the Right wing of the Party he would have been more sympathetic to the India diehards than Baldwin and Chamberlain proved to be. Furthermore, without private papers currently available for research, Hailsham has not attracted a biographer to emphasise his importance. The Hailsham-Chamberlain alliance of March 1931 is discussed in Part One of this thesis.
had his record as Chancellor to add to the other decisions of the past to defend against detractors. As Chancellor, his biggest decision (supported by most contemporary wisdom and the full support of the Cabinet) was to return to the Gold Standard at the unsustainable pre-war parity of $4.86. The belief in the wisdom of maintaining this mechanism encouraged the creation of the National Government in 1931 and his further exclusion from office, not least when the received wisdom found that life went on even after it had to be abandoned. All of this was in the future. In 1925 Churchill’s reintroduction of free trade’s great self-regulator reinforced the City’s world role and further dented the prospects for a protectionist economic policy.27

Whilst Churchill’s economic measures were not all supported by the Right,28 his Budget speeches were admired as great parliamentary performances.29 However, his defence of free trade was vigorously opposed by the 200 strong group of Conservative MPs centred around the protectionist Empire Industries Association (EIA). Given the general unimportance of the other backbench committees, such as they existed in the 1920s (and far from being the ‘kingmaker’ of legend, the 1922 Committee was particularly uninfluential in this respect),30 the EIA stood out as a source of considerable opposition to Churchill’s free trading instincts. Their rebellion against him was resistible because of the support he

27 see in particular Peter Clarke *The Keynesian Revolution in the Making 1924-1936*, 1988, pp. 33-43, and also his chapter ‘Churchill’s Economic Ideas 1900-1930’ in Blake and Louis’ *Churchill*, especially pp. 83-90; also Addison *Home Front* pp. 244-250; Bruce P. Lenman *The Eclipse of Parliament*, 1992, pp. 121-2 reiterates the assertion that Churchill’s decision to return to Gold was encouraged by his wish to court favour in that other bastion of support for a future Tory leader, The City, which valued the Treasury view of ‘sound finance’. Amery argued prophetically that the resulting increase in imports would necessitate either a tariff or bank rate rises and Gold Standard abolition: Amery to Churchill, 6 December 1926, Baldwin Papers 28/242-245.

28 see for example the *Daily Mail* 16 April 1929 and the diehard MP, Col. John Gretton’s condemnation of the 1929 Budget as ‘not sound finance’ in *The Times*, 16 April 1929.

29 Baldwin, writing to King George V on 12 April 1927 believed Churchill’s 1927 Budget had won ‘intense rejoicing and intense admiration’ (Gilbert Companion vol.v., pt.1., pp. 984-6) and even the shadow Chancellor, Philip Snowden confessed that Churchill, with his ‘fascinating rhetoric and engaging personality’, was the Government’s ‘one remaining asset’: Snowden to the Commons, reported in *The Times*, 16 April 1929.

30 Philip Norton ‘The Parliamentary Party and Party Committees’ in *Conservative Century* pp. 97-99 and 105-113. As Dr Stuart Ball has commented on the period, ‘the 1922 Committee developed the habit of shying away from difficult topics.’ Stuart Ball, ‘The 1922 Committee: The Formative Years, 1922-45’ in *Parliamentary History*, vol. 9 (pt. 1), 1990, p. 140.
received from Baldwin.\textsuperscript{31} Furthermore, the Annual Conference of the Party’s caucus, the National Union, made clear that it regretted the ‘slow progress’ being made at ‘safeguarding’ (the piecemeal protection of specific industries).\textsuperscript{32} Whilst the constituency associations had no claim to the formulation of policy, their united voice at their annual conference could not be lightly ignored as an irrelevance.\textsuperscript{33} Under pressure in the Cabinet from Amery, Cunliffe-Lister and Neville Chamberlain, Churchill had to climb down from his position in order neither to put Baldwin in an extremely awkward situation nor be forced out himself. On 2 August 1928 he conceded to his Cabinet colleagues that an enquiry should be made into the ‘safeguarding’ of iron and steel.\textsuperscript{34} Whilst this was a significant retreat from his former position, it did not represent the arrival of a comprehensive protectionist programme for which food taxes were the totem. Faced with mounting unemployment but determined to resist wide scale protection, Churchill’s diversionary scheme (which put him at loggerheads with Neville Chamberlain) involved removing manufacturing, agriculture and transport from paying local Rates, an idea advocated by the young Harold Macmillan. The scheme failed and was blamed as a cause for the Conservatives’ electoral defeat later in the year.\textsuperscript{35}

The clearest signal of Churchill’s standing in the Conservative Party came when Baldwin considered reconstructing his Cabinet in March 1929 before calling the General Election of that year. The arch-protectionist Leo Amery, who had a considerable axe to grind and was not, at any rate, one of Baldwin’s intimates, pleaded with the Premier to move the

\textsuperscript{32} McKenzie \textit{British Political Parties} pp. 227-8. 
\textsuperscript{33} For example, had the 1922 Party Conference condemned the Irish Treaty - as was feared - it appears that possibly the Government (and certainly Austen Chamberlain the Party Leader) would have resigned. It was the repetition of this potentiality, as we shall see in Part Two of this thesis, that encouraged the actions of Churchill and his diehards to appeal to the Party caucus over Indian constitutional reform. 
\textsuperscript{34} Middlemas and Barnes \textit{Baldwin}, pp. 473-4. 
‘paralysing negative influence’ of Churchill from a portfolio where he was hindering protectionism and that ‘the Party ... would breathe a profound sigh of relief if he was shifted’ in favour of Neville Chamberlain. Amery thought Churchill’s ‘fine sense of the historic sweep and diversified drama of the world’s affairs’ might be suited to running the Committee of Imperial Defence (CID) or in directing foreign policy which he would make ‘much more interesting’.

Baldwin however, who wanted anything but an ‘interesting’ foreign policy, had already thought that he would ‘dread to find himself waking up at nights with a cold sweat at the thought of Winston’s indiscretions’. If Churchill had been given the Foreign Office, having previously held the Home Office and the Treasury, his Prime Ministerial credentials would have been given a further boost.

In fact, over the New Year Baldwin had written to Asquith’s Foreign Secretary, Lord Grey of Fallooden, who was currently Chairman of the Liberal Council, to see whether he was interested in returning to the Foreign Office. Although Grey shared Baldwin’s loathing of Lloyd George, he replied negatively whilst indicating that he had faith in Baldwin’s ‘honourable’ style of government. Quite what a storm such an appointment would have made can only be imagined. It would have tilted the balance in the Cabinet further to the Left, bolstering Churchill’s position with the introduction of another ideological free trader. Certainly it said much for Baldwin’s lack of enthusiasm for protectionism and the Chamberlain family legend by 1929.

Baldwin’s next ill-judged idea was that Churchill should be sent to the India Office in a Cabinet reshuffle. This can be viewed as evidence that Churchill’s ‘diehard’ Imperialist sentiments had not been voiced with the same vigour during the discipline of office compared to that which he was shortly to pronounce outside it. Alternatively, since on such matters he was already in agreement with Lord Birkenhead, the hard-line Secretary of

37 Amery diary, 27 February 1929.
the State for India between 1924-1928, there was no reason why he should have spoken out. The Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet thought the appointment would be an excellent idea since Churchill would throw himself with enthusiasm into whatever cause his portfolio demanded, as he had with 'the Irish job'. Later, however, he conceded to the old worry that he would probably be unreliable during a crisis and when the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, damned the prospect with faint praise, Baldwin dropped the idea. Had the offer been made, it would clearly have been demotion for Churchill, marking the passing of the high water mark of his Office-holding.

As has been noted, Baldwin thought that Churchill's chance of the Leadership rested upon a future minority Conservative government retaining office with support from Lloyd George and this became a more pressing concern as the General Election became imminent. Lloyd George, approached his former Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Coalition, Sir Robert Horne and Churchill to see if they could push Baldwin into such an arrangement. Churchill thought Lloyd George's demands (electoral reform and free trade) were acceptable. Employment schemes, financed by loans were also mentioned as a price for Liberal support which Churchill, taking the Treasury view, regarded as a waste of money which, without an inflationary expansion of credit, would merely interfere where, if truly of use, private capital would have sought a return anyway. Rallying under the 'Safety First' slogan, Churchill criticised Lloyd George's launch of his crusade against unemployment and also downplayed the importance of the Right wing alternative, Empire Development, arguing that the Tories 'should not try to compete with L.G., ... but take our stand on sound finance'.

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39 Tom Jones diary, 23 February and 13 April 1929, pp. 172 and 179.
40 Lloyd George Memorandum, 18 February 1929 reproduced in Gilbert, companion vol. v., pt. 1., pp. 1426-7; Clarke Keynesian Revolution, p. 64.
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Lloyd George's bidding - before the election at any rate. Reporting on a dinner conversation he had exchanged with him, Lord Beaverbrook, the politically active *Daily Express* owner, recorded that whilst Lord Rothermere wanted a Liberal-Conservative coalition, Churchill thought:

> the Conservative faith in Baldwin has evaporated. Churchill had no intention whatever of allying himself with Lloyd George, although rumours to this effect in Conservative circles have been doing him a great deal of harm.\(^{42}\)

If we accept that the worsening economic climate would not have been reversed had the Conservatives retained power after 1929 (which given the international aspect of the Depression it would seem fair to assert) then whatever Baldwin's prevarications, events (or Neville Chamberlain) would have pushed the Conservative Party into a more protectionist stance, isolating an increasingly awkward Churchill. As is described in Part One of this thesis, this is exactly what happened with the Party in opposition and there is no reason to believe that being in office could have delayed its development in this direction indefinitely.

Finally, although Churchill had done a good job at dismantling the effectiveness of Britain's fighting forces whilst at the Exchequer, he never trumpeted ideologically the cause of disarmament and (at this stage) had little genuine optimism for the League of Nations.\(^{43}\) If re-elected to office, Baldwin intended to pursue disarmament vigorously, particularly the abolition of armed aeroplanes and submarines for which he did not 'see why we can't get France and Italy round a table and put an end to some of it'.\(^{44}\) It is hard to imagine that Churchill, the former Air Minister who had found the RAF so useful (and economical) over the skies of Iraq, would have wished to be in the vanguard of its abolition. Subsequent events certainly suggest that Defence and Disarmament policy were areas where he would have clashed with his leadership whatever rank he held.

\(^{42}\) Beaverbrook to Sir Robert Borden (former Canadian Prime Minister), 26 March 1929, Beaverbrook Papers, C/52.

\(^{43}\) Charmley *Churchill*, p. 236.

\(^{44}\) Baldwin to Tom Jones, Tom Jones diary, 1 November 1928, p. 155.
In view of likely differences between Churchill and his front bench colleagues on Imperial, economic and strategic issues, it is hard to believe that these areas of conflict would not have caused a rift even if the Conservatives had won the 1929 Election and he had remained in the Cabinet. The truth appears to be that Baldwin’s and Churchill’s views were naturally diverging by 1929. A further election victory would have led the Tory protectionists to demand an end to Baldwin’s 1924 timidity on the subject which had made Churchill’s rehabilitation possible. Furthermore, events in foreign and imperial affairs, where Churchill was to the right of Baldwin, were less important to British politics in the 1920s than they were to prove after 1929, making a split seemingly unavoidable. In this sense, the relative tranquillity of the 1924 to 1929 Government, which enabled Churchill to return to the Conservative Party despite his former differences with it, was the exceptional period rather than his wilderness years in the 1930s. The economic slump made the Conservative case for raising tariffs irresistible, and on this Churchill was irretrievably out of step with the overwhelming majority of his Party. As the next chapter will argue, Churchill’s career prospects reached their peak in the 1920s and would have receded naturally after 1929 even had he not sought to exploit the splits and fissures which reopened in the Party following the electoral defeat of that year.
PART ONE
OUT OF OFFICE
Chapter One
Opportunities for Realignment

i). Opposition and Realignment

Recollecting from the detached distance of time and success, Churchill thought that when he vacated 11 Downing Street he had ‘no great influence with the Conservatives [because his] Free Trade outlook, although modified by Imperial Preference and the McKenna Import Duties, ran counter to the deep-seated desires of the Tory Party. The Exchequer is not an office which confers popularity upon its holder.45 His hesitancy in pushing forward protectionist ‘safeguarding’ measures had been censured by the Party caucus at the National Union of Conservative Associations’ Annual Conference and of the other remaining free traders on the Tory frontbench, Lord Eustace Percy was an easily marginalisable figure at the Conservative Research Department, Lord Salisbury was in declining health and destined to resign the Leadership in the Lords in 1930 and Lord Derby was about to switch to supporting protection.

The arithmetic of the 1929 Election defeat stood to make matters even worse for Churchill’s position, decimating the reputedly more moderate Tory representatives of the Midlands and the North and entrenching Conservatism in its south eastern enclave.46 Instead of

45 Churchill’s recollections of 1948, Churchill Papers 4/113/25 (draft copy for The Gathering Storm, Chapter Two ‘Peace at its Zenith’, 1948); Lord Beaverbrook later claimed that after the 1929 Election defeat, Baldwin had told Churchill that ‘there was nobody more unpopular than himself. The difficulty of carrying Churchill, said Baldwin, was one of the main reasons for losing the election.’ (Beaverbrook to Stanley Morison, 4 May 1951, in Kenneth Young, Churchill and Beaverbrook, 1966, p. 118n) It would have been surprising if Baldwin had spoken to so recent a colleague in quite this language and it does not explain Baldwin’s subsequent hesitancy in moving towards a firmer protectionist commitment. Nevertheless, the Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet, Tom Jones thought that Churchill was ‘disliked by the [Conservative] party’. Tom Jones to A. B. Houghton (former U.S. Ambassador to Britain), Tom Jones diary, 19 June 1929, p. 189.
46 Tories were all but wiped out in Wales where they lost 8 of their 9 seats. In Scotland they lost 16 of their 38 seats. Whilst holding 70% of the vote in the Home Counties, they attained only 36% in Lancashire/Cheshire and a derisory 27% in Yorkshire. Amongst the ‘moderate’ Tory casualties were Harold Macmillan, Alfred Duff Cooper, Robert Hudson and
their being around 60 of the more than 400 seats occupied by right wing diehards, these MPs now comprised more than 50 of the remaining 261 Tory seats after the defeat. This was a proportionate increase from a seventh to a fifth of the parliamentary party. The Tory parliamentary group which had done so much to criticise his defence of free trade, the Empire Industries Association (EIA) saw 169 of its former 219 members returned, a proportionate increase from just over a half to nearly two-thirds of the Party.

If Churchill was to remain true to the free trading principles that had encouraged him to Cross the Floor in 1904, then he could clearly not call upon the Conservative Party to sustain his position. Likewise, if Baldwin was to win back the marginal constituencies in the Midlands and the North then he could not surrender to the hard Right wing which now were such a prominent section of his southern English centred Party. Baldwin’s desire for moderate ‘New Conservatism’ - perhaps as much the product of his state of mind as of electoral consideration - was given a protective cushion between 1931 and his retirement in 1937 by his Party’s subsumation into a National Government tempered by its need to stay allied to its Labour and Liberal adherents. One of the effects of this effective coalition was the marginalisation of the Tory Right who were denied representation in the Cabinet throughout the period. If Churchill was to sustain his own free trading position in his Party in 1929 then, similarly, the logical means for him to do so was by forcing the Tories into an alliance with the Liberal leader, David Lloyd George. Such an accommodation would have necessitated the Tories dropping aspirations for a whole-hog protectionist policy. Given that Labour won the 1929 Election without an overall majority, if the Liberals could be persuaded by Churchill to ally with the Tories then a Conservative Government could be returned to power.47 Both the Liberals and Labour under its neo-Gladstonian Chancellor, Philip Snowden, were committed to free trade and the working

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47 If all 59 Liberal MPs agreed to vote down the new Labour Government in favour of a Tory led one then Labour’s 28 seat lead over the Conservatives would have switched to a 31 seat deficit.
class vote was expected to be opposed to any fiscal tariffs which raised the price of basic foodstuffs. Given these considerations, Churchill fumed to his Leader that a protectionist Tory Party would ensure 'one result - very likely final for our life time, namely a Lib-Lab block in some form or another and a Conservative Right hopelessly excluded from Power'.

Raising the spectre of internecine warfare to Neville Chamberlain, Churchill warned that a more protectionist Tory Party would ensure that a fifth of the Conservative Party and vote would be 'split off'.

Whilst Baldwin welcomed MacDonald's vision of a Parliament short of an outright majority operating as a 'Council of State', Churchill had no intention of working with Labour. In a blatant appeal to Liberals sitting there, he informed the Commons that he viewed the gulf across 'the floor [as wider] than the gangway'. With no immediate deal with the Liberals worked out, Churchill's advice to Baldwin not to meet the new Parliament merely in order to be voted out of Office was based on the fear that Leo Amery and Neville Chamberlain had wanted the Government to go down fully committed to Protectionism.

Given the Liberals' commitment to free trade, it was surprising that the pro-protection Philip Cunliffe-Lister and the late Joseph Chamberlain's own son, Austen, spoke in a meeting of Baldwin's ex-ministers on 11 July to call for an approach to the Liberals with fusion as the ultimate goal. Only Amery, appalled at this prospect, voiced his predictable support for food taxes and no surrender. Neville Chamberlain cautiously called for a rather improbable Imperial policy which excluded food taxes. With Baldwin advocating

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48 Churchill to Baldwin, 29 June 1929, Chartwell Papers 2/572(a)/51-2.
49 Churchill to Neville Chamberlain, 5 July 1929, Neville Chamberlain Papers 7/9/30.
50 MacDonald's speech to the Commons, Debate on the Address, 2 July 1929, Hansard 229 H.C. Deb 5s. col.64.
51 Churchill's letter in the Daily Mail, 8 May 1929.
52 Churchill's speech to the Commons, Debate on the Address, 3 July 1929, ibid., col. 125; see also Churchill's opposition to running a candidate against a strong Liberal in the Preston by-election: Churchill/Baldwin correspondence, 23 and 24 June 1929, Chartwell Papers 2/572(A)/53 and 111.
deferment of important questions, Churchill took the lead in the conversation and stated the necessity to work with the Liberals on the electoral reform committee. He was sanctioned to proceed with discussions with Lloyd George.\footnote{Amery diary, 11 July 1929, pp.42-4.} This now made Churchill the pivotal figure, becoming the chief negotiator with the man Baldwin despised as 'The Goat'.

In order to secure Conservative support, Lloyd George dropped his insistence that any Liberal-Tory agreement must include acceptance of his interventionist \textit{We Can Conquer Unemployment} programme, the genesis of which he had originally demanded from any such alliance when he had spoken to his former Ministers in the Coalition, Sir Robert Horne and Churchill back in February. Churchill reported the rest of Lloyd George's terms to Baldwin's cabinet-in-exile on 17 July. The Liberals would ditch Labour and put the Conservatives in power on the understanding that they would then introduce electoral reform followed by a fresh general election (by which under the new electoral procedure the Liberals could anticipate making substantial gains). The possibility of continual coalition government with a pivotal free trading Liberal Party dictating terms was unappealing to the protectionist majority of these senior Tories.\footnote{ibid., 17 July 1929, p.45.} As we will see, when the barriers of Lloyd George and free trade zealotry were removed from the equation in mid-1931, Neville Chamberlain would prove more than willing to negotiate an alliance with Liberals marshalled by the more compliant, less duplicitous Sir John Simon.

Baldwin did not take the lead in shaping the style and format of mediation with the Liberals. For once, his lethargy can be seen as masterly inactivity. Baldwin was toying with Churchill, either because he believed his former Chancellor had outlived his usefulness and should now be safely left to make a fool of himself in Liberal Party negotiations which were predestined to damnation, or, because he was keen to appear open to all suggestions, thus limiting a potential backlash against any political cul-de-sac...
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\(^{54}\) Amery diary, 11 July 1929, pp.42-4.
\(^{55}\) ibid., 17 July 1929, p.45.
towards which he might be claimed to be steering. Tom Jones, whose knowledge of both MacDonald and Baldwin was considerable, thought that the two of them got 'on together because they both hate and fear L.I.G. He is rarely for long out of their minds. The speeches they make, the times they make them, especially when the House is sitting, are largely determined in relation to the movements of L.I.G. known or guessed. Thus Baldwin was allowing his ex-Chancellor to pursue one agenda whilst privately determined to block his prospects of achieving it. That Baldwin preferred opposition to assuming office with Liberal assistance was irrefutably proven when a Government defeat on the Coal Bill in December was averted (to Churchill's fury) by Baldwin persuading over thirty Tory MPs to stay at home for the day.

Was Churchill conniving with Lloyd George or did he believe he was merely Baldwin's loyal emissary? Doubtless, an adept politician like Churchill had his eye open to any opportunity his imaginative former boss might be able to conjure-up, but it does appear that Baldwin, his current boss, was kept properly informed by his ex-Chancellor. Beaverbrook probed Churchill to explain why, during a dinner at the house of the former Liberal Chancellor, Reginald McKenna, MacDonald had announced he had it on good authority that Churchill and Lloyd George were planning to bring down the Government in early 1930 with the support of Beaverbrook's newspapers. In fact, Churchill may have been misleading Lloyd George as much as Baldwin was misleading Churchill. The source of MacDonald's information is finally revealed to us in an extract from Chamberlain's diary in 1931 when discussing the possibility of new negotiations with the Liberals to bring down the Government: 'L.G. began by saying he was very nervous about discussing these matters. He had done so before with Winston but Winston had told S.B. and S.B. had told Ramsay

56 Tom Jones diary, 29 June 1929, p.190. As Dr Paul Addison has noted, 'Baldwin built his reputation on his part in bringing Lloyd George down, and it seems to have been one of his primary aims after 1922 to prevent the most able and inventive politician of the age from ever again holding office.' Paul Addison, The Road to 1945: British Politics and the Second World War, 1975, p. 28.
57 Lane-Fox to Irwin, 22 December 1929, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.18/333.
58 Beaverbrook to Churchill, 12 July 1929, quoted in Young Churchill and Beaverbrook, p.110.
which was very embarrassing to him.' 59 That the Leader of the Conservative Party was warning the Leader of the Labour Party about threats to bring down his Government, is merely one more twist in this strange dichotomy between appearance and reality in the period’s inter-party tussles.

The decision of the new Labour Foreign Secretary, Arthur Henderson to sack the Imperialist Lord Lloyd as Egyptian High Commissioner has been seen as the event that spurred Churchill’s adoption of the right wing Imperialist cause. Baldwin’s criticisms of Labour’s action in this respect were muted by the knowledge that Lloyd had previously enjoyed a stormy relationship with the previous Tory Foreign Secretary, Sir Austen Chamberlain, a point Henderson was not slow to make. This left Baldwin merely to question what Labour’s departure in Egyptian policy would be.60

In contrast, Churchill ignored the subtleties of the weakness in defending Lloyd’s case. Not content merely to indulge in an embarrassing dialogue with Henderson as to how the Foreign Secretary had found out that Lloyd had been to see him upon resigning, Churchill then annoyed the House further by casting aspersions at the Foreign Office bureaucrats’ ‘streak of prejudice’ against Lloyd for not being a Civil Servant himself. The real argument, about the future of Egyptian policy, Churchill confined to his concluding remarks.61 An irritated MacDonald told Churchill not to indulge in ‘the most contemptible tittle tattle.’62 Amery thought that for Churchill the ‘debate was a bad fiasco... [and that he] would have joined in if Winston had not and perhaps I might have done it better’.63 It was not to be the first time that Amery felt his own objectives were being hampered by Churchill’s tactics. The Commons debate on Lloyd’s dismissal was, as Churchill claimed twenty years later, the beginning of his ‘divergence from Mr Baldwin’.64

59 Neville Chamberlain diary, 6 July 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/22.
60 Baldwin to the Commons, 26 July 1929, 230 H.C.Deb 5s., col.1636.
61 ibid., cols. 1653-1658.
62 ibid., col. 1658.
63 Amery diary, 26 July 1929, p. 48.
64 Churchill Papers 4/113/26.
parliament was the opportunity for Churchill to use his command of the English language to ridicule the minority Labour Government. In picking Lloyd’s dismissal as his subject matter, he not only ignored the temperately phrased viewpoint of Baldwin but overlooked the fact that the Tory backbenchers ‘had been damped down as much as possible by the Whips, and ... we were much hampered by our own past.’

Churchill’s tirade was heard in silence from the Conservative benches. As Dr John Charmley has rightly asserted, not only did Churchill’s senior colleagues fail to dissuade him from his confrontational course, they seemed privately to be gloating at his failure. Certainly, Neville Chamberlain was not sorry to see his free-trading competition for the leadership ‘look exceedingly foolish’ when ‘all through this short session he has been trying to take the lead away from [Baldwin] and he thought he saw his way to make a real splash in the Adjournment and leave the House the hero of the day’.

There is no documentary evidence to suggest that Churchill’s senior colleagues saw in his intervention anything other than end of term opportunism. It would appear that none of them foresaw that his views on Egypt were but the first blast of his tenacious campaign to preserve Britain’s Imperial status. Yet the fact that he was the Tory politician that Lloyd came to see in order to find a champion for the cause, suggests that if his colleagues were unaware of the depth of his feelings on Britain’s global position then there were others who were not. He had previously complemented Baldwin on a domestic programme that he thought would fulfil the vision of Disraeli and Lord Randolph Churchill. Now he saw that outside home affairs, the ‘Mr Baldwin, brought up as a business man’ was failing to ‘identify [the Conservative Party] with the majesty of Britain as under Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury’.

Reminiscing about his youth, Churchill spoke to students of the ‘jolly little wars against barbarous peoples that we were endeavouring to help forward to high

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65 Churchill to Lord Camrose, 28 July 1929, Chartwell Papers 8/225/un-catalogued sub ref.
67 Neville to Ida Chamberlain, 28 July 1929, Neville Chamberlain Papers 18/1/663.
68 see the Prologue.
It is hard to imagine Baldwin, or any other member of his predominantly civilian Shadow Cabinet making such an observation. In October 1930, Churchill finished an autobiography of his youth, *My Early Life*, which was littered with romantic nostalgia for the days when he had participated in the great cavalry charge against the Dervish at Omdurman and escaped from a Boer prison during the excitement of the South African War.

Having largely ignored Imperial questions at the General Election, Churchill now assured his area constituency association, that ‘the most urgent and the most fatal of all the decisions likely to be taken in the coming year’ was in Egypt because it portended the same surrender of purpose in India. This could only result in ‘a serious effusion of blood’. Since it was believed that a continued British presence in India still necessitated the freedom to move goods through the Suez Canal (going round the Cape was costly in time and money) Britain could not run the risk of Egyptian nationalists closing the Canal and thus the arteries of Empire. As a result, there could be no real question of repudiating the arrangements of Britain’s commitments to Egypt which were concomitant with the granting of sovereign independent status in the 1922 Treaty and in the stabilising role in the Middle East of which the League of Nations in Geneva had mandated the premier role to Britain.

Giving credibility to Churchill’s fears, the Labour Government proceeded to mishandle the Egyptian situation by insisting that the proposed Treaty that they had negotiated with the more moderate Mahmud Pasha be ratified by a democratic Egyptian Parliament. This resulted in the triumph of the hard-line Egyptian nationalists who intimidated the liberal moderates into standing-down, making the Treaty originally proposed redundant in the face of a nationalist resurgence of the Wafd Party which the MacDonald Government had thereby now constitutionally legitimised. Churchill savaged Labour in the Commons adjournment debate on Egypt (with the help of the motions proposer, Sir Austen

70 Churchill’s address as Chancellor of Bristol University, 14 December 1929, *Complete Speeches* vol.v., p. 4674.
Chamberlain). In a better targeted speech than his contribution to the Lloyd debate, Churchill inferred Henderson’s deceit to Baldwin when he misleadingly claimed that negotiations for a Treaty had not been conducted behind the back of the then High Commissioner, Lord Lloyd. Secondly, he lambasted Labour for destroying the Egyptian moderates by demanding the supposed lunacy of an election on manhood suffrage ‘in an electorate, 92 per cent of whom are illiterate, and, ... unable, in consequence of that illiteracy, to enjoy the secrecy of ballot!’ Britain’s signs of retreat in Egypt ‘was the direct precursor of the massacres in Palestine’ as the internecine power-battles commenced to fill the void created by Britain’s weakening grip. Churchill’s alternative policy for Egypt rested not on a carefully worked out set of proposals but on an attitude, the same attitude that he would adopt with regard to India:

‘Once we lose confidence in our mission in the East, once we repudiate our responsibilities to foreigners and minorities, once we feel ourselves unable calmly and fearlessly to discharge our duties to vast helpless populations, then our presence in those countries will be stripped of every moral sanction, and resting only upon selfish interests or military requirements, it will be a presence which cannot long endure.’

Churchill subsequently recalled that whilst he saw it as the duty of the Conservative Party to ‘confront the Labour Government on all great imperial and national issues’, Baldwin ‘felt that the times were too far gone for any robust assertion of British Imperial greatness, and that the hopes of the Conservative Party lay in accommodation with Liberal and Labour forces’. As we have seen, however, Churchill would have been perfectly happy with an accommodation with Liberal forces and conveyed his annoyance to Lloyd that they had been ‘sourly impartial’. This ought to have been a sign to Churchill that Lloyd George was not going to desert Liberal principles on the administration of

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72 Churchill’s speech to the Commons, Egyptian (proposed treaty) Adjournment debate, 23 December 1929, Hansard, 233 H.C. Deb Ss. cols. 1994-5, 2007-9; Churchill made out a similar case to the proprietor of the Daily Telegraph: Churchill to Lord Camrose, 28 July 1929, Chartwell Papers 8/225.
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Empire just to help out his former colleague’s political advancement. Churchill now began to turn his attention onto Imperial questions as a lever to attack the Government and gain support from the Tory Right wing who were otherwise alienated from him on the great fiscal question. Of the other senior Tories who were supportive of Lloyd: Birkenhead, Joynson-Hicks, Salisbury and Amery, the last two would probably have had to have been included in a Baldwin Cabinet had the election gone favourably, creating, with Churchill, an Imperialist minority too strong for Baldwin to ignore. But it is clear from his annoyance when the Liberal Leader failed to join him in defending Lloyd that he had hoped it would also be a bridge towards gaining support from Lloyd George over the head of the supine Baldwin. After all, the Lloyd George Coalition Government had shown itself perfectly happy to exert force in defence of Imperial and foreign objectives. As we shall see shortly over the Irwin Declaration, Lloyd George showed signs of joining Churchill on this supposed crusade to save the British Empire and Churchill’s lurch to the Right was as much an attempt to join forces with him as to gain credibility with Tory Imperialist ‘diehards’.

Spending the summer recess on a lecture tour of Canada and the United States Churchill told Amery that he would retire from Westminster in order to make some money for his family if the Party adopted a strong Imperial Preference policy. This view, he confirmed to his wife, naming Neville Chamberlain as the sort of Party leader who would involve his political departure. Chamberlain was at the same time writing to Baldwin encouraging him not to step-down from the leadership since ‘the succession would come either to Churchill or myself, and I don’t know which I should dislike most!’ For Churchill, this made an accommodation with Lloyd George all the more desirable. Four days after Churchill had spent an hour with MacDonald on the occasion of the Premier’s birthday in New York, the Liberal Leader wrote to Churchill warning him that the new Labour Government was receiving a favourable press and that without a Tory-Liberal combination,
Labour would be in office for another seven years. Lloyd George's opposition to a 'Trade Union Government' should lead the two of them to 'interchange views' when Churchill returned, at least, with a view to unifying against the Coal Bill.\textsuperscript{78} Lloyd George's desire for an understanding with the Conservatives is often viewed sceptically.\textsuperscript{79} This overlooks his fear that he ran the risk of his own MPs and voters deserting to the Labour Party if it remained in office with its free trade ideologue, Philip Snowden at the Treasury whilst the Conservatives adopted the doctrines of Imperial Preference. Ironically the Liberal dissidents were to move into the very camp that Lloyd George's logic ruled out.

Before we discuss the implications of the Empire Free Trade campaign on the Conservative Party, and Churchill's position within it, there appeared in October 1929 the possibility that the whole economic argument might be forced into the background by Imperial issues after all - a situation very much to Churchill's advantage. For Churchill, still in Canada, the prospect of opposing British weakness in India was tailor made for his own combative psyche.

If we are to understand Churchill's strategy in opposing government policy on India, some reference to the issues involved is essential. In 1927, Churchill had regarded his country's greatest achievement to be the 'spread of the ideas of self-government, of personal liberty and of Parliamentary institutions throughout the world'.\textsuperscript{80} Having previously spent ten months in India in 1896 on military postings, he had supported the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms initiated in August 1917 with the promise of 'the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire'.\textsuperscript{81} Ignoring the sympathies of the Tory right wing in 1920, Churchill at the War Ministry had vigorously condemned General

\textsuperscript{78} Lloyd George to Churchill, 16 October 1929, Chartwell Papers 2/164/54-6.
\textsuperscript{79} see, for instance, K. Middlemas and J. Barnes, \textit{Baldwin}, 1969, p. 533.
\textsuperscript{81} quoted in Gilbert, companion vol.v., part 2., p. 129n.
Dyer's ruthless suppression of unrest in Amritsar which he believed was 'not the British way of doing business'.

In choosing the one Cabinet member who had opposed the original Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, Baldwin's appointment in 1924 of Lord Birkenhead to the India Office hardly suggested that the Conservative leadership was contemplating a tactical retreat in the sub-continent. Whilst India had, since 1919, enjoyed the right to set her own tariffs, she was subjected to tacit British pressure to ensure moderation. There was nothing in the Conservatives' 1924 election campaign to suggest that they were intent on pursuing an active or radical Indian policy. Relying on Birkenhead not to do anything rash, Churchill had paid little public attention to Indian questions during the second Baldwin Government although he later recalled that Birkenhead 'had kept me in close touch with the movement of Indian affairs, and I shared his deep misgivings about' India. The removal of this safeguard with Birkenhead's relinquishment of the India Office, together with Churchill's subsequent relief from concentrating on Treasury matters, ensured the dangers he saw in the Indian situation became increasingly apparent to him. All the same, it came as a surprise, mixed with some cynicism, to Churchill's colleagues to discover that the man so recently contemplated by Baldwin as the next Indian Secretary, should be found to hold such diehard views on the subject.

The Viceroy, Lord Irwin, was in an invidious position. The Congress Party, which had been requesting 'swaraj' (home rule) since 1906, stated in December 1928 that it would encourage civil disobedience to push for Indian independence, if full dominion status was not granted within twelve months. Certainly, there was no question of this being conceded, but Irwin felt that the promise of dominion status as a goal, arguably implicit (though not clearly stated) in the 1917 proclamation for eventual 'responsible government', would be a sufficient

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token of British good intention to assist the Hindu liberals in spiking the guns of the extremists in the Congress party.84

Far from being the natural progression from the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, dominion status was raised as a smoke screen to circumvent the 1919 reforms in order to accompany the real hope of British policy: All-India Federation. Instead of involving the conservative and broadly loyalist Indian Princes in order to dilute the authority of the Congress Party, the 1919 reforms had concentrated upon the very central legislature of British India, the area where Congress would gain the greatest support. Birkenhead never altered his views that the reforms had initiated India upon an unfortunate course. However doubtful the alternative courses may have proved, it appeared that the management of decline had hastened, rather than prevented submission to nationalist forces. The Indians' boycott of the 'all white' Statutory Commission headed by Sir John Simon in 1927, which the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms had established, was evidence that either the reforms had not gone far enough in reaching out to Indian aspirations, or had encouraged them beyond what the British Raj felt able to offer. Irwin, Baldwin and the Labour Party believed the former. Birkenhead, Churchill, Salisbury and the right wing of the Tory back-bench settled for the latter. Birkenhead's health and powers were failing and Salisbury, also safely ensconced in the House of Lords, never really commanded great populist powers even when healthy. Churchill was, therefore, the spokesman to emerge in the Commons to fight the diehard corner. But, significantly, it was not diehards with whom Churchill was most immediately linked when taking up the issue. Besides Churchill, Lloyd George, Austen Chamberlain and Sir Laming Worthington-Evans also raised concerns at the Irwin Declaration. Together with Birkenhead these men all had at least one factor in common - they were all ex-Coalitionists defeated by Baldwin and his friends at the 1922 Carlton Club putsch. The Indian controversy promised not merely to bond Tory diehards together

against the MacDonald-Baldwin 'progressive' axis on this issue, but to realign them behind the 'Old Gang' Coalitionists whom they had damned in 1922.

Ramsay MacDonald and the India Secretary, Wedgwood Benn, permitted Irwin to announce the principle of dominion status even after they knew that Simon's Statutory Commission on India would not endorse it. The Viceroy's suggestion was to link in his proposed statement a pledge for the goal of dominion status with the promise of a round table conference. This conference, with Indian leaders fully involved, would examine the shaping of a new constitution for the sub-continent. In effect this initiative would supersede the Simon Commission's work which was the revision of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. British policy now involved bringing the loyalist Indian Princes into play in order to counter-balance Congress support in British India. Since the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms did not concern the relationship of the Princes to the legislative structure of British India, the Simon Commission’s work must indeed be seen as irrelevant to this new direction in British policy. The Irwin-Wedgwood Benn axis was thus shrewdly perceptive of the need to ditch Simon’s work as quickly as possible. The way in which this was mishandled however, badly alienated Simon.85 Understandably, although only after some earlier more positive reflection,86 Simon and his colleagues on the Commission decided to oppose their years of conscientious work being cast aside by such an overtly political stroke.87 At the last moment before the Irwin declaration, MacDonald, at Irwin's instigation, agreed to extend the Simon Commission's remit to include the relationship of, and to, the Princely States,88 but it was not enough to win Simon’s support for the Declaration. Lord Salisbury wrote to Baldwin pleading desperately with him 'to convince [Irwin] that the Party will be shaken to its centre if we were to assent to a declaration anticipating the Simon Report

85 Simon to Snowden, 29 October 1929, copy, Baldwin Papers 103/138.
86 Wedgwood Benn’s secretary D.T. Monteath to Baldwin, 26 October 1929, Baldwin Papers 103/120.
87 Simon to Snowden, 29 October 1929, Baldwin Papers 103/138.
88 Moore, Endgames of Empire, p. 41.
evidently intended to prejudice the issue upon which the Party if not the Country as a whole is profoundly uneasy. We must resist it.\textsuperscript{89}

In order to avoid turning India into another Irish Question - polarising Westminster for a political generation - the Labour Government requested that Baldwin and the former Viceroy, Lord Reading (on behalf of the Liberals) be asked to endorse Irwin's proposals. Baldwin, under the apparent misapprehension that Irwin's statement would have the Simon Commission's approval, (and therefore Reading's as well) agreed to recommend the proposals. It was not until Baldwin discovered that Simon was opposed to the Irwin initiative that he belatedly tried to remove a Conservative commitment to its support and, indeed to prevent the declaration from being delivered, threatening even to publicly oppose the Government on the issue.\textsuperscript{90} As was often the case with Baldwin, he acted too little, too late. Irwin had argued against any delay anyway since he inaccurately believed that he had the unique opportunity to gain the Congress Party's support by his Declaration.\textsuperscript{91}

Since Baldwin had been relaxing on the continent when asked for his approval, he had been unable to seek council from his senior colleagues.\textsuperscript{92} Although his great qualification was that he approved it only in a personal capacity and only if it had the Simon Commission's support, it is a fair criticism to question whether he should have allowed himself to have been rushed into an over-hasty decision without conducting some deeper enquires of his own. Viscount Peel (Secretary of State for India, 1922-4) had previously warned Baldwin against accepting the goal of dominion status which he regarded as quite different to the 'self-government within the Empire' phraseology of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms.\textsuperscript{93} Lord Salisbury was furious that his Leader had given his assent even in a personal capacity

\textsuperscript{89} Salisbury to Baldwin, 23 October 1929, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.2., p. 108.
\textsuperscript{90} Baldwin to Snowden, 30 October 1929, Baldwin Papers 103/133; Simon to Snowden, 29 October 1929, Baldwin Papers 103/138.
\textsuperscript{91} Irwin's telegraph to Wedgwood Benn, 29 October 1929, Baldwin Papers 103/129.
\textsuperscript{92} papers on the \textit{Daily Mail} controversy, 1 November 1929, Baldwin Papers 103/161-3.
\textsuperscript{93} Peel to Baldwin, 14 October 1929, Baldwin Papers 103/118.
stating that it was 'cold comfort to me to be told that you - most honourably - were careful not to commit any of us. What a dislocation! Poor Conservative Party!'94

Churchill returned home to England from his trans-Atlantic voyage on the 5th November, a casualty of the Wall Street Crash. He had missed the fiery Shadow Cabinet meeting on the proposed Irwin Declaration in which an embattled Baldwin had rather surprisingly ‘said very little indeed’ leaving Sir Samuel Hoare, who was the only other supporter of the declaration, to do most of the defence of Irwin.95 Rothermere’s hostile Daily Mail claimed that the Shadow Cabinet were ‘aghast’ at Baldwin’s ‘extraordinary blunder’ and that ‘they required Mr Baldwin to write a letter to the Prime Minister withdrawing the approval and promise of support for Indian Home Rule, which, without any consultation of his colleagues, Mr Baldwin had given to Lord Irwin, the Viceroy of India, two months ago.’96 Although Baldwin denied ‘every implication of fact’ in the Daily Mail’s story97 even Irwin’s close associate, the Tory MP George Lane-Fox, thought that the ‘poisonous’ newspaper article contained ‘a certain element of truth ... and it is perhaps lucky that there will be no representative of the Daily Mail able to take part in the debate today, who might challenge his very sweeping denial in detail’.98

Churchill did not speak in the ensuing House of Commons debate. Birkenhead displayed his churchillian ability to over-state the case on important occasions and his ‘vulgarly cruel’ speech in the Lords annoyed both friends and foes to the cause.99 If Lord Linlithgow’s prediction that the event would do Baldwin ‘serious mortal hurt’100 was to come true then Churchill’s decision not to speak might be seen to have been a rare example of caution. But

95 Hoare to Irwin, 28 October and 13 November 1929, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.18/287,298.
96 Daily Mail, 1 November 1929.
97 Baldwin Papers 103/161.
98 Lane-Fox to Irwin, 7 November 1929, India Office Papers, MSS Eur.c.152.18/292.
99 India Office Papers MSS.Eur.c.15s.18/:-: Lane-Fox to Irwin, 7 November 1929, No.292; Davidson to Irwin, 9 November 1929, No.293; Simon to Irwin, 14 November 1929, No.304; Salisbury to Irwin, 14 November 1929, No.306.
100 Lane-Fox to Irwin, 13 November 1929, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.18/299.
this is not to say that his opposition to the Irwin scheme was not made manifest. Lane-Fox felt that had the Speaker not accepted the withdrawal of the motion before a division then there would have been 'half our party in each lobby' and noted ominously that Churchill and Worthington-Evans (as well as Austen Chamberlain) had shouted 'No' to it being withdrawn.101 A 'very depressed' Baldwin, subsequently reporting the debate to Lord Lytton, repeated this fact that none of his colleagues supported him and that half would have voted against him which 'would have meant a stormy party meeting and Baldwin's resignation'. The fact that 'as soon as Lloyd George got up Winston and Worthington-Evans on each side of him leant forward and punctuated every sentence with emphatic 'Hear hear's!' had not escaped the Party Leader's notice.102 Hoare was not slow to notice the hostility of 'the old Coalition element', observing that 'throughout the debate Winston was almost demented with fury and since the debate has scarcely spoken to anyone'.103

In a revealing letter to the Viceroy (which he unsuccessfully requested to be destroyed) the Conservative Party Chairman, J.C.C. Davidson a fanatical Baldwin loyalist whose view of people appeared to rest purely upon which side they had voted at the 1922 Carlton Club meeting, agreed that the opposition to the Irwin declaration was a coalitionist conspiracy backed also by the press barons, Beaverbrook and Rothermere.104 Beaverbrook's inclusion as a vehement India diehard is misplaced but certainly Rothermere's flag-ship paper was used as a spring-board to suggest that Irwin should be recalled and replaced by Churchill. The ex-Chancellor himself wrote an article warning against the encouragement of premature hopes amongst Indians created by the Declaration.105

101 J.C.C. Davidson to Irwin, 9 November and Lane-Fox to Irwin 13 November 1929, ibid., MSS.Eur.c.152.18/293 and 299.
102 Lytton to Irwin, 20 November 1929, India Office Papers., MSS.Eur.c.152.18/309.
103 Hoare to Irwin, 13 November 1929, India Office Papers., MSS.Eur.c.152.18/298.
104 Davidson to Irwin, 9 November 1929, India Office Papers., MSS.Eur.c.152.18/293.
105 The leader article, and Churchill's article 'The peril in India' in The Daily Mail, 16 November 1929; The Times Editor, Geoffrey Dawson, ridiculed both articles to Irwin in his letter of 21 November 1929, India Office Papers MSS.Eur.c.152.18/311.
Davidson’s ‘instincts’ led him to believe that ‘the centre of the intrigue’ was close to I.C.I. (its chairman was the pro-protection former Lloyd George Liberal, Lord Melchett, but, more importantly Birkenhead was a director) and that the journalists in the Lobby Press Gallery suspected that it was Birkenhead who had fed the Daily Mail with the story about Baldwin’s humiliation at the hands of his Shadow Cabinet over his role in agreeing to the declaration. Davidson disregarded the welfare of India as a possible motive for those who opposed the Baldwin-Benn-Irwin consensus:

For days it has been obvious that the arch-tactician, the ‘Goat’ [Lloyd George], was setting the trap which would have resulted, if we had walked into it, in complete disaster to the Party. He had wanted to put down a Motion of Censure on the Government, but Stanley had put his foot down and said that under no circumstances would he have a discussion on India founded on a Vote of Censure. The ‘Goat’ had made his speech without any reference to India but solely in order to get in a right and a left. With his right barrel he hoped to wing the socialist government, and with his left to kill SB and split the Tory Party ... If there had been a Division ... SB and probably two-thirds of the Party would have been brigagged with the Socialists in one lobby, and the ‘Goat’ and his old colleagues in the Coalition, and the Diehards and all SB’s personal enemies would have trooped into the other. And the fools never saw it, and even some of our leaders like Neville hadn’t twigged the situation.

It is important to indulge Davidson by quoting him at length because his viewpoint, as one of Baldwin’s closest confidantes, is crucial to our understanding of the growing suspicion being generated between Baldwin and Churchill. With Churchill looking on, it was principally Lloyd George himself who had been a chief instigator of the scenes in the Commons against the Irwin Declaration. After the 1931 election had confined Lloyd George’s electoral base to his own family, the prospect of Churchill leading a new Coalitionist Government with help from a Lloyd George power base diminished. Lloyd George’s subsequent decision to promote interventionist economics and disarmament made it impossible. That the two failed to combine in 1929 when they needed each other most, might, as Dr John Campbell asserts, be an instance of Lloyd George’s failure to come to terms

106 Davidson to Irwin, 9 November 1929, India Office Papers., MSS.Eur.c.152.18/293.  
107 ibid.  
108 India Office Papers MSS.Eur.c.152.18/:: Dawson to Irwin, 3 November 1929, No.290; Winterton to Irwin, 11 November 1929, No.295.
with the harsh realities of the British party system. However, Lloyd George’s decision to drop Indian diehardism in order to prop up the MacDonald Government together with the effects of the economic recession ensured that a majority of Tories were determined to place protectionism as the top political priority above India. In view of this, it is hard to see who amongst these Tories was seriously going to support a Churchill-Lloyd George coalition even if one had been agreed in principle. The situation was no different for the Liberals, most of whom had no wish to be part of a Protectionist-leaning coalition (at least in 1929) and who had been, in Attlee’s phrase, only temporarily re-united by a common distrust of their leader.

Whatever Churchill may have hoped to be the case, it seems questionable whether Lloyd George really saw the adoption of a diehard stand on India as the hammer to break Baldwin. As John Campbell has pointed out, Lloyd George had been briefed both by Reading and by Irwin on 8 October but despite Irwin’s observation that the Liberal Leader was ‘trying to make trouble and to attract our Diehards to his Imperial flag’ Lloyd George made no mention of teaming-up on the Indian issue when he liaised with Churchill (then in America) eighteen days later, despite suspecting that a potential crisis was about to emerge. Whilst Lloyd George would certainly have been happy to create maximum embarrassment to his opponents, his line taken in the Commons, in defending the role of his Liberal colleagues, Simon and Reading, was entirely consistent with the normal behaviour to be expected from the leader of the party to which they belonged. If Churchill’s motives for waving the Imperial banner aloft included building up a coalition of personal support, then in the longer term it would appeal to the Tory diehards and to the Tory ex-Coalitionists without Lloyd George who would have had difficulty delivering the 1930s Liberal Party united in favour of Imperialism. For the moment, Churchill could make no

110 Tom Clarke, My Lloyd George Diary, 1939, p. 81.
112 Irwin to Baldwin, 8 October 1929, Baldwin Papers 103/108; see also Churchill to Irwin, 1 January 1930, Chartwell Papers 2/572(A)/88.
113 Lloyd George to Churchill, 16 October 1929, Chartwell Papers 2/164/54-6.
more capital out of the situation until either the Liberals came round to an Imperialist standpoint or events in India should go so badly wrong as to justify his diehard position in this respect. This is why whilst his detractors alleged that, with Birkenhead, he was ‘obsessed with the idea of another coalition’¹¹⁴ he virtually absented himself from the Commons during what would otherwise have been a critical period, leading Lane-Fox to note that he was ‘taking no part in the House and I have not seen him more than about twice here. I will back SB to outstay him’.¹¹⁵ With 1930, economic issues came yet further to the fore, greatly hampering Churchill position within the Conservative Party and leaving him little option but to gradually slide away from his free trading position in order to retain some leverage once either Lloyd George, events in India, or a combination of the two, came to his rescue.

¹¹⁴ Lane-Fox to Irwin, 11 December 1929, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.18/328.
¹¹⁵ ibid.
Chapter Two
The loss of Churchill's credibility in economics

i). An over-view

Whatever stance he may have wished to adopt on developments abroad, it was on economics that Churchill, as ex-Chancellor, remained as the chief spokesman on the Opposition front bench. His role in this area can best be analysed by dividing his performance into two categories: firstly as a critic of Snowden's policies and secondly as a director of the Conservatives' own economic programme. As we shall see, it was in the latter sphere that he was to be undone.

At the Treasury, Churchill had disregarded rigid Cobdenism (in order, in part, to appease the views of the E.I.A. and its supporters) but had resisted 'safeguarding' of any major industry to the fury of many on the Right. Given the commitments made by Baldwin after the catastrophic Election of 1923 on the Protectionist platform, this hesitancy had its defence, but after the 1929 defeat, the Party was freed from its past in this respect. Churchill's protestation in the Debate on the Address that he was 'a Free Trader who favours Safeguarding'116 lay down the marker in the new Parliament for the stance that he would be adopting. If there had been an economic recovery, as was anticipated, starting from 1930 then this loose and ambiguous phrase might have necessitated him moving little further from that which he had adopted as Chancellor. Instead, the economic situation worsened, sharpening the call for a more extensive form of protection than normal free trade could tolerate. Furthermore, in this climate a sweeping and dynamic cure on offer to present to the electorate in contrast to Snowden's stolid defence of the spirit of the 1840s seemed more appropriate.

Protectionist policy came in several different levels of intensity. Amery thought that Churchill in 1929 had advanced little further from the free trade orthodoxy of Edwardian

116 Churchill's speech to the Commons, 3 July 1929, Hansard, 229 H.C. Deb 5s., col. 120
England. In conversation with him, Churchill had suggested that the implementation of a food tax would instigate his retirement from politics.\textsuperscript{117} Cajoled however by the move to the Right on this issue in the Conservative Party and by the deepening economic recession, Churchill came, during 1930, increasingly to demand not just limited and specific safeguarding (which was always open to the charge of pandering to specific interest groups against the general will of both the domestic and the industrial consumer) but rather a general tariff on virtually all foreign imports save basic foodstuffs. He continued to cling to this last caveat due to his belief that an ‘overcrowded’ industrial nation like Britain, without any prospect of agricultural self-sufficiency, would be unsustainable on a diet of dear food. As he had reminded his colleagues, he could not credit that the new mass electorate of consumers would vote for a Party which promised them taxation on their most basic necessity.\textsuperscript{118}

‘Empire Free Trade’, as this Imperial Preference under Lord Beaverbrook’s direction re-styled itself, was not wholly practical in the foreseeable climate. The Dominions were not anxious to have their fledgling industries destroyed by British competition. For most of the Tory protectionists though, the imperialist goal of greater unity between the Dominions and the mother country lifted the cause above an economic theory to reduce unemployment. This policy could best be advanced by pursuing protection against the foreigner and free trade (or as near to it as could be negotiated) with the Dominions. This necessitated what Churchill staked his position on preventing - a tax on foreign basic foodstuffs - so that Dominion produce could find a safe market in Britain in return for what would result in Britain’s manufacturing domination of Empire trade.

Baldwin believed in Imperial Preference in principle but was extremely cautious to pay the political price which Churchill assured him would be involved in implementing the

\textsuperscript{117} Amery diary, 5 August 1929, p.49.
\textsuperscript{118} Churchill to Baldwin, 29 July 1929, Chartwell Papers 2/572(A)/52; Churchill to Neville Chamberlain, 5 July 1929, Neville Chamberlain Papers 7/9/30; Churchill to Beaverbrook, 6 July 1929, Chartwell Papers 2/572(A)/108.
necessary food taxes, particularly since the proposals were supposedly most unpopular in northern England where the Conservatives needed to gain back lost territory. His slowness to adapt to the mood of the Party on this, almost cost him his leadership. Churchill may have had no love for Baldwin's views on India and Egypt but he desperately needed his Leader's restraining hand on the Party's fiscal policy. Without pressure, Baldwin might have continued to provide a suitably tranquil harbour to moor Churchill's views until the next election. Unfortunately for Churchill, Baldwin was not able to avoid the majority of Party opinion indefinitely.

Baldwin managed to slow down the pace of Neville Chamberlain's protectionist recommendations before agreeing unconditionally to his scheme in October 1930. From February until that date Chamberlain, Baldwin and Churchill had all publicly adopted the same stance: if a deal could be brokered which included staple food taxes, it would be implemented if it was endorsed by a national referendum. Though he made no definitive statement as to whether he would follow his Party leadership or not, Churchill's publicly stated views on the costs of a staple food tax left no reason to doubt that he would have difficulty in being within the vanguard of a vigorous 'yes' campaign come the referendum itself. This prospect clouded the likelihood of his return to the Treasury should Baldwin win the next election, ceding the momentum to Neville Chamberlain.

In Churchill on the Home Front, Dr Paul Addison states that it was not until 'October 1930 [that Churchill] abandoned the cause of Free Trade, the one principle to which he had clung tenaciously through all the twists and turns in his career.' In fact, Churchill's defence of this one principle in the preceding months had been very much less than tenacious. Whatever Amery may have claimed on his trans-atlantic voyage in August, Churchill in 1929 was not a strict free trader, hence his preservation of the McKenna, Silk and Safeguarding duties as Chancellor and his condemnation of Snowden's campaign to

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119 see above; Churchill claimed this was Baldwin's reason for reticence in a speech in Epping, 27 October 1930, Complete Speeches vol.v., p.4919.
120 Addison, Churchill on the Home Front p.288.
remove them. By February 1930 Churchill publicly supported the extension of safeguarding to all non-lame duck industries which were going through difficulties and by April he had put the case for a Tariff on foreign finished and semi-finished manufactures as a means of raising revenue. Significantly he began to argue this case for, in effect a General Tariff, on the extremely anti-free trade argument that British industry would benefit from trading in a protected internal market. According to Churchill the case for a General Tariff no longer rested on the fact that it would counter that great enemy of free trade, the un-level playing field of subsidised dumping, since this could only be met by outright prohibition.\(^{121}\) Rather, it was to be 'a stimulus to industry' and to 'yield to us a valuable revenue and a relief to other forms of taxation, and the proceeds of that revenue or a part of it could be devoted to the necessary aid of agriculture.'\(^{122}\) In order to avoid favouritism, the tariff should be sweeping rather than piecemeal.\(^{123}\) Churchill therefore did not cling tenaciously to free trade until the last moment. Churchill's best escape route to save face whilst accepting tariffs manifested itself as part and parcel of his condemnation of the Labour Government. The worsening dole queues allowed him to argue that whilst Germany, the United States and France were reducing their taxation in order to compete with Britain, Labour's social policies were further burdening the British taxpayer, already the most heavily directly taxed in the world. Not only was there a need for retrenchment, particularly against the alleged dole scroungers, but since direct taxation had reached its realistic limit, indirect taxation, in the shape of a general tariff 'on foreign manufactured articles, either of a finished or semi-finished character would have to be introduced for revenue raising purposes. Not only would this relieve the direct taxation burden, but by assisting the 'depressed industries' against competition they would be more profitable (in theory) and could therefore once again yield more in direct taxation.\(^{124}\) This argument

\(^{121}\) Churchill's speech in Epping, 27 October 1930, Complete Speeches vol.v., p. 4919; Budget debate, 15 April 1930, 237 H.C. Deb 5s. cols.2764-5 and 2771; see also Churchill to Snowden, 24 January 1930, Chartwell Papers 2/171/50; Churchill's speech in the Commons, Finance Bill Second Reading Debate, 20 May 1930, 239 H.C. Deb 5s, cols.345-6.
bore little resemblance to those of the free trade ideologue of old. He was now arguing for a Gladstonian paradise of a balanced budget and low Income Tax to be brought about by protection.

He had accepted every creed of the protectionist manifesto except the instrument of imperial unity which meant most to the Imperialists, the food tax. October 1930 was the date of his bowing to the inevitability of these taxes, via that a set wheat quota ‘of British wheat shall be used in the British loaf every year’¹²⁵ but he had abandoned free trade in any meaningful sense before then and had been supporting guaranteed prices for British farmers since March 1930.¹²⁶ Baldwin moved so cautiously towards staple food taxes that he was almost deposed by his own Party. Churchill walked the same road, but, by being merely a step behind, lost all claim to direct economic policy in the run-up to the next election.

ii). Lord Beaverbrook’s Challenge

The protectionist challenge to Baldwin and Churchill’s more cautious approach came from two sources: one group inside, and the other outside the Conservative Party. Inside the Party there was the voices of the E.T.A. and Amery’s ‘Empire Economic Union’ (E.E.U.) research body, launched in November with the help of the ICI Chairman, Lord Melchett. For Baldwin, the challenge from the press barons was more publicly damaging.

¹²⁵ Churchill’s speech in Harlow, 7 November 1930, ibid., p. 4929; The beauty of quotas was that they allowed farmers to buck the market, passing on the extra expense to the consumer, without the latter feeling as if his food had been directly taxed, as he would with a direct import tariff. Churchill’s endorsement of agricultural protectionism embraced his championing of the British redcurrant and he looked forward to the day when as a result of Government assistance, one day ‘every cottage in the country districts [has] its own pig.’: ibid., pp. 4928-9.
¹²⁶ Churchill’s speech in Harlow, 26 March 1930, ibid., p. 4732.
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\[126\] Churchill’s speech in Harlow, 26 March 1930, ibid., p. 4732.
Beaverbrook had stated his intention to campaign vigorously on the issue of 'Empire Free Trade' in his *Daily Express* on 30 June 1929 believing that since the Conservative Party regarded him, with Rothermere, as 'untouchables' he was better served by campaigning from outside the Party. Neville Chamberlain argued that if a commitment was made to adopt the 'free hand' (whereby a future Conservative Government could, subject to parliamentary approval, negotiate any appropriate deal with the Dominions and Colonies, declaring void previous restrictive pledges that had been made) then Beaverbrook's opposition could be bought-off without the Party having to anchor itself to the unrealisable utopia of Empire Free Trade. The 'free hand' was the only realistic way to achieve food taxes by inter-dominion consent. Beaverbrook's failure to accept this reality and work with Neville Chamberlain rather than against him showed a lack of judgement driven by his personal animosity towards Baldwin - the main motivation of his colleague in the campaign, the *Daily Mail's* owner, Lord Rothermere.

Neville Chamberlain (and not ex-Chancellor Churchill) met Beaverbrook on 4 November and argued the case for the 'free hand' and that the Conservative Party would not rule out a future commitment to food taxes. Chamberlain's initiative was followed-up by a further attempt to prevent Beaverbrook's opposition, with Baldwin's emollient words to the Party Conference in the Albert Hall on 21 November which called for an Imperial policy to create 'one eternal and indestructible unit for production, for consumption, for distribution'. Beaverbrook was enthusiastic about Baldwin's Albert Hall rhetoric but his growing suspicion that rhetoric was its sole depth, and with encouragement from the vehemently anti-Baldwin Rothermere, he decided to launch his 'Empire Crusade' campaign in the *Express* on 10 December. It was not, however, until 15 January that Beaverbrook brokered a deal with Rothermere and mid-February 1930 that the *Express* moved into out-right opposition to Baldwin following his refusal to let Beaverbrook tamper with the selection of Empire Free Trade supporting Conservative candidates. Deciding that a rival political

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party was the best way to bludgeon the Conservatives into support for Empire Free Trade, the 'United Empire Party' was formed on 18 February with the full backing of Rothermere's papers.

Beaverbrook's opinion of Churchill appeared to shift back and forth. In October 1929, he appeared to wish that Churchill would become leader of the Conservative Party

whilst the following month he was telling Neville Chamberlain that if Churchill challenged for the leadership he (Beaverbrook) 'might perhaps be supporting Baldwin against Winston & [Birkenhead]' No doubt he was tailoring his comments to the requirements of his correspondents. This said, he probably was hopeful that, boxed into a corner, Churchill might opt to accept food taxes rather than commit political suicide. In January he tried to persuade Churchill, though without a glimmer of success. Churchill was prepared to concede the Balfourian principle of 'tariffs for negotiation' but his refusal to countenance a food tax made an accommodation impossible. If Harold Nicolson's recollections of his meeting with Beaverbrook are accurate then Churchill seems to have pleaded almost pitifully with the Canadian newspaper magnate that his campaign was 'destroying my party' and that free trade was the one remaining conviction which he had not abandoned. There was thus no possibility, despite his despairing view of Baldwin, that he would be aided by the Beaverbrook press or vice versa.

Beaverbrook alleged to Amery in February 1930 that 'last summer Winston had seriously suggested to him the formation of a committee of Public Safety to consist of Winston, [Birkenhead], Austen, Beaverbrook and Rothermere, and had asked him [Beaverbrook] to approach Rothermere on the subject'. No evidence can be found to support this claim and

130 Neville Chamberlain diary, 5 November 1929, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/22.
131 Neville Chamberlain diary, 12 November 1929, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/22.
134 ibid.
135 Amery diary, 2 February 1930, p. 61.
quite probably it was only concocted by Beaverbrook in the hope that Amery would pass it on to Baldwin who might therefore feel he could relinquish any bonds of protective amity he had towards Churchill. Alternatively, in the face of an alleged socialist menace at the polls, Churchill may indeed have deliberately flattered Beaverbrook and Rothermere in the hope of gaining the press lords' support. The revival of the ‘Old Guard’ Coalitionists in alliance with Bonar Law’s champion was certainly an odd prospect.

Neville Chamberlain thought that:

> Winston of course is dead against food taxes or more broadly against anything which would make more difficult a deal with Lloyd George. He has absolutely no instinct in these matters & cannot see that apart from any other difficulties it is impossible to deal with Ll.G. because he couldn’t deliver the goods, i.e. he could not take his party into the lobby with us against the Government.\(^\text{136}\)

Churchill still hoped that the Coal Mines Bill, as Lloyd George had suggested to him,\(^\text{137}\) might prove to be the genesis of Liberal-Conservative common action to oust MacDonald. With this perhaps in mind, when he wound-up for the Opposition in the Commons debate, Churchill phrased his objections to the bill in the same sort of language that he used against the Liberal anathema of food taxes, claiming that the Bill was:

> a deliberate and avowed plan of levying a new, indirect tax upon the general public for the benefit of private and sectional interests, and of levying this tax through the agency of a basic necessity of popular consumption ... [as well as Conservatives and Protectionists for different reasons] Liberals have shown themselves utterly scandalised, as was natural, by the creation of a new statutory vested interest and a monopoly value. Free Traders are shocked at a reversion to the most obsolete forms of 18th century Protection.\(^\text{138}\)

In the long run however Chamberlain was right and Churchill could place no trust in Lloyd George’s help. The latter’s subsequent decision to stick with the Government stung Churchill into commenting that the ‘inconsiderate’ Liberal Leader was ‘perfectly entitled,
for reasons of his own, to come to some accommodation with the Government, but in embracing a new ally, there is no need to spurn those with whom he has previously walked into the Lobby' and later the same day that 'the intrigues that the Prime Minister has been carrying on with [Lloyd George] have shocked me'.

Henceforth, Churchill’s oratorical performances returned to the sort of attacks on Lloyd George’s economic programme that he had used against him at the General Election. As 1930 progressed, so in his public utterances Liberal policy equalled socialism linking ‘the wild schemes of Mr Lloyd George and the extreme and violent forces represented by Mr Maxton and Sir Oswald Mosley’. Since his views on food taxes and Imperial policy had already distanced him from most of the Conservative front bench, in maintaining this stand for financial orthodoxy, Churchill also ruled himself out as an alternative leader amongst the young Tory progressives of the YMCA. Yet, one of their major figures - albeit temporarily out of Westminster - Harold Macmillan, now led a group of fifteen candidates advocating Beaverbrook’s position anyway. Churchill’s rejection of interventionism also ensured his exclusion from the dupes of embryonic fascism in Mosley’s ‘Young Party’. Having failed to reach accord with Lloyd George, alliance with the Tory right wing was the one other constituency that he could now look to for support but only if he moved more quickly in the direction of accepting tariffs.

With unemployment rising from over one million in 1929 to two and a half million by the end of 1930, what support Churchill could find in the Party for maintaining the fiscal status quo was quickly drifting away. Furthermore, the Party’s senior figures were arguably

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139 debate on the Coal Mines Bill, 4 February 1930, 234 H.C. Deb 5s. col.1738 and the debate on the Unemployment Insurance (No.2) Bill, 4 February 1930, ibid., col.1356.
140 Churchill’s speech to a Unionist Association meeting in Dumbartonshire, 6 September 1930, Complete Speeches vol.v., p. 4915; Churchill again implicated Lloyd George with Mosley in his speech to the Supply Committee, 28 May 1930, 239 H.C. Deb. 5s., cols.1424-5.
141 Amery diary, 23 June 1930, p. 73.
142 Strachey, the editor of The Spectator had died in 1927 and Salvidge, the Tories’ manager in Liverpool, the following year. Meanwhile the opinions of the Cecils - Lords’ Robert, Hugh and Salisbury - in these matters were considered antiquated. Lord Derby began to switch sides and by October 1930 his views were closely related to those of
more cautious than the Party at large. Few of the MPs, peers and candidates who had participated in Beaverbrook's canvassing of their opinions towards 'Empire Free Trade' were totally condemnatory. Whilst the selling of the food tax was a major worry, the principles of Empire Free Trade were rejected, according to Beaverbrook's reckoning, by under twenty MPs. There was no obvious constituency of support for Churchill on the central plank of economic policy from any wing of the Party.

At a meeting of Tory frontbenchers on 30 January 1930 only Amery adopted Beaverbrook's Empire Crusade line in favour of food taxes. Baldwin advocated the extension of safeguarding to all non-lame duck imperilled industries and an 'Empire Preference' (but one emasculated by the absence of food taxes). This emphasis on industrial rather than agricultural protection became the main focus of his 'United Empire' speech at the London Coliseum on 5 February which Churchill endorsed. For Churchill, a judicious acceptance of the principle of industrial safeguarding was worthwhile if it gave him a leverage to argue for the limitation of its scope. Amery noted that:

[Churchill's] main advice to Baldwin was definitely to defy the Press magnates. Whether this advice was given from mere combativeness, or in the hope that S.B. would damage himself, I do not know ... I ... reiterated the immense importance even in the eyes of our own members and candidates, of not quarrelling with the press. Bobby Monsell, Davidson and Austen all spoke in the opposite sense to Winston who really is now feeling himself very much alone ... I talked with some of [my colleagues] later in the evening and they all agreed about the necessity of trying to keep the peace with Beaverbrook ... there is one point on which Winston is helpful. He is quite prepared to confine the food tax pledge to basic or staple foods.

The Party Chairman, J.C.C. Davidson, found his officials equally opposed to Churchill's combative advice to Baldwin to confront Beaverbrook and Rothermere. Churchill's suggestion that the Tories should fight a mini-general election against the press lords in four test case constituencies: two in the North, one agricultural and one in or near London 'at

143 Herzog PhD, pp. 356-9.
144 Tom Jones to his wife, 9 February 1930, Tom Jones diary, p. 244.
145 Amery diary, 30 January 1930, p. 60.
a time when the enemy’s attack is at its zenith, would’, Davidson feared, ‘be disastrous to
the Party and might break it up altogether.’

It is possible to construe from this that Churchill was happier to take risks when, if events
took a disastrous turn, the ultimate loser would be the Conservative Party Leader whose
post he coveted. This is conceivable, but a string of Party defeats to the Empire Crusade
might well have produced in a protectionist-leaning Conservative cabal the necessity to
find a new leader who was more, not less, sympathetic to working towards Empire Free
Trade. In such a situation and with Amery never being a serious contender for the
leadership except in a few circles, Lord Hailsham or Neville Chamberlain, away in
East Africa until 8 March 1930, would have been more obvious choices with the former
Coalitionist Chancellor, Sir Robert Horne, re-emerging as an alternative.

In fact Beaverbrook, having witnessed the enrolment of over 170,000 members to the Empire
Crusade in its first fortnight, was contemplating running fifty candidates at the next
election including one against Churchill in his Epping constituency. This, Amery
charitably noted, was despite the fact that the ‘supposed free trader ... has come along
quite a lot latterly’. Churchill certainly feared for his position and stepped-up the
number of his engagements in his constituency in order to ‘save’ it from the ‘Rothermere-
Beaverbrook party’.

Yet confrontation was to be postponed, once, via Horne and Philip Cunliffe-Lister,
Beaverbrook had let it be known to Baldwin that he would make his peace if, on the
Conservatives being returned at the next election, they held a referendum on food taxes.

146 Davidson to William Tyrrell, 9 March 1930, in Robert Rhodes James (Ed.), Memoirs of a
Conservative: J. C. C. Davidson’s Memoirs and Papers, 1969, p. 325; Davidson to Baldwin, 26
147 Amery diary, 20 June 1930, p. 73.
148 Amery diary, 20 June, 20 and 22 July 1930 p. 78.
141.
150 Churchill to Frank Morrish, the Chief Organising Agent at Conservative Central
Office, 3 March 1930, Chartwell Papers 2/175/19; Amery diary, 27 February 1930, p. 65.
Salisbury and Londonderry were opposed to issuing a referendum pledge and Amery, prophetically, was sceptical on the grounds that a referendum would probably be an excuse for Baldwin to fudge the issue and do nothing. However, Beaverbrook had already rejected the offer of the second election on food taxes, making a referendum the most obvious constitutional device which Baldwin could offer. Both Churchill and Beaverbrook avidly accepted this initiative which Baldwin announced at a speech in the Hotel Cecil on 4 March 1930. Churchill paid Beaverbrook a visit whilst the press lord was still reading Baldwin’s statement and told him that he was delighted that the referendum pledge buried the hatchet and that they could now again work together in a common cause. At Wanstead, Churchill publicly congratulated Beaverbrook for accepting the referendum and thus resuming ‘his position among the leaders of the Conservative Party’ and hoped that Rothermere, ‘on many points of [whose programme] I find myself in hearty agreement’ would do likewise. If Churchill really thought the door was being closed on the protectionist challenge, then he was greatly out of touch with reality.

Like Baldwin, Churchill saw in the referendum a device to bury the necessity for the Party to adopt a firm and united line in favour of food taxes, ending the divisive ‘deadlock which has long obstructed the discussion’ once and for all. On 7 March, Beaverbrook disassociated himself from the United Empire Party and began sending the finances raised back to their donors. Rothermere, however, refused to accept the pledge - envisaging the scope of the United Empire Party to stretch beyond the economic sphere to include Indian diehardism and a campaign against diplomatic relations with Russia. He had telegraphed Beaverbrook on 4 February telling him that ‘India is Baldwin’s Achilles Heel pertinaciously press him on this and you are the inevitable leader.’ Furthermore, Rothermere, was allegedly in league with Beaverbrook’s latest ‘bitter enemy’, Lloyd

151 Amery diary, 3 March 1930, p. 65.  
152 Taylor, Beaverbrook, p. 284.  
153 Churchill’s speech at Wanstead, 1 March 1930, Complete Speeches, vol.v., p. 4729.  
154 ibid.  
155 Rothermere to Beaverbrook, telegrams, 15 and 24 January 1930, Beaverbrook Papers C/284.  
156 Rothermere to Beaverbrook, 4 February 1930, Beaverbrook Papers C/284.
George. A powerful press lord, still at that stage opposed to food taxes and Indian defeatism and supportive of Lloyd George was an obvious potential patron for Churchill who used Rothermere's *Daily Mail* as a soap box to speak out against British weakness in India and it has been alleged (with hardly any evidence) that Rothermere was pinning his hopes on Churchill seizing the leadership. Yet, if there was an opportunity for alliance, Churchill spurned it. When Rothermere's *Sunday Dispatch* ludicrously described the United Empire Party's failure to force a General Election as 'a tribute to the new party' Churchill compared such chop logic with a medical statement: 'Although the patient died, the operation was a success!' He was not prepared to clutch at any straw to ditch Baldwin, and certainly not when he needed his caution on economic policy. Beaverbrook lamented to Rothermere that 'Winston is denouncing us violently, saying that he is being bullied and dragooned. He is stirring up considerable opposition in the House.'

Beaverbrook decided to scrap the accord with Baldwin, reinstigating the return of the Empire Crusade against his middle-way leadership. The greatest scalp claimed by this crisis was Baldwin's long-standing henchman, J.C.C. Davidson, whose resignation from the Party Chairmanship Baldwin was forced to receive on 29 May. At a time when a local constituency association even refused to hold a meeting at Crystal Palace which Baldwin was due to address in view of the fact that Beaverbrook would not be chairing it, the former First Lord of the Admiralty, Bridgeman, rejected Baldwin's offer of the Party

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157 'very secret' note made by Davidson of meetings with Beaverbrook, 12 and 14 March 1930, Davidson memoirs pp. 326-7.
158 *Daily Mail*, 16 November 1929.
159 Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, p. 271; On the contrary, Rothermere's *Sunday Dispatch* argued on 5 January 1930 that it was Lord Beaverbrook who had the greatest likelihood of becoming the next Prime Minister. According later to a 'stupefied' Amery, Beaverbrook thought Rothermere's judgement in selecting Baldwin's successor to be splendid, modestly agreeing that 'unfit as he was for the job, he might be compelled to be Prime Minister!': Amery diary, 19 June 1930; How seriously Beaverbrook really rated his own chances of becoming Tory Leader is debatable. In September 1930, he privately put himself at Amery's disposal in the unlikely event that the latter should supplant Baldwin as leader: Amery diary, 28 September 1930, p. 79.
160 Churchill's letter in *The Times*, 4 April 1930.
161 Beaverbrook to Rothermere, 22 March 1930, Beaverbrook Papers C/284.
Chairmanship. After hesitation,\textsuperscript{162} Neville Chamberlain thus took up the Chairmanship instead. One of his first tasks was to schedule a meeting of MPs to decide the fate of the referendum pledge in a meeting at the Caxton Hall on 24 June. Without the pledge, Churchill's position on the Opposition Front Bench looked precarious.

On the morning of the Caxton Hall meeting, the \textit{Express} had brought news of Rothermere's miraculous conversion to food taxes. The Party Leader spoke up against subservience to the press barons ably highlighting the full arrogance of Rothermere. However, both the recollections of (admittedly un-impartial MPs) Amery and Brigadier-General Sir Henry Page Croft suggest that his defence of the referendum was coolly received and that he had by no means convinced his jury.\textsuperscript{163} It took an afternoon session for protectionists like Home (wishing to appear moderate whilst confident that the referendum pledge would soon be swept away by events anyway) to appeal for unity to over-power the arguments of the E.I.A. spokesmen, Colonel John Gretton and Page Croft. Despite this, the division was a surprisingly close vote of around 150 to 80. A defeat on this issue would most probably have encouraged Baldwin's resignation and swept aside Churchill's position on the Conservative front bench. With a fragmenting Liberal Party disillusioned by the Government's failure to proceed with the Alternative Vote, a General Election in the foreseeable future could not have been ruled out. It was therefore a measure of the Tories' desperation with Baldwin (and therefore with Churchill too) that they were prepared to risk his public assassination at such a sensitive point.

Cunliffe-Lister and Neville Chamberlain (who was already contradicting Baldwin in public by arguing for the 'free hand' to discuss wheat quotas and an emergency 10\% tariff on foreign imports)\textsuperscript{164} encouraged Baldwin to propose a motion in the Commons censuring the Government's failure to discuss the issue of duties on food. This placed Churchill in an

\textsuperscript{162} Chamberlain had wanted Geoffrey Ellis to take the post: Neville Chamberlain diary, 22 June 1930, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/22; Davidson's draft memoirs of 30 October 1963, Davidson memoirs, p. 432.
\textsuperscript{163} Amery diary, 24 June 1930, p. 74; Lord Croft, \textit{My Life of Strife}, 1945, p. 186.
\textsuperscript{164} Amery diary, 7 and 8 August 1930, p. 79.
invidious position from which he tried to extract himself with the unconvincing compromise that he would vote for it, but not put his name to it. Meanwhile, a memorandum sent by the Conservative Party’s Chief Agent, Sir Robert Topping to Neville Chamberlain on his return from a continental holiday argued that the referendum pledge had so undermined Baldwin’s position as to make his survival as Leader an open question. However, it would have been politically humiliating to have asked for his resignation whilst the United Empire Party was running a candidate against an official Conservative at the South Paddington by-election. This would have posed the question as to who governed the Conservative Party: its leader or the press barons?

Nationally and internationally the success of free trade was under pressure. Whilst any serious clamour for food taxes from a broad section of the electorate had not yet manifested itself finance, industry, the unions and the press were all arguing for greater protectionism. The MacDonald Government’s short-lived ‘Tariff Truce’, initiated in April, demonstrated rather than overcame, Britain’s isolation. Sir Oswald Mosley meanwhile, having resigned from the Government, was courting Macmillan and the so-called YMCA of young ‘progressive’ Tory hopefuls, with his proposal to avoid food taxes whilst establishing import boards. Beaverbrook briefly flirted with the idea of teaming-up with the dynamic Honourable Member for Smethwick but thought better of it. For

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165 ibid., 7 July 1930, p. 75.
166 Outside the Home Counties, by-election results did not necessarily suggest that the nation-wide electorate needed a more positive policy in favour of food taxes. Baldwin’s middle-way approach coincided with impressive Conservative victories between February and June in constituencies in Sheffield, Nottingham and Glasgow. To Churchill’s delight, Shipley was decisively won for the Conservatives in November by a candidate who would not even go so far as to support the ‘free hand’, which by then, even Baldwin had adopted. Herzog PhD, p. 242; Churchill’s speech in Harlow, 7 November 1930, Complete Speeches, vol.v., p. 4928.
167 During the summer, many of The City’s leading banks, the Empire Congress of the Chambers of Commerce, the Federation of British Industry and the General Council of the TUC had all called for the raising of tariffs against non-Empire goods. Of the 72% of The Federation of British Industry’s membership that expressed a preference in its September poll, under 5% supported the maintenance of free trade. On top of the Rothermere and Beaverbrook press, The Daily Telegraph, Morning Post and even Dawson’s Times all abandoned opposition to the principle of a food tax.
Churchill, Lloyd George was still the only non-Tory MP with whom he was prepared to do deals.
Chapter Three
Churchill’s drift to the Right

j). The Navy and the sub-Parliament

The effects of aerial bombardment, highlighted by the Committee of Imperial Defence (C.I.D) sub-committee in 1922, together with air and submarine technologies’ undermining of the ‘blue water’ maritime defence of the British Isles, had choked the Royal Navy of funds. At the Treasury, Churchill had cut its expenditure by over £3 million,169 and the MacDonald Government now hoped to save £13 million by proposing that the capital ships (battleships and battlecruisers) parity between Britain and the United States agreed to at Washington in 1922 should spread to cruisers, destroyers and similar surface vessels. At the resulting London Naval Conference, Britain agreed to America’s demands and reduced her maximum cruiser strength limit from seventy to fifty. Japan whose navy was, with American encouragement in 1921, no longer allied to the British, set her ratio compared to her Anglo-Saxon co-signatories at 9:15:15.

Critics at the time could observe that the Conference’s treaty was not ratified by France and Italy and that it failed to find agreement on submarine policy.170 Churchill wrote to Baldwin arguing that the restrictions that were agreed should be opposed and that no limitations should be set. Since the United States was not a likely enemy of Britain, there should be established a fresh naval standard which ignored the United States but was equal to the next two or even three strongest naval powers.171 Churchill pointed out that an over-stretched Royal Navy, whilst on paper reduced to the same size as the more concentrated U.S. navy, was in fact for battle purposes, placed in an inferior position since it

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169 Circular letter to Conservative MPs from Lord Stonehaven, Chairman of the Party, 30 May 1931, Baldwin Papers 129/175.
171 Churchill’s speech to the Commons, 15 May 1930, Hansard 238 H.C. Deb 5s., col.1900; Churchill to Baldwin, 17 May 1930, Baldwin Papers 117/53-4.
also had to perform the burdens of safeguarding its global Imperial and trading commitments. Further, he observed that the Treaty was not one of general disarmament: it excluded France and Italy; increased Japan’s navy to within 30% of the Royal Navy (giving it effective superiority in the Pacific); and gave the United States ‘the greatest naval expansion that has been seen. The only Power to be disarmed is the Power which has already disarmed the most; the only navy to be cut-down is the Navy of the country that cannot live without sea-borne food.’ However, since Churchill himself as Chancellor had argued that Britain’s cruiser requirement was less than seventy, he came the worse off in scrapping on the point of the cruiser capacity reduction to fifty in the Commons the following month.

Churchill saw the Naval Treaty as another example of Britain’s indolent attraction to the ‘line of least resistance ... [as] the passive matrix on which others imprint their claims.’ On this issue of defence, Churchill allowed himself to ally with the Tory protectionist diehards and against his former colleague, Lloyd George. In March, the Liberal Leader had used the need to defend the survival of the Naval Conference as a pretext to switch the Liberal strategy from opposition to the Government on the Coal Bill to one of abstention. Such was the difficulty of striking a deal with the Liberals. On 16 May the Tory rebels, almost all on the right wing of the Party, put down a motion, signed by 140 of them, condemning the Naval Treaty. Both the protectionist zealots, Amery and Gretton, supported Churchill’s introductory cannonade in the Commons debate to condemn the Treaty. Churchill was discovering a previously unlikely constituency of support.

The result was the debate on 2 June proposing the appointment of a select committee to examine the London Naval Treaty. Churchill told the Commons that he could not

172 Commons debate, 15 May 1930, Hansard 238 H. C. Deb 5s., cols 2110-1.
173 Commons debate, 2 June 1930, ibid., 239 H. C. Deb. 5s., cols. 1913-4.
174 Churchill’s speech to the Commons, 15 May 1930, 238 H.C. Deb 5s, col. 2110.
175 Leaving Baldwin in the lurch to defend his action, Churchill particularly annoyed Lloyd George by quoting in the Commons from a 1921 Cabinet telegram sent with Lloyd George’s approval without asking his permission to use it. 15 May, 1930 238 H.C. Deb. 5s., cols. 2099-2132, 2174-2179, 2205-12.
understand how the Government could ‘invite Members of other parties to consider a question like the Channel tunnel’ but would not countenance a select committee on the surrender of Britain’s naval superiority which was ‘vital for the welfare of this country and the Empire.’ With the Liberals siding with the Government, there was never any real doubt who would win in the division lobby. Baldwin’s speech proposing the motion was essentially inoffensive and it was clear that he was not spoiling for a fight. Perhaps his most interesting observation was his fear that as soon as Britain was not sufficiently strong to act independently she would run a risk of being drawn into the orbit of some other country, as she had with France before 1914. Not only was there an unspoken, but implied, regret that Britain had got caught up in France’s problems (and thus should avoid so doing in the future) this statement demonstrated how little Baldwin thought possible the viability of collective security through the League of Nations.

Labour’s First Lord of the Admiralty, A.V. Alexander, disagreed with the crux of Churchill’s condemnation of the Naval Treaty - that it was an instrument of unilateral rather than multilateral disarmament - and raised the old bogey of Churchill the warmonger who had in his heart ‘no real desire for peace’. Worse, Alexander luridly quoted from a biographical piece he had read about Churchill before the War which claimed that ‘he will write his name big upon our future. Let us take care that he does not write it in blood.’ The knife was twisted one more turn by stating his isolation from the Conservative leadership: when Churchill ‘led an attack upon the treaty, he divided his own party. [Mr Baldwin] who opened the debate to-day knows that that is the position’. Churchill’s view did not even have the support of the Daily Telegraph, never mind The Times. Although it helped to associate him with the Imperialist diehards, defending the Navy was a non-starter as an alternative programme for Churchill

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176 Churchill’s speech to the Commons, 2 June 1930, ibid., col. 1909.  
177 Baldwin’s speech to the Commons, 2 June 1930, ibid., col. 1799.  
178 Alexander’s speech to the Commons, 2 June 1930, ibid., col. 1910.  
179 ibid., col. 1922.
to the economic debate, particularly amongst those very diehards, until he also fully embraced the food tax credo.

In June Churchill delivered the Romanes Lecture at Oxford University where he resurrected the idea of a sub-Parliament of specialists to relieve Westminster of the detailed debate over economic policy. This was merely the floating of an idea which he himself did not believe would be treated with anything other than 'universal derision' and was neither intended to introduce corporatism into the British State (as Robert Skidelsky and others have suggested) nor to sideline embarrassing issues for himself like the food tax out of the political arena where he sought support. Churchill made clear that the sub-parliament's intention was to make parliamentary democracy (which was still 'the best in the world' and 'precious beyond compare.') more sustainable so that its 'walls shall not be undermined by slow decay or overthrown by violent battering-rams'.

At Oxford he made it clear that the sub-parliament would be 'devoid of legal force' and was intended to give an institutionalised voice to personnel other than politicians in order that their contribution to the economic debate could be more effectively made. He suggested that around a half of its members would be MPs (politically proportionate to the make-up of the Commons) and peers. Only those bills which Parliament opted to send to the sub-parliament, having already received a second reading, would be under consideration and that any amendments which the sub-parliament recommended would then have to receive Westminster's approval in order to become law. It was therefore little more an attack on parliamentary democracy than MacDonald's appointment in

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181 Robert Skidelsky, Oswald Mosley, 1975, p. 228. Clive Ponting goes even further, suggesting that the Romanes Lecture proposals were 'a semi-corporatist, anti-democratic alternative that would have appealed to any authoritarian state in the Mussolini mould.' Clive Ponting, Churchill, 1994, p. 351.
182 Churchill's speech to the electricians, Complete Speeches vol.v., p. 4931; Romanes Lecture, Oxford, ibid., p. 4853.
183 Churchill's Rectorial Address, Edinburgh University, 5 March 1931, ibid. p. 4988.
184 Churchill's speech to the electricians, Complete Speeches, vol.v., p. 4855.
185 Churchill's memorandum, 5 June 1931, Chartwell Papers 2/177/45-6; see also his speech to the Commons, 2 June 1931, Hansard 253 H.C. Deb 5s., col.109.
January 1930 of the Economic Advisory Council.\textsuperscript{186} Churchill’s scheme was neither corporatist, quasi-fascist nor would it get him off the hook with his parliamentary colleagues over protectionism.

ii). India and Lloyd George

In an inflammatory speech in front of Lord Carson at Thanet on 20 August, Churchill inferred that the Indian Viceroy, Lord Irwin, was ruling weakly and lambasted the MacDonald Government for keeping Simon off the British delegation to the forthcoming Round Table Conference at the ‘behest of a handful of disloyal Indian politicians’ led by the ‘malevolent fanatic’ Gandhi.\textsuperscript{187} In-between his friendly invite to his Leader to lunch with him at Chartwell so that he could see his ex-Chancellor’s latest wall, Churchill warned Baldwin:

I do earnestly hope you will not allow your friendship for Irwin, to affect your judgement or the action of your Party upon, what since the War, is probably the greatest question Englishmen have had to settle. ... I must confess myself to care more about this business than anything else in public life.\textsuperscript{188}

India had certainly begun to fire Churchill’s imagination. To Beaverbrook he summed up his sentiment:

When I think of the way in which we poured out blood and money to take Contalmaison or to hold Ypres, I cannot understand why it is we should now throw away our conquests and our inheritance with both hands, through sheer helplessness and pusillanimity. In this disastrous year we have written ourselves down as a second Naval Power, squandered our authority in Egypt, and brought India to a position when the miserable public take it as an open question whether we should clear out of the country altogether ... My only interest in politics is to see this position retrieved.\textsuperscript{189}

\textsuperscript{186}Addison, Churchill and the Home Front, p. 298.
\textsuperscript{187}Churchill’s speech to a Conservative meeting at Minster, Thanet, 20 August 1930, Complete Speeches vol.v., p. 4913.
\textsuperscript{188}Churchill to Baldwin, 24 September 1930, Chartwell Papers 2/572(A)/84.
\textsuperscript{189}Churchill to Beaverbrook, 23 September 1930, Chartwell Papers 2/572(A)/79-80.
It was rumoured in March that the young Tory MP and a close confidante of Churchill, Brendan Bracken, was expressing a wish that Lloyd George might re-emerge at the head of a new centre-right coalition. This followed other rumours that Lloyd George felt that he had outlived the Liberal Party’s usefulness and might be interested in a political realignment with help from Lord Rothermere. There was a tendency amongst Central Office’s flying circus of wire-pullers to magically translate hear-say about Lloyd George’s intentions into hard fact and the suggestion that the ultra-protectionist Lord Beaverbrook was also supposed to be implicated in the conspiracy lends credence to the possibility that the whole tale was fanciful. Churchill had, however, written to Beaverbrook suggesting that the two of them should fight together on India for which ‘we must gather the Liberals to us.’ This is further evidence suggesting that Churchill saw the Indian campaign as the bridge not merely to the Right but back to his old Coalitionist colleague in the Liberal Party. Churchill claimed to Beaverbrook that advocacy of Indian diehardism would ‘not at all weaken’ the press baron’s crusade for food taxes because that cause would be carried along with ‘national revival’ over India. Yet, to Beaverbrook, it was the economic union of the Dominions (especially Britain and Canada) that was the central issue, not, as Churchill (and Rothermere) believed, India. Churchill probably realised that such an alliance was wishful thinking, ending the letter that ‘this screed is only intended to cheer you up and must not degenerate into a lecture’. However, according to Beaverbrook’s associate, the Evening Standard journalist, Robert Bruce Lockhart, Churchill had privately drawled to Beaverbrook over dinner ‘give me a big navy, and I’ll swallow your food taxes.’ Beaverbrook, however, seemingly did not think he needed Churchill to realise his plans.

190 Tom Jones to his wife, 3 March 1930, Tom Jones diary, p. 247.
191 Waldron-Smithers to Geoffrey Fry (Baldwin’s Private Secretary), 7 January 1930, Baldwin Papers 57/8.
193 ibid.
194 Bruce Lochart diary, p. 123.
That the Liberal Leader was not ready to switch allegiance was proved when the Labour National Executive's decision in May to refuse adoption of the Alternative Vote did not lead to Lloyd George's order to strangle the Government in the division lobby. He threatened to do this, but reigned back from so doing. Instead he accepted MacDonald's offer of Liberal participation in the framing of unemployment and agricultural policy. The Liberals' financial troubles told against forcing a General Election and despite fears that his patience was running out with the Government in July and September, Lloyd George was willing to cling to MacDonald in October when the Government affirmed that it would proceed with adopting the Alternative Vote method of electoral reform after all. Lloyd George's decision to stick with Labour was instrumental in the formation of the 'Liberal Nationals' under Simon and Runciman. It destroyed any hopes that Churchill may still have harboured of alliance to his old master with its resultant dilution of Tory protectionism. There is no record of him approaching Simon, the old Asquithite. This ensured that only the Tory Right could now be a source of support for Churchill's Indian rhetoric. There was nowhere else for it to come from and until Churchill embraced the food tax, even this source of support would be patchy.

iii). Bowing to the food tax

At the Imperial Conference in October, the Canadian Premier, R.B. Bennett, rejected Beaverbrook's case for complete Empire Free Trade as 'neither desirable nor possible' and proposed the preferential 10% duties increase on non-Imperial goods advocated by Neville Chamberlain. With his Central Office staff, Robert Topping and Patrick Gower, Chamberlain pushed Baldwin into adopting this as Party policy with a 'free hand' to tax meat.

196 Simon's letter to Lloyd George, printed in *The Times*, 6 November 1930.
197 Amery diary, 9 October 1930, pp. 81-2.
Churchill pondered his future. When it came to the meeting of his front bench colleagues on the 14 October, he made an emotional performance that, as Chamberlain cynically recalled:

if meat was to be liable to taxation he could not accept the policy and would have to express his disagreement publicly. It was evidently a predetermined decision (he even took the opportunity of bidding us all a sort of formal farewell) that for a time no one found anything to say. Probably the majority felt that if he really meant to go it would be hailed with delight by the party generally. At last Austen spoke up and begged him not to take a course which would so seriously injure the cause. Winston started to reply but broke off apparently overcome with emotion and we separated.198

Churchill had drawn up a letter to Baldwin outlining that whilst he accepted quotas and guaranteed prices for British wheat growers and a general tariff on foreign, imported, manufactured articles he did not:

understand why such elaborate steps should be taken to avoid taxing foreign cereals, when the Conservative Party has to expose itself to all the dangers and unpopularity of a tax on beef and mutton ... I refuse categorically to seek a mandate from the electorate to impose taxes upon the staple foods of this overcrowded island ... In all other matters - now unhappily judged minor - such as the maintenance of a steady state of society in this island, or our naval strength, or our rights in India and Egypt, I will gladly give what help I can.199

Baldwin could scarcely have relished Churchill’s idea of assistance on ‘this island’s’ Imperial rights. However, before Churchill could send this letter, one arrived from Baldwin which encouraged him to hesitate. His leader assured him that after their ‘six years of loyal and strenuous work together’ if he resigned ‘whatever happens, I am your sincere friend.’200 Although he hoped that Churchill would ‘yet see your way to stay with us’201 Baldwin did not labour the case for staying in the Business Committee and must have

198 Neville Chamberlain diary 19 October 1930, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/22.
199 draft letter from Churchill to Baldwin, 14 October 1930, Chartwell Papers 2/572(A)/57 and 59.
200 Baldwin to Churchill, 14 October 1930, Chartwell Papers 2/572(A)/75.
201 ibid.
been aware that his political problems, at least in regard to the tariff issue, would be eased by Churchill’s exit. Baldwin’s letter was thus essentially designed to part company on good terms with him. Taken together with Austen Chamberlain’s plea not to part company, Churchill may have been touched by these displays of affection and thought he was held in higher regard generally than proved to be the case. Baldwin’s letters to him during this period always stressed not the value he placed on his political judgement but the engagingness of his character. Baldwin wrote to Davidson on 16 October that he thought it ‘quite possible that Winston will go out’ on the new policy. Amery thought that if he resigned, Churchill would ‘no doubt gravitate back to LG.’ Churchill’s failure to resign, to Neville Chamberlain’s annoyance, may also have been fuelled by the fact that the newspaper reports did not regard the new statement of policy as particularly remarkable.

Churchill replied to Baldwin by accepting the programme for so long as a basic food tax was not introduced, taking the opportunity the following day in a letter which spoke of Baldwin’s ‘extreme kindness’ to remind him that no staple food taxes was a position which he, the Leader, had held ‘until quite recently, what most people believe you are saying today, and what I shall certainly have sooner or later to say in public’. Churchill here was playing for time in the hope that the Dominions might not prove to be ‘willing to offer any new entry into their markets for our manufactures which would justify such drastic measures’. However for so long as there was any likelihood at all that a future Conservative Government could come to an arrangement with the Dominions, his opposition to the measures that such a policy necessitated ruled out Churchill’s chances of returning to the Treasury, and possibly to any future leading Conservative Cabinet post. It may well, however, have been that his political calculations went deeper: by the time negotiations started with the Dominions the more important issue of India might have split the Party,

202 see, for instance, Baldwin’s letters to Churchill of 2 January, September and 21 October 1930, Chartwell Papers 2/572(A)/82, 87, 102.
203 Baldwin to Davidson, 16 October 1930, Davidson memoirs, p. 353.
204 Amery diary, 14 October 1930, p. 84.
205 ibid.
206 Churchill to Baldwin, 16 October 1930, Chartwell Papers 2/572(A)/104-5.
precipitating Baldwin's downfall and his ascendancy as the spokesman of Indian
diehardism.

Having finished his letter to Baldwin, Churchill subsequently added a personal note
telling him that if he 'had not been subjected to so much ill-treatment and intrigue this
year, you would have been able in 1931, to lead our party into as great a victory as 1924'.

The same day, Churchill was to respond favourably to a request to join the fledgling Indian
Empire Society, an organisation comprised largely of former military and Indian Civil
Service diehards suspicious of the forthcoming Round Table Conference's intentions.
The Churchill who deplored protectionist conspiracies to remove Baldwin was soon to find
himself implicated in a diehard conspiracy which was to be labelled with having the
same intentions.

The statements of Bennett and Baldwin both denounced Empire Free Trade as a goal. This
came on top of the Conservative Research Department's long awaited report on the subject,
released in August, which had also argued against it. Beaverbrook rejected Amery's
advice to accept the 10% duty in good grace and instead set 'all out to kill S.B.' In view
of the fact that Baldwin had made clear that he wanted to be given 'a completely free
hand to discuss with the Dominions all the alternative methods, including taxes on foreign
foodstuffs' the Party Leader really had gone as far as he was reasonably capable of
going. As far as Beaverbrook was concerned, the Conservatives would have to stress in even
stronger tones the likelihood of some kind of food duties (Baldwin was increasingly keen on
a wheat quota) to gain his acquiescence.

207 ibid.
208 Sir Mark Hunter/Churchill correspondence, 11 and 16 October 1930, Chartwell Papers
2/174/5, 20.
209 for aims of the Indian Empire Society, se its introductory booklet, Chartwell Papers
2/174/6.
210 Herzog, unpublished PhD, p. 211.
211 Amery diary, 11, 13 and 16 October 1930, pp. 82-4.
212 The Times, 22 October 1930.
The Party’s Chief Agent, Robert Topping advised Baldwin that the loss of Churchill would be more than compensated if he made explicit the full consequences of the free hand\textsuperscript{213} and Baldwin’s statement to The Times on 22 October categorically stated that a free hand included the possibility of food taxes. The previous day he had, separately from Neville Chamberlain, written to Churchill. Repeating his protestation of friendship, Baldwin stated that he feared that ‘this may be the occasion when you will feel it necessary to express your dissent. I hope indeed not’,\textsuperscript{214} Chamberlain urged, insincerely,\textsuperscript{215} that he should not take ‘any irrevocable step’ since the likely level of taxes - and in the case of wheat, quotas - would be on a small range of foodstuffs and would probably be relatively minimal. Further, the hope was reiterated that if he did decide to resign then it should not lead to ‘ourselves driven in opposite camps when there is so much about which we are in agreement’\textsuperscript{216}.

Yet Churchill still regarded the fiscal issue as not the one in which to part company and no resignation was forthcoming. He made no attempt to conceal the fact that he was playing for time, telling his constituency that on staple food taxes ‘I intend to wait before expressing any opinion until I know exactly where and on what we are finally going to stake our fortunes at the coming election.’\textsuperscript{217} Baldwin’s position was almost as precarious as Churchill’s and treacherously, the latter chose this moment to pay Beaverbrook a private visit, allegedly telling the would-be kingmaker to reject Baldwin’s offer. As an incredulous Bruce Lockhart observed:

Here is Winston - an ex-colleague of Baldwin in the last Government and still a member of his Shadow Cabinet - advising [Beaverbrook] how to counter Baldwin’s letter. [Edward Shanks, Beaverbrook’s literary adviser] and I could spring a bombshell which would ruin Winston’s and [Beaverbrook’s] career. In the evening [Lloyd George] came to dinner and

\textsuperscript{213} Middlemas and Barnes, Baldwin, p. 557.
\textsuperscript{214} Baldwin to Churchill, 21 October 1930, Chartwell Papers 2/572(A)/102.
\textsuperscript{215} Neville Chamberlain Papers: letters to Walter Bridgeman, 1 and 18 November 1930, 8/10/16b (c) and (l) and diary, 6 November 1930.
\textsuperscript{216} Neville Chamberlain to Churchill, 21 October 1930, Chartwell Papers 2/572(A)/103.
\textsuperscript{217} Churchill’s speech in Epping, 27 October 1930, Complete Speeches, vol.v., p. 4920.
gave similar advice to [Beaverbrook]; he told him he had Baldwin cornered and advised 'no surrender.'218

In trying to build an alliance on India, Churchill therefore found himself bound up with the one unifying factor which held Rothermere, Beaverbrook and Lloyd George together - dislike of Baldwin. With rumours that over forty Conservative MPs were calling for his resignation,219 Baldwin decided to take up the challenge that 17 MPs, led by Colonel John Gretton, lay at his feet and offered to put his leadership on the line at a Party meeting to be held at the Caxton Hall. Alone of the Tory grandees, Lord Derby had also expressed the hope to him that he would resign, but typically switched back his allegiance once it was clear that Baldwin would win the vote of confidence.220 The Party Chairman, Chamberlain selflessly did his best to ensure a victory for Baldwin by drafting the resolution of support for his leadership. He also made sure that as well as MPs, the peers and as-yet unelected candidates would also be eligible in the vote in the hope that these last two categories would swamp the more protectionist southern English oriented block of MPs.221 The meeting was held on the day of the South Paddington by-election. News of the United Empire Party's victory over the Conservative candidate arrived, fortunately for Baldwin, after the meeting had finished.

Baldwin made an effective speech, which was ably supported by Hailsham's call not to surrender to press dictatorship. The E.I.A's Gretton and Page Croft (Churchill's new-found friends on India and the Navy) called for Baldwin's resignation whilst Beaverbrook spoke against Baldwin's policy.222 Confidence was passed in Baldwin's leadership by 462 to 116. Although Churchill did not speak out at the Caxton Hall meeting, he had already made public that he would not exchange 'Parliamentary Government for newspaper

218 Bruce Lockhart diary, 22 October 1939, p. 132.
219 Amery diary, 28 October 1930, p. 86.
220 Middlemas and Barnes, Baldwin, p. 577.
221 Ball, Baldwin and the Conservative Party, p. 101.
222 Amery diary, 30 October 1930, pp. 86-7.
government and that party policy would be based on principle and not 'dictated by some persons who on the morrow of our defeat will sail away on some new adventure of their own.' The twin pincer attack on Conservative votes by the cry of food taxes in the north and 'the Beaverbrook-Rothermere Press' in the south, Churchill lambasted as 'evil tendencies' which would lead to 'disaster'. This was plain talking.

Walter Bridgeman supposed that the views expressed at the Caxton Hall meeting demonstrated that Baldwin's unpopularity stemmed from the continuing presence of the 'old gang', in particular Austen Chamberlain. This view was broadly shared by Neville Chamberlain and Amery. Ironically, were it not for the 'revolting' prospect of handing over a victory to the press plutocrats, Austen Chamberlain was toying with visiting Bridgeman to discuss whether Baldwin could not be encouraged to perform for his Party, like Captain Oates, an act of self-sacrifice. Yet the immediate effect of the meeting was for the 'old gang', including Churchill, to write together to Baldwin assuring him that they did not claim 'any prescriptive right ever to be consulted or to belong to the next Cabinet.' As Amery recorded 'Winston with delightful frankness afterwards said that of course 'the old gang really means me, unless not to leave me wholly alone, you, Austen, would like to be associated with me'. This was only too true. The Tory MP, Victor Cazalet, mused in his diary on 1 December that 'it is curious how out of things [Churchill] is, and how badly he has played his cards. No one even mentions him as a Conservative leader; and what to do with him in the next Conservative Cabinet - that is a problem.' Discussing the same problem, Neville Chamberlain and Amery came to the conclusion that:

the only thing to do with Winston if he provided no excuse for leaving him out was to make him Minister of Defence policy with the job of co-

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223 Churchill's speech to the Dumbartonshire Unionist Association, 6 September 1930, Complete Speeches vol.v., p. 4915.
224 Churchill's speech to his Epping constituency, 3 November 1930, ibid., p. 4924.
225 Bridgeman to Davidson, Davidson memoirs, p. 352.
226 Amery diary, 9 November 1930, p. 89.
227 Austen to Neville Chamberlain, 9 October 1930, Austen Chamberlain Papers 39/2/40.
228 Amery diary, 6 November 1930, p. 88.
government' and that party policy would be based on principle and not 'dictated by some persons who on the morrow of our defeat will sail away on some new adventure of their own.' The twin pincer attack on Conservative votes by the cry of food taxes in the north and 'the Beaverbrook-Rothermere Press' in the south, Churchill lambasted as 'evil tendencies' which would lead to 'disaster'. This was plain talking.

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228 Amery diary, 6 November 1930, p. 88.
ordinating not only the strategy but the finance of the three departments. We realised, however, that this would make none of the three departments very attractive to anyone like Philip [Cunliffe-] Lister.\textsuperscript{230}

In fact, far from scrapping for officerial left-overs, Churchill, writing to his son, was in combative mood and heartily tired of the minor men and issues which popular democracy was apparently generating. No longer did he, now asserting himself above mere party niceties, want office:

in such an administration and be saddled with all the burden of whole-hog Protection, plus unlimited doses of Irwinism for India. I feel a great deal stronger since the Indian situation developed, although most people will tell you the opposite. It is a great comfort when one finds a question one cares about far more than office or party or friendships.\textsuperscript{231}

As one of Baldwin's supporters put it: 'I am afraid Winston is out to make serious trouble.'\textsuperscript{232}

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\textsuperscript{230} Amery diary, 9 November 1930, p. 88.  
\textsuperscript{232} Lane-Fox to Irwin, 21 January 1931, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.19/211
Chapter Four
The Indian Crusade

i) Churchill’s Emergence as a Diehard Spokesman

Churchill’s prominence as a spokesman of diehard sentiment was enhanced by the death of his ‘greatest friend for nearly a quarter of a century’, Lord Birkenhead.233 Churchill’s glowing reference to his late soul-mate in The Times suggesting that he had died at a time when he ‘might have made his greatest contribution to the fortunes of the England he loved so well’234 charitably overlooked the fact that politically Birkenhead had already burnt out long before. This did not stop Churchill believing that he ‘would have been of decisive importance’ in resisting the Government’s Indian policy.235 ‘Last night’, Clementine wrote to Birkenhead’s widow, ‘Winston wept for his friend. He said several times ‘I feel so lonely’’.236 Churchill had good reason to feel for the passing of his colleague, henceforth, he would have to fight the Indian debate without a single first-rate statesman by his side.

The prominence of the tariff debate during 1930 for the Conservative Party had cast aside the issue of India since the Irwin Declaration but the attempted side-stepping of the Simon Report, published in June, in the framing of November’s London Round Table Conference, placed it firmly back onto the agenda.

The publication of the Simon Report, in staying loyal to its original remit and failing to support Irwin’s initiative on dominion status,237 fell well short of matching the aspirations of India’s politicians and supposed enlightened thought in Britain.238 The Round Table Conference, as Irwin envisaged, was therefore intended to frame a constitution beyond which the Simon Commission had considered. To emphasise this point, Simon was denied a

233 Churchill in The Times, 1 October 1930.
234 ibid.
237 Simon to Irwin, 16 May 1930, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.19/59(A).
238 Irwin to Benn, secret telegram, No.594-5, 6 July 1930, Baldwin Papers 104/138-141.
seat at the Conference on the grounds that the publication of his Report made him a prejudiced participant.\textsuperscript{239} The dying Birkenhead had warned Baldwin against supporting anything beyond the Simon Report's recommendations\textsuperscript{240} and with his demise his case fell to the advocacy of the ill Salisbury and, more prominently, to Churchill.

Although personally supportive of Irwin, Baldwin had little obvious option, unless he wanted to encourage internecine warfare even further, than to bow to 'the opposition of his Party and his immediate counsellors, every one of whom appears to be opposed to [Irwin's] position.' \textsuperscript{241} The parliamentary Conservative Party's 'India Committee' was a forum for scepticism towards Irwin's actions.\textsuperscript{242} In view of this, Baldwin therefore felt obliged to appoint Austen Chamberlain, who had made clear his opposition to Irwinism, to lead the Conservative delegation at the forthcoming Round Table Conference, an act MacDonald calculated to be indicative of the Tory frontbench's decision to block Indian constitutional advance beyond that envisaged at the provincial level by the Simon Report.\textsuperscript{243}

This situation was, of course, laced with the greatest irony. Austen Chamberlain had (with Churchill and Birkenhead) been amongst those responsible for the Irish Treaty so hated by diehards. The Irwinites' fear that he would prove to be a bulwark against concessions on India was matched by the fear, on the Right, that if he could do a deal with Irish terrorists in 1921 then there was no reason why he might not prove equally un-sound if given the chance to apply his educated mind to negotiating with Middle Temple educated Indian lawyers. With this fear to the fore, Lord Salisbury, who had never forgiven the signatories of the Irish surrender (Churchill inclusive), voiced his opposition to having

\textsuperscript{239} Irwin to Hoare, 5 August 1930, India Office Papers. MSS.Eur.c.152.19/123.
\textsuperscript{240} Birkenhead to Baldwin, 30 June 1930, Baldwin Papers 104/15.
\textsuperscript{241} MacDonald to Irwin, 2 July 1930, ibid., MSS.Eur.c.152.19/89.
\textsuperscript{242} Hoare to Irwin, 17 May 1930, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.19/61; The Tory MP, Ormsby-Gore, also discerned a 'general move to the right' in the Party: William Ormsby-Gore to Irwin, 3 July 1930, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.19/91(A).
\textsuperscript{243} Hoare to Irwin, 17 May, 15 July and 1 August 1930, ibid., MSS.Eur.c.152.19/61, 100 and 106.
Party interests represented by Sir Austen.\textsuperscript{244} Given his subsequent actions, diehard suspicion at Chamberlain’s ability to negotiate away their position may have been shrewd but they were short of skilled negotiators to defend their interests. Lord Peel, who was selected, was too unmalleable to be able to make a positive contribution to the Conference. Hailsham, very much a sceptic, declined for the stated reason of pressure from his legal profession. As a result, it was the young progressives, Oliver Stanley and Samuel Hoare, both on the Party’s liberal wing, together with Lord Zetland, who did most of the speaking-up for the Conservative Party at the all-party conference.

The Indian Empire Society (I.E.S.) formed the institutionalised backbone of opposition to Irwin’s machinations. Planned since March by Lord Salisbury and Lord Sydenham (a former Governor of Bombay)\textsuperscript{245} it was significant that Churchill was not selected to be one of its founders but was asked to join as an ordinary member on 10 October and did so six days later as member number 357.\textsuperscript{246} Members of its executive included such noted old diehards as Joynson-Hicks (now ennobled as Lord Brentford), and Lords’ Carson and Londonderry.

Although it was not, nor intended to be, his creation, Churchill’s superior oratorical powers led him to dominate the publicity surrounding the I.E.S and he quickly regarded it as his own publicity vehicle, writing privately to his son that they fed out of his hand.\textsuperscript{247} It was the Society’s Chairman and Treasurer, Sir Claud Jacob (a member of ‘The Other Club’ which Churchill and Birkenhead had formed in 1911) who encouraged Churchill to speak, together with Lord Lloyd, at the Cannon Street Hotel meeting of 11 December. However, it was soon Churchill who was taking the initiative in organising the meeting and encouraging a quick follow-up rally in the Manchester Free Trade Hall to stir-up

\textsuperscript{244} Samuel Hoare to Austen Chamberlain, 14 September 1930, Austen Chamberlain Papers 39/2/33; Baldwin to Irwin, 16 October 1930, India Office Papers. MSS.Eur.c.152.19/147; Gillian Peele ‘Revolt over India’ in Gillian Peele and Chris Cook \textit{The Politics of Reappraisal 1918-1939}, 1975, p. 123.
\textsuperscript{245} Peele and Cook, p. 125-6.
\textsuperscript{246} Sir Mark Hunter (Secretary, I.E.S.)/Churchill correspondence, 10 and 16 October 1930, Chartwell Papers 2/174/5, 20.
Lancashire’s anxieties for the future of her textiles trade if Indians were given greater economic autonomy.248

Churchill had pulled no punches in his speech at the Cannon Street Hotel, claiming that ‘Gandhism and all that it stood for would, sooner or later, have to be grappled with and crushed. It was no use trying to satisfy a tiger by feeding him with cat’s meat.’ Dominion status would inevitably lead to Hindu independence with the British as second class citizens, Indian debts to them repudiated and perhaps ‘an army of white janissaries, officered, if necessary from Germany, ... hired to secure the armed ascendancy of the Hindu.’249

The speech delighted the I.E.S.250 and infuriated the Baldwinites who thought it ‘very extreme’ and ‘monstrous’.251 Baldwin’s friend, Geoffrey Dawson in The Times, claimed that Churchill should be ignored since he clearly did not speak on behalf of the Conservative Party and stood to wreck the great work of the careful consensus makers. No less ominously, referring to the success of Churchill’s nostalgic memoirs, My Early Life, published a couple of months previously, Dawson sniped that his:

distinction as a writer suggests that he might find better scope at this moment for his brilliant talents than a more and more lonely political furrow. But the omniscient subaltern of 1896 is not, after all, so very far removed from the statesman who has nothing to learn in 1930.252

Allegations of being reactionary and out of touch were to form the backbone of the Baldwinites’ attack on Churchill’s Indian views over the succeeding five years but with his

248 Jacobs/Churchill correspondence, 23 November 1930, Chartwell Papers 2/174/9-10, 11
249 Churchill’s speech to the Indian Empire Society, 11 December 1930, Cannon Street Hotel, London, Complete Speeches vol.v., pp. 4938, 4934; Churchill was not alone in deprecating Hindu domination: see Gwynne (Editor of the Morning Post) to Baldwin, 24 November 1930, Baldwin Papers 104/72-4 and for the reaction to the publication of the American Katherine Mayo’s virulently anti-Hindu Mother India see Nirad C. Chaidhuri, Thy Hand Great Anarch! India 1921-1952, 1990, pp. 255-60.
250 Lord Sydenham to Churchill, 12 December 1930, Chartwell Papers 2/174/17-18
251 Sir Malcolm Hailey at the India Office to Irwin and Irwin to Geoffrey Dawson, 15 December 1930, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.19/185/c,218.
252 The Times, 13 December 1930.
speech at the Cannon Street Hotel, Churchill began to reach out to his natural - though politically contentious - ally, Lord Rothermere. There was no prospect of alliance from Lloyd George on the issue since Reading was effectively shaping the remnants of the Liberal Party’s India policy and he had become convinced, with Simon, that there was now no workable alternative to Irwin’s approach. The divided Liberal Party’s desire to avoid facing a General Election at that moment would have made attacking the Government counter-productive. From the south of France, Rothermere telegraphed Churchill after his ‘bold and convincing’ speech encouraging him ‘to make more of the same kind and I promise you full publicity for them. We must have a talk when we get back to London.’ In preparing for the I.E.S. meeting at Manchester, Churchill encouraged Hunter that it was ‘so important to unite this powerful press support with our cause’ that Rothermere’s politically ambitious (and, in view of his father, politically untouchable) son, Esmond Harmsworth, should second him on the platform.

The day after the Cannon Street meeting, Hoare outlined his strategy to the Conservative front bench in a meeting of their Business Committee. Commerce would be safeguarded by trade agreement and the army and law enforcement would stay under British control. A statutory currency board and reserve bank would ensure that Indian ministers would have control of only about twenty per cent of the federal reserves. Britain would thus retain the real reins of power whilst the call for dominion status could be deflected by the promise of a federal constitution whose executive would be difficult to remove whilst federation itself would form an effective escape route from the mistakes of Montagu’s unitary structure.

253 Rothermere to Churchill, 13 December 1930, Chartwell Papers 2/180(A)/46-8; Via Brendan Bracken the following year, Churchill agreed a contract with Esmond Harmsworth, who was ‘now in active charge’ of the Daily Mail’s affairs, to write a weekly article for that paper for a lucrative £7300. This useful platform brought Churchill visibly into association with the Rothermere dynasty and into conflict with his commitments with The Daily Telegraph which was within the orbit of Lord Camrose and the diehard Lord Burnham. Bracken-Churchill correspondence, 22 and 23 August 1931, Gilbert, companion vol.v.pt.2, pp. 350-2; Churchill to Esmond Harmsworth, 4 September 1931, ibid. p. 355-b; Col. Lawson General Manager of the Daily Telegraph to Churchill, 16 November 1931, ibid. p. 373.

254 Churchill to Sir Mark Hunter, 4 January 1931, Chartwell Papers 2/180(A)/3
Conservative participation in the Conference would involve no commitment to the details of any federal scheme, nor real responsibility at the centre.255

In contrast to Rothermere, Churchill's relations with Beaverbrook remained 'chilly and detached'256 with the latter initially suspecting India was for Churchill merely the latest self-advancing cynical ploy.257 Baldwin's comment that 'Winston is very well and has gone quite mad about India'258 better reflected the temperament upon which he flourished. Churchill believed that his own advancement in the longer term and his attachment to principle in India were mutually inclusive, writing to his son after the Cannon Street rally, 'I am sure events will justify every word'.259

Days before Churchill was to publicly sever himself from the Party Leadership, he had received information from Beaverbrook that 'the discard in Baldwin's next Cabinet is to be as follows - Salisbury, Austen Chamberlain, Churchill, Worthy Evans and Jix.260 Beaverbrook may have been making the list up with the intention of pushing Churchill into opposition both from Baldwin and out of harm's way for the advancement of whole-hog protection. There is no reason to believe that had Baldwin already made his mind up about the next Cabinet he would have told Beaverbrook - of all people - about it. Possibly Baldwin may have conferred with Beaverbrook's friend Samuel Hoare and the press lord had subsequently found out about it from him, but again, it is unclear why Baldwin would confide such sensitive reflections to any interested colleague. What is clear is that by now

255 Moore, Endgames of Empire, pp. 46-7.
257 Beaverbrook to Arthur Brisbane (New York journalist), January 1930, Beaverbrook Papers C/64.
258 Baldwin to Davidson, 15 December 1930, Davidson memoirs, p. 356.
260 Beaverbrook to Churchill, 19 January 1931, Chartwell Papers 2/177/1.
Churchill was indulging in 'anti-Baldwin conversation over India' on the telephone to Beaverbrook and sharing his frustration over dinner with Reading and MacDonald.

The Round Table Conference completed its business on 19 January agreeing to re-convene in the autumn to frame the details of transferring powers at central and provincial levels within the context of a federal system but having failed to reassure the Congress Party. Three days later, Irwin released the Congress leaders from gaol, hoping that negotiations with them could result and that they too, would contribute to the next Round Table Conference. Freed, the Congress representatives failed to suspend their campaign of civil disobedience against British interests. For Churchill, this was the final straw and he made his position clear to The Times. Whatever may have been his precarious position on the fiscal question, Churchill's views on India could not be ignored by the Party leaderships. This is evident by the fact that MacDonald chose to commence his speech opening the Commons adjournment debate on the Indian Conference by trying to implicate Churchill as an ex-Cabinet minister sharing responsibility for the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms which, the Premier suggested, had laid out the road to dominion status. The debate itself was littered with references to the Right Honourable Member for Epping, the location to which Irwin cheerfully hoped Baldwin would send him on the day of the debate itself.

In view of the effect that the Commons debate of 26 January had in almost crippling Baldwin's control over the Conservative Party and setting Churchill on a destructive path on the issue for the next four years, a lengthy reference to the arguments and language used is necessary. Churchill's case was that far from restoring peace, Britain's notifications of

261 Bruce Lockhart diary, 24 January 1931, p. 149.
262 MacDonald diary, 4 December 1930, in David Marquand, Ramsay MacDonald, 1977, p. 578.
264 MacDonald's speech in the Adjournment debate, 26 January 1931, Hansard 247 H.C. Deb 5s, cols. 637-8; Churchill countered this argument that the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms had included Parliament's right to revoke Indian constitutional advance: 247 H.C. Deb 5s, cols. 694-5.
265 Irwin to Baldwin, 23 January 1931, Baldwin Papers 104/156.
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265 Irwin to Baldwin, 23 January 1931, Baldwin Papers 104/156.
impending retreat had so heightened the tension that even the 'high-minded' Irwin had been forced to imprison 60,000 political agitators. He repeated his fear that without 'our impartial protection' Muslims and Untouchables would be at the mercy of the Hindu majority. Since outright independence for India was not envisaged the purpose of the proposed reforms was not to relieve Britain of her Indian responsibilities but merely to create 'agencies which will make it more difficult for us to discharge our task.' As for the belief that in the final event, Britain would still retain the ultimate powers, 'once the principle is conceded, safeguards and reservations very often prove of no lasting value'.

These were similar arguments to those that he had used to condemn the proposed reduction of Britain's military grip in Egypt. But Churchill saved his most emotive (and theatrical) rhetoric for his final encore:

The great liner is sinking in a calm sea. One bulkhead after another gives way; one compartment after another is bilged; the list increases; she is sinking; but the captain and the officers and the crew are all in the saloon dancing to the jazz band. But wait till the passengers find out what is their position ... with their women and children, throughout this enormous land, in hourly peril amidst the enormous Indian multitude ... then I think there will be a sharp awakening, then, I am sure, that a reaction of the most vehement character will sweep this country ... That, Sir, is an ending which I trust and pray we may avoid, but it is an ending to which, step by step and day by day, we are being remorselessly and fatuously conducted.

Baldwin, speaking apparently off-the-cuff, rose to respond to his colleague, claiming that he would not have spoken were it not for Churchill's interjection which had been delivered like George III losing the American colonies but 'endowed with the tongue of Edmund Burke.' Whilst accepting that Churchill had 'sat close by my side in difficult times' and that he was sincere in his convictions, his views were, Baldwin suggested, in conflict with those of 'the younger Members of the Conservative party' like Oliver

266 ibid., cols. 698-701.
267 ibid., cols. 702-703.
268 Lane-Fox to Irwin, 28 January 1931, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.19/221.
Stanley. Baldwin had no intention of turning India into another Irish Question by polarising Westminster politics. If the Conservatives were returned to power at the next election, they would 'have only one duty, and that one duty is to try to implement so far as we can what has been done in the Conference ... I should consider it to be my duty, so far as I was able if I were leading the party still, to use every effort in my power to bring about that federal constitution.270

Although Amery initially though it better than usual, on reflection he felt that Baldwin's speech did more than anything else to create the crisis which almost removed him from the Leadership.271 Indeed, there had been no obvious necessity for Baldwin to speak since Churchill had not, in his albeit disquieting speech, actually directly criticised the line taken by Hoare and the Conservatives' Conference delegation. That a future Conservative Government's one commitment was to give more power to Indians must also have come as a surprise to the protectionist Imperialist Right. No less damaging was that Baldwin had made his statement without consulting his own colleagues on what was a departure from the agreed formula of his frontbenchers' backing for Hoare's more cautious approach.272

Baldwin had blundered, but had Churchill's violent condemnation staked-out his own claim as the real opposition spokesman? Neville Chamberlain as Party Chairman gleefully recorded in his diary that people were writing to him from across the country saying that they had 'lost all trust in [Churchill's] ability or will to carry anything'.273 Amery, who was to emerge as a supporter of Baldwin's policy, thought Churchill's speech

269 Baldwin's speech in the Adjournment debate, 26 January 1931, Hansard 247 H.C. Deb 5s. ibid. col. 744.
270 ibid., cols. 747 and 746.
271 Amery diary, 26 January and 26 February 1931, pp 145, 150; Lane-Fox to Irwin, 28 January 1931, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.19/221.
272 Lane-Fox to Irwin, 28 January 1931, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.19/221; Neville to Hilda Chamberlain, 31 January 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 13/1/724; Gwynne to Baldwin, 1 February 1931, Baldwin Papers 104/166; Edward Cadogan, a Tory member of the Simon Commission was particulariy exasperated that Baldwin had gone further than Commission's Report's recommendations which were 'the limit to which we should go': Cadogan to Baldwin, 29 January 1931, Baldwin Papers 158/158-61.
273 Neville Chamberlain diary 23 February 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/22.
'might have been to the point in 1901 but was now irrelevant and in its whole tone tactless and unhelpful'. Benn, never really able to rise to the big occasion, claimed that Churchill was 'listening to the jazz music of his own oratory, he is singing in a calm sea of universal popular disapproval'. Indian troops who had fought in the Great War 'in order that people could settle their own destinies' could hardly now be denied that hope for themselves. When he asked what Churchill meant by asserting 'strong government', some members shouted out 'Sidney Street'. Even in a moment of tension, Churchill's chequered past would be brought-up as evidence of his head-strong nature. Baldwin's introductory note of thanks for his help in mobilising the British Gazette during the General Strike was a double-edged sword, reminding the House of Churchill's controversial zeal in times of trouble (not that this argument would have troubled Churchill's new friends on the Right who would recall that his strong line had been successful). When Churchill interjected that he supported developing Indian provincial government as outlined by the Simon Report but claimed, lamely, that the concrete for this development should be 'British decisions and Indian loyalty and good will' Benn reposted that this was short-hand for 'The lathi, the stick, and after the lathi the rifle, and after the rifle the machine gun ... government by force without the assent of the people.'

Given Churchill's condemnation of this tactic when used at Amritsar, Benn's put-down may have been a mis-representation of Churchill's desires, but this did not mar its effect. According to Baldwin's mouth-piece, Geoffrey Dawson in The Times, Churchill's rhetoric might have been 'brilliant' but that it was:

doubtful whether [he] possesses the power to do harm any longer ... The Indian delegates were here long enough to take the measure of his influence in the country; there is no reason to suppose that it is acknowledged even by so large a section as Mr Baldwin was prepared to concede.

274 Amery diary, 26 January 1931, p. 145.
275 ibid.
276 Benn's speech in the Adjournment debate, 26 January 1931, 247 H.C. Deb 5s. col.749.
277 ibid., cols.752-3.
278 Baldwin's speech, ibid., col. 744.
279 Benn's speech, ibid., cols. 755-6.
280 The Times, 27 January 1931, p. 15.
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Conversing with Baldwin, Amery claimed his Party Leader was:

well content with Winston who at last has severed himself from the Party, though I wish it had happened over the food duties and not over India. By choosing the latter as his pretext Winston is playing for the support of Rothermere and even to some extent of [Beaverbrook] and is incidentally covering himself in his own constituency. I imagine his game is to be a lonely and formidable figure available as a possible Prime Minister in a confused situation later on. I doubt whether he will achieve it with his essentially out of date views. The only chance might be a general outbreak in India requiring military repression.281

ii). Bidding for the Leadership?

Churchill’s resignation from the Conservative Business Committee came the day after his speech in the adjournment debate. Although of primary importance, it is easy to overestimate the effect of this step given the fact that the divergence of view had already been performed in the public arena. The Business Committee had only been instigated in March 1930. It was therefore considerably less historically and institutionally august than its later descendant, the full Shadow Cabinet. Until Churchill’s resignation from it, the public had been unaware of its existence. In fact, until that date, even Amery had been unaware for sure of its existence!282 In his letter to Baldwin, which promised support on other issues and his ‘friendship’ and ‘warmest personal regard’, Churchill made clear that he felt that he ‘ought not any longer to attend the meeting of your ‘Business Committee’.’ Baldwin replied that he thought Churchill’s decision ‘correct in the circumstances’ and agreed that they could still both be ‘loyal’ friends and comrades-in-arms.283

Modern historians’ belief that Baldwin’s Business Committee was merely the old name for the Shadow Cabinet has led them to underline the importance of Churchill’s

281 Amery diary, 30 January 1931, p. 146.
282 ibid., 24 February 1931, p. 149.
resignation.\textsuperscript{284} This is not strictly accurate. As Samuel Hoare made clear in his autobiographical work:

the Shadow Cabinet of the Opposition, composed of all the principal ex-Ministers, had not met since the controversy over Irwin’s speech \[of October 1929\]. In its stead, there were frequent meetings of a small Business Committee to which Baldwin invited [Neville] Chamberlain, Churchill, Hailsham, Peel, Oliver Stanley and myself.\textsuperscript{285}

When Churchill left the Business Committee in January 1931 he left not the Shadow Cabinet in the modern understanding of the term, but rather an inner grouping from which only Hoare and Chamberlain went on from to inclusion in the August 1931 Cabinet. As we shall see, Churchill’s historic aggression towards the Labour movement ensured that MacDonald would probably have refused to have had him in such a Cabinet even if he had never raised a whisper against Indian policy. Meanwhile, his stance on economic policy may have affected his position in the Conservative Party, but it would not have barred him from office in the National Government which included Cobdenites like Herbert Samuel and Philip Snowden.

The real importance of Churchill’s resignation from the Business Committee was that he, seemingly without Baldwin’s realisation, proceeded to have the resignation correspondence published in the press, highlighting the breach. Neville Chamberlain thought this action had been undertaken so as to give maximum publicity to Churchill’s forthcoming I.E.S. rally in Manchester which would be very ‘damaging to S.B’s position.’\textsuperscript{286} Yet Churchill continued to cover all exits by making public that he was choosing to stay as the Chairman of the Finance Committee.\textsuperscript{287}

\textsuperscript{285} Lord Templewood, Nine Troubled Years, 1954, p. 48.
\textsuperscript{286} Neville to Hilda Chamberlain, 31 January 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 18/1/724.
\textsuperscript{287} Churchill’s speech in Epping, 23 February 1931, Complete Speeches vol.v., p. 4983.
The Tory front-benchers who remained the most openly sceptical of Baldwin’s India policy were Austen Chamberlain and Lords’ Salisbury and Hailsham. In the event of Baldwin’s resignation, Chamberlain, if asked for his opinion as a Party grandee, despite his regard for his fellow ex-Coalitionist, would have recommended his half-brother Neville for the Leadership.\textsuperscript{288} Salisbury’s position is more difficult to ascertain in that he agreed with Churchill’s stance and had supported his opposition to the food tax but was not personally intimate. Although Hailsham was un-enthusiastic about Irwin’s actions,\textsuperscript{289} he was of the view that Churchill would be a disastrous leader of the Conservative Party. Having been acting Premier in August and September 1928, he knew that, without Churchill, he was the most likely leadership candidate of the Centre-Right and had almost refused the Lord Chancellorship in 1928 because he feared it would have the twin effect of reducing his chances of becoming Leader and, therefore, helping Churchill’s prospects.\textsuperscript{290} Churchill tried, unsuccessfully to persuade Hailsham ‘to speak out like a man’ against Irwinism,\textsuperscript{291} but the latter decided that his own interests were best served by a more publicly temperate approach to the issue. Therefore, we can see that deprived of the support, given free will, of any senior member of the Party, Churchill’s resignation from the Business Committee scarcely altered his standing amongst its members. He had to gamble on the fact that no magic circle candidate could assume authority without real popular backing from the parliamentary party. The Carlton Club putsch of 1922 had demonstrated the muscle the parliamentary Party could bring to bear on the official Leadership. The Caxton Hall meeting of October 1930 had also broken the tradition of the Leader’s fate being decided by a small clique behind a closed door.

Amery’s description of Baldwin’s belief that Churchill had ‘severed himself from the Party’ was a premature over-simplification. The day after his resignation from the Business Committee, Churchill was back in the Commons delivering a lengthy speech.

\textsuperscript{288} Austen to Ida Chamberlain, 28 February 1931, Austen Chamberlain Papers 5/1/532; Amery dairy, 7 and 11 March 1931, pp. 152, 155.
\textsuperscript{289} Lane-Fox to Irwin, 21 August 1931, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.19/120.
\textsuperscript{290} Neville Chamberlain Papers, diary 2/22/8 March 1931.
\textsuperscript{291} Churchill to Rothermere, 3 February 1931, Chartwell Papers 2/120(A)/32.
against the Second Reading of the Government’s Trades Disputes Bill. The imagery of MacDonald wanting Lloyd George to cut the Bill’s ‘dirty throat’ and that he, the Premier, reminded Churchill of the malleable ‘boneless wonder’ circus act which his parents had forbidden him to see as a child, was regarded by Harold Nicolson as ‘the wittiest speech of his life’ which left most of the chamber ‘chuckling’. 292 These sentiments were shared by a worried Neville Chamberlain who thought the speech had ‘raised his prestige to a higher level than ever’. 293 It was Churchill himself who seemed unbreakable, bouncing back, once again, from being written off as a spent force.

When Churchill came to speak at Manchester’s Free Trade Hall, in an open meeting organised by the I.E.S. on 30 January, he was met by an over-flowing auditorium. At last he was back on the offensive. Manchester was, of course, an excellent location for these efforts since, responding to India’s financial crisis, Irwin had sanctioned an increase in Indian cotton tariffs. This would hit Lancashire’s textiles industries and fuel fears of the effects of an increasingly Indian-centric fiscal policy.

In the immediate future, the real fight was not to preach to the converted in Manchester however, but to raise the revolt in the parliamentary Conservative Party. Having failed to win-over Baldwin’s Business Committee, the Party’s India Committee was Churchill’s next most important target. The Committee, now meeting weekly, had by 1931 almost a hundred back-bench MPs and peers as regular participants 294 although technically it was open to any Conservative at Westminster to attend and take part. Despite Hoare’s skilful assurances, many of its members had been nervous about Conservative goals at the Round Table Conference. Although Baldwin ‘ambled along’ to the Committee’s meeting on 9 February, supported by Leo Amery, his lukewarm reception contrasted with the voluble support for Lords’ Winterton and Lloyd who condemned Indian appeasement. Whilst its

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293 Neville to Hilda Chamberlain, 31 January 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 18/1/724.
294 McEwan, unpublished PhD, p.343.
Chairman, John Wardlaw-Milne was essentially a Party loyalist, the diehards were ‘obviously very much in the majority’.295 Churchill, who did not address the India Committee on this occasion, subsequently felt that he performed well to a sympathetic gathering of the Party's Central Council on 24 February296 - his first real attempt to strike at the Party at the non-parliamentary level. The unimpartial Daily Mail, reporting the ‘prolonged and enthusiastic ovation’ that he received from the Central Council, waxed lyrical that ‘every day at home the influence of Mr Winston Churchill upon public opinion grows stronger ... He is showing the true qualities of Leadership which are most urgently required ... He is the most discussed man in politics to-day.’297 This would make it hard for Churchill to deny he was not in cahoots with the press lords’ campaign to dictate the future of the Tory leadership. The Daily Telegraph, by comparison, also condemned Irwinism but felt Churchill’s views ‘unhelpful’. For the Telegraph, attempts to make a bigger split on the issue of India, which it thought Churchill ‘would deplore’ was a ‘mischievous’ device of the Beaverbrook-Rothermere press.298 Interestingly the Telegraph’s ‘Peterborough’ columnist summed-up the speculation about Churchill’s position:

Whether Mr Churchill would ... be prepared to accept any office inferior to that of Chancellor of the Exchequer, for which presumably Mr Neville Chamberlain is destined, are possibly more legitimate subjects for speculation ... I cannot think that Mr Churchill has any intention either to withdraw from active politics or to fight under any other banner. That he has been pressed to do so, as has Sir Robert Horne also, is obvious.299

Increasingly the activities of the India Committee were used to try and hold a gun to Baldwin’s head, pre-empting his actions with warnings. Spurred on by I.E.S supporters, the Committee agreed to dispatch a deputation (of which the diehard members were Gretton,

295 Amery diary, 9 February 1931, p. 147; The Times, 4 March 1931.
297 Daily Mail, article: ‘Mr Winston Churchill’s triumphal progress’, 25 February 1931; see also other glowing references to Churchill in Daily Mail, eg., 27 January, 28 January and 27 March 1931.
Burnham, Lloyd, Sir Alfred Knox, and Churchill’s adjutant Brendan Bracken) to Baldwin to express the serious reservations about Irwin’s negotiations with Gandhi and their objections to an inquiry into the police in India although Baldwin had already decided against supporting such an intrusion anyway.300 This was by no means the end of his problems with the Committee. When it met on 9 March, Churchill, Lloyd and Lord Burnham were all enthusiastically received by the majority of its attendance of about sixty. Oliver Stanley and Amery led the pro-Irwin cause. However, when even Stanley argued against the next proposed Round Table Conference taking place in India, Churchill tried to pass a resolution to this effect, once again trying to put pressure on Baldwin. In fact the embattled Party Leader had already decided that he was not prepared to destroy himself by agreeing to participation in a conference in India and therefore had no objections to the India Committee resolution being published. Not only did this leave a furious Irwin feeling betrayed,301 but, more importantly from Baldwin’s perspective, it gave the press the opportunity to present him as having been dictated to by the India Committee, and Churchill in particular, thus further weakening his public standing.302

Yet, Churchill’s personal basis of support in the Party should not be taken for granted. When one MP expressed his desire to see Churchill assume the leadership, Amery expressed the hope that there were not too many other ‘mugs’ of similar opinion in the Party.303 One fifth of the parliamentary party (52 MPs) had been civil, colonial or military servants by profession and it was from this group that Churchill had the best chance of finding his natural constituency.304 Churchill was also looking, as he made clear to the India Committee, to the House of Lords as a launch-pad for the fight against Irwinism305 and the high proportion of peers in the Indian Empire Society suggested the

300 John Wardlaw-Milne MP to Baldwin, 3 March 1931 and Baldwin to MacDonald, 2 and 3 March 1931, Baldwin Papers 104/220, 218, 224.
301 Irwin to Benn, telegram, 10 March 1931, Baldwin Papers 104/243-4.
302 Amery diary, 9 and 16 March, pp. 153-4, p. 156; Lane-Fox to Irwin, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.19/266.
303 Amery diary, 27 February 1931, p. 150.
304 Ramsden, The Age of Balfour and Baldwin, p. 305.
305 Lane-Fox to Irwin, 28 January 1931, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.19/221.
wisdom of this outlook. There was of course a certain irony in Churchill appealing to the second chamber to block the activities of the Executive given his own role in the constitutional crisis of 1909-11. Of the peers, Lloyd was the most formidable and it was he who, with Churchill, dominated the India Committee’s more important meetings.

There is much in Dr Stuart Ball’s claim that Indian diehards and the Beaverbrook/Rothermere Empire Crusaders’ were separate and un-coordinated bodies but this was not necessarily the cause of their eventual failure. For Beaverbrook, scarcely subdued by the Caxton Hall result, the over-riding objective was the removal of Baldwin. He may not have been particularly interested in the Indian question on its merits and resented the fact that Rothermere gave it primacy, but nothing could overtake his tolerance of any path which could, in conjunction with his campaign, pave the way to this higher goal. The failure to formally fuse the three main organisations (The I.E.S., The Empire Crusade and the United Empire Party) did not hinder what was becoming their common short-term objective: Baldwin’s removal. There is no reason to believe that a single thrust would have been more effective than the chosen pincer attack. Furthermore the existence of the I.E.S. was a more respectable forum for those who might be sympathetic to Beaverbrook’s and Rothermere’s goals but would recoil from public association with a direct organisation under the two main press plutocrats. The policy directives masterminded by Neville Chamberlain in October 1930 had greatly undermined the urge by dissident Tory MPs to encourage the Empire Crusade but this was scarcely the point. The crisis of early 1931 was not only about policy, it was about the personality of Stanley Baldwin as a fitting leader of the Conservative Party.

Rothermere, writing from his Monte Carlo winter retreat, encouraged Churchill to boldly forget about appeasing his ‘old colleagues’ and that since a General Election might still be over a year away he should ‘make the most of this breathing space’. The Rothermere press

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306 Ball, Baldwin and the Conservative Party, p. 125.
308 see Williamson, National Crisis and National Government, p. 177.
had been instructed to provide him with as much publicity as he wanted, though to Churchill’s annoyance this worked more at the editorial level than in the coverage of his speeches which were ‘the only weapon I have for fighting this battle.’

Whilst Rothermere purred to his new friend that he would become Prime Minister as long as he went ‘unswervingly forward’, Churchill urged caution arguing that before long ‘we must look for a party meeting not upon the question of the leadership which should most carefully be excluded from our discussions, but upon the question of the policy in India. It is too early to do more than contemplate this.’

Churchill condemned Beaverbrook’s candidates standing in by-elections, since their effect was to unite the Conservative Party in an increasingly unnatural alliance against an outside interference. Although Churchill recorded a ‘remarkable evidence of support among MP’s’ in private, publicly he thought that Party loyalty was unbreakable which is why ‘Baldwin, the party machine, who gets into office etc etc are mere irrelevancies. Policy alone is what counts - win there, win everything’. He then contradicted this belief however, by stating in the same letter that the forthcoming Westminster St George's by-election which was about ‘a political personality and a situation’ was a legitimate area of interference. The personality here was Baldwin and the situation was the decision of the Conservative candidate to stand-down rather than speak in his favour in what had been one of the safest Conservative seats in the country.

The refusal of J.T.C Moore-Brabazon to support Baldwin was the latest in a series of blows to the Party Leader’s prestige. It was not the action of a fifth rate candidate in a no-hope seat but of a former junior minister, who with Harold Macmillan, ran the Conservative Candidates’ Association in an extremely prestigious constituency. Baldwin was even

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309 Rothermere to Churchill, 29 January 1931, Chartwell Papers 2/180(A)/50; see also his telegram of the previous day, ibid., 2/180(A)/49; Churchill to Rothermere, 3 February 1931, ibid., 2/180(A)/62.
310 Rothermere to Churchill, 31 January 1931, Chartwell Papers 2/180(A)/52.
311 Churchill to Rothermere, 3 February 1931, Chartwell Papers 2/180(A)/62.
312 ibid., Chartwell Papers 2/180(A)/64-5; see also Rothermere’s defence of the by-election tactics: Rothermere to Churchill, 9 February 1931, Chartwell Papers 2/180(A)/69.
subjected to pro-Churchill mutterings in his own constituency association. The Party’s London whip, Earl Howe, told Amery that Beaverbrook’s campaign would mean the loss of all London’s seats for the Tories in view of the ‘tremendous strength of the anti-Baldwin feeling everywhere’. Howe was not the only man who wanted the Party Chairman to organise a deputation to tell Baldwin it was time to go. Neville Chamberlain received with ‘reluctance’ a memorandum from the Party’s Chief Agent, Robert Topping on 25 February claiming that despite their being little support for Beaverbrook, the popular feeling was that the Party could not win an election with Baldwin as its Leader. Topping suggested that although

Many of our supporters ... lean much more towards the views of Mr Churchill [on India] than to those expressed by Mr Baldwin in the House of Commons, ... they would be very perturbed at the possibility of any change of leadership taking place as a result of the differences between those two statesman. They would prefer, I believe, that if a new leader is to be chosen, he should be elected on broad policy and not on any one single issue.

Whilst Topping was claiming that Churchill would not be the choice of those wanting a change at the top, there was nonetheless amongst this group a ‘grave apprehension [that] a sudden development might bring about a change which would not eventually prove advantageous to the Party’. As Neville Chamberlain summarised it: ‘there was a serious danger that Churchill should seize the leadership himself if something was not done quickly.’ If this is how Chamberlain interpreted Topping’s memorandum, then it was the opposite to what Dr Ball has written that it meant: ‘not so much that Baldwin should go, but that if he did so the present [my italics] confusion might result in the choice of Churchill.’

313 Sir Richard Brooke, Vice-Chairman of Bewdley Unionist Association/Baldwin correspondence, 1 and 2 March 1931, Baldwin Papers 104/204 and 205.
314 Amery diary, 26 February 1931, p. 150.
315 Neville to Hilda Chamberlain, 1 March 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 18/1/728.
316 Topping to Neville Chamberlain, confidential, 25 February 1931, Baldwin Papers 166/50-3; Neville to Hilda Chamberlain, 1 March 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 18/1/728.
317 Ball, Baldwin and the Conservative Party, p. 137.
That events during 'the last few days'\textsuperscript{318} were moving in Churchill's favour was not in doubt, but, as we have seen, he was not the choice of the Tory front-bench nor was he, according to Topping, that of the constituency associations. This leaves the back-bench MPs as the unknown quantity. One possibility is that Topping and Chamberlain were raising the chimera of a Churchill victory only if Baldwin, staying on, protracted the crisis of leadership. This fear would encourage a change in leadership to be carried out swiftly amongst the supposedly sound men of the front bench before the more populist wings of the Party could get involved in the process. In this scenario a relatively trouble-free change-over to Hailsham, or Chamberlain himself, could be anticipated without an open wound being left long to fester on public display. This does suggest a serious panic about Churchill's growing popularity amongst back-bench Tory MPs who, it was feared, might be stampeded into throwing their weight behind him. Amery, on the other hand, whilst doubting that 'the rest of us can hold [Baldwin] up much longer' felt that it was 'only the absence of an obvious successor and the dislike of being coerced by the Press [that] has prevented things from collapsing before now.'\textsuperscript{319}

Chamberlain received, separately, the views of the leading Party men, Hoare, Hailsham, Cunliffe-Lister (the former President of the Board of Trade), Eyres-Monsell (the Party's Chief Whip), Bridgeman (a Baldwin loyalist, who whilst at the Admiralty had seriously crossed with Churchill) and his half-brother Austen. All advised him to show Baldwin Topping's letter. All save for Bridgeman, believed that this action would instigate his resignation. Chamberlain also thought that Baldwin could not 'survive' and, not wanting to 'miss the bus' as his half-brother feared he might by delaying the fateful interview, he was himself ready to replace Baldwin. He was acutely aware, however, that as Party Chairman he could not be seen to be knifing Baldwin for personal advantage which is why the advice of so many key colleagues worked in his favour.\textsuperscript{320}

\textsuperscript{318}Topping to Neville Chamberlain, 25 February 1931, Baldwin Papers 166/50-3.
\textsuperscript{319}Amery diary, 2 March 1931, p. 151.
\textsuperscript{320}Neville to Hilda Chamberlain, 1 March 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 18/1/728 and diary 23 February 1931; Amery diary, 5 March, p. 152.
Neville Chamberlain recorded in his diary a conversation Cunliffe-Lister claimed to him that he had recently had with Sir Robert Horne, the former Coalitionist Chancellor. When pushed for an answer, Horne had said that he would, regrettably, have to do his duty and accept the Party leadership if it was forced upon him. When Horne had enquired about Churchill's prospects, Cunliffe-Lister had claimed that there was no chance of him taking the Leadership since 'he world have very few votes in the House of Commons, still fewer if it were known that he wanted to leave us over food taxes.' Cunliffe-Lister was not alone in insisting that Churchill had almost no support amongst Tory backbenchers which makes the stated fears to the contrary of Topping and Chamberlain all the more intriguing. Either one or other were mistaken or, Cunliffe-Lister was trying to discourage Horne from germinating the idea that his old Coalition comrade, Churchill, had a real prospect, thus nipping in the bud any possible Churchill-Horne arrangement of mutual support which, for all Cunliffe-Lister knew, might have been in the making between the two former colleagues. Horne was a seasoned enough politician to know that in the bluff and counter-bluff world of internecine Tory Party self-advancement whatever he said in private might be repeated to the Party Chairman (for instance). Likewise for all Cunliffe-Lister knew, any loose talk to Horne might well be being telegraphed straight-back to Chartwell Manor. Whatever he thought about the privacy of political conversations, Cunliffe-Lister then determined to twist the knife one stage further assuring Horne that even if Churchill gained back-bench support, 'most of his colleagues including himself, [Neville Chamberlain] and Hailsham and the younger men such as Oliver Stanley would refuse to serve under him'. Horne then said that this ruled out Churchill's prospects and agreed with Cunliffe-Lister's advocacy of a 'Hailsham, Chamberlain combination. That both of [them] were so loyal to the party that each [would] willingly serve under the

321 NB. Martin Gilbert in his companion vol.v.pt 2, p. 294 appears to have mis-read Chamberlain's handwriting and incorrectly claims that Cunliffe-Lister was talking not to Horne but to Sam Hoare, transforming the context of the conversation. 322 Neville Chamberlain diary 8 March 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/22. 323 see the pro-Irwin Tory MP for Tonbridge, Col. Herbert Spender-Clay to Irwin, 5 March 1931, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.19/251.
other. In private conversation, Hailsham and Chamberlain had both assured each other that, like Horne, they too had no wish to be Leader, but if the Party should desire it then, regretfully, they would have to do their duty. Either way, they should work together.324

The terms of the ‘Delhi Pact’ reached between Irwin and Gandhi were read out to the Commons on 5 March: the release of Indian agitators from gaol and an end to civil disobedience and the boycott of British goods. Amery felt that they had vindicated, at least for the moment, Baldwin and would cause a ‘revulsion of feeling among our own rank and file’ against Churchill.325 This was a view shared by Davidson who felt that the truce had dished not only the ‘crooks’ like Churchill and the press barons but also Lloyd George who, he believed, was still intriguing to remove Baldwin from the Conservative leadership.326 The positive impact of the Irwin-Gandhi Pact was, however, short-lived and within a couple of days Amery was less sure that ‘the Party [was] likely to listen to reason on India from S.B.’ Both Chamberlain and Hoare felt that Baldwin’s case was still irretrievable and that he should resign before the crisis turned into a catastrophe.327 Hailsham now seemed to be against the emerging consensus amongst the Business Committee that Baldwin should be told to resign before the Westminster St George’s campaign had been fought. Hailsham’s fear that the Party might be viewed as pandering to the Press barons so soon after he had publicly criticised Beaverbrook, aroused Amery’s suspicions: ‘I was surprised to find that he thought even Winston might be accepted. I do not know whether [Hailsham] regards himself as a possible leader and feels that his chances would be prejudiced if the situation arose too soon after describing Beaverbrook as a ‘mad dog’.’328 Whether the ensuing debate in the Commons, in which Baldwin got the better of Churchill, significantly altered the balance of forces in the Conservative Party is unclear.329

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324 Neville Chamberlain dairy 8 March 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/22.
325 Amery diary, 5 March 1931, p. 151.
326 Davidson to Irwin, 5 and 6 March 1931, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.19/250, 254
327 Amery diary, 5, 6 and 7 March 1931, pp. 152-3.
328 ibid., 6 March 1931, p. 152.
329 Lane-Fox to Irwin, 12 March 1931, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.19/266; Amery diary, 12 and 13 March 1931, pp. 155-6.
main combatants’ interpretation of which of them could command support seemed to turn constantly - none taking anything for granted in a volatile political climate.

With the India Committee now acting as a ‘policy soviet’, and the Beaverbrook and Rothermere press (and of course the Imperialist *Morning Post*) giving coverage to the cause, Churchill also began canvassing support from Lord Camrose’s *Daily Telegraph* and the *Sunday Times*, albeit without much obvious public manifestation of success. The Board of Governors of the BBC rejected his application to broadcast his message on one of their eight proposed radio programmes on India since, as Sir John Reith insultingly told him, the broadcasts being ‘informative with a view to giving listeners an appreciation of the problems involved’ would not be suitable for him to be given ‘facilities to broadcast [his] own views’. As Reith made clear, this was on the advice of such impartial arbiters of information as the Party Whips and the India Office. Baldwin also had the unswerving and influential support of *The Times* whose Editor occasionally helped him with ideas for his speeches. The more *The Daily Mail* moved news about India diehard activities towards the front of its pages, the more Dawson in *The Times* deliberately moved such activities to the small print at the back. When Baldwin made his famous comment about press barons having, ‘power without responsibility, the prerogative of the harlot throughout the ages’, he was being conveniently selective. In fact, during the inter-war period the Conservative Party contemplated taking-over, directly and indirectly, controlling stakes in media organisations in order to promote ‘subtly propagandist’ material itself.

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330 Amery diary, 16 March 1931, p. 156.
332 Lane-Fox to Irwin, 4 March 1931, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.19/246.
333 Dawson to Irwin, 16 February and 5 March 1931, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.c.152.19/236 and 248.
334 Baldwin’s speech in the Queen’s Hall, 17 March 1931, quoted in Middlemas and Barnes, *Baldwin*, p. 600.
335 see memoranda from Conservative Central Office in the Baldwin Papers, eg. 48/232.
The temporary decision of Baldwin to resign after Chamberlain had shown him most of Topping's memorandum on 1 March and his hasty recantation, together with the course of the St George's by-election are well recounted elsewhere. From our perspective, the most important aspect of the by-election was that the press barons' intervention in the shape of their 'Independent Conservative' candidate, Sir Ernest Petter, prevented Baldwin's immediate resignation since whilst he was willing to resign at the private implied request of his front-bench colleagues, he was not going to do so as a public humiliation to a couple of arrogant press plutocrats. It was the advice of his wife, of Davidson and of Bridgeman, that he should stand himself against the press barons' candidate in St George's which prevented his immediate resignation and by the time Baldwin was dissuaded from this extraordinary procedure, there was no point him resigning before the result of the by-election was known. Duff Cooper's sufficient 5,710 vote victory flying the official Conservative colours in St George's gave Baldwin a temporary reprieve even although he was still very much on parole. This parole period was terminated by the collapse of the Government and the extraordinary events of August which led to Baldwin's rehabilitation as a man supposedly putting the country before party advantage.

It was not the failure of the Indian diehards and the press barons to merge into one united anti-Baldwin foe, but on the contrary, rather their obvious association, which helped save Baldwin's leadership. The press barons' intervention the previous month at East Islington which by splitting the centre right vote had handed over the seat to Labour, should have been a warning that their campaign was more divisive than constructive. This made Baldwin's decision to turn St George's into a referendum on press arrogance all the more piquant.

336 see Gillian Peele's article 'St George's and the Empire Crusade' in Chris Cook and John Ramsden (eds.), *By-elections in British Politics*, 1973; Middlemas and Barnes, *Baldwin*, p. 587-600; Williamson, *National Crisis and National Government*, pp. 187-190; Ball, *Baldwin and the Conservative Party*, pp. 137-150 argues that the threat to Baldwin's position came neither from constituency associations nor from a fictitious conspiracy from his front-bench colleagues but largely from a temporary depression on his own part.


338 amongst those making this charge is Martin Pugh in his widely read *The Making of Modern British Politics 1867-1939*, 1982, p. 277.
The I.E.S. rally at the Albert Hall had been moved forward a month, on Rothermere's advice, to 18 March before the announcement of Worthington-Evans' death on 14 February and the resultant calling of the Westminster St George's by-election. Therefore, whilst it may not have looked that way at the time, the date of the Albert Hall rally, on the eve of poll, was entirely accidental. It was the failure to re-schedule the meeting to a less subversive moment for the Conservative Party, combined with the Rothermere press's insistence that 'GANDHI IS WATCHING ST GEORGE'S' that suggested that the press barons and the India diehards were all part of the same conspiracy of harlots.

Churchill insisted that his platform appearance at the Albert Hall in condemnation of the forthcoming Gandhi-Raj had nothing to do with the St George's by-election but the implication was clearly there. The pages of the Daily Mail associated the activities of Churchill and the I.E.S. with the campaign in St George's, presenting the India debate in the headlines as the 'BALDWIN-CHURCHILL INDIA DUEL.' Duff Cooper's victory made Churchill's performance look all the more treacherous since he was now part of the sniping losing faction in the struggle for Party mastery. Baldwin's hostility to Neville Chamberlain, who had, in fact, behaved to his leader as loyally as any man in his position could be expected to do, was short-lived and Chamberlain's resignation from the Party Chairmanship (but not the Conservative Research Department) was the prelude to his formal emergence as the Chancellor-in-waiting. His status as Baldwin's effective deputy

340 Daily Mail, 18 March 1931.
341 This point was emphasised by the fact that six Tory MPs resident in the constituency refused to sign a letter of support for Duff Cooper and a further one actually wrote in favour of Sir Ernest Petter! Of these seven members, five (Col. John Gretton, Sir Alfred Knox, Reginald Purbrick, Sir Basil Peto and Sir William Wayland were emerging as India diehards). G. C. Webber, The Ideology of the British Right 1918-1939, 1986, p. 36.
342 Churchill's draft statement for his cousin, the Duke of Marlborough, in his Chairman's address to the Albert Hall meeting, Chartwell Papers 2/180/114. Full text of Churchill's speech at the Albert Hall, 18 March 1931, Complete Speeches, vol. v, p.p. 5003-9; Both Clive Ponting and Dr Carl Bridge are incorrect in stating that Churchill spoke at this meeting 'in favour of the Beaverbrook candidate'. Ponting, Churchill, p. 344; Carl Bridge, Holding India to the Empire: The British Conservative Party and the 1935 Constitution, New Delhi, 1986, p. 65.
343 Daily Mail, 13 March 1931.
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\(^{339}\) Churchill/Rothermere correspondence, 1 February and letters of 3 February 1931, Chartwell Papers 2/180(A)/55, 61 and 66.

\(^{340}\) *Daily Mail*, 18 March 1931.

\(^{341}\) This point was emphasised by the fact that six Tory MPs resident in the constituency refused to sign a letter of support for Duff Cooper and a further one actually wrote in favour of Sir Ernest Petter! Of these seven members, five (Col. John Gretton, Sir Alfred Knox, Reginald Purbick, Sir Basil Peto and Sir William Wayland were emerging as India diehards). G. C. Webber, *The Ideology of the British Right 1918-1939*, 1986, p. 36.

\(^{342}\) Churchill’s draft statement for his cousin, the Duke of Marlborough, in his Chairman’s address to the Albert Hall meeting, Chartwell Papers 2/180/114. Full text of Churchill’s speech at the Albert Hall, 18 March 1931, *Complete Speeches*, vol. v, p.p. 5003-9; Both Clive Ponting and Dr Carl Bridge are incorrect in stating that Churchill spoke at this meeting ‘in favour of the Beaverbrook candidate’. Ponting, *Churchill*, p. 344; Carl Bridge, *Holding India to the Empire: The British Conservative Party and the 1935 Constitution*, New Delhi, 1986, p. 65.

\(^{343}\) *Daily Mail*, 13 March 1931.
was entrenched by his successful bringing to heel of the Beaverbrook campaign on favourable terms to himself (peace at the price of a minor extension of the free hand throughout all areas of agriculture) in the so-called 'Stornoway Pact' at the end of March, which Beaverbrook had signed on Churchill's advice.344

344 Bruce Lockhart diary, 12 April 1931, p. 163.
Chapter Five
Old and New Alliances:

i). The Formation of the National Government

Even with the wealth of documents now available, it is still frustratingly difficult to analyse Churchill’s political manoeuvrings during the financial and political crisis of mid-1931. The main reason for this is that Churchill appears to have been entirely caught out by the extraordinary and fast moving turn of events. As a result, he drifted rudderlessly: speaking up for the National Government one moment whilst contemplating membership of a national opposition the next and advocating an emergency tariff whilst at the same time arguing that the fall in the pound made it unnecessary. His actions were like those that Curzon had once attributed to Baldwin: taking one giant leap in the dark, looking round, and then taking another.

Yet, if his actions appear contradictory then they were perhaps no more so than those of Baldwin, who within the space of a month had dismissed the concept of a National Government; joined a National Government to defend the Gold Standard; helped take Britain off the Gold Standard; intended to lead the Conservative Party independently at the forthcoming General Election only to fight it as Ramsay MacDonald’s deputy under a ‘National’ banner. It might seem almost shocking that a senior member of the Conservative Party like Churchill could pay lip-service to his Party’s actions publicly whilst privately discussing his future with men like Lloyd George and Sir Oswald Mosley. In reality, it is rather less so when we remember that at the same time, Neville Chamberlain was acting as Baldwin’s unofficial deputy whilst negotiating with the Labour Premier, arbitrating with, and between, two different factions of the Liberal Party and also sounding out Mosley. These and many other permutations of the same personalities jockeying for positions, with and against, each other were the understandable result of a political crisis which fragmented the Liberal Party, electorally annihilated the Labour Party, removed the ‘Old
Gang’ from any prospect of recovery and kept the Conservative Party externally united and internally divided. This makes it difficult to determine when senior politicians were discussing events with one another during this period whether they were being frank, were bluffing, or were double-bluffing. As Mosley’s son has rightly observed with particular reference to the discussions involving his father, much of this dinner table talk came to nothing concrete because ‘everyone on the fringes of power seemed to be trying to charm everyone else, and to be waiting to see what would happen.’ None of the key politicians in mid-1931 had any real intricate plan to deal with a particularly unpredictable situation which changed by the hour.

The first opportunity for the Conservatives to supersede the Labour Government, appeared to come, as Churchill had always insisted, from the Liberals. During late 1930 Lloyd George, conscious of dissatisfaction within his own Party about the effect of propping-up an increasingly unpopular Government, let it be hinted that if the Conservatives agreed to introduce Proportional Representation in the cities and not to stand against promising Liberal candidates in an ensuing election, then he would sever Labour’s umbilical cord in the division lobby. Without this, he would keep MacDonald in office and enjoy the introduction of the Alternative Vote. Churchill regarded urban P.R. as the least of electoral reform evils and suggested a second vote for ‘every householder and breadwinner’. The proposed reform, however, he derided as a ‘botch...to square the Liberals’: since the Alternative Vote institutionalised ‘blind chance’ in deciding winners by giving extra prominence to the second preferences of ‘the most worthless votes given by the most worthless candidates’. Although Neville Chamberlain (via intermediaries) negotiated with Lloyd George (without telling Baldwin, ‘lest it should go to Ramsay!’)

345 Nicholas Mosley, Rules of the Game: Sir Oswald and Lady Cynthia Mosley, 1896-1933, 1982, p. 188.
346 Amery diary, 30 November 1930, p. 138.
347 Churchill’s speech in the Representation of the People (No.2) Bill debate, 2 July 1931, Complete Speeches, vol.v., pp. 5044, 5041.
348 He did however tell his brother Austen, Hailsham, Hoare whom he presumed would, unlike the Leader of the Conservatives, not give the Leader of the Labour Party information about plots against him: Neville Chamberlain diary, 6 July 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/22.
on the basis of him ditching Labour in return for Proportional Representation, the Liberal Leader's motives could not be trusted. As a result, Chamberlain preferred to encourage the disintegration of the Liberal Party and then to do a deal with the part no longer committed to free trade or able to reinstitute the 'Old Gang' - the two factors which had made him vehemently against Churchill's negotiations with the free trading Liberal Party of Lloyd George in 1929. His approach to Sir John Simon left Lord Lothian to ponder whether Lloyd George was now free to break away from mainstream Liberalism to run 'a semi-Socialist progressive party'.

Churchill had been finally severed from any claim to Conservative front bench status not in January when he had resigned from the Business Committee, but in April. Baldwin's decision to ask Chamberlain to conduct the Tory opposition in the Commons to Snowden's Budget, without even writing to Churchill to inform him, precipitated, as could only have been intended, Churchill's resignation as Chairman of the Finance Committee. This, in effect, was to formally concede the shadow Chancellorship, although the momentum of this post had already slipped out of his hands long before. Writing a public letter to Baldwin, Churchill claimed that Chamberlain's succession was appropriate and that he was 'glad to be relieved of a mass of very laborious financial business and detail' now that 'the Indian situation preoccupies my mind'. Whilst promising continued support, he made clear he was not retiring from the combat zone and would be 'propose[ing] to take an active

349 Williamson, *National Crisis and National Government*, p. 116n. It appears that Lloyd George was also receptive to informal approaches from MacDonald in July which may even have involved him being brought into the Cabinet. The same month he told Chamberlain via Kingsley Wood that 'he now thought that a crisis might arise in the autumn so serious that no one party could deal with it.' Frank Owen, *Tempestuous Journey: Lloyd George, His Life and Times*, 1954, p. 717; Neville Chamberlain diary, 24 July 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/22.

350 Sir John Simon was already talking to Amery in March about accepting protection and receiving Conservative guarantees for the Liberals whom he could command to vote obediently, together with his desire for the Foreign Office: Amery diary, 26 March 1931, p. 158.

351 Williamson, *National Crisis and National Government*, p. 175; The approach began in December 1930, Simon having broken publicly from Lloyd George the previous month: Simon's letter to Lloyd George, published in *The Times*, 6 November 1930. Chamberlain stepped up his wooing in April and June 1931.

352 Lord Lothian, 29 April 1931, quoted in the narrative introduction to the Amery diary, p. 122.
part in the larger discussions.\textsuperscript{353} In fact, Churchill had resigned the Finance Committee only under duress. In his ‘naked fakir’ speech to his home West Essex Conservative Association of 23 February, he had made clear that he expected, as the Committee’s Chairman, to be the main opposition spokesman to the forthcoming Budget.\textsuperscript{354} On 9 April, he wrote to Chamberlain offering his oratorical services in the budget debate and protesting that, if India could be put aside for the moment, then their objectives were the same.\textsuperscript{355} When Chamberlain rose to answer Snowden’s budget ‘there were derisive shouts for Winston from the Labour benches and some serious shouts for him from two or three of our DieHards, who in their enthusiasm about India have forgotten all they ever felt about Winston’s financial performances.’\textsuperscript{356}

When Churchill finally spoke two days later, it was in a liberated, almost whimsical tone. Noting Snowden’s confession, that ‘the limits of direct taxation ha[d] been reached’ Churchill agreed with Chamberlain’s view that the ‘compulsive need for revenue must bring the tariff’ and that this would help ‘in welding together the production and consumption of our Empire’\textsuperscript{357} During the second reading of the Unemployment Insurance (No.4) Bill he sounded like an Edwardian Liberal accommodating himself to the Conservatives’ call for retrenchment, ticking off Snowden for ‘not drawing the line which separates the self-supporting element in the community from those who are compelled to incur the bounty of their fellow subjects’ in the Unemployment Insurance scheme of which he claimed the original authorship and the labour exchange system which he ‘brought into being and set up’.\textsuperscript{358}

\textsuperscript{353} Churchill to Baldwin, 2 April 1931, Chartwell Papers 2/5729(B)/242-3.
\textsuperscript{354} Churchill’s speech in Epping, 23 February 1931, \textit{Complete Speeches} vol.v., p. 4983.
\textsuperscript{355} Churchill to Neville Chamberlain, 9 April 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 8/10/34.
\textsuperscript{356} Amery diary, 27 April 1931, p. 160.
\textsuperscript{357} Churchill’s speech in the Budget debate, 29 April 1931, Hansard 251 H.C. Deb 5s. cols. 1657-8, 1665, 1667-8.
\textsuperscript{358} Churchill’s speech on the Unemployment Insurance (No.4) Bill’s second reading, 26 June 1931, Hansard 254 H.C. Deb 5s, cols.842, 849, 843-9.
Relieved of any formal position in the Party structure, Churchill’s decision to reassociate himself with the great social welfare reforms of the past twenty-five years did not necessarily suggest that he was moving with Lloyd George, Mosley and the Tory ‘progressives’ on the road to ‘Tory socialism’.359 This notion involves ignoring the Tory retrenchment arguments which underpinned his speeches in this period and to misinterpret his economic sub-Parliament - a purely advisory body - as some kind of commitment to a corporatist state. He had led the assault on the economics of Lloyd George’s We Can Conquer Unemployment proposals at the last Election. Mosley’s programme of May 1930 he chastised as ‘a less efficient variant’ of the Liberal Leader’s scheme of proposals which were ‘examined in every aspect... [and found that they did] not hold water’.360 That Mosley’s economic ideas had become progressively more interventionist since his Commons resignation speech only made alliance with Churchill less believable. Churchill’s rejection of interventionist economics distanced himself similarly from the Tory Left who also opposed his Indian diehardism.362 Members of this group contemplated moving over to a centre party with Lloyd George,363 or to Mosley’s embryo New Party.364 Reporting the gossip that Churchill was interested in forming ‘a Centre Party’ shortly after his resignation from the Business Committee, the Daily Telegraph’s gossip column recalled, perhaps with some irony, Harcourt’s words on Lord Randolph Churchill’s attempts to establish such a group: ‘all centre and no circumference’.365 Churchill was not prepared to

360 Churchill’s speech to the Supply Committee, 28 May 1930, Hansard 239 H.C. Deb 5s, cols. 1424-5.
361 see Williamson, National Crisis and National Government, pp. 147-8.
363 see report of Cliveden dinner party attended by Oliver Stanley, Walter Elliot, Brendan Bracken, Harold Macmillan and Bob Boothby in Tom Jones diary, 26 October 1931, p. 274.
364 conversation between Macmillan and Harold Nicolson, Nicolson diary, 30 May 1931, p. 76; The Tory MP, W.E.D. Allen resigned from the Conservative Party at this time in order to join the New Party.
adopt an interventionist economic policy to gain support from the ‘progressives’ of his Party and the Left. He was prepared to speak up for Imperialism to gain support from his historic enemies on free trade and Ulster - the diehard Right.

It is in this light that Churchill’s conversations with Lloyd George and Mosley during the crisis period in which the National Government was formed must be viewed. By July, Mosley believed that the crisis would lead to a National Government - led by Lloyd George with Churchill as second in command. According to Harold Nicolson (who had left Beaverbrook’s employment in order to assist with the creation of Mosley’s ‘New Party’), Lloyd George had sounded out Mosley and Churchill after dinner at Sir Archibald Sinclair’s house with the idea that if there was a Labour-Conservative National Government then they should ‘form a National Opposition’. Given the propensity of MacDonald and Baldwin to fail the country, they would soon come to power themselves. What was clear from the discussion was, however, that Lloyd George, whilst master of ceremonies, had no real plan as to how this coalition of talents was to operate. Nicolson noted that Churchill, who had brought along his young supporter, Brendan Bracken, was ‘very brilliant and amusing but not constructive’. Nonetheless, Nicolson thought that they all departed ‘on the assumption that although nothing has been said, the great Coalition has been formed. [Mosley] is very pleased.366 When the formation of the National Government took place with Lloyd George seriously ill and Churchill in France, the latter flew in briefly from France for a supposedly secret rendez-vous with the invalid Liberal (Herbert Samuel was effectively leading the Party in his absence).367 There is no documentation as to the discussion of tactics which took place at this juncture, but no obvious action emerged from it. Both men were still publicly at one with the ‘national’ concept: it was the calling of an election on this programme that forced Churchill to jump with the majority of his Party and Lloyd George to isolate himself entirely.

366 Nicolson diary, 20, 21 and 23 July 1931, pp. 80-3.
367 Amery to his wife, 4 September 1931, Amery diary, p. 197.
Back in Biarritz, Churchill dispatched his ambitious son to negotiate with Mosley with equally negative results. If young Randolph interpreted his father’s instructions accurately then Churchill wanted Mosley to ‘join him and the Tory toughs in opposition’ since the balancing of the budget would not solve the national economy whilst failing to dissolve existing tensions. By ‘toughs’, Churchill presumably did not mean the minor backbench YMCA ‘progressives’ but the Imperialists of the Party unimpressed by the prospect of a MacDonald-Baldwin combination. However, when Mosley enquired why Churchill did not go into a combination of Lloyd George and Sir Robert Horne, his son replied that without Mosley they would ‘not be able to get hold of the young men.’ Clearly therefore, Churchill did hope to square the circle and bring on board a group who no longer had anything in common with him but whose presence would mitigate against allegations that the ‘Old Guard’ Coalition was back in action. Convinced of his own destiny, Mosley had no wish to be dragged along in a subservient role to such an incongruous group. His position was the same when he was approached by Neville Chamberlain who was also interested in whether he could be brought on side. Chamberlain certainly took seriously the potency of a Lloyd George-Mosley alliance in the event of a crisis and such a combination had the interest, and intermittently the support, of many of the key figures in the media including Beaverbrook, Rothermere and Garvin, the last of whom wanted to see these dynamic forces in the same improbable coalition as MacDonald, Baldwin and Churchill. Chamberlain had a secret meeting with Mosley in the hope of doing ‘a secret deal.’ Nothing came of it.

Both MacDonald and Baldwin may previously, at unrelated times, have casually pondered the merits of coming together to force through policies objectionable to the extremes of their respective parties but conspiracy theories on this theme are wide of the mark.

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368 ibid., 31 August 1931, P. 89.
369 Neville to Hilda Chamberlain, 14 February 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 18/1/726.
370 Williamson, National Crisis and National Government, p. 149.
371 Nicolson diary, 1 October 1931, p. 93.
372 see in particular: Neville Chamberlain diary 6 July 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/22.
Baldwin, who was sceptical about entering any sort of coalition, spent the crucial weeks sunning himself in Aix-les-Bains and appeared content to leave Neville Chamberlain to handle the negotiations back home. Baldwin's insistence that the new Government was not a formal coalition, less still an integration of parties, but merely a temporary collusion of individuals at Executive level, underlined his hesitancy to embroil himself in a permanent departure from the course of British politics and reinforced his own anti-coalitionist credo. He made absolutely clear that as soon as the Budget had been balanced and credit restored, a fresh general election would be called upon old party lines. This was also MacDonald's stated intention. This desire manifested itself in Baldwin's insistence that, given the limited period of operation, only a small ten-man Cabinet should be appointed. That this had the dual bonus of making more acceptable the exclusion of all figures of the Tory Right, including Lord Hailsham, (who had succeeded the ill - and dispirited - Salisbury as Tory Leader in the Lords in June) and all the Tory 'Old Gang' ex-Coalitionists was the result rather than the motivation of this view (Austen Chamberlain was the only ex-Coalitionist to be offered a portfolio: the Admiralty, and this was to be outside the Cabinet). In one sense Hailsham's exclusion dampened the prospects of Churchill's most likely right wing contender for the leadership succession, but more importantly, it emphasised the Cabinet's avoidance of all sceptics of the Indian federalist agenda now masterminded by Hoare, who became the India Office's new Secretary of State. When Hailsham returned to the Cabinet in November, it was to a contracting War Office. That Churchill was not a contender for a Cabinet portfolio was a fact regarded too obvious to merit discussion by Fleet Street. As early as February he had made clear to his

373 ibid. In July, Baldwin had told the Cabinet Secretary, Sir Maurice Hankey, that although he would help the Labour Government to make the necessary economies, he would 'not enter a Coalition Government'. Hankey diary, 6 September 1931 in Stephen Roskill, *Hankey: Man of Secrets*, vol. 2., 1972, p. 548; Ramsden, *Balfour and Baldwin*, p. 316; Baldwin's speech in *The Times*, 13 December 1930.  
374 Baldwin's statement, reported in *The Times*, 25 August 1931.  
375 Neville Chamberlain diary 24 August 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/22.  
Baldwin's reluctance to join the National Government, the role of Chamberlain as messenger rather than leader and the rejection of left wing conspiracy theories regarding the events of August 1931 are convincingly argued by Stuart Ball, 'The Conservative Party and the Formation of the National Government: August 1931' in *The Historical Journal*, vol.29., pt. 1, 1986, pp. 159-182.
constituency that although he would be a ‘loyal member of the Conservative Party’ on other issues, since he intended ‘to go through’ with his attempts to ‘marshal British opinion’ against surrender in India to the bitter end, ‘I should not be able to serve in any Administration about whose Indian policy I was not reassured.’ A month later he reiterate this view: ‘I have cheerfully and gladly put out of my mind all idea of public office.’ This was not a self-sacrifice however, since as India would become ‘the culminating issue in British politics’ during ‘the next two to three years’ in which he ‘intend[ed] to fight’ on it, he would ‘receive shortly an ally - ...”The March Of Events”’ Churchill had returned briefly to England on 17 August for a couple of days and had spoken to Sir Robert Horne on the situation. Horne relayed to Neville Chamberlain, who passed it on to Baldwin, that Churchill was, in common with ‘a definite body of Conservative opinion ... aggressively of [the] view’ that the Tories should ‘take no responsibility whatsoever for Government plans ... This perhaps you would expect and discount.' If this was Churchill’s view, then he, like the ‘definite body of Conservative opinion’ adapted to the new situation very quickly. In arranging a deal to write articles for the Daily Mail with Esmond Harmsworth, Churchill wrote to Bracken from France that he ‘must reserve liberty to terminate the contract should I be called upon to take Office, and decide to do so.’

Amery suggested, with hindsight, that the chief attraction for Baldwin of a National Government was that it could be formed without Lloyd George (because of his illness) and Churchill who was out of sight in France. As Dr. Philip Williamson has demonstrated, this may have been the end result, but it was not the purpose of forming the Government. If Baldwin’s chief concern had been the permanent exclusion of the ex-coalitionist element he would not have been reluctant to enter the National Government in the first place and

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376 Churchill’s speech to the West Essex Conservative Association, 23 February 1931, Complete Speeches vol.v., p. 4984.
377 Churchill’s speech to the Constitutional Club, London, 26 March 1931, ibid., p. 5010.
378 Horne to Neville Chamberlain, 18 August 1931, Baldwin Papers 44/43.
379 Churchill to Brendan Bracken, 23 August 1931, Chartwell Papers 8/290.
380 Amery diary, 29 August 1931, p. 195n.
381 Williamson, National Crisis and National Government, p. 517.
would not have, on so doing, insisted that it should dissolve itself as soon as its immediate
task was accomplished to give place to old party politics.

Having generally taken a minimalist view of his support in the Conservative Party, Dr
Stuart Ball has argued that Churchill might have filled a minor Cabinet position had an
all-Tory Cabinet been formed in mid-1931. Certainly the public calls in *The Times* by
General Seely, Asquith’s ex-War Secretary, and by the veteran Editor of the *Observer*, J.L.
Garvin, during the winter for a national government of all the talents had advocated
Churchill’s inclusion with Lord Reading as Premier, a leader whose Indian views
Churchill reportedly might still have been able to tolerate (although given Reading’s
enthusiasm for the Round Table Conference this optimism is highly suspect). Samuel
Hoare wrote to his ‘greatest friend in political life’ Neville Chamberlain that ‘as we
have said several times in the last few days, we had some great good luck in the absence of
Winston and L.G’. Unless Hoare thought that had the two of them been available
they would have been able to wreck the process, it is more likely that he inferred that
places would have to have been found for them in the Government. This entirely
contradicts his later publicised view that essentially because of their political position ‘no
one even suggested that [Lloyd George and Churchill] should be associated in any way with
what was happening’. Whilst a fit Lloyd George could not have been excluded from the
Government, save by his own command, a post for Churchill ought never to have been an
option. The new Government may have been constituted to save the very device which
Churchill had been responsible for restoring - the Gold Standard - but his eclipse on
economic questions by Chamberlain and his concentration upon the Indian Question came at
a time when economy was much more important than events in the sub-continent. If the
National Government was to be temporary then there was no need to address the Indian

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385 leaflet to his constituents, September 1931, Templewood Papers VII:1.
386 Hoare to Neville Chamberlain, August (?) 1931, Templewood Papers VII:1.
issue anyway and therefore no need to consider how best to play Churchill. Men like
Cunliffe-Lister who ‘would never again work with Winston as Chancellor [because in the
last Government] he defeated all tariff proposals’\textsuperscript{388} found themselves, under the special
circumstances of the crisis, working with the Cobdenite Philip Snowden. Churchill’s
exclusion from the August Cabinet was not, therefore, because of his free trading past, but
because his views, like Hailsham’s, were antagonistic to the Labour members in a small
Cabinet determined to maintain a ‘national’ and united front. India was the most current of
Churchill’s supposedly objectionable right wing views, but his renowned traditional
combativeness towards the Labour movement might well have disqualified him from office
even if he had waxed-lyrical about Lord Irwin’s viceroyalty all along.

More tentatively, Dr John Charmley suggests that if Churchill had still been in the
Business Committee in August, he could not have been so-effectively marginalised in the
process of forming the National Government.\textsuperscript{389} Certainly, Churchill would have been
consulted, and would have had no shortage of comment. However, there is no reason to
believe that with only four seats available in the August Cabinet for Conservatives, he
would have emerged from the process with a portfolio, when, thanks to MacDonald’s veto,
other qualified right wing men like Hailsham did not. Leo Amery who, like Churchill
had his reservations, but unlike Churchill was on the Business Committee at the time of
the new Government’s formation, felt unable to prevent the Government from being
created.\textsuperscript{390} Although he had been more loyal to the Party despite his divergent views on
Empire Free Trade than had Churchill on India, he was nonetheless excluded from Cabinet
office, even after the October re-shuffle confirmed Tory dominance in the Coalition.

Neville Chamberlain shared Baldwin’s belief that the Government would be short-lived
since Snowden, the new Chancellor, had assured him that he had no intention of

\textsuperscript{388} reported conversation between Cunliffe-Lister and Lord Bayford, 22 March 1931, in John
Ramsden (ed.)\textit{Real Old Tory Politics, the political diaries of Sir Robert Sanders, Lord
\textsuperscript{389} Charmley, \textit{Churchill}, p. 266.
\textsuperscript{390} Amery to his wife, 25 August and Amery diary, 28 August 1931, pp. 193, 194-5.
introducing a Tariff policy.\textsuperscript{391} There was no prospect of the Conservatives being for long placated in these circumstances and with the collapse of the coalition, Beaverbrook believed that Chamberlain would then make himself available as Baldwin's more partisan replacement.\textsuperscript{392} Lord Lloyd also thought that Baldwin's leadership would be jettisoned with the imminent collapse of the coalition.\textsuperscript{393} Certainly, that the National Government, as constituted, would be short-lived, was the commonly expressed view almost everywhere. Churchill now announced an alternative idea.

Parliament reconvened on 8 September to discuss the financial crisis and take stock of the momentous governmental changes of the previous fortnight. MacDonald spoke first, followed by Arthur Henderson, the new Leader of the Opposition. Churchill spoke next, the first Tory to do so. Initially Churchill's description of Baldwin's 'high motives' appeared decidedly luke-warm conceding that since 'the deed is done ... we have got to make the best of it'. Had the coalition of forces been truly 'national' then the Government should have been maintained for 'a long time' but since a large section (Labour) were in opposition, the resulting 'uncertainty' which would hamper 'our trade and industrial activity' could not long be tolerated. He warned, in particular the Conservative Party that as the majority partner they would, as time went by, have to shoulder the 'new discontents and new disappointments' of 'a vast, unorganised electorate' if they long delayed going to the country. Whilst he wanted Baldwin's assurance that no 'substantial' step in Indian policy should be taken by the interim Government, the main issue was that 'the nation is now ripe to adopt' protection. Without being able to introduce this 'constructive' measure, Conservatives would be reduced to merely 'enforcing unpopular economies, and levying new and burdensome taxes'. Turning to the Liberals, and paying particular tribute to his friend Sir Archibald Sinclair (the new Scottish Secretary) he 'rejoiced' that at last 'the Floor was broader than the Gangway, and long may it remain so ... Now we are all together. Now we see our common opponents arrayed against us.' Since the British electorate 'are a great

\textsuperscript{391} Amery diary, 2 September 1931, p. 196.
\textsuperscript{392} ibid., 6 September 1931, pp. 197-8.
\textsuperscript{393} ibid., 26 August 1931, pp. 193-4.
people...at their best on great occasions’ they would respond warmly to a national appeal in a General Election if it were called soon.394

For Baldwin, Conservative Party strategy was to break up the National Government once the currency and budget had been stabilised without a sweeping tariff policy with the ensuing election fought by the Conservative Party on a strong protectionist programme. Here, then, was Churchill arguing for the virtual opposite: the Liberals should drop their archaic attachments to free trade (as he had done) so that the National Government could implement protection as soon as possible and to fight a quick election on this National, rather than party, basis. Although he voted for it as a means of identifying himself with the ‘national’ programme, he was not afraid to criticise Snowden’s direct-tax raising emergency budget for its failure to take protection seriously.395 When the Government failed in one of its primary objectives - to maintain the Gold Standard - he argued that adopting the Tariff would be the only way to give the coalition a fresh leash of life.396

Given the fact that he was supposedly ‘scornful’ of the new Government,397 Churchill’s actions seem bizarre. Perhaps he feared that an end to the coalition would lead to a whole-hog protectionist Tory Party under Neville Chamberlain from which he would be permanently excluded. But, in fact he was now arguing for little less himself. Not only did he state the case for the Tariff as a means of revenue, he had accepted the whole idea of the supposed benefits of free trade within a large protected market, sighting the United States as a worthy example.398 Furthermore, a Baldwin-MacDonald combination was more likely to exclude him on account of his alleged right wing views (as it had done all non

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394 Churchill’s speech to the Commons on the financial situation, 8 September 1931, Hansard 256 H.C. Deb 5s. cols. 44-9.
395 Churchill’s speech to his constituents in Chingford, 11 September 1931, Complete Speeches vol.v., p. 5074; speech in the Commons, Budget debate, 15 September 1931, Hansard H.C. Deb 5s. cols. 711-2.
396 Churchill’s speech in Liverpool, 29 September 1931, Complete Speeches vol.v., pp.5082-3.
397 Amery to his wife, 1 September 1931, quoted in Amery diary, p. 196.
398 Churchill’s speech in the Unemployment (No.2) Bill debate, 18 February 1931, Complete Speeches vol.v., p. 4980.
'progressive' Tories) than a Chamberlain-Hailsham one. On top of this, with his own conversion to protectionism, the fiscal issue was essentially a dead one for Churchill and if he hoped that a continuing National Government - by including Liberals - would thereby strengthen his position then he would not have abandoned free trade so totally and spoken of the need to introduce the Tariff. The most likely explanation as to his motive must surely be that he decided that by advocating an election he would be welcomed back into favour if a Conservative dominated National Government was to be returned. This would tie-in with the Evening Standard diarist's observation that being now 'weak' and 'slightly the worse for drink' Churchill was 'like a schoolboy trying to get into the team'. In fact his call for an early election on protectionist lines was 'by no means pleasing to the Front Bench' and Baldwin speaking shortly after him did not address directly the content of his speech. That Churchill wavered so easily between advocating a General Tariff one week and, after another meeting with Lloyd George, then argued the Liberal line that sterling's devaluation therefore no longer necessitated such a move before reverting to his protectionist stance again, only confirms this view that he had no more idea what to do - or when to do it - than anybody else.

We must, however, also consider the fact that illness demobilised what Churchill saw as the greatest asset of a potential opposition - David Lloyd George. It may well be that, despite their differences over the last three years, Churchill did not feel he could strike without the support of his old master. He still revered the old Welshman and the Liberal's support for the Round Table Conference, Churchill had told Sinclair as recently as January, had, he feared, dashed the 'last despairing hope that we should see again the great Lloyd George come to the aid of our country'. Less than a fortnight before the National Government was formed, Churchill had written a feature for the Daily Mail

399 Bruce Lockhart diary, 20 September 1930, p. 186.
400 Amery diary, 8 September 1931, p. 199.
401 Baldwin's speech, 8 September 1931, Hansard 256 H.C. Deb 5s. cols. 66-72.
402 Amery diary, 24 September 1931, p. 204.
chronicling Lloyd George's achievements and suggesting that he could best serve his country by breaking from his ‘discordant associations’ with the Liberal Party and mounting a statesman-like ‘pedestal’ to give ‘true counsel’ on the nation’s affairs.\textsuperscript{404} It is still not clear whether Lloyd George’s wish to lead a National Opposition as stated in July to Mosley was a serious intention rather than merely keeping his options open since he reportedly approved of Liberal involvement in forming the new Government.\textsuperscript{405} However, he had no wish to see the Liberals fight a swift election on a ‘national’ platform and broke with Samuel and the main body of his party as a result. This made a parting of approach necessary and so Churchill’s call for an election, therefore, could not have been at Lloyd George’s instigation. The invalid Liberal’s refusal to follow Churchill on the path of national rectitude, ‘an absence we all deplore’ as the latter told the post-election Parliament,\textsuperscript{406} was a source of disappointment. Churchill felt free to confess to the voters that ‘I did my best to bring him along. I am sorry indeed that the great wartime Prime Minister should not be with his country in the perils of peace as he was in the perils of war.’\textsuperscript{407} An underlying theme of Churchill’s strategy from 1929 to 1931 - teaming up once again with Lloyd George - had therefore come to nothing. In the event, Churchill could not resist a jibe as his former colleague hobbled into electoral insignificance with a party composed of his own family: ‘the most united party in the country - small, but united by bonds far above the ordinary connections and associations of political life.\textsuperscript{408}

On 24 September, Baldwin announced to his Business Committee that, as Amery acidly put it, on the ‘result of an hour’s thinking at 3 a.m.’\textsuperscript{409} he now proposed that ‘an election should take place as soon as possible [and] that the appeal should be on a national not a party programme’ which should include the free hand to impose tariffs.\textsuperscript{410} This was tantamount

\textsuperscript{404} Daily Mail, 12 August 1931, article: ‘Will Lloyd George ‘Come Back’?’.  
\textsuperscript{405} ibid., 29 August 1931, p. 7.  
\textsuperscript{406} Churchill’s speech to the Commons, 11 November 1931, Complete Speeches vol.v., p. 5095.  
\textsuperscript{407} Churchill’s speech at Forest Hill, 23 October 1931, ibid., p. 5088.  
\textsuperscript{408} Churchill’s speech in Epping, 12 October 1931, ibid., p. 5086.  
\textsuperscript{409} Amery diary, 24 September 1931, p. 203.  
\textsuperscript{410} Neville Chamberlain diary, 24 September 1931, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/22.
to saying that the Conservative Party was going to fight an election on Conservative policies but under the larger, more appealing banner of being 'National' - just as Churchill had advocated in September. MacDonald and Simon were now sufficiently broadminded on the issue of tariffs to go along with this policy leaving Snowden as an obstacle ready to be swamped by the march of events. If the Samuelite Liberals were not prepared to fight on these protectionist lines then, as far as much of the Tory Party was concerned, their departure was a cause for celebration. There is no evidence to suggest that Baldwin had planned this course of action any more than his assertion that the National Government would defend the Gold Standard was a deliberate deceit considering the fact that the Government subsequently abandoned Gold. As Dr Charmley has said, it was all in the best tradition of 'make do and mend'. Whilst allowing for his scepticism for the whole process, Amery probably best analysed the decision by stating that 'a few weeks ago the idea of being under MacDonald was resented by most of our party. Now they have got converted to the national notion they are terrified of standing alone and being accused of having broken up the 'national unity'. That the appeal to the country materialised as a woolly 'doctor's mandate', a device to promise everything and nothing so that the free trade Samuelite Liberals stayed in alliance, was but another unforeseen twist in a long series of political hair-pin bends.

Despite the fact that Churchill's election addresses were conventional for a Tory in the 'National' appeal and that he supported the 'doctor's mandate' so that the Liberals would not have 'to commit themselves to any scheme' a Samuelite candidate stood, with his Leader's endorsement, against him in his Epping constituency. This was particularly irritating in view of the fact that Churchill, like Baldwin, had made clear his disapproval of a Conservative standing against Samuel in Darwen. He had hoped to

411 Amery diary, 30 and 1 October 1931, p. 206.
412 Charmley, Churchill, p. 265.
413 Amery diary, 28 September 1931, p. 205.
414 see Complete Speeches vol.v., pp. 5084-8.
415 Churchill's election address at Theydon Bois, ibid., p. 5088.
416 Churchill's election address at Wanstead, 10 October 1931, ibid., p. 5084.
make an election broadcast on the BBC,417 but in common with every other Tory, save the Party Leader, he was denied the opportunity which was afforded to all three Liberal leaders.418

Churchill did not hide his annoyance at Samuel’s public hope that he would lose his seat at the election and made clear in his first speech before the new parliament that as far as the Government were concerned “My relations with foreign Powers continue to be friendly’... My attitude will be one of discriminating benevolence.’ There was an underlying threat of malice in his sarcasm when he spoke of the surprise of finding Baldwin ‘now the champion coalitionist ... I am sure he will be reminded of those dangers whenever he should chance to walk across the portals of the Carlton Club’. MacDonald, ‘the Saviour of the Gold Standard - no, I beg pardon, of the pound sterling’ who had lambasted Churchill’s economic policies during the election campaign could expect no mercy from his oratorical tormentor. This did not prevent him wishing the Government ‘Godspeed’ in their endeavours. For Churchill, the direction for the Government had to be the calling of an international conference to settle the war debt problem and the unleashing of the gold reserves whose stock-piling by the United States and France, he attributed to the break-down of the Gold Standard. Furthermore, the instituting of protection without delay was a primary requirement and that alongside the restriction of food imports should come the encouragement of greater self-sufficiency in the areas of home agriculture which were capable of expansion.419 Henceforth, Churchill’s alienation from the Government would not be concerned with domestic issues.

417 Churchill to Sir John Reith, telegram. 10 October 1931, Chartwell Papers 2/183/36.
418 Churchill’s election address at Epping, 13 October 1931, Complete Speeches, vol.v., p. 5086.
419 Churchill to the Commons, 11 November 1931, ibid., p.5090-7.
ii). Building an Imperialist Alliance

The detail of the Statute of Westminster and the conclusion of the second Round Table Conference on India ensured that Churchill could not make peace with the new Government. He voiced 'no attack on the main principles' of the Statute of Westminster Bill since he was not 'opposed to the resolutions of 1926 out of which the Statute was born'. He felt it important to observe that the legal definition of dominion status which the Statute proclaimed had severe repercussions for the India debate since its definition was much more exact than the broad inexactitudes he had originally supported for India in 1917. He had 'only one important point of principle at issue' and that was to support Colonel John Gretton's amendment preventing the possibility of the Irish *Dail* being legally capable of repudiating the 1921 Treaty, for which, despite his new diehard connections, he was not ashamed to take his fair share of the credit. The potential loss of Britain's strategic air and naval rights in the Irish Free State would be a particular source of concern.

Churchill's insistence may seem deliberately argumentative given the Government's assurances that the Statute did not affect Ireland's right to repudiate the Treaty. President Cosgrave's insistence that there was no intention to perpetrate such an act without common agreement suggested that Gretton's amendment could only poison relations between the two countries. However, it was valid for Churchill to assert that there was legal dispute over whether the Statute did affect the Treaty's inviolability and that if relations were healthy with Ireland then there was no harm in giving legal enforcement to the constitutional basis of that peace. Ireland's internal turmoil and the possibility of De Valera's *Fianna Fail* Party taking power (as was indeed to happen in February 1932) was, as far as the diehards were concerned, all the more reason for making a cast-iron legal

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420 Churchill's speech on the Statute of Westminster Bill, 20 November 1930, ibid., p. 5104. Despite this clear statement in support of the Commonwealth of the white dominions, Clive Ponting has quoted selectively so as to claim, contrary to the facts, that Churchill opposed 'any legal recognition of the right of the white dominions to self government' hence his opposition to the Statute of Westminster.

421 Churchill's speech, 24 November 1931, ibid., p. 5105; speech of 20 November 1930, ibid., p. 5100-3.
The quality of Churchill's two speeches on the Statute of Westminster was noteworthy: Amery thought he had delivered 'one of the most powerful and most impressive speeches which has been delivered in this House for a long time' whilst Baldwin acknowledged that he was 'by common consent the most powerful debater and greatest orator in this House'. Churchill's argument was moderately phrased and couched to cause a minimum of divisiveness in the debate, but just as it further brought him into the orbit of Gretton and the circle of Ulster and India diehards, so it further isolated him from the reformist majority. One backbencher was not afraid to follow Churchill's second oration on the Bill with the question 'what precisely is his position in the public life of England; whom does he represent; what principles does he hold; and who is his Leader?' The new Parliamentary Secretary for Pensions also entirely missed the point, thinking that Churchill's defence of the Treaty he had signed was, in some way, 'a change of viewpoint' having previously 'surrendered Ireland'. On his return from his American tour four months later, Churchill wrote to Salisbury suggesting that some of the caucus who had supported Gretton's amendment should meet to 'interchange opinion' on De Valera's threatened disruption of the Irish settlement. That he suggested an approach to Gretton 'would be better' coming from Salisbury suggests that he had not yet become an intimate of the inveterate diehard colonel. Churchill hoped that the campaign would include not just Lord Lloyd, Page Croft and Gretton but also Lords' Carson and Midleton (the former of whom had violently attacked Churchill over the Irish Treaty, the later of whom, at the War Office as St John Brodrick had been locked in public argument with Churchill over army reforms in 1903), and the legal experts Lord Sumner and Professor John Morgan - both of whom were to assist the diehards' India campaign. Churchill's meeting with Salisbury was kept strictly confidential and the hard line which the Government let it be

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422 speech of 24 November 1931, ibid., pp. 5105-6.
423 Amery's speech on the Statute of Westminster Bill, Second Reading debate, 20 November 1931, 229 H.C. Deb 5s. col.1199.
424 Baldwin's speech to the Commons, 24 November 1931, 260 H.C. Deb 5s. col.344.
425 Joseph Devlin MP to the Commons, 24 November 1931, ibid., col.331.
428 Churchill to Salisbury, 5 April 1932, ibid., pp. 413-4.
known that they would take with any repudiation from De Valera defused the necessity for Churchill to bring together a new constituency of Ulster loyalist forces to defend the pact that he and his Coalition colleagues had made with Irish Republicans.429

If the Government’s resolve against De Valera prevented Churchill championing revisionist Ulster diehardism then a similar change of approach to Gandhi cooled his ability to rouse the same body of support under the India diehard colours. Churchill’s approval of the tough measures of the new Indian Viceroy, Lord Willingdon, against Gandhi and Congress’ supporters reinforced his belief that his case for the assertion of the will to rule was the essence of successful government for India.430 He therefore argued that the Indian Empire Society should hold its fire on a fresh Albert Hall rally until ‘the Government start - as I am sure they will - communing with Gandhi, or when they make some foolish constitutional surrender not to help India but to save Ramsay MacDonald’s face’.431 The twenty members of the Indian Empire Society returned to Parliament after the 1931 Election432 were a minor fraction on the Conservative benches, to say nothing of as a proportion of the whole House. If he was not to ditch the Indian issue, Churchill had to speak and vote against the new Government in December with the close of the second Round Table Conference’s continuing work for All-India Federation. However, it only further ensured that he would be viewed as an outsider from the governing party.

In discussing the fluidity of the diehard constituency of support in the new Commons, it is of value to compare the division lobby lists of Tories on Gretton’s Amendment to the Statute of Westminster Bill on 24 November and of Churchill’s Amendment to the second Round Table Conference debate of 3 December 1931.433 Of the 43 Tory rebels on the India division, 16 (plus one of the Tellers) also voted against the Government over the Statute of

431 Churchill to Lord Derby, Chartwell Papers 2/189.
432 Sir Mark Hunter to Churchill, 6 November 1931, Chartwell Papers 2/180/206.
433 Hansard 260 H.C. Deb 5s.
Westminster, eight (plus one Teller, and one who was to be a Teller) voted with the Government and 18 were absent or abstained. It is important, of course, to note that of the 32 MPs who voted against the Statute of Westminster but not against the Government’s India policy, seven were from Ulster constituencies. Furthermore, convinced India diehards like Patrick Donner and Brendan Bracken were amongst the 22 of them who abstained or were absent on the India division. The defeat in December was a clear blow to Churchill’s hopes of a large Commons following on the Indian issue for the moment and Hoare could note with confidence to the Viceroy that ‘You will have noticed from the collapse of the Churchill movement in the House of Commons how fully [the Round Table agenda] has been accepted by the great bulk of the Conservative party.’

As we shall see, the December division was to be the low point in the diehard campaign. Hoare’s optimism was misplaced. Churchill thought the diehards’ parliamentary position sufficiently strong, writing to Salisbury that the Government’s decision ‘to remit the whole Indian constitutional issue to a Joint Committee of both Houses before a Bill is even introduced into the House of Commons, seems to me ... most advantageous from our point of view.’

Churchill’s departure for America on 5 December for over three months testified to the fact that he felt there was no useful work for him to do in London. When he returned to England on 18 March, having recovered from a serious car accident shortly after his arrival in New York, his attitude was not noticeably different to that which he had adopted before the Christmas recess.

In the United States, Churchill had privately conceded that MacDonald and Baldwin had ‘ceased to command my allegiance.’ Significantly, when he again offered his broadcasting services to the BBC, he said that he would speak on broadly political matters ‘from an entirely independent standpoint.’ Understandably, the continued reticence of

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434 Hoare to Willingdon, 3 December 1931, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.2., p. 381.
435 Churchill to Salisbury, secret, 1 July 1932, ibid. p. 447.
436 Churchill to Robert Boothby, 6 February 1932, ibid., p. 400.
the BBC to allow him to speak, on the dubious pretext that his views on monetary policy might prejudice the Lausanne Conference received his strongest approbation. His attitude to the re-alignment of British politics was probably best summarised when he claimed that he had ‘always been able to keep [his] enthusiasms for the present National Government within the bounds of decorum’ but that internationally it had raised the prestige of Britain, and her ability to cope with the crisis. Even speaking in public, he did nothing to destroy the idea that he was, in effect, an independent Conservative whose acceptance of the Party Whip did not signify that he would be a bulwark for the actions of the Executive.

Meanwhile, the fire had been extracted from the debate on protectionism. Beaverbrook did not want the cause of Empire Free Trade to be led by Churchill in the Commons since he was ‘utterly unreliable’, even if he had been apparently ‘sincere’ in every conflicting political stance he had ever adopted. Much of the content of his speeches on the 1932 Budget and the Import Duties Bill was given not to the measures, which he supported and had little that was original to contribute, but to repaying old scores against Snowden and Samuel. As Cuthbert Headlam, the spokesman for the ‘Northern group’ of Government MPs, put it, whilst Chamberlain might be ‘a dreary man’, ‘Winston made the House laugh - that is all he is capable of doing - but it is not the way to stage a comeback.’

Given the strong emotional side to Churchill’s character, it is perhaps not so extraordinary that he should have been attracted by a romantic quest to forestall Imperial sunset.

438 Churchill’s public statement, 29 June 1932, Chartwell Papers 2/190.
439 Churchill’s speech on the Budget, 21 April 1932, Complete Speeches, p. 5137; he had already conveyed this impression to Esmond Harmsworth, 29 February 1932, in Gilbert companion vol.v.,pt.2, p. 406.
440 see, for instance, Churchill’s speeches to the Commons, 11 and 24 November 1931 and to the Royal Academy, 30 April 1932, Complete Speeches pp. 5091, 5104-9, 5154.
441 Beaverbrook’s letters to Arthur Brisbane of 6 December 1931 and to J.L. Garvin, 19 January 1932, Beaverbrook Papers C/64 and C/140.
442 Churchill’s speech to the Commons on the Budget, 21 April 1932, Complete Speeches vol.v., p. 5136; Churchill’s speech to the Commons on the Import Duties Bill, 4 May 1932, Complete Speeches vol.v., p. 5108.
443 Headlam diary, 4 May 1932, p. 237.
Having decided to adopt this stance over Egypt and the Irwin Declaration, and to follow it through subsequently on the London Naval Treaty and the Round Table Conferences, it is interesting to note how little Churchill took the trouble to institutionalise the basis of a united constituency on this line. Much of the momentum which was to under-pin these activities, particularly at the non-parliamentary level, was to come from the Indian Empire Society. This was an organisation which Churchill had played no part in establishing. Between 1929 and 1931 he seemed almost oblivious to the need to manage opinion at the constituency level of the Party. He acted as if all that was needed was to await applause from a great speech or a fine press article. He had deplored the Empire Crusade’s attempt to fight as a national populist mass movement not merely because it undermined his own economic views but because he believed the idea of trying to bring about a change in the Tory leadership by forcing the issue and dividing normal Tory voters at by-elections was bad strategy.\footnote{Churchill to Rothermere, 3 February 1931, Chartwell Papers 2/180(A)64; Rothermere to Churchill, 9 February 1931, ibid., 2/180(A)/69.} It was only in 1932 that he began seriously looking at building up an institutionalised support group. Noting his lengthy absences from the Commons other than when he was making tiresome lengthy speeches criticising Government policy, Headlam thought that Churchill had ‘lost all influence with the new members and has no kind of following - I think that B. Bracken is literally his only follower. By now, had he played his cards better, he might have had a decent following.’\footnote{Headlam diary, 26 May 1932, p. 239.}

So far, Churchill’s strategy had failed in its objectives. Tory apprehension at the Government’s emerging India policy was seemingly his one remaining hope.
PART TWO
INDIA AND 'THE WINSTON CROWD'
Chapter One
The Joint Select Committee and The India Defence Committee

i). Government and Diehard Strategy

The India Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare announced in the Commons on 27 June 1932 that the Government would frame a White Paper on Indian constitutional reform which would then be analysed by a Joint Select Committee from both Houses. However, in the face of Hindu liberal pressure, he had to retreat by promising a third Round Table Conference to meet in November. Its task was to work out the proportion of seats for the princely states and the Muslims in the proposed Council of State and Assembly and to recommend that direct election should take place to the latter. It met, however, without either the Princes or the incarcerated Congress leaders, and with serious reservations from Orthodox Hindus.446 The India Office was going to have as much difficulty persuading Indians to accept the policy as it was with the British diehards.

Hoare felt that the adoption of a Joint Select Committee undermined ‘Winston’s most damaging line of attack, namely that Parliament was going to be edged out of the final settlement’.447 On top of this, it presented the Government with ‘a great gain when we have got the whole question safely into the hands of the Joint Select Committee’ since it was a way of circumventing ‘the extreme right [from] mobilising an extensive attack’ in Parliament.448 The Government hoped that debate could be silenced by the assertion that discussion would be premature until the Joint Select Committee had issued its Report. The

446 See in particular R.J. Moore, ‘The Making of India’s Paper Federation, 1927-35’ in Enganges of Empire: Studies of Britain’s Indian Problem, 1988, pp. 56-9; Orthodox Hindus were particularly wary of any westernised democracy being foisted upon their society, especially if it was going to represent ‘the ambitions of the English-educated but de-Indianised minority’ which comprised the Congress Party. These Hindus preferred a model based on village rather than provincial government. See, for instance, the document sent to Willingdon signed by 28 leaders representing every province in British India, the All-India Varnashrama Swarajya Sangha, 17 March 1933, copy in Chartwell Papers 2/196/21.
447 Hoare to Ramsay MacDonald, 1 July 1932, Templewood Papers VII.1.
448 Hoare to Willingdon, 10 February 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/601.
hope would then be that the Report would only make changes of a non-fundamental nature, thus giving a supposedly unpartisan legitimacy to Government policy on India, marginalising its opponents as malcontents whose study of their topic had been much less rigorous than the official Report. As Hoare told Willingdon, ‘the attitude of most Conservatives is one of suspended animation. They are waiting to see whether the White Paper really does make the safeguards as effective as possible, and also whether the Federation looks really like taking shape.’ In the meantime, there was always the hope that the diehards might lose interest in the subject, realising that, confined to a minority, it could only be a cul-de-sac for them.

Perhaps another motivation for the appointment of the Committee was not only to tire out the diehards in Parliament but to seal the deal in India itself. In short, the Government needed the time that the lengthy deliberations of the Committee would provide. The Indian Princes now seemed lukewarm about the proposed Federation and without their support the pertinent clauses in the White Paper would be inoperative. Gaining their acquiescence was a matter of time and diplomatic attrition. If, after this gruelling process, the Princes’ support for Federation could be confirmed, then it would make the resulting Bill’s passage at Westminster much easier to swallow by comforting hesitant Tories in the belief that the Indian nationalists’ power in a new constitution would be greatly diluted by the presence of the Princely States.

Yet, by protracting the whole issue, Government policy gave the diehards time to build up previously absent organs of opposition. This opposition would be free to raise as much trouble and doubt over the White Paper as possible whilst Central Office would be muted by its own argument that nothing prejudicial should be said outside the Joint Select Committee whilst it was deliberating. As we shall see, it was the Government’s achievement in managing to convince the Party caucus to stay silent during the Joint Select Committee deliberations whilst at the same time launching its own ‘front’ organisation, the

\[449\] Hoare to Willingdon, 25 February 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240 (3)/615.
'Union of Britain and India' so that the Government could breach the official curfew, that undermined these diehard advantages.

Churchill wrote to Lord Lloyd that whilst it was 'quite probable' that in the end the diehards would lose the fight, the protracted parliamentary process of the Indian proposals ensured that there was no danger of them 'being rushed'. The presence of peers on the Joint Select Committee was regarded by him as advantageous to a less revolutionary bill and encouraged him in the hope, which he believed was shared by Hailsham, that Salisbury would chair the Committee. This possibility may have fostered the ingratiating tone of Churchill's letter to the Tory grandee at the beginning of July 1932. The previous month, Churchill had not even been sure that Salisbury wanted to be associated with the diehard cabal since he was 'very particular'. When in February of the following year the Government did confidentially approach Salisbury to chair the Committee, he refused. What should, however, be noted at this juncture is that Churchill, in common with the views of the Indian Empire Society Executive, was looking at ways in which, at least some diehards could co-operate with the Government's procedure so as to produce a less radical piece of legislation. If, as his Cabinet enemies sometimes alleged, his motivation over India was primarily the destruction of the National Government itself, then presumably he would have wished the legislation to take as extreme and implausible a form as possible so that it would alienate a larger share of the Conservative majority in Parliament. As we shall see, Churchill's decision not to sit on the Committee, by no means obvious until the last moment, was to be of primary importance to the whole conduct of the diehard campaign, and his place in it.

450 Churchill to Lloyd, 22 July 1932, Chartwell Papers 2/189/94.
452 Churchill to Lloyd, 4 June 1932, Chartwell Papers 2/189/59.
453 Salisbury to Churchill, 10 March 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/192/58.
The second perceivable short coming in the Government’s decision to protract the Indian issue was that it left open the possibility that the situation in India might deteriorate further in the meantime, undermining the case for giving the alleged perpetrators of disorder increased autonomy. Furthermore, whilst the convening of the Joint Select Committee was lending time to Government efforts to cajole the Indian Princes into the proposed federation, it was giving no less time to the diehards and the enforceable march of events to cajole them out of it. It was to be a major part in the diehard attack, although not one which Churchill initially made his top priority, to encourage the Princes to reject the proposals. Gwynne, the veteran Editor of the dwindling *Morning Post*, wanted to use his paper’s correspondent in India, D. Madhavo Rao, as a link between the campaign in Westminster and the campaign in India itself but Churchill failed, at first, to grasp the potential of this, replying nonchalantly that they had ‘no organisation which could keep in touch with him’.455 Hoare too was conscious that the diehards were going to make Princely reluctance an issue and that, whilst the Princes dithered, this was a dangerously weak link in the Government’s scheme.456 Willingdon could only lamely reply that the Princes were ‘very difficult to get hold of’ and warned that their support was by no means assured.457

There was always the possibility that the very scale of the White Paper would defeat its implementation. Hoare feared that the end of the session might arrive before the completion of the Joint Select Committee report. The Committee would then lapse and a new session would have to reconstitute a fresh Committee from scratch, if, indeed, it was prepared to do so at all. ‘In any case’, he gloomily concluded, ‘the effect would be to delay everything for at least another year and I do not then believe that we should get any Bill

455 Gwynne/Churchill correspondence, 2 and 4 March 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/192/47-8, 53; at the prompting of Sir Michael O’Dwyer, the *Morning Post* sent Churchill details of intimidation tactics brought by the Government against the Princes. See the letter from Ian D. Colvin (*Morning Post* leader writer) to Churchill, 20 November 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/194/116.
456 Hoare to Willingdon, 10 and 17 February 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/601, 607.
457 Willingdon to Hoare, 26 February 1933, Templewood Papers VII.1.
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456 Hoare to Willingdon, 10 and 17 February 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/601, 607.
457 Willingdon to Hoare, 26 February 1933, Templewood Papers VII.1.
through this Parliament at all'. Even if the Committee did produce a coherent report, Hoare was well aware of the difficulty of 'getting a Bill of about two hundred clauses through Parliament with half the Conservatives in the House of Commons doubtful or hostile, and the House of Lords suspicious of almost every detail.' Whilst hoping that Churchill was 'overbidding his market', Hoare could well see how Churchill could believe that by the autumn 'he will have captured most of the Conservative organisation.'

Worried at the difficult of getting such a huge piece of legislation onto the statute books, Hoare had contemplated introducing provincial autonomy first before framing a subsequent bill to establish All-India Federation at a later, more judicious, moment. Hostility, not least from India, forced him to drop this idea. Churchill realised that if the Government incorporated into the Bill the whole federal structure but only intended to proceed with the more acceptable provincial government first, leaving federation's actual implementation until an unspecified date in the future, then it would be 'easy for the House to accept it in principle, as nothing is going to happen for some years'. Whilst this might satisfy backbench Tory MPs, in reality it would seek only to raise Indian politicians' hopes, during which period Labour might win a General Election and implement further reform immediately on less satisfactory terms to Britain.

As laid out in Sir Henry Page Croft's Commons' motion of 22 February 1933, the diehard strategy was to try to bind the Joint Select Committee's competence to the strict discussion of the Simon Report's recommendations for the extension of self-government in the Indian provinces without the federation of Central Government advocated by the White Paper.

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458 Hoare to Willingdon, 5 May 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/693-4.
459 Hoare to Willingdon, 19 May 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/706.
460 For the British, there was a danger that states already given provincial government would be in a stronger negotiating position to haggle with Britain when she attempted All-India Federation. Leading Hindu liberals like Srinivasa Sastri - who the India Office feted - were also worried that in such a situation the Muslim states might split off from the decision of the Hindu ones. see Moore, Endgames of Empire.
461 Churchill to Salisbury, 13 February 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/192/27.
462 This course of action had been particularly advocated by the India Empire Society's President and former Lord of Appeal in Ordinary, Lord Sumner. Churchill to Lord Hugh
If this concession could be forced upon the Government then some of the diehards, including Churchill, would certainly have accepted offers to serve on the Committee. Lively and difficult debate would then have ensued upon the details of provincial government, especially over the Simon Report’s recommendation that the provincial governments’ should control their own law and order. However, there would have been no internecine war between the diehards and the Government on the scale that was to emerge, since both groups would enter the negotiations sharing the same legislative goal, albeit arguing on the details. It would, however, have been a humiliating climb down for the Government from its White Paper. Furthermore, there was little likelihood, if any, that Indian politicians, and in particular Congress, would have anything to do with such a limited extension of power in the sub-continent. The whole point of the Government’s initiative was to incorporate Indian political aspirations into the framework of the British Raj and the failure to make any concessions at the level of central government would have made their exclusion a potentially permanent danger.

Although, in the words of The Times editorial, Churchill ‘did not himself take part (except by occasional interjections)’ in the debate, some of the diehard speeches during the debate on Page Croft’s motion might have been regarded ‘consciously or unconsciously the product of his galvanic inspiration.’ The motion ‘was quite frankly intended, as everyone realised, to be a preliminary trial of strength between the Government and the extreme right wing’ and that the revival of interest in India amongst MPs would be beneficial so long as they were progressive in their views on the issue and did not ‘set their faces firmly against the appalling levity which would treat it as an opportunity for personal or party scores.’ This was the line that Geoffrey Dawson was to take throughout his newspaper’s coverage of the Indian issue.

Cecil, 11 March 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/192/60; Churchill to Salisbury, 12 March 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/192/63.
463 Editorial in The Times, 23 February 1933.
42 MPs opposed the Government line, a gain of only one on Churchill’s December 1931 division. Looking at this result superficially, the best that could be said about this from Churchill’s perspective was that at least it showed that other diehards could not instantly command a larger following in the Commons than himself. This judgement however misses the point. Page Croft’s motion had been debated because it had come top of the private members’ ballot. Despite - or rather because - of this, the Government had put the Whips out on all Tory MPs. The figure to look at is not so much the 42 who voted with the diehards but, as Gillian Peele has pointed out, the 245 Tories who had also defied the Whip by abstaining. Whilst many of these MPs may have been absent because of other commitments, most would have been astute enough to realise how seriously the Government’s Whips’ Office were taking the significance of the debate. These groups of MPs, particularly those who had abstained, were clearly sufficiently sceptical of Indian policy to show their doubts. If the diehards could bring them out into open opposition to the policy, then any resulting Bill, and perhaps the future composition of the Government itself, would be open to question. The danger here would be that it was this latter prospect which might scare the waverers into backing the India policy. The Government, having done some quick calculations of their own as to backbench support knew that the Party was too finely poised for comfort.

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464 Peele and Cook, Politics of Reappraisal, p.133.
465 Indeed, the Indian Empire Review hoped at the time that many of those who had voted with the Government were not necessarily supportive of the India Office’s likely proposals but rather did not want their own open minds on the subject to be restricted by any definite pledge at such an early stage. Indian Empire Review, April 1933 issue, p. 7. The journal’s editor, Sir Louis Stuart had received this view from Edward Cadogan: Cadogan to Stuart, 27 February 1933, Stuart Papers, MSS.Eng.hist.c.609/119-20.
466 In April, R. A. Butler had drawn up for Central Office a ‘White List’ of likely backbench supporters of the Indian White Paper and a ‘Black List’ of those likely to oppose. Central Office was advised that those on the Black List ‘Mr Butler would suggest should not be recommended as speakers on India at Conservative meetings.’ There were 103 names on the Black List (obvious names like Churchill’s were not even mentioned) and 47 on the White List. When updated in October 1934, the White List had gone up to 56, the Black List had slipped to 60 and a new ‘Grey List’ of waverers had been created with 43 names (of which four were said to be White-Grey, two Grey White, and one Black Grey). Butler Papers F. 73/50-3, 60-1, 68-9, 77-9, 87-8.
As we will see, the diehards tried four main different ways of defeating the legislation. They encouraged the Party caucus to defeat the policy from the conference floor. They tried to intimidate Tory MPs in their own constituencies. They encouraged the Indian Princes to declare unambiguously against federation, scuppering much of the India Bill. Churchill’s largest single contribution, an attempt to force from office the India Secretary and Lord Derby for improper conduct, would have, had it worked, probably made the largest contribution to a diehard victory. Not only would the India Secretary have been disgraced, but exposure of the ‘King of Lancashire’s’ role in suppressing the diehard sentiment within his county’s business community would have coaxed the sixty-odd Tory MPs in the region towards the diehards.

ii). The launch of the India Defence Committee

The Commons vote on the Page Croft motion demonstrated that the diehard position in the House would remain weak until the waverers could be induced into outright rebellion. During the summer of 1932, Churchill had already begun to plan the mobilisation of the Party caucus as the springboard for an autumn campaign on India with assistance from Rothermere. 467 Unable to offer procurement, a vigorous campaign in the constituencies was the only alternative to any inducement that the diehards could offer backbench MPs which was more intimidating than the pressure of the Whips’ Office. This was not likely to encourage the ordinary voter to reject the Government in favour of one of the two Opposition parties since both of them were even more committed to increasing Indian autonomy than the Government, but it could threaten sitting Conservative MPs with the worry of a rebellion from their own Associations. The problem here was that whilst this was certainly the showing of the stick, a carrot was only going to be on offer if the diehards were subsequently going to run the Cabinet either in all, or in part.

467 Churchill to Bracken, 29 July 1932, Chartwell Papers 2/189/95; Hoare to Willingsdon, 9 September 1932, India Office Papers MSS.Eur.240.2/412; Lord Lloyd was keen also to involve Rothermere’s son, Esmond Harmsworth. See Lloyd to Churchill, 1 June 1932, Chartwell Papers 2/189/60.
Hoare observed that ‘the Winston crowd’, as he revealing termed the diehards, had ‘been very active with meetings, lunches, and propaganda of every kind’. This was indeed the case with Page Croft, Gretton and Sir Alfred Knox requesting Churchill to join them to discuss appropriate motions for the forthcoming Conservative Central Council meeting. The dying Lord Sydenham, who had been largely responsible for the Indian Empire Society’s own statement of policy, had written to Churchill encouraging him that he ‘alone [could] now stop this surrender of India’. In replying that he would take up the cudgel, Churchill inferred that the prospects for success were not good given the likely antics of the Whips’ Office. Repeating his fears about parliamentary brow-beating to the Anti-Communist and Anti-Socialist Union, Churchill appeared to advocate a way of side-stepping the pressure of the Whips by claiming that ‘one deep-throated growl from the National Union of Conservative Associations would be enough to stop the rot.’ Control of the Party caucus was, therefore, the best way to challenge the Whips’ grip on the parliamentary party. Sir Louis Stuart, the Indian Empire Review’s editor, noted that two years ago Churchill had been ‘standing almost alone [even if] he was not quite alone’ on India. By comparison the ‘march of events’ was now much more favourable with support not just from politicians like Salisbury and Page Croft, but also from the Morning Post and ‘a strong section of the Conservative Party, the rank and file in the main’ as manifested in the resolutions passed by the Grand Council of the Primrose League, the Conservative Women’s Eastern Counties area and other Tory associations. ‘It would appear that’, Stuart perorated, ‘like Inkerman, this will be a soldiers’ battle’.

471 Churchill/Sydenham correspondence, 2 and 7 January 1932, Chartwell Papers 2/192/1 and 2; During 1933. Churchill became more outspoken in his criticism of Baldwin’s resolve ‘to force the India abdication policy through at all costs and by every use of the party machinery at [his] disposal.’ Churchill’s press statement, 30 April 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/193/66.
473 Indian Empire Review, April 1933 issue, p. 18.
The constituency and area representatives on the Conservative Central Council met on 28 February. This was, as *The Times* pointed out, 'the final hurdle preliminary to the presentation of the White Paper to Parliament' but that 'there was a general belief that it would adopt' Churchill's resolution criticising the creation of a democratic responsible All-India government. Both Churchill and Hoare were greeted with 'loud cheers' although *The Times* goes some way towards contradicting its own evidence five pages further on in the same edition by also admitting that Hoare began his speech to 'a very critical audience.' Churchill claimed that the Indian proposals were being forced upon the reluctant Princes against their will and that 'in his opinion, the present policy of the National Government was nothing but a Socialist policy'. Even Hoare had to admit afterwards that Churchill had 'made one of his very effective speeches' and the claim that the policy was a socialist one, to be repeated throughout the diehards' campaign, was bound to appeal to the more partisan Party workers, particularly those in southern England. As a result, the Government's victory of 189 to 165 was embarrassingly narrow. Hoare confessed in a state of near panic to the Viceroy that the Council, attended by the 'leading Conservatives in the constituencies who take a part in electioneering and the local organisations', was full of Churchill's 'partisans' and that unless the White Paper was issued soon and in detail 'there is the making of a first class crisis here and a breakaway of three-quarters of the Conservative Party'. It was, therefore, possible in February 1933 that Churchill was backing a winning horse after all.

Coming so soon after their poor parliamentary performance, the vote of the Central Council was, in the *Indian Empire Review* 's words 'a remarkable portent' for the diehards and it enabled Churchill to write to the Chief Whip, David Margesson asserting that since the diehards represented 'three-quarters of the Conservative Party in the constituencies' (of which they could 'prove half') then they should have eight places on the Joint Select

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474 *The Times*, 1 March 1933.  
475 Hoare to Willingdon, 3 March 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/621-2.  
476 ibid.  
Committee to twelve from those who supported the Round Table policies. This continues to suggest that Churchill was at this stage planning on playing a full part in the Committee’s composition. 478

In Parliament, Salisbury’s idea as to who should form the vanguard of organising an opposition to the White Paper cited, beside Churchill and himself, Horne, Cadogan, Page Croft, Banks, Knox, Craddock, the Duchess of Atholl from the Commons and from the Lords, Burnham, Rankeillor and Fitzalan. 479 These, with Lord Lloyd who was particularly insistent on co-ordinating collective action, 480 formed the nucleus of the diehards’ new organisation, the India Defence Committee (I.D.C.). 481 Sir Alfred Knox became its Chairman and a new young right wing recruit from the 1931 landslide, Patrick Donner, its Secretary. Also invited were all those Tories who had voted against the Government in the previous two India divisions. 482 Initially, fifty Conservative MPs became members. Churchill also began to plan the creation of a group of ‘8 Al peers’ to marshal diehard cohesion in the House of Lords. 483

Worried by the launch of the I.D.C., Hoare wrote to the Viceroy that:

Winston and his crowd have been very active and completely unscrupulous. They have been making a dead set at the party organisation in the constituencies, with the result that they have seriously disturbed a large

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478 Churchill to Margesson, 1 March 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/192/41-2. This is also the impression that Churchill gives in a letter of 12 March 1932 (Chartwell Papers 2/192/62). Unfortunately, it is not clear to whom the letter was addressed so its argument must be treated cautiously.

479 Salisbury to Churchill, 10 March 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/192/58.

480 Note made to Churchill by his Secretary, Violet Pearman of a telephone call to him from Lord Lloyd, 20 April 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/28.

481 Patrick Donner also recalled Admiral Keynes and Lords’ Lymington and Wolmer being at the inception of the I.D.C. in his memoirs, see Donner, Crusade, A Life Against the Calamitous Twentieth Century, 1984, pp. 118-9.

482 Churchill to Salisbury, 12 March 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/192/63; Churchill to Patrick Donner, 17 March 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/5.

number of Conservative MP's and have produced a sheaf of resolutions against the Government programme.\textsuperscript{484}

From the other side, the veteran diehard, John Gretton, was of the same mind, telling Churchill that ‘we have to consider now most seriously, organisation, funds, and our future course: we can only make headway by bringing pressure on the House of Commons through the constituencies’.\textsuperscript{485} Despite this, Knox decided to resist the temptation to set up a national office at first, arguing that, for the meantime at least, the I.D.C. should remain a purely parliamentary group.\textsuperscript{486} As we shall examine shortly, this stance was soon to be overwhelmed by the need to influence MPs from outside the corridors of Westminster.

\textbf{iii). Churchill launches his own civil disobedience movement}

Within the Cabinet, only Hailsham at the War Office was employing Churchillian rhetoric to the effect that giving Indians more autonomy meant religious strife, caste repression and corruption. Furthermore, Hailsham now announced that ‘from the first he had misgivings’ about the Government’s India policy. It was rather late in the day to be coming out with these sort of doubts. Hoare claimed there was no alternative and Indians would still be denied control over foreign and defence policy. The Cabinet therefore gave Hoare’s scheme the go-ahead and no further opposition to the principles (as opposed to the political advisability) of the White Paper was ever to be manifest from this quarter again.\textsuperscript{487}

Command Paper 4268, the Government’s India White Paper, was released on 17 March and Hoare opened its debate in the Commons ten days later. The India Secretary defended the

\textsuperscript{484} Hoare to Willingdon, 17 March 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)634. 
\textsuperscript{485} Gretton to Churchill, 30 March 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/192/132. 
\textsuperscript{486} Donner to Churchill, 29 March 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/15; In this vein, Sir Louis Stuart’s suggestion that the I.D.C could generate a £3000 fighting fund for the I.E.S. to ‘campaign amongst working men in London’ was not implemented. Stuart to Donner, 22 March 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/12. 
\textsuperscript{487} Cabinet minute, 10 March 1933, Cabinet Papers 23/75, Gilbert, v. pp. 470-1.
Simon Report’s recommendation to cede law and order to elected Indian provincial government. Whilst this might have been seen to isolate the diehards from the Report, the issue was one of the more contentious ones for Conservative MPs generally. Understandably, much of Hoare’s speech consisted in defending the White Paper not for its advances but for its constitutional safeguards. In contrast to the 1921 Irish Treaty which had failed, ‘even with the signature of my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping’, because it had not provided the safeguards necessary to keep the Irish loyal to the Imperial crown, the Indian White Paper ensured that the British Government would still appoint the Viceroy, the Provincial Governors and other high officials. The security services, the executive affairs of the Federal and Provincial Governments and ‘the ultimate power’, the Army, would still be under British control. ‘Those’, emphasised Hoare, were ‘no paper safeguards’.488

For the diehards, it was Viscount Wolmer, Salisbury’s nephew, who most directly countered Hoare’s arguments. Parliamentary government tempered by safeguards had never worked anywhere because the two principles were fundamentally incompatible. Indians were being encouraged to believe they were being given ‘responsible self-government ... leading them on to Dominion status’ but as soon as they attempted to exercise the rights normally associated with this status it would be ‘filched away from them’ by the British Governor whose ‘responsibilities and rights [would] inevitably bring him into conflict with his Parliament.’ If Hoare’s safeguards had existed in the Irish Treaty then they would merely have involved increasing the use of the British Army, hardly solving the Irish question.489 The analogy with the Irish Free State was frequently brought up throughout the long campaign over India. For the Government, it allowed the opportunity for another gratuitous mention of Churchill’s own involvement in handing over the Empire to gunmen,490 whilst for the diehards it seemed to support their argument that the concession

488 Hoare to the Commons, 27 March 1933, 276 Hansard H.C. Deb. 5s., cols. 713-6, 708.
489 Viscount Wolmer to the Commons, 27 March 1933, 276 H.C. Deb 5s., cols. 812, 814.
490 For instance, Lord Winterton who followed Churchill in the debate, reminding the House, in the unlikely event that it had forgotten, of Churchill’s previous commitment to constitutional innovation not only in Ireland but in South Africa, and India too. Winterton to the Commons, 29 March 1933, 276 H.C. Deb 5s., col. 1062.
of significant powers to the natives undermined the validity of retaining other restraints on their sovereignty.491

Yet, as the Government speeches made clear, it was Churchill’s oration which was being most anticipated. On the floor of the Commons at least, he was the undisputed leader of the diehards. In Herbert Samuel’s words, despite the poor judgement which Churchill had shown over the past fifteen years in military, financial and political matters which had been ‘[un]helpful to the nation’, at least he ‘prevents our debates from being dull’.492 This was perhaps his problem, as the Indian Empire Review pondered ‘when he rose there was a stir. He was expected to be funny’.493 John Gretton was possibly correct in his compliment to Churchill that his and Baldwin’s speeches were the only ones that the House ‘cared to hear’.494 According to Hoare (whose analysis of Churchill’s views on India always included the calculation that his real target was the Cabinet men themselves)495 the second day’s debate on India had encouraged Churchill to go ‘about the House saying that he had not only smashed the scheme but that he had smashed the Government as well.’496 The Times was certainly of the view that the diehards were getting the better of the debate until Churchill stood up to speak.497 His ‘much advertised’ speech on the third day was, Hoare pleasantly reflected, ‘one of the greatest failures of his life’498 due to his wholly unproved assertion, and his failure to withdraw it when challenged by John Wardlaw-Milne and Hoare, that promotion in the Indian Civil Service was being linked

491 The Morning Post, for example, compared the Indian safeguards to the old ‘apologetic cough’ in which Liberals, when pushed, used to mention the Irish Lord Lieutenant’s veto, and suggested the homily that ‘when a man proposes to retire, after a period of transition, and in the meantime hands over most of his power ... the staff will look for its orders to the pushful young man with their future in his hands.’ The Morning Post, 18 March 1933.
492 Herbert Samuel to the Commons, 27 March 1933, 276 H.C. Deb 5s., col. 736.
493 Indian Empire Review, May 1933 issue, p. 20.
495 Hoare to Willingdon, 17 March 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/635; Hoare to Willingdon, 6 April 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/660.
496 Hoare to Willingdon, 31 March 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/655.
497 The Times, 30 March 1933.
498 Hoare to Willingdon, 31 March 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/655. The Times agreed, gleefully reporting that the House subsequently ‘appeared to combine pity for Mr Churchill with apathy towards his argument’. The Times, 30 March 1933.
with support for ‘modern’ pro-Government views. Sir Austen Chamberlain, writing to his half-sister, could ‘recall no parallel’ to Churchill’s oratorical flop and thought that ‘he ha[d] become hysterical [and that] it is impossible to discuss [India] with him even privately’. Once again, it was his judgement that was being called into question.

Yet, in a sense, all the diehard speeches were purely academic since without any public objection to the principle of a Joint Select Committee, the I.D.C. had decided, to Gretton’s regret, not to place an amendment to the Government motion leaving only the Labour Party to provide the opposition in the division lobby. The Government had, therefore, won the first round in the Commons. The Joint Select Committee would consider the proposals of the White Paper rather than merely the Simon Report and Churchill had been made to look foolish into the bargain.

Hoare hoped that Churchill’s humiliation in the debate not only gave the Government an advantage in winning back wavering backbench support but that ‘the papers that are backing him so strongly will begin to wonder whether he is the divine leader that they had assumed’. Writing to his allies, however, Churchill was determined that the campaign would be fought to the bitter end, with or without the prospect of ultimate victory. The debate was, however, clearly a set-back and Churchill was thus in a

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499 Churchill’s speech to the Commons, 29 March 1933, 276 H.C. Deb.5s., cols. 1037, 1040, 1042, 1047-8.
500 Austen to Ida Chamberlain, 1 April 1933, Austen Chamberlain Papers 5/1/613. One Tory backbencher alleged that Churchill’s opposition to Government policy on unemployment, foreign affairs, India and doubtless other issues in the future was a symptom of his ambition and lack of sincerity: Edward Campbell to the Commons, 29 March 1933, 276 H.C. Deb 5s., col. 1099. Churchill’s alleged hysteria over India probably suggests that he was, or had certainly become, absolutely genuine on the issue. Although the Duchess of Atholl rose to defend Churchill from these allegations of insincerity, and Sir Louis Stuart did his best on behalf of the Indian Empire Society to defend Churchill’s words, the day had clearly reduced his esteem in the Commons. The Duchess of Atholl to the Commons, 29 March 1933, ibid., col. 1099; Indian Empire Review, May 1933 issue, pp. 20-2.
502 Hoare to Willingdon, 31 March 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/655; Churchill to Page Croft, 31 March 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/192/133; Churchill to Lord Carson, 31 March 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/192/136. Victor Cazalet was also left in no doubt by Churchill that he would ‘fight the White Paper to the bitter end’. See Cazalet diary, 19 April 1933, p. 154.
correspondingly less commanding position when the following day Hoare wrote to him to encourage his acceptance of the offer to sit on the Joint Select Committee.\(^{503}\)

The Government proposed to give sceptics of the White Paper nine seats on the Committee. This would be clearly outweighed by the twenty-five supporters of the Paper but given the recent division lobby weakness of the diehards this ratio did not seem entirely inappropriate. Churchill appears initially to have been undecided whether or not to sit and asked Salisbury to ‘call [his] friends together’ in order to consult upon the stance to adopt.\(^{504}\) Within days however, he had given Gwynne of the *Morning Post* the firm impression that he, Page Croft and Lord Lloyd would together refuse their offers to sit on the Committee. Gwynne lobbied Churchill to accept the offer if Salisbury could not be dissuaded from accepting a seat since there was no point refusing to sit on the Committee unless all diehards likewise undermined its authenticity by boycotting it. If any diehards sat on the Committee then their claim that it was ‘packed’ with Government supporters would be weakened and their cohesion as a united opposition undermined.\(^{505}\)

At the last moment, Churchill, in telling Hoare that he wanted ‘neither part nor lot in the deed you seek to do’, firmly decided not to sit on the Committee.\(^{506}\) This came as an annoyance to some of those diehards who accepted membership\(^{507}\) and as a surprise to Hoare who had expected his co-operation. Indeed the India Secretary only prevented all the diehards from boycotting the Committee by manoeuvring Salisbury into staying with two fresh diehards to take the places of Churchill, whose refusal to serve was, indeed,

\(^{503}\) Hoare to Churchill, 31 March 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/192/135.
\(^{504}\) Churchill to Salisbury, 1 April 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/193/3; Churchill to Hoare, 1 April 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/193/5.
\(^{505}\) Gwynne also argued that Churchill’s absence deprived the diehards of an able cross-examiner of witnesses and made less effective any minority report that the diehards could have produced as a viable and considered alternative to the majority report. Gwynne to Churchill, 4 April 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/193/8-9.
\(^{506}\) Churchill to Hoare, 5 April 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/193/11-12.
\(^{507}\) Lord Burnham to Churchill, 7 April 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/193/19.
echoed by Page Croft and Lloyd.\textsuperscript{508} Hoare felt that Churchill’s decision not to stand had been encouraged by the demon bogey of the National Government, Lloyd George.\textsuperscript{509}

Churchill’s decision not to sit on the Committee, has been largely regarded, even by modern historians, as a political blunder.\textsuperscript{510} It is not clear why this line is so frequently upheld. Indeed it is surely more surprising that Churchill, given his ambition, contemplated sitting on the Committee at all. Membership of the Joint Select Committee was intended to prevent partisan expression on the Indian issue whilst the Committee was deliberating. Yet, Churchill’s command of partisan expression was what he did best. Salisbury’s decision to accept the responsibilities of the Committee’s membership ensured that he never put his name to, or publicly recommended, the I.D.L.’s campaign before the Committee’s Report was published. Page Croft made it clear that he had been advised that he could not honourably speak up for the I.D.L. and sit on the Committee simultaneously.\textsuperscript{511} Hoare could safely sit on the Committee without any diminution of his authority as Secretary of State, but for Churchill to have done so would have virtually bound and gagged him on the Indian issue whilst the Committee was sitting. As such, the leadership of the Commons diehard campaign might have fallen to someone else (Sir Alfred Knox was already the I.D.C.’s Chairman), depriving Churchill of his mastery of this parliamentary constituency. Whilst he might have been able to re-assert his leadership of the group once the Committee had reported, this could, by no means, be guaranteed. In the meantime, the diehards would have been deprived of their best platform advocate.

Hoare suspected that Churchill, watching events in Germany where Hitler had now become Chancellor, thought that England was ‘going Fascist’ and thereby saw himself as a potential British Mussolini (ironically, it was compromising with Fascist Powers which

\textsuperscript{508} Hoare to Willingdon, 12 April 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/673.  
\textsuperscript{509} Hoare to Sir John Anderson, 28 April 1933, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.2., p. 581.  
\textsuperscript{511} Page Croft to the Commons, 13 June 1934, Hansard 290 H.C. Deb. 5s., col.1760.
was later to blunt Hoare’s career, rather than that of Churchill). Hoare accurately interpreted Churchill’s motives as developed here, in claiming that he had ‘convinced himself that he will smash the Government sooner or later and [therefore] if he joins the Committee he will be muzzled at any rate for a time’. The decision not to co-operate in the Committee was therefore an arrival at the point of no return, opening up fresh opportunities to Churchill and the I.D.C. to associate themselves vigorously with the campaign in the constituencies. It was virtually a declaration of civil war.

On 10 April the membership of the Joint Select Committee was presented to Parliament. With Salisbury refusing the poisoned chalice of the chairmanship and Peel suffering from phlebitis, Lord Linlithgow was appointed to the post. Its thirty-two strong composition was made up of six members of the Government, nine backbenchers already known to be supportive of the White Papers’ general concepts, four Labour Party representatives who felt the White Paper was not radical enough, one Liberal MP also supportive of increasing Indian self-autonomy, seven diehards, and four others whose views were allegedly non-partisan. The Indian Empire Society was particularly worried by the absence of sceptical lawyers on the Committee (although Rankeillour was to emerge to fill this gap) and pointed out that the Government’s three lawyers on the Committee (Sankey, Simon and Reading) were not exactly likely to ‘criticise their own scheme’. Whatever the proportion of diehards, for many the real cause for concern was the proportion of Government ministers involved. Sir Austen Chamberlain privately said as much to his

512 Hoare to Willingdon, 6 April 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/660.
515 Lord Zetland, Lord Hutchinson, Lord Peel, Lord Reading, Lord Lothian, Mary Pickford, John Wardlaw-Milne, Lord Winterton, Lord Eustace Percy.
516 Clement Attlee, Morgan Jones, Seymour Cocks, Lord Snell.
517 Isaac Foot.
518 Lord Salisbury, Lord Burnham (who died in shortly afterwards), Lord Hardinge of Penhurst, the Earl of Lytton, Sir Reginald Craddock, Sir Jospeh Nall, (and initially) Sir Edward Cadogan.
519 The Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Derby, Sir Austen Chamberlain and Lord Rankeillour (as it transpired, only Rankeillour identified himself as a diehard).
half-sister when he confessed how ‘ill-constituted’ the Committee was given that there were ‘not enough independent members ... therefore the majority will not carry the weight it might have done’. The absence of younger Conservatives would not appease those in this group who wanted their ‘honest doubt and anxiety’ over India allayed.\(^521\) When a Commons motion was laid down requesting the ministers’ removal, it attracted the support not only of the hard-core diehards but with a total of 118 votes in the division to 209 for the Government, fired a warning shot that Parliament did not wish to be hoodwinked by a biased committee. Churchill naturally made the most of this success, suggesting that had the whip not been applied, a majority of Conservatives might actually have voted against their own government, instead of which the Cabinet had composed the Joint Select Committee ‘not looking for advice but for advertisement’.\(^522\)

Sir Austen Chamberlain’s acceptance of a place was to be crucial to the Government, not least because his feeling ‘free from any obligation to’ Baldwin and MacDonald\(^523\) gave him the air of a genuinely independent senior statesman. He did not think he would ‘like the result whatever it is’ because it was ‘a fearfully dangerous experiment’ but his willingness to play along with the proposals was the same as many otherwise sceptical Tories: that ‘one can’t go back on the past’ and ‘what’s the alternatives’?\(^524\) Another appointee to the Committee, Lord Derby, told Chamberlain that he would always vote with him and would ‘follow [him] blindly’.\(^525\)

\(^{521}\) Austen to Ida Chamberlain, 16 June 1933, Austen Chamberlain Papers 5/1/621.
\(^{523}\) Austen to Hilda Chamberlain, 28 October 1933, Austen Chamberlain Papers 5/1/637.
\(^{524}\) Austen to Hilda Chamberlain, 26 March 1933, Austen Chamberlain Papers 5/1/612.
\(^{525}\) Derby to Austen Chamberlain, 28 March 1934, Austen Chamberlain Papers 40/1/3.
Chapter Two
The India Defence League Goes To War

i). The war in the constituencies begins

Churchill had made no direct public denunciation of Baldwin for over two years (allegedly because of his ‘personal regard’ for his Leader526) but when Baldwin spoke at Worcester warning his audience that Churchill’s attempts to ‘split the Conservative Party’ could help bring about ‘some form of Bolshevism or fascism’527 such a grave charge could not go unanswered by a former colleague. Churchill’s broad ranging press statement made clear the extent of the breach between the Party leadership and the I.D.C. In summoning great characters of the past to support his case, he asserted that the Liberal Party had been split by Gladstone’s conversion to Home Rule, not Hartington and Joseph Chamberlain’s response to this turnabout and that Peel’s conversion to Free Trade had split the Conservatives rather than Bentiink and Disraeli’s counter-offensive. On this basis, it was not those who were defending traditional Tory Imperialist values who were to blame but Baldwin’s attempt to force ‘upon his party a policy on which it has never been consulted and which runs directly counter to its deepest instincts and traditions ... Those who drive the wedge into the oak are accountable, and not the oak which splits in accordance with its natural grain.’528

In asserting that the fate of the India White Paper and the National Government were inseparable, Baldwin was playing a dangerous game. Geoffrey Dawson, writing to Baldwin to assure him that he was ‘at [his] service’ to fight against the ‘Winstonians’ who were ‘all ‘traitors’ to their party’529 reinforced this high risk strategy a little over a month later in his Times’ editorial. Entitled ‘The Conservative Choice’ Baldwin’s Vicar on Fleet Street interpreted the Party scriptures to the Tory laity - either the White Paper was approved

526 Churchill to William Ormsby Gore MP, 14 April 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/193/37.
527 Baldwin’s speech in Worcester, 29 April 1933, Gilbert vol.v, p. 478.
529 Dawson to Baldwin, 6 May 1933, Baldwin Papers 106/70.
or Baldwin and Willingdon might resign, possibly ending the National Government at home and any chance for a consensual settlement in the sub-continent.530 Enemies of Indian Federation were to be regarded as outright opponents of the Government itself.

This whole debacle is important to our understanding of the conduct of the two forces in the campaign. The quickest way to bring down the Government (or at least force major changes at the top) would be to defeat its major legislation in the Commons. Yet, at Worcester, Baldwin did not mention the diehards’ votes against their Government in Parliament as a possible cause of the fall of the National Government and therefore the rise of darker forces. Rather, Baldwin accused the diehards of attempting to ‘destroy national unity’ by ‘going about the country’.531 This was a reference to the fact that the diehards were building their support in the constituency associations as a weapon to influence their parliamentary representatives’ voting. It was hardly surprising that Baldwin was running scared of his massive parliamentary majority being defeated by a constituency based campaign. The day before his Worcester speech, the Horsham and Worthing Conservative Association of the pro-White Paper Joint Select Committee appointee Lord Winterton, voted against the Indian White Paper by 161 to 17. Another Government loyalist and junior office holder, William Ormsby-Gore, told his Stafford constituency association that ‘Mr Churchill’s organisation will seek to bring pressure on me through you.’532 Hoare had already warned the Viceroy that the Party could expect ‘embarrassing resolutions out of a good many constituencies’533 and to Sir John Anderson that if the Government was further

530 ‘The Conservative Choice’, Leader article in The Times, 8 June 1933.
531 Baldwin’s speech at Worcester, 29 April 1933, Gilbert vol.v., p. 478.
532 Ormsby-Gore to his constituents, reported in The Times, 10 April 1933.
533 Hoare to Willingdon, 6 April 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/661. By the summer of 1933 the following Conservative Associations had passed motions critical of the White Paper policy: Cirencester-Tewkesbury, North Islington, West Lewisham, Torquay, Hythe, Aldershot, Bath, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Dartford, East Willesden, Greenwich, Horncastle, Old Trafford, Central Wandsworth, York, Epping, Chichester, South-East Essex, Walkhampton, Westminster St George’s, Bedford, Kingswinford, Nelson and Colne, Barrow-in-Furness, Ealing, Walton, Bilton, Stroud, Oldham, Burton, Gillingham, North Portsmouth, Taunton, Daventry, Kettering, Blackpool, Eastbourne, Ludlow, West Leyton, Bournemouth, Belton and Burgh Castle, Lowestoft, Farnham, Wood Green, Louth, New Forest and Christchurch, Stone, Isle of Ely, Woodbridge, Wrekin, Wells, Southsea, Canterbury, Manchester, Hampstead, King’s Lynn, Newport, Cheltenham (see editions of
seen to fail more generally as it approached its mid term then it had gain a great deal of support and might even force a political
Churchill hoped to use the Morning Post and Rothermere’s Daily Mail
board for subscriptions to the campaign, which was now to be broadened
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This new body, the India Defence League, would be technically non-party
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wanted to go further, suggesting that if the Tory candidate in the forthcoming Hitchin by-
election did not support the I.D.C. then an India Diehard candidate, funded by Rothermere,
should be found to run against him.\textsuperscript{537} The prospect of this maverick action was removed
when the constituency association selected an alleged diehard as the Conservative
candidate, not least because the constituency was favourable to the indirect influence of
Lord Salisbury.\textsuperscript{538} By early May, Churchill was boasting that the I.D.C. had attracted
support from nearly seventy MPs.\textsuperscript{539}

\textbf{ii. The India Defence League}

The India Defence League (I.D.L.) was publicly launched in June, with the committed
support of ten Privy Councillors, twenty-eight Peers, fifty-seven MPs, two former Governors

\textsuperscript{534} Hoare to Sir John Anderson, 28 April 1933, Gilbert Companion vol.v., pt.2., p. 582.
\textsuperscript{535} Churchill to Rothermere, 3 May 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/193/83.
\textsuperscript{536} Churchill to Sir James Hawkey (his constituency chairman), 30 April 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/35; Churchill to Salisbury, 13 May 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/56.
\textsuperscript{537} Rothermere to Churchill, 6 May 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/193/89.
\textsuperscript{538} Churchill to Salisbury, 13 May 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/56. In fact, the division
lobby lists suggest that the candidate’s subsequent diehard credentials once elected were
largely noticeable by their absense.
\textsuperscript{539} Churchill to Rothermere, 3 May 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/193/82; Churchill to Lord Beatty, 15 May 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/66.
seen to fail more generally as it approached its mid term then ‘Winston and his army would gain a great deal of support and might even force a political crisis’.534

Churchill hoped to use the Morning Post and Rothermere’s Daily Mail as the advertising board for subscriptions to the campaign, which was now to be broadened beyond parliamentary membership. Beaverbrook, Churchill recorded, had ‘been helpful too’.535 This new body, the India Defence League, would be technically non-party and that ‘constituencies might be associated with the League by resolution. We ought eventually to get the best part of a hundred Conservative seats definitely pledged.’536 Rothermere wanted to go further, suggesting that if the Tory candidate in the forthcoming Hitchin by-election did not support the I.D.C. then an India Diehard candidate, funded by Rothermere, should be found to run against him.537 The prospect of this maverick action was removed when the constituency association selected an alleged diehard as the Conservative candidate, not least because the constituency was favourable to the indirect influence of Lord Salisbury.538 By early May, Churchill was boasting that the I.D.C. had attracted support from nearly seventy MPs.539

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536 Churchill to Sir James Hawkey (his constituency chairman), 30 April 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/35; Churchill to Salisbury, 13 May 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/56.
537 Rothermere to Churchill, 6 May 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/193/89.
538 Churchill to Salisbury, 13 May 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/56. In fact, the division lobby lists suggest that the candidate’s subsequent diehard credentials once elected were largely noticeable by their absense.
and three former Lieutenant-Governors of Indian Provinces and other representatives from the armed forces and the judiciary. The I.D.L. was to be governed by a large General Council which, meeting like shareholders at a company A.G.M., would convene annually to approve policy and elect the Executive Committee to manage the group’s daily activities. Patrick Donner, the I.D.C.’s Secretary also took over as the I.D.L.’s Parliamentary Secretary, with a Chief Organiser and his Assistant appointed to conduct the nation-wide campaign. After it had been refused by Earl Beatty on the grounds that he knew ‘nothing’ about the Indian reforms, the Presidency was given to Viscount Sumner who was now at the end of a distinguished legal career. As the President of the I.E.S., his appointment at the I.D.L. symbolised the community of interest between the two organisations with members of the I.E.S. given automatic free honorary membership of the I.D.L. Vacating their Kensington premises, the I.E.S. also moved into share the I.D.L.’s headquarters at 48 Broadway in Westminster. Yet, there was some truth in the Indian Empire Society’s claim that whilst ‘work[ing] in close co-operation’ it would not be merged with the I.D.L. since it ‘would retain its own identity’ and editorial control of the Indian Empire Review. Importantly, the I.E.S. also retained its own revenue and expenditure.

The two principal paymasters of the I.D.L. were the Duke of Westminster and, to a lesser extent than had been hoped, Lord Rothermere. This was supplemented by £50 donations from the parliamentary members and £4500 from the diehards’ fighting fund of 1922. Churchill preferred not to accept the suggestion that he should sit on the I.D.L. Executive Committee since this would interfere with his speaking engagements. Instead he wanted one of the Vice-Presidencies, a request which could not easily be refused. As Churchill

540 Churchill’s draft note on the India Defence League to his colleagues, undated but clearly March/April 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/77.
542 Indian Empire Review, August 1933 issue, p. 19.
543 Indian Empire Review, July 1933 issue, p. 5.
544 Donner, Crusade, p. 119; Churchill to Rothermere, 6 November 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/137; Churchill to Hugh Orr-Ewing (Chief Organiser, I.D.L.), 17 November 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/138-9; Gretton to Gwynne, 5, 6 and 18 April 1933, Gwynne Papers G8.
wrote to the Duke of Westminster, ‘Vice Presidents are ex-officio members of the Executive Committee who will really run the show, but need not attend their meetings unless they wish.’ Yet, he ensured that his interests were represented on the policy-making Executive by insisting upon Sir James Hawkey, his loyal constituency chairman, as one of its members. Churchill, meanwhile keen to extend his dynastic dominion over the campaign, was pressing the compliant Donner to foist young Randolph Churchill, unsuccessfully, upon the League as its Press Liaison Office.

Whilst the Duchess of Atholl, Lord Hugh Cecil and the Duke of Bedford declined to serve as I.D.L. Vice-Presidents, by September the list of this post’s holders consisted of Churchill, Page Croft and the Marquess of Hartington from the Commons and from the Lords: Earl Howe (formally Viscount Curzon), the Duke of Westminster, Viscount Fitzalan, Lloyd and Carson. Covering all angles, Catholicism was thus represented by the Duke of Norfolk’s son, Fitzalan, who had served as the last Viceroy of Ireland (Norfolk’s grandson, Lord Rankellour, worked for the diehards on the Joint Select Committee), whilst Carson’s inclusion, at Donner’s suggestion, linked the Ulster Unionists more firmly to the diehard cause. The other two Vice-Presidents were Field Marshall Sir Claud Jacob and Rudyard Kipling, although the latter took little active part. Gretton, Chairman of the ‘Bass’ brewing empire, became Treasurer. The Executive Committee consisted of the MPs: Viscounts’ Wolmer (its Chairman) and Lymington, Sir Alfred Knox and P.G. Agnew;

545 Churchill to the Duke of Westminster, 24 May 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/78. In fact, the importance of the Vice-Presidency was largely determined by the character of its holder. It could certainly be supine enough: when the I.D.L.’s Chief Organiser, Vice Admiral Usborne was seen to be inefficient at his post, he was politely given a Vice-Presidency instead, his organisational role being passed on to Captain Hugh Orr-Ewing. Gretton to Churchill, 21 September 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/81.
546 Churchill’s note to his I.D.L. colleagues, un-dated but clearly March/April 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/37-8.
547 Donner to Churchill, 21 April and 2 May 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/29, 51.
549 See the Indian Empire Review, July 1933 issue, pp. 5-6.
Churchill’s man, Hawkey; the former Indian Civil Servant and Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, Sir Michael O’Dwyer and a Gallipoli old hand, Naval Captain N.W. Diggle.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the diehard leadership was not so much the quantity, as the political tradition of its aristocratic membership. Scions of three of Britain’s greatest aristocratic political families: Churchills, Cavendishes and Cecils were involved in the cause. Historians of aristocratic decline might ponder that the campaign would probably have been ultimately triumphant if it had included members of the nouveau riche’s greatest political family, the Chamberlains. Wolmer, the future Lord Selborne, was Lord Salisbury’s nephew and was married to Churchill’s cousin. Howe’s mother was Churchill’s aunt. Churchill in particular wanted to see ‘Bendor’ Westminster ‘in our show, although like others he has his critics’ and was embarrassed when Lloyd appeared to be less concerned to bring on board this extremely wealthy personal friend whom Churchill had wanted to make Chairman of the General Council.550 As well as providing valuable finance, Westminster chaired luncheon meetings on the I.D.L.’s behalf and coined the phrase ‘The White Paper ... has a deep border of black around it’551 which was to emerge as a diehard catch phrase.

The Indian Empire Society had gone into 1933 claiming 1300 members including twenty-four peers and twenty-seven MPs.552 Only five MPs sat on its Executive Committee.553 It was only just commencing the establishment of local branches when the I.D.L. was launched.554 Beyond providing a platform for diehard speakers and a forum for their publications, it had avoided becoming an organ of parliamentary intrigue itself (in contrast to the I.D.C.) save for its campaign to encourage its members to write to their MPs telling them to ‘agree

550 Churchill to Lloyd, 2 May 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/197/52; Churchill to Westminster, 24 May 1933 2/197/78.
552 Indian Empire Review, December 1932 issue, p. 49.
553 The MPs were: Sir Reginald Craddock, Patrick Hannon, Major-General Sir Alfred Knox, Sir Charles Oman and Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Walter Smiles.
with the views of Mr Churchill'. Henceforth, it was the I.D.L. which was to form the bulwark of the diehards' political offensive, with the I.E.S. performing a more self-consciously effete role.

The establishment of local I.D.L. branches was one way of expressing the widespread concern of right wing politically aware constituents, but this in itself was of minimal worth unless they also influenced the control and personnel of the local Conservative Associations. These would have more leverage in persuading wavering MPs not to pursue a pro-White Paper line against the will of their own constituency workers and their level of success in this will be discussed later. On top of their relationship with their parliamentary representative, the Associations also sent representatives to the organs of the Party caucus, the National Union's Annual Conference and the Union's governing body, the Central Council. These were platforms upon which to launch a direct power challenge to the Party and Government leadership.

iii). The fight for the Party caucus

Unlike in Parliament, the diehards did not have to fear the interference of the Whips' Office in the voting of National Union delegates. The meeting of the Central Council on 28 June was the first test to the effectiveness of the diehards' campaign since the launch of the I.D.L. Churchill and Page Croft from the Commons and Lloyd and Carson from the Lords were pitched against Baldwin himself in the speaking order. Although Carson claimed to them otherwise, if the delegates were to rebuff their Leader, particularly in the light

556 The I.D.L.'s Chief Organiser, Hugh Orr-Ewing, wrote to I.D.L. supporters who were members of local Conservative constituency associations to forward to him the names and addresses of the officers of their associations and of the women's branches so that they could be targeted by mail. He also wrote to sympathetic chairmen of Conservative constituency associations advising them to send to the National Conference only those delegates they were sure would oppose the Indian White Paper. Copies of this correspondence were printed in a disapproving *The Times*, 29 September 1933.
557 Lord Carson to the Conservative Central Council, 28 June 1933, as reported in the *Indian Empire Review*, August 1933 issue, p. 5.
of his statements at Worcester and the recent ‘Conservative Choice’ editorial in *The Times* about the alleged indivisibility of Indian reform and the continuance of the National Government, then the whole direction and composition of the Cabinet would have been open to question. Hoare’s interpretation that Lloyd and Churchill performed ‘badly’ seems to be borne out by the repeated heckling meted out to Churchill for his refusal to sit on the Joint Select Committee.\(^{558}\) Churchill even interrupted his flow to murmur indignantly that there was being ‘run propaganda to victimize’ him.\(^ {559}\)

Baldwin had opened the debate with the old chestnut about the dangers of paralysing British politics over India in the way in which it had once been paralysed by Ireland. His main argument though was based not on the merits of the White Paper but rather on the strategic basis to the Government of the Joint Select Committee which because it was reviewing the policy with ‘semi-judicial consideration’ (words which ought later to have haunted him) it was not appropriate for the caucus to intervene in the issue. In return for the Central Council’s acquiescence on this point, he promised that once the Committee’s Report was published he and they would ‘take counsel together’ to frame the resulting legislation.\(^ {560}\) The pro-Government amendment to Lloyd’s anti-federalism resolution reflected this in calling for the Council, in effect, not to try and prejudice the Select Committee’s actions and therefore, ‘not to come to any final conclusion’ until the Report had been made public. The delegates agreed to this gagging act by 838 to 356. Baldwin’s gamble had caused a major setback for the diehards - the Tory partisans were more interested in maintaining a National Government at home than in reversing constitutional proposals in far off India. This point was to be crucial for the eventual failure of the diehards campaign in Britain.

\(^{558}\) Hoare to Willingdon, 30 June 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/742; *The Times*, 29 June 1933; Despite Baldwin’s speech, however, R.A. Butler, present at the Council, later thought that it was Neville Chamberlain’s ‘presence [that] decided the result of the meeting’. Butler, *Art of the Possible*, p. 52.

\(^{559}\) Churchill’s speech to the Conservative Central Council, 28 June 1933, *Complete Speeches*, vol.v., p. 5278.

\(^{560}\) Baldwin to the Conservative Central Council, 28 June 1933, Baldwin Papers 106/215.
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559 Churchill’s speech to the Conservative Central Council, 28 June 1933, Complete Speeches, vol.v., p. 5278.
560 Baldwin to the Conservative Central Council, 28 June 1933, Baldwin Papers 106/215.
It is hard to assess what proportion of those who voted to gag themselves may have been against the White Paper but genuinely believed (against all the arithmetic of its composition) that the Joint Select Committee was going to produce a fair and dispassionate appraisal of the White Paper incorporating major amendments from less partisan members like Sir Austen Chamberlain. The beauty of the Joint Select Committee’s deliberation in acting to gag the Tory caucus was that it gave all the momentum to the Cabinet view. Sir Louis Stuart prophesied this, writing after the Central Council had asked not to be heard until the Report was published, that when the time did eventually come for them to ‘take counsel’:

Mr Baldwin will make another opening address containing a brief statement of the proposals, will continue that the proposals are accepted by him, by the Cabinet, and by all the other eminent men who support him, and will state that non-acceptance of the proposals will imply a lack of confidence in himself and will emphasize that at all costs there must be no difference of opinion on the Indian question, because the Indian question is not a party question.561

This is exactly what Baldwin proceeded to do.

Having failed to gain control of the Central Council in June, the diehards’ next target was the India debate of the National Union of Conservative Associations’ annual Conference, held at the Chamberlain home ground, Birmingham, on 6 October. Almost ten thousand I.D.L. leaflets were distributed and posters were displayed not merely on hoardings but also on passing motor cars circling Birmingham.562 It was almost as if a rival political party was trying to gatecrash their opposition’s conference. The I.D.L. motion was proposed by Viscount Wolmer, with the Marquess of Hartington seconding it. Although Wolmer insisted that this motion was consistent with ‘this conference record[ing] its confidence in the National Government’, Neville Chamberlain came to the rescue of the platform party, claiming that the diehards’ motion represented a ‘direct challenge to the Government’ and the Conference duly decided by 737 to 344 (with 121 abstentions) to follow the now familiar

561 Indian Empire Review, August 1933 issue, p. 6.
562 Indian Empire Review, November 1933 issue, p. 43.
line that it was not competent to comment on Party policy until after that policy had already been, in effect, framed.\textsuperscript{563}

Meanwhile, Hoare wanted his colleagues to put every pressure on their constituents attending the Conservative Womens' Conference to vote for Mary Pickford's resolution rather than that of the diehards.\textsuperscript{564} When the 2500 delegates met, on 11 May 1934, the Duchess of Atholl's amendment criticising the White Paper policy was passed overwhelmingly. The forerunner of the Young Conservatives, the Junior Imperial League, voted likewise at its annual general meeting. Earlier, on 9 February, Churchill had spoken at the Essex and Middlesex Provincial Area National Union, his resolution expressing 'anxiety' over the White Paper's police and central government proposals being accepted, despite interventions from loyalist MPs, by 92 votes to 47. As the I.E.S. cooed, since Essex and Middlesex were represented by 32 Tory MPs, 'the pronouncement of this meeting has thus great significance.'\textsuperscript{565} All these meetings were however, sufficiently unimportant to the structure of the Party to be safely ignored by the Government. Where Churchill had failed the previous June, on 28 March 1934 it was Fitzalan's turn to take his amendment to the Central Council arguing for the right of the caucus to be able to discuss Indian policy. As the \textit{Indian Empire Review} pointed out, if both the Viceroy and the Governor of Bombay were allowed to ignore the Joint Select Committee's verbal curfew by recommending the White Paper to the Indian Central and Bombay Legislative Councils, it was not clear why ordinary party activists should not be allowed a platform to vent their views as well. \textsuperscript{566} Faced with this threat, nine Cabinet Ministers, the Chief Whip and a regiment of party managers were wheeled into position to face the Tory delegates who were once again left with the impression that a call for a debate was a direct revolt against the Party leadership and thus, the stability of the Government. The voting went against Fitzalan by 419 to 314.

\textsuperscript{563} 1933 Conservative Annual Conference Report, folios 27-33.
\textsuperscript{564} Hoare to Baldwin, 5 May 1933, Baldwin Papers 106/69.
\textsuperscript{565} \textit{Indian Empire Review}, February 1934 issue, p. 101.
\textsuperscript{566} \textit{Indian Empire Review}, May 1934 issue, pp. 178-9.
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563 1933 Conservative Annual Conference Report, folios 27-33.
564 Hoare to Baldwin, 5 May 1933, Baldwin Papers 106/69.
Having gone through the strain of the Privileges Case and the commencement of the Lancashire campaign (described below), Churchill decided to go on a three week Mediterranean cruise rather than attend the National Union's 1934 Conference in Bristol. Other diehards were less lethargic about the occasion and 600 copies of the September edition of the *Indian Empire Review* were distributed.\(^\text{567}\) Hugh Orr-Ewing even organised that all I.D.L. members took up residence in the Grand Hotel since 'The Royal Hotel ha[d] been taken over by the Central Office'.\(^\text{568}\) This really was a party within a party yet Wolmer in particular was keen that the diehard attack was conducted in a way which did not intimidate the middle ground Party activists into believing their Party was being bullied by an aggressive exterior force.\(^\text{569}\)

On 4 October, Page Croft spoke at the Conference for the diehard resolution begging the delegates that since the Central Council had been 'persuaded to muzzle itself' then 'you are the democratic parent of the Council ... It is positively your last chance to influence the situation'. He claimed that the India policy was:

\[\text{a reversion to the ideals of Cobden, whose one aim was to quit the Empire. Why should 460 Conservative [MPs] be asked to surrender their principles at the behest of 30 Liberals and 10 Socialists? [in order to] risk the fate of one fifth of the human race [and] the final ruin of Lancashire and the destruction of our greatest market ... There is only one force which can now save India for the Empire - the Conservative Party - and the heart of the Party is this conference.}\(^\text{570}\)

There was nothing new in his claim that the policy was the unnecessary by-product of the Tories' involvement in the National Government since this was one of the main thrusts of the diehard attack. The link between Lancashire's future and India's level of fiscal autonomy was also a well rehearsed routine. The whole drift though, particularly the reference to the long dead Cobden, exhudes the protectionist rhetoric of Page Croft's Empire

\(^\text{567}\) *Indian Empire Review*, November 1934 issue, p. 467.  
\(^\text{570}\) 1934 Conservative Annual Conference Report, folios 28-31.
Industries Association and its fight against Churchill’s former affinity towards free trade. Page Croft could play the Imperialist card to party activists with much more conviction than Churchill’s albeit more memorable rhetoric could ever reach. For one, Page Croft had always been consistent in his championing of this cause. Secondly, he could place his views on India within a framework of a long-term economic strategy. Whilst the Imperial Preference of both Joseph Chamberlain and Lord Beaverbrook was linked by a commitment primarily involving the white dominions, India was clearly linked, if not combined, into this weltanschung. Churchill could claim no such pedigree and subsequently lacked the bond that E.I.A men like Page Croft had with the Conservative caucus’s deep seated regard for finding in protectionism an added justification for Imperialism. This calls into question the suggestion that Churchill’s failure to attend the Conference was a fatal error, robbing the diehards of their star turn just at the moment when the caucus came closest to deserting their official Party leadership.\(^{571}\)

When the vote went to a show of hands, (on a loyalist amendment to Page Croft’s motion calling for the Conference to gag itself so as ‘to have faith in their leader’) the Conference Chairman’s assertion that the Government had won led to such ‘angry protests’ that ‘amid intense excitement’ a ballot had to be organised.\(^{572}\)

Therefore, when the amendment requesting the now routine gag to be placed on Page Croft’s motion calling for ‘caution’ was passed, it did so by a mere 543 votes to 520. Page Croft comforted himself, writing to Churchill that he thought ‘the White Paper had not a score of friends in the Hall.’\(^{573}\)

The Party Leadership could no longer hide behind the caucus gagging motion after the publication of the Joint Select Committee’s Report in November 1934. The diehards realised that this was the most important caucus division in the campaign and Lord Salisbury’s pamphlet and the I.D.L. Manifesto were sent to all the Chairmen of Conservative Associations, spurring the Government to set about producing a counter

\(^{571}\) Barnes and Nicholson, p. 280; This point was also not lost on the liberal press.  
\(^{572}\) Manchester Guardian, 5 October 1934.  
\(^{573}\) 1934 Conservative Annual Conference Report, folios 28-30.  
\(^{573}\) Page Croft to Churchill, 8 October 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/225/24.
Yet, everything that the diehards' feared about the issue then being presented as a fait accompli came true. The defeat of Salisbury's motion condemning federation, for which Churchill also spoke, by 1102 to 390 at the Queen's Hall meeting of the Central Council on 4 December was a clear vote of confidence in Baldwin who intervened personally in the debate. Beaverbrook, who, a month earlier had thought the Government had been driven close to having to abandon their Indian policy now thought otherwise. As R.T. McKenzie has noted, this meeting must rank with the National Union's 1921 Conference over Ireland as a landmark in Party history. In 1921 Austen Chamberlain's leadership had been successfully maintained against the diehard onslaught calling for the caucus to reject his profoundly un-Tory Treaty with Sinn Fein. In 1934, Chamberlain re-emerged to play a prominent part in preventing the fractious Tory foot-soldiers from mutinying against their appointed Generals. A defeat for the Government would not have necessitated the abandonment of the Joint Select Committee's Report as the basis for legislation (in effect, the abandonment of the whole India policy) but it is hard to see how Baldwin could have got out of such a hole without perhaps the bloodiest civil war in the Party's history. This terrible fear in itself was possibly responsible for encouraging many delegates to follow Disraeli's dictum to damn their principles and stick to their party. After Salisbury had launched the diehard amendment and Amery had spoken for the Government line, both sides took turn-about to speak for and against the motion, the line up being: Lord Eustace Percy, Viscount Fitzalan, the Earl of Derby, Churchill (following straight on from Derby after his breach of privilege case against him!), the Marquess of Linlithgow, Sir Alfred Knox, Viscountess Bridgeman, the Marquess of Hartington, Sir Austen Chamberlain and finally Sir Henry Page Croft. The Party was certainly aware of the magnitude of the event at the time, 67 per cent of the Council's total membership being present for what was acknowledged to have been a debate of high quality all round.

574 Sir John Thompson (Chairman of the Union of Britain and India, see below) to Lord Zetland, 28 November 1934, Thompson Papers, MSS.Eur.F.137/49/315.
575 Beaverbrook to Sir Robert Borden (former Canadian Prime Minister), 22 December 1934, Beaverbrook Papers C/52.
After Salisbury, the diehard speakers, in marked contrast to the Government supporters, lacked members of the Joint Select Committee and this may have told against them. Hoare’s ability to convince the supposedly non-partisan Austen Chamberlain and his group of the Report’s merits was certainly advantageous in winning over the caucus. However, given the way in which the caucus were denied a chance to debate the policy until it had been effectively enshrined as a major pillar of Party doctrine without which the National Government was in jeopardy, the result should never really have been in doubt. The delegates were not taking counsel with their leadership. The leadership were presenting them with their policy and making its acceptance a matter of confidence. In the final event, for the delegates and the future of the National Government - at least in terms of its composition - it was a case of ‘better the devil you know...’.

iv). Branches of the India Defence League

The first prong of the diehards’ attack on the Conservative constituency Associations ended, as we have just seen, in the failure to gain control of the Party caucus. The second prong of the offensive concerned the ability of action in the constituencies to influence the voting intentions of MPs. The initial policy of the I.D.L. was that local committees should facilitate the enrolment of new members and the holding of meetings without these committees becoming full blooded district branches. The North and the Midlands were considered a particularly important area for attention since there ‘the public ha[d] not, hitherto, evinced any great knowledge of the Indian question.’ Local committees soon

578 Dr Carl Bridge argues that this demonstrates the importance of ‘high politics’ in the balance of power in the Conservative Party. More precisely, what the India debates with the caucus shows is that whilst the diffusion of power in the Party was sufficient for the grassroots to overturn high politics, their sense of deference ensured that they did not do so in effect. See Bridge, *Holding India*, p. 136 and S. Ghosh, ‘Decision-making and Power in the British Conservative Party: a Case Study of the Indian Problem 1929-34’ in *Political Studies*, 1986.

became branches in all but name and the organisation of the I.D.L. at constituency level was, as a result, unavoidable.

In all, 60 local branches of the I.D.L. were established. The constituencies which these were intended to cover were represented by 127 MPs. In the Appendix to this thesis are listed all the branches, with the constituencies covered and reference to whether the responsible MPs voted with the diehards. The results make interesting reading since they cast doubt on the effectiveness of the I.D.L.'s war in the constituencies in altering the balance of forces in Parliament. Of the MPs whose constituents had access to a local branch of the I.D.L., only 22 (17.3%) voted with the diehards on the Second Reading of the India Bill in February 1935 and two of these were not even regular lobby division comrades of the diehards. In other words, over 80% of MPs who had I.D.L. branches covering their constituencies were not intimidated into voting with the I.D.L. in Parliament. Further, doubt should be cast on whether those MPs who did vote with the diehards did so because of fear of I.D.L. activity in their constituencies. All but two of these 22 MPs had been in the Commons when at the outset of the parliamentary session's campaign, Churchill had divided the House over the second Round Table Conference on 3 December 1931. Eleven of the names could be found already voting diehard in this division, long before there was any serious talk of establishing I.D.L. constituency branches. Of the remaining ten, it is not clear that it was I.D.L. activity close to home which was the essential ingredient in making their subsequent stand with the diehards. Some, genuinely, might have taken longer to formalise their views on the complicated issue of Indian constitutional reform.

That I.D.L. branches tended to be established in constituencies where the sitting MP was hostile should not surprise us. Where the MP was supportive, diehard enthusiasm could happily be channelled through the local Conservative Association - it was when this was not possible that the case for exterior pressure could best be made. Yet, given the evident

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580 see Stuart Papers, MSS.Eng.hist.c.625/33-41 and reports in the Indian Empire Review, all editions, 1933-5; Two branches, Guernsey and the East India branch based in Calcutta were, of course, outside direct parliamentary representation.
failure of local I.D.L branches to influence most of their parliamentary targets, it does seem fair to question whether a policy of concentrating exclusively upon the infiltration of the actual Conservative constituency associations of loyalist MPs themselves might not have proved a better tactic than the establishment of exterior pressure groups. Without a proper list of I.D.L. members, it is, unfortunately, not possible to determine to what extent they were also in their local Conservative Associations, but what evidence there is suggests at least some tendency to overlap.\textsuperscript{581}

Just over 60\% of sitting Conservative MPs had been in Parliament, at least at some time, before the 1931 landslide.\textsuperscript{582} By comparison, those of them who were India diehards\textsuperscript{583} had, on average, longer parliamentary experience and were older, a reflection, perhaps, of the fact that their safer seats had facilitated longer political careers. Their social backgrounds were, however, not wildly different from other Tory MPs. Whilst, as has been mentioned, their ranks included the names of many of the traditional great political landed elite (interestingly these were often of Whig rather than Tory origin) the proportion was not dissimilar to that which backed the Government. Indeed whilst Hartington, Lymington and Scone were heirs to major estates, only about another three were primarily landed aristocrats and this was below the party average. In line with the rest of the Party, the middle classes were well represented amongst the diehards amid whose number included the working class member for Lanarkshire. Businessmen were reasonably represented amongst them, supported, in part, by the nervous textiles interests of

\textsuperscript{581} Using as his basis reports in the \textit{Indian Empire Review}, Gerald Studdert-Kennedy has calculated that 60\% of constituency associations with sitting diehard MPs in the main urban conurbations submitted like-minded resolutions to Party conferences, compared with 41\% of counties (excluding Greater London) south of a line from Gloucester to the Wash but only 15\% in the textiles area outside Liverpool and Manchester. Studdert-Kennedy, \textit{Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History}, vol. 18, p.346 This is not to say that those constituencies which did not submit such resolutions were in conflict with their MP on the Indian issue or that the \textit{Indian Empire Review} list was completely comprehensive.\textsuperscript{582} Of the 470 Tory MPs, 183 were new to the Commons, 236 had sat in the previous Parliament and a further 51 had been MPs before 1929.\textsuperscript{583} The definition chosen here is that adopted by J.M. McEwan who has identified 82 Tory MPs who persistently voted with the diehards - two less than joined them on the Second Reading division. The following comparisons are made with regard to this group in relation to the 1931-5 parliamentary Conservative Party as a whole. McEwen, unpublished PhD, Appendix H, pp. 498-500.
Lancashire. In common with the rest of the party, half of the diehards had been educated at major public schools (although only seven of them were Etonians) but only just over half were graduates. The perception of the diehards as a group of Colonel Blimps was greatly overdrawn since the percentage of diehards with experience in the armed forces outside the War itself (20%), whilst high, was not overwhelmingly disproportionate to the Party as a whole.584

Eleven regular India diehards sat for Lancashire or Cheshire constituencies. This was the largest geographical group to represent predominantly industrial areas. This is to be expected since industrial areas with their tendency towards a less Tory electorate, could only contribute towards a Tory victory with the connivance of the middle ground of otherwise Liberal or moderate Labour support - a support perceived to be less likely to take an imperialist line on India. This said, that half of the diehards did not represent southern English constituencies585 is a point seldom stressed when we consider the traditional image of them, amusingly but imprecisely described by Dr Charmley in terms of the 'seaside resorts of England resounding with the growls of red-faced colonels' backed by 'the conservative denizens of the genteel watering-places'.586 The diehards may not have been liberal progressives but they were geographically and personally somewhat more evenly representative of middle class Britain than their opponents liked to admit. In this light, we should be cautious about making generalisations about the strategic stupidity of Churchill's decision to involve himself with them.

584 McEwen, unpublished PhD, pp.350-4. Gerald Studdert-Kennedy has drawn attention to the differences in the diehards' profiles according to constituency region. Southern diehard MPs were much more likely to have had careers in the armed forces or civil service (domestic and especially Imperial) than their more business orientated northern allies. Southern diehards were six times more likely to have gone to Oxbridge than other universities whereas those in the textile belt were only marginally more likely to have attended Oxbridge than elsewhere. Studdert-Kennedy, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 18, p. 355.
585 10 diehards represented London, 14 represented the Home Counties, 8 represented Wessex, 4 more the western counties and three the eastern counties. Outside the south, 4 represented the eastern Midlands and 3 the western midlands, 11 represented Lancashire and Cheshire, 5 sat for Yorkshire, 4 for the Northern counties, 7 for Scotland and 6 for Ulster. The University seats contributed a further three diehard MPs. See McEwen, p. 355n.
Of the 82 diehards, 42 (51%) had at the last election majorities in excess of 10,000 (of which 19 - or 23% - were over 20,000) whilst a further 15 (18%) had been regarded to be so secure that opposition candidates had not even bothered to be put up against them in 1931. In other words, 57 of the 82 diehard MPs (almost 70%) had a constituency cushion of support which allowed them considerable independence of judgement without fear of serious retribution. Whilst difficult to prove scientifically, it might be worth tentatively speculating that solidly Tory constituencies probably had a tendency to contain a larger share of Tory voters of a more right wing disposition than some of the more marginal constituencies, so many of these MPs may indeed have been accurately reproducing their constituents’ feelings anyway.

v) The U. B. I. versus the I. D. L.

Unable to foresee its eventual failure, Hoare was concerned about the ‘Winston propaganda in the country’, telling the Viceroy that he wanted to launch a rival organisation with the assistance of the former President of the European Association in India, Edward Villiers. So keen was Hoare to enlist Villiers’ help that he telegraphed to Willingdon about the desirability of ‘getting him a Knighthood’.\footnote{587 Hoare to Willingdon, 5 May 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/694. Villiers was given a knighthood in 1936.} R.A. Butler, the Under Secretary at the India Office, became ‘very busy’ in establishing the group\footnote{588 Butler, \textit{Art of then Possible}, p. 51.} with the former Party Chairman and current Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, J.C.C. Davidson.\footnote{589 J.C.C. Davidson to R.A. Butler, 13 March 1933, Davidson Papers, MSS.Eng.hist.c.561/13.} The resulting organisation was the professedly non-party Union of Britain and India (U.B.I.) which, in its own words ‘was formed on 17 May 1933 with the object of furthering the
Government’s programme of Constitutional advance as outlined in the White Paper, while insisting on the maintenance of adequate safeguards.\footnote{U.B.I. memorandum, undated but probably May/June 1935, Thompson Papers, MSS.Eur.F.137/51/37.}

The U.B.I. was necessary since, as Thompson put it, ‘it is impossible for the Central Office to arrange for meetings in constituencies where the local Association is hostile. It is just in those constituencies that meetings are most wanted.’\footnote{Thomson to Lord Bingley (a U.B.I. supporter), 24 December 1934, Thompson Papers MSS.Eur.F.137/49/365.} Since the Government had claimed that campaigning on the Indian issue should be discouraged until the Joint Select Committee Report had been published, the U.B.I was a way in which they could covertly campaign whilst pretending to be doing no such thing. Given their successful attempts to muzzle the Party caucus on this issue, it was more cunning than commendable. Of course, the I.D.L. were already campaigning hard, but then they had never attempted to place a muzzle on the debate in the first place. When the Joint Select Committee Report was finally published, since its composition and the other MPs had ‘no longer any excuse for not coming out into the open [and] the Central Office, too, are now free’,\footnote{Thompson to Willingdon, 14 December 1934, Thompson Papers MSS.Eur.F.137/49/347.} Thompson no longer saw a use for the U.B.I. but was persuaded by Hoare and Baldwin to keep it going until the India Bill became law.

The structure of the U.B.I was much less complicated than that of the I.D.L. Its four office-holders were more famous for their work in India than any time spent in Westminster.\footnote{The former Governor of Madras and acting Viceroy for Irwin during 1929, Viscount Goschen acted as its President despite initial misgivings about even putting his name in the newspapers for the cause (Butler, \textit{Art of the Possible}, p. 51). Goschen’s ten year career in the Commons had ended back in 1906, although as a peer (from 1907) he became a Joint Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture in the 1918. Sir John Thompson, Delhi’s Chief Commissioner from 1928 to 1932 chaired the organisation and was supported by two vice-chairmen, Villiers and Sir Alfred Watson, the recently retired Editor of India’s \textit{The Statesman}.} This was intentional so that the U.B.I. could appear to be constructed of informed individuals in contrast to the I.D.L.’s discontented soldiers, aristocrats and career politicians. As Thompson boasted, ‘the Union itself is not constituted as an association in
the strict sense of the word with members and periodic meetings ... [but] of ex-Governors and ex-Members of Council who have had experience of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, we have 27 as compared with 2 on the India Defence League list. The U.B.I. listed 192 members and supporters. In the spring of 1934, the I.D.L. responded both to this and to Baldwin's charge that they had few members who had served after the introduction of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, by publishing a list of 300 of their own members with Indian experience, 200 of whom had been there since the reforms' establishment in 1919.

The main reason, of course, for the U.B.I.'s more streamlined executive, was that with (initially) no constituency branches to supervise and no interference in parliamentary tactics, it had much less to do. R.A. Butler, whose flat was often used for the U.B.I.'s meetings, admitted from the safe distance of his memoirs that 'initially it was very difficult to find anyone willing to join it.' The I.D.L. which, even before its great recruitment drive of December 1934, boasted 'eight or ten thousand subscribing members' and had three times as many branches as were subsequently established by the U.B.I., Thompson himself admitted that he could not find enough 'well-wishers' to get branches started because the chairmanship 'class of provincial society' permeated 'so strong a diehard atmosphere'.

When the U.B.I. finally did decide to allow the foundation of its own constituency committees across the country, it had already been in operation for over a year, and they were never to be on remotely the same scale as the I.D.L. The U.B.I. felt it more profitable to organise meetings in constituencies without setting up an organisation on the

594 Thompson to Sir Henry Craik, 28 July 1934, Thompson Papers, MSS.Eur.F.137/49/64. By September 1934, four U.B.I. branches had been launched (London, Oxford, Guildford and North Hampshire), six more were in the process of formation, and a further seven were contemplated. Owen Tweedy (U.B.I. Secretary) to A. F. Morley (R. A. Butler's Private Secretary), 18 September 1934, Butler Papers F. 74/143.
596 Butler, Art of the Possible, pp.51-2.
597 Churchill to Rothermere, 6 August 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/228/21.
598 Thompson memo on U.B.I. constituency committees, no date, Thompson Papers, MSS.Eur.F.137/5.
599 see Thompson papers' memoranda, particularly MSS.Eur.F.137/51/36.
ground itself. 326 meetings were addressed by U.B.I. speakers in all, half of them during 1934 with the largest share of them addressed by Villiers and Thompson.\(^{600}\) When, during 1934, U.B.I. local committees were eventually established they were all in southern England (with the exception of three in Scotland). No branches were ever established in the diehards’ designated battlefield of Lancashire where the U.B.I found it impossible to generate any support.\(^{601}\) Twenty branches were launched in all, half of them during 1935 which was after the effective cessation of hostilities in the Party caucus anyway but when it was still important to keep constituency pressure on wavering MPs.\(^{602}\) Perhaps more local branches might have been established but for the U.B.I. Executive’s insistence that they ‘must be, for the most part, Committees of men who know India.’\(^{603}\) The U.B.I. Bulletin, virtually a leaflet in comparison with the monthly fifty-odd page Indian Empire Review, was the other major preoccupation of the organisation. It was sent to all MPs, peers and a large number of associations.\(^{604}\)

By August 1934 the U.B.I. had spent only £6000, a fraction of the £30,000 which Thompson (probably erroneously)\(^{605}\) had heard that the I.D.L. had spent over the same period.\(^{606}\)

\(^{600}\) U.B.I. speakers addressed 110 meetings in 1933, 158 in 1934 and 48 in 1935; Edward Villiers addressed 77 meetings and Thompson spoke at 38. Unfortuantely no surviving record details the location of constituencies targetted by the U.B.I., although common sense would dictate that they were ones either where diehards sat or where the MP’s stance was seen to be wavering. See Thompson Papers, MSS.Eur.F.137/51/34-5.

\(^{601}\) Report from S. W. Swaby (Northern Representative of the U.B.I.) to Owen Tweedy, 12 March 1935. Butler Papers F. 74/183-6.

\(^{602}\) The U.B.I. local branches established were: Aberdeen, Alton and Petersfield, Bedford, Bournemouth, Bristol, Buckinghamshire, Camberley, Cambridge, Colchester, Edinburgh, Egham, Glasgow, Guildford, West Kent, London, New Forest and Christchurch, Northamptonshire, Oxford, Richmond, East Suffolk. Oxford was the first committee to be formed. Without any other surving references to it, given the southern bias of the distribution, we must presume the Richmond branch refers not to Yorkshire but to Richmond-on-Thames. See Thompson Papers, MSS.Eur.F.137/51/34.

\(^{603}\) Thompson to Lord Brabourne, 8 August and 15 November 1934, Thompson Papers, MSS.Eur.F.137/49/86, 296.

\(^{604}\) The U.B.I.’s popularity can not easily be discerned from its Bulletin’s growing print-run since it was often being sent unsolicited to groups who may, or may not, have been its happy recipient. Nevertheless, the print run of the Bulletin rose and fell as follows: 6,263 (30 June 1934); 16,263 (30 November); 11,114 (31 March 1935); 8,321 (31 May 1935). See Thompson Papers, MSS.Eur.F.137/51/34.

\(^{605}\) Unfortunately the I.D.L. accounts have not survived, although none of the surviving correspondence from the two main donors, Rothermere and Westminster, implies figures remotely on this scale. If all of the I.D.L. MPs did subscribe the £50 each as recommended, then this would still only have generated in the region of £3500. Added to this must be the
Although Goschen, the U.B.I. President, made clear in *The Times*, after continuing speculation,\(^607\) that his organisation had ‘never at any time received any financial assistance from any party organization or from the Government.’\(^608\) Dr John Charmley has alleged that the U.B.I. was indeed funded by Conservative Central Office.\(^609\) Whilst this can not be proved, it seems quite possible that funding came from a source either in or close to the Party. Suspiciously there is not even any surviving documentation of any attempt by the U.B.I. to raise funds generally.\(^610\) The fact that its Treasurer, Lord Brabourne, was Hoare’s old Private Secretary (and subsequently the lucky recipient of the Governorship of Bombay) certainly indicates the indivisibility of difference between its autonomy and Government strategy. Central Office were intimately wound up in its tactics with its officers and R. A. Butler liaising with and holding meetings with the U.B.I throughout the period.\(^611\)

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\(^{607}\) As Sir Alfred Knox put it, scribbled in red chalk when returning to sender his copy of the U.B.I. *Bulletin*, ‘where does the money come from?’ Thompson to Lord Brabourne, 8 August 1934, Thompson Papers, MSS.Eur.F.137/49/85.

\(^{608}\) Lord Goschen to *The Times*, 24 November 1933 and 19 October 1934.

\(^{609}\) Charmley, *Churchill*, p. 274.

\(^{610}\) Thompson in his private correspondence certainly stated the desire that they should not be funded ‘from ‘party funds’’. Quite why he should have chosen to put ‘party funds’ in quotation marks begs the conjecture as to whether he was being economical with the truth, receiving these funds only after they had passed through an intermediary body. Despite the absence of a mass appeal, Thompson seemed pretty sure that they ‘could count on such money as was necessary being forthcoming.’ R. A. Butler told Hoare that he had approached the Health Minister, Kingsley Wood who told him ‘that he could not use his money for Indian purposes’ and suggested approaching ‘the same source as helped us before’ making clear that ‘the anonyimity of the source of supply’ must be maintained. Note of interview between Thompson, Villiers and Miss Maxse (Central Office), 27 September 1934, Thompson Papers, MSS.Eur.F.137/49/203; Thompson to Lord Goschen, 12 August 1934, ibid, MSS.Eur.F.137/49/106. R. A. Butler to Hoare, 21 December 1934, Butler Papers F. 74/214-5.

\(^{611}\) see documents throughout the India section of the Butler Papers, especially in F. 73 and F. 74.
The I.D.L.'s campaign in the constituencies failed. Neither control of the caucus nor the intimidation of sitting Tory MPs resulted from their intervention. In a view later shared by R.A. Butler,612 Hoare told Sir John Thompson that 'he considered that the success of the Government policy was 85% due to the U.B.I.' This was probably intended more as a compliment than an actual appraisal of facts, but there is little doubt that the Government were worried by the I.D.L.'s campaign and that the U.B.I. was a useful organisation through which it could counter the stream of diehard publicity reaching Conservative activists. This conceded, it was loyalty to the leadership, fear of the break-up of the National Government, belief that the Joint Select Committee was an impartial body of the great and the good and that its Report could only, therefore, be the best policy for Britain and India, that were the most potent weapons in the Government's armoury.

612 Butler, _Art of the Possible_, p. 52.
Chapter Three
Parliament and the India Policy

i). The Committee of Privileges

Throughout this period, the Joint Select Committee had been making slow and laborious progress with Hoare and his deputy, R.A. Butler, demonstrating a great ability to master their brief. Churchill submitted his memorandum to the Joint Select Committee on 22 October 1933 along the conventional lines of the diehard argument. This was followed by a cross-examination two days later. As Hoare prided himself to the Viceroy, 'as long as I kept [Churchill] on the details of the scheme he made a very bad showing.'613 Alluding indirectly to Churchill, The Times claimed it was receiving complaints about 'the waste of time and effort involved in listening to some of the recent evidence ... from politicians whose object in appearing before the Committee has been frankly propagandist.'614 Confined to a permanent minority, diehard efforts on the Committee entirely fell on stony ground.

At the beginning of April 1934, luck for the diehards appeared to take an unexpected upturn. Courtesy of the Daily Mail which had leaked the story, Churchill was handed documents suggesting that pressure had been put upon the Manchester Chamber of Commerce to alter its evidence to the Joint Select Committee by a member of that Committee,615 Lord Derby. Furthermore, he had done so with the acquiescence of another member, the Secretary of State for India himself, Sir Samuel Hoare. Significantly, it was to his old Coalitionist friends, Sir Robert Horne and Lloyd George, that Churchill turned for advice. Lloyd George’s Secretary and mistress certainly got it into her head that Churchill was 'working extremely hard to undermine the Gov[ernment] and appears to be gaining

613 Hoare to Willingdon, 26 October 1933, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(3)/854.
614 The Times, 30 October 1933.
ground. That would certainly have been the message that 'The Goat' would want to hear at any rate. Churchill sent him copies of the evidence leaving him duly impressed by it, finding Churchill 'excited and excitable' about the case. Churchill, accompanied by Brendan Bracken, met Douglas Crawford (the Daily Mail's Foreign Editor), the Manchester MP Alan Chorlton and a member of the Chamber's India Section H.Y. Robinson, in the Savoy Hotel on 8 April. According to Robinson, the Chamber of Commerce had approved their India Section's evidence which had suggested that Lancashire cotton would be jeopardised by giving increasing powers to nationalist Indian ministers. One hundred copies of this evidence were sent to the India Office to be shown to the Joint Select Committee in June 1933. It was, however, not distributed. In the meantime Lord Derby dined with the then President of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, Thomas Barlow, first in London, and, it appeared, subsequently in Manchester. The document which was then presented before the Joint Select Committee purporting to be the views of the Chamber of Commerce was far removed from the original copy sent in to the Committee. At first Churchill and Bracken were of the view that Lord Derby should be made the centre of the attack for this impropriety and that to drag in the India Office 'was impossible.' The exposure of Derby, whose political influence in Lancashire was considerable, would undermine the Conservative Party's ability to restrain the qualms MPs in the region had over the Indian policy's economic effects on the area's crucial textiles trade. The best course was to raise the point with the Speaker in the Commons as a breach of privilege. Whatever the Speaker's decision, with help from the press, serious questions would soon be asked and the scope of the scandal widened. Rothermere was, of course fully behind the action, having launched the press coverage of it in the first place. Beaverbrook however claimed to Hoare, a personal friend, that he had refused to give support to the campaign.

616 Frances Stevenson's diary entry for 6 April 1934, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.2., p. 743.
617 Churchill to Lloyd George, 10 April 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/213/35-6.
618 Frances Stevenson diary, Gilbert, Companion vol.v., pt.2., p. 524.
620 Beaverbrook to Hoare, 19 April 1934, Templewood Papers VII:3.
On 12 April Churchill wrote to the most senior diehard on the Joint Select Committee itself, Lord Salisbury, hoping to enlist his support since Derby’s actions appeared to have contravened the House of Commons Sessional Order Number Four which forbade tampering with evidence being brought before a committee. Salisbury’s response was that it was ‘disgusting’ that ‘when the Manchester witnesses appeared before [the Committee] that they had been got at’ but he could not allow himself to be ‘involved’ in a course of action which involved the use of ‘confidential’ documents. Given his reputation for honourable behaviour, Salisbury’s refusal to associate himself with the action was a setback for Churchill.

Churchill did consult with several of his fellow members of the I.D.L. over tactics. Page Croft wrote to him supportively and the Duchess of Atholl was also encouraging. Hoare wrote to Derby’s brother that Churchill had spent the three days prior to his speech in the Commons with his friends preparing the offensive and that all the I.D.C. members had been telegraphed to be in the House to hear his allegations. Whatever the situation at the commencement of the campaign, Churchill claimed that its disastrous finale had been acted upon his ‘own judgement and responsibility’. The existing correspondence of his enemies refer almost exclusively to Churchill in the action, although ‘Winston’ was the name they invariably, and tellingly, used to describe all Indian diehard activity throughout this period.

621 Salisbury to Churchill, 12 April 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/213/51-3.
622 Page Croft to Churchill, 20 April 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/213/107; Lord Lloyd told Halifax (formally Lord Irwin), either truthfully or as part of a misinformation campaign, that he had had the papers upon which Churchill based his charges for weeks before Churchill took up the case and had himself been waiting for a more advantageous moment to leak them. Hoare to Sir George Stanley, 10 May 1934, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(4)/1060. If this was indeed the case, then we can only speculate as to what conspiratorial reasons had led Lloyd to keep the evidence to himself during this period. It is not impossible that he might have been about to use the revelations as a means of asserting his own leadership in the Indian diehard campaign and this initiative was torpedoed by Churchill’s sudden decision to claim a breach of privilege himself. Unfortunately, Lloyd’s surviving papers throw no light on this speculation.
623 Hoare to Sir George Stanley, 10 May 1934, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(4)/1058.
624 Churchill to Edward Russell (Assistant Editor, Morning Post), 21 July 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/215/26.
It is now clear that, at Hoare’s instigation, Derby had interfered in the Chamber of Commerce’s activity, getting them to withdraw their evidence and to substitute it with a ‘a very harmless document’. Derby wrote to Churchill assuring him that he was mistaken and that the changes were the result not of pressure from him but from further information sent from the Chamber’s Indian Mission. This was untrue, but proving it as such was a different matter. Furthermore, at a meeting between Hoare and Hailsham at the India Office on 26 April it was decided to remove from scrutiny particularly incriminating correspondence between Derby and the Deputy Under Secretary at the India Office, Sir Louis Kershaw.

By the time Churchill raised the case as a breach of privilege in the Commons, he had also decided to implicate Hoare fully in his charges. Therefore, if his case was sustained, he would have both disabled the Government’s attempt to pacify the main strategic battleground of Lancashire and would have publicly disgraced the architect of the Government’s India policy. The resulting resignation of Hoare would have endangered the ‘Joint Select Committee and all its works,’ probably killing the India policy since as Hoare admitted to Willingdon, there were ‘not thirty’ Conservative MPs ‘genuinely keen to go on with the Bill, that the great mass is very lukewarm and that a very strong minority is actively hostile.’ Even more extraordinarily given the public display of solidarity, Hoare thought that ‘most of’ his ‘colleagues in their heart of hearts would say that it was

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626 Hoare to Willingdon, 3 November 1933, India Office Papers MSS.Eur.E.240(3); further proof of Derby’s improper conduct is contained in Derby to Sir Louis Kershaw, 26 July 1933, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.2., p.634.
627 Derby to Churchill, 16 April 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/213/74.
628 Manchester Chamber of Commerce’s India Mission telegram, received by the Chamber of Commerce in Manchester on 23 October 1933, Gilbert vol.v., p. 519.
630 Churchill’s letters to E.A. Fitzroy (Mr Speaker), Hoare and Derby, all 15 April 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/213/66-70, 71-2, 73.
impossible to get through a Bill at all. Modern interpretations asserting that Churchill’s actions over the breach of privileges were misguided and counter-productive appear unaware of how close they were to success in this respect. The Daily Telegraph speculated that should an Election follow (although there was constitutionally no necessity for one) Churchill would certainly be recalled to the Cabinet on his own terms. Collectively, the diehards’ best chance of defeating the policy was, as we have seen, to come at the Party Conference on 4 December 1934. But with Churchill’s intervention in April against Derby and Hoare, the whole policy might have imploded before then. In 1915, Churchill had sought by his Gallipoli offensive to break through the stalemate on the western front with a daring surprise move to knock out the enemy from the rear. His charge in 1934 worked on the same principle. For him, it had the same result.

The Conservative leadership were ‘staggered’ by Churchill’s act of treachery against his own Party colleagues. Davidson thought that the episode demonstrated that Churchill:

631 Hoare to Willingdon, 20 April 1934, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(4)/1044-5; Hoare to Willingdon, 27 April 1934, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(4)/1047; Hoare to Sir George Stanley, 10 May 1934, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(4)/1060. It is important to remember that Hoare was determined to cajole Willingdon into pressurising the Indian Princes into federation and may therefore have thought that one way to do this was to paint as black a picture as possible of his own problems at Westminster in the hope that this would spur on the Viceroy to play his part in alleviating them (Hoare to Sir George Stanley, 22 May 1934, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(4)/1068). Nevertheless, it is sufficiently clear from Hoare’s tone that he felt Churchill, even if unsuccessful on the Privileges case, was bringing the Government close to its knees.
632 see in particular, Rhodes James, Churchill, a Study in Failure, 1970, pp. 209-11.
633 Daily Telegraph, 9 June 1934.
634 Hoare was particularly taken aback that Churchill could plan such an action, sit next to him at lunch as if nothing was about to happen and then the following night have dinner ‘with Lloyd George and Home for the purpose of arranging an attack, whilst the following day he was trying to bring the leader of the Labour party ... into it on his side. Can you imagine a more treacherous way of treating not only two former colleagues in various Governments, but two prominent people in his own party.’ Victor Cazalet diary, 17 April 1934, p. 160; Hoare to Willingdon, 20 April 1934, India Office Papers MSS.Eur.E.240(4)/1044; Hoare to Sir George Stanley, 10 May 1934, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(4)/1058; The Viceroy to India thought that Churchill ‘with this great obsession about India ha[d] become orientalised’ as only a ‘bitter, disgruntled Oriental’ could launch such an ‘unscrupulous attack’. Willingdon to Hoare, Gilbert, companion, vol.v., pt.2, p. 771.
never discriminates between his friends and his enemies, but treats them alike. A man may have quite recently been working intimately with him, and yet he will attack him with the same venom and bitterness as a Communist ... perhaps that is why Winston has no friends.635

The suspicion that the real objective was to destroy the National Government lingered.636 If the frequently stated assertion that it was the India policy that held the National Government together was true then this could certainly have been the result were Churchill to prove his case. Some Tories might have secretly smirked had the charges been made against non-Tories like Simon and Sankey, but in targeting two prominent Tories, Churchill appeared to be demonstrating the lack of commitment to the Conservative Party which was now established as a recurring theme in his political life. Given the diehards’ commitment to reviving the Conservative interest within the National Government (or perhaps even outside it) this tactic was all the more confusing.

Hoare thought that Churchill’s strategy would succeed insofar as it would hold up the work of the Joint Select Committee. As has been noted, Hoare was already worried that the whole policy was being dragged dangerously into the injury time of the parliamentary session. As it transpired, the Churchill case’s two month delay of the Committee’s work concluded just in time to prevent it from meeting until after the intervening summer recess, ensuring a total of five months delay. The Committee of Privileges was therefore diverting the valuable time not just of Hoare but also of the India Office, the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Conservative Party. To make matters even more embarrassing, Derby’s brother was about to become Acting Viceroy.

Given the magnitude of the issue at stake, it is not surprising that the Government played foul in order to defeat Churchill’s charges. As we have seen, Hoare and Hailsham

635 J.C.C. Davidson to Lord Brabourne, 25 April 1934, Davidson Papers, MSS.Eng.hist.c.561/74.
deliberately removed the vital incriminating evidence from the files submitted to the Committee of Privileges convened to investigate the case. When he was called before the Committee, Churchill was refused the right to cross-examine and question witnesses. The Committee’s composition of MacDonald, Baldwin, Inskip (the Attorney General), four Government backbenchers, three Opposition MPs (all of whom supported Indian reform in one form or another) and no diehards whatsoever could scarcely have been said to be stacked in Churchill’s favour. Allegedly, MacDonald may even have given Churchill the impression that if he dropped the case then he might be appointed by the Government to improve relations with the Dominions.

Terence O’Connor, who was providing Churchill with legal advice, thought that if the Committee of Privileges Report found against him then he should save face by accepting the decision and express relief that his Conservative colleagues had been proved innocent from such grave charges. The Report’s findings, drawn up by Sir Thomas Inskip and released to the public on 9 June, argued that the Joint Select Committee was not ‘in the ordinary sense’ a judicial body and therefore the normal orders against tampering with witnesses were not strictly applicable. At any rate, it concluded, witnesses had not been

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638 This said, Hoare felt that his own experience of being questioned had been ‘terrible’ since the Committee were ‘all taking their duties very seriously’ and it would appear that he was not privy to its secret deliberations. Hoare to Willingdon, 3 May 1934, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(4)/1055; Hoare to Sir George Stanley, 10 and 17 May 1934, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(4)/1060, 1064.
640 Churchill’s other legal adviser was, at a cost of £182, Cyril Asquith (the son of Churchill’s old Liberal boss). Terence O’Connor gave his services without charge. Churchill’s legal expenses are referred to in his letter to E. Roderick Dew, 30 June 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/215/20; the legal argument of Churchill’s case is set out in Cyril Asquith to Churchill, 25 April 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/213/126-8.
641 Terence O’Connor to Churchill, 5 June 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/214(A)/92, 95-6; Hoare felt that if he had adopted this emollient line then he could ‘have regained much of his lost position’. Hoare to Sir George Stanley, 15 June 1934, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(4)/1081.
642 Committee of Privileges Report, p. 17, copy in Chartwell Papers 2/223; Despite this interpretation, the Parliamentary Standing Orders were subsequently changed at a judicious moment to outlaw the very activities in which Hoare and Derby had engaged. Bridge, Holding Indit, p.131.
tampered with but merely advised which was perfectly acceptable to the Privileges Committee. Frightened about how the Commons might receive this evidence, MacDonald took the precaution of putting the Whips on the House. The Committee refused to have the evidence used in the case published and demanded the return of all copies of the evidence held by Churchill so that they could be destroyed.643

In the Commons on 13 June, Churchill ignored O’Connor’s advice and argued that if the Joint Select Committee was not a judicial body then why had Baldwin claimed that it had been ‘semi-judicial’ in giving his reasons for why the White Paper should not be discussed by Central Council activists in June 1933?644 Amery, speaking after him, launched a savage offensive on the man he had been growing closer to over defence policy, implying that his motive was to cripple the Government, suggesting his motto was ‘If I can trip up Sam, the Government’s bust’.645 Another MP described him as a ‘menace’ to peace, unfit ‘to be selected for any responsible post in any Administration in the future’.646 The Commons were in no humour to listen to Churchill’s muckraking and accepted the Report without even a division. Friend and foe alike agreed that Churchill’s position in the House had been greatly weakened.647 The Indian Empire Review accepted unequivocally the Committee’s findings that no impropriety had taken place but defended Churchill against ‘the insinuations as to his motives [which] reflect no credit on those who made [them]’.648 Although many of the leading diehards spoke or wrote in support of Churchill,649 more

643 O.C. Williams (Clerk to the Committee of Privileges) to Churchill, 8 and 20 June 1934, Chartwell Papers, 2/214(A)/100 and 2/214(B)/168.
644 Churchill to the Commons, 13 June 1934, 290 H.C. Deb. 5s., col. 1733-4.
645 Amery to the Commons, 13 June 1934, 290 H.C. Deb. 5s., col. 1738.
646 J.P. Morris (Conservative Lancashire MP) to the Commons, 13 June 1934, 290 H.C. Deb 5s., col. 1789.
647 Frances Stevenson diary, 13 June 1934, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.2., p. 807; Hoare to Sir George Stanley, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(4)/1081-3. Unaware of the truth, the Lancashire diehard MP, Sir Joseph Nall thought that the Committee’s refusal to publish the evidence was probably a good thing since their publication would cause ‘a reaction against Winston and our group in quarters which up to now have looked to us to support their cause.’ Sir Joseph Nall to Salisbury, 9 June 1934, Salisbury Papers, S(4)206/91.
648 Indian Empire Review, August 1934 issue, p. 33.
649 Page Croft and the Duchess of Atholl both defended Churchill in the Commons. Amongst those who wrote sympathetically to Churchill were: Duchess of Atholl to Churchill, 16 June 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/224/118-9; Wolmer to Churchill, 13 June,
importantly, many were reluctant to associate themselves with Churchill’s tactics in public. Returning from India, the Assistant Editor of the *Morning Post*, Edward Russell wrote to the I.D.L. Parliamentary Secretary, Patrick Donner, to complain that as Churchill was the only diehard politician taken seriously by Indians, his ‘desertion’ in the Privileges debate by the other diehards ‘was the gravest tactical blunder’. Donner had this revealing letter, which spoke of ‘the internal jealousies on our side, particularly in regard to Mr Winston Churchill’ being ‘plainly apparent for some time’, circulated to Churchill and a couple of other members of the I.D.L. Executive.650

Churchill did not recognise defeat and continued to encourage dissent from Lancashire with a speaker meeting programme culminating in his speech at the Manchester Free Trade Hall before an audience of 3,000. Rather more to the point, however, was that not a single Manchester MP agreed to sit on the platform with him. To accompany the tour, the I.D.L. launched Churchill’s pamphlet ‘My Fight for Lancashire’. An emergency meeting of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce was also summoned, to Derby’s angst,651 which led to an ambiguous motion about the necessity of appropriate safeguards. This was a vague and therefore meaningless compromise since the Chamber was hardly going to ask for anything less. Meanwhile, Randolph Churchill also went on a controversial speaking offensive in the area, addressing over fifty meetings and ‘making for himself’ in his father’s partisan opinion, ‘an excellent position with the Lancashire wage-earners’.652 Young Randolph was, however, a dubious asset for Churchill.653

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650 Edward Russell to Patrick Donner, 18 July 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/226/91; Portsmouth I.D.L. shared this view of Churchill’s importance, at least to his face: Rear Admiral R. St. P. Parry (Chairman, Portsmouth I.D.L.) to Churchill, 3 October 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/227/40.

651 Hoare to Sir George Stanley, 6 July 1934, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(4)/1091.

652 Churchill to Gretton, 26 July 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/215/32.

653 His comments about Herbert Samuel and Lancashire MPs being ‘rats’ marred his performances and his uncritical interview with ex-Kaiser Wilhelm courtesy of Rothermere’s *Daily Mail* two days before his father was due to address the Commons on the Privileges Report was unfortunately timed. Violet Pearman to Churchill, 13 July 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/206/21. There may, however, have been some realisation in the Government ranks that Churchill (junior) was sufficiently impetuous to go beyond what even his father might sanction. Hoare repeated the rumour that the two of them fought
Derby swore never to forgive Churchill. Churchill was no less embittered, telling his lawyer that in view of the ‘evil’ treatment he had received, ‘some day I hope to nail this bad behaviour up upon a board, as stoats and weasels are nailed up by gamekeepers ... some of them are dirty dogs and their day will come’. Whilst he had at least highlighted that Lancashire was not solidly behind the Government’s proposals his failed attempt to dislodge key figures in his own Party was the even more evident result of the action.

ii). The passage of the India Bill commences

In November 1934, the Report of the Joint Select Committee was at last published. Its four Labour members dissented from its findings because they felt it had not gone sufficiently far in realising Indian aspirations. On the other extreme, Lord Salisbury was joined by the other four diehards on the Committee in drafting a minority report which largely re-stated the entrenched diehard position. The Joint Select Committee Report proposed only three significant changes to the White Paper. The first two concerned implementing a firmer anti-terrorist provision and clarifying the anti-economic boycott strategy. The third change intended that indirect election by the provincial chambers would replace direct election (on a narrow franchise) to the Central Assembly. This was done to keep Austen Chamberlain’s support but appears not to have worried the India Office in any case.

Despite his friendship for his old fellow Coalitionist, Chamberlain himself made clear to Churchill that he would still put his weight behind the Government. There was no

‘like cats’. Hoare to Sir George Stanley, 1 June 1934, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(4)/1072.

654 H.Y. Robinson to Orr-Ewing, 27 October 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/222/46; Thomas W. Cowap (a Party activist) to Churchill, 7 July 1934, reported Derby’s alleged derogatory comments about Churchill to the Cheshire and Westmorland Area of the National Union of Conservative Associations of 7 July 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/215/6.

655 Churchill to Cyril Asquith, 8 August 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/207/21.


657 Butler, Art of the Possible, p.54; Bridge, Holding India, p.186.

surprise in this as Chamberlain, for all his lingering doubts about the India policy, did not share the diehard synopsis and had no intention of doing anything which might encourage ‘the greater danger of a Socialist dictatorship on the Cripps pattern.’ Writing to his sister, he was of the view that:

the Gov[ernment] ought to be grateful to me, for if I had gone against them, there isn’t a doubt but that they would have been beaten and indeed, unless I had exerted myself, I don’t think they could have obtained a working majority.

Given his failure to change radically India Office policy, this quotation may support Churchill’s view about Austen Chamberlain always playing the game and always losing it. The Government got more out of his support than he got out of them and he couldn’t help noticing subsequently that he was being ‘used whenever India gets difficult’. The suggestion that had Churchill followed Austen Chamberlain’s lead and in not opposing Indian policy placed himself in an advantageous position to return to the Cabinet at the head of a united pro-rearmament group after 1935, fails to address Chamberlain’s failure to reap such a benefit.

Further, it is not clear that being a diehard was necessarily to be despised by other Conservative MPs. According to Salisbury, who was not given to overstated partisan hyperbole, it was doubtful whether, Hoare inclusive, ‘there was a single member of the [Joint Select] Committee who liked the White Paper’ but that many had thought it ‘better than the alternative’. Hoare confessed to his former PPS that he did not see how the Bill could reach the statute books unless the proposed safeguards could be viewed as sufficient since he had already ‘taken the Conservative Party up to the utmost limit of their endurance.’

659 Austen to Ida Chamberlain, 18 October 1934, and Austen to Hilda Chamberlain, 28 October 1933, Austen Chamberlain Papers 5/1/675 and 5/1/637.
662 Salisbury to Baldwin, 20 November 1934, Baldwin Papers 106/351.
663 Hoare to Brabourne, 28 November 1934, Templewood Papers VII.4.
Despite this, Churchill was under few delusions about the problems of conducting an effective opposition to all the main party leaderships in the Commons, receiving, he prophesied, one speech to every three of the White Paper supporters and unable to wind up on the crucial motions.\textsuperscript{664} He had made an unimpressive opening speech in the new session which Hoare had heard had annoyed other diehards for its ‘bad tactics’\textsuperscript{665} Given the problems of conducting a parliamentary campaign he regarded the allocation of time to diehard speakers by the BBC to be vital.

Wolmer wrote to Churchill, telling him that the I.D.L would be formulating its statement on the Joint Select Committee Report and then asking ‘the Parliamentary Group, of which Alfred Knox is Chairman’ (in case it should have slipped Churchill’s memory) to endorse it. Courtauld was to be sent to encourage the \textit{Morning Post} to give the I.D.L. space to advertise for funds and Churchill was to encourage the \textit{Daily Mail} to do likewise.\textsuperscript{666} One of the effects of dragging out the Joint Select Committee was that it lengthened the Indian campaign and drained the I.D.L. of funds. This prompted Churchill to write to Rothermere and the Duke of Westminster begging for more funds since the League had now reached the ‘crisis of its existence’ just before the publication of the Joint Select Committee’s report in October elevated it to its most important role, adding the familiar allegation that the U.B.I was being indirectly funded by Conservative Central Office.\textsuperscript{667} In response, Westminster subscribed a further £500 and Rothermere £100.\textsuperscript{668}

\textsuperscript{664} Churchill to Ian Colvin (Leader writer for the \textit{Morning Post}), 3 November 1934, Chartwell Papers 8/486/(no sub-ref.).
\textsuperscript{665} Hoare to Willingdon, 2 November 1934, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(4)/1162.
\textsuperscript{666} Wolmer to Churchill, 9 November 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/227/55.
\textsuperscript{667} Churchill to Rothermere, 6 August 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/228/20-2; Churchill to Westminster, 8 August 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/227/10-11.
\textsuperscript{668} Orr-Ewing to Churchill, 16 August 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/227/17 and G.G.H. Du Boulay (Assistant Organiser of the India Defence League) to Violet Pearman (Churchill’s Secretary), Chartwell Papers 2/227/15. On top of his costs of £500 for the Privileges case, Churchill subscribed a further £100 to the I.D.L., see Orr-Ewing to Churchill, 30 November 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/227/66.
In contacting Rothermere, Churchill wrote that as well as increasing the number of I.D.L. branches, it was 'possible that after the National Union has pronounced in January we shall decide to carry the war into the constituencies and fight every bye-election which affords that opportunity' but that 'it would be fatal however to intervene in bye-elections before the National Union has pronounced [since] anything like that would upset the delegates.' Either Churchill was so losing sight of political reality that he was preparing to encourage the electorate to vote against the Party to which he officially belonged, or, more likely given the lack of documentation on this proposal with his I.D.C. colleagues, Churchill was merely trying to excite Rothermere and his personal fortune with the tantalising (but illusory) hope of such activity.

Whatever Churchill actually thought, Lord Lloyd seriously advocated that the I.D.L. should 'fight whatever by-election offered any reasonable chances of success' since to fail to do so would ensure 'accepting certain defeat on the India cause [and] also gravely jeopardising any real revival of Conservative strength inside our party.' He had to admit however that this view was not shared by the rest of the I.D.L. Executive, except possibly by Knox who was on the far right of the Party in any case. Neville Chamberlain had feared that if the Government were to call a snap General Election, as Simon was recommending, before 1935 (and thus without an Indian Act yet on the statute books) then the I.D.L. would probably run their own candidates against National Government ones. This was one of his reasons for arguing that an Election should be postponed until after the legislation had become law.

Churchill, meanwhile, was showing signs of confusing the India issue with personal allegiance to himself, writing to Orr-Ewing to complain that only twenty of the seventy

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669 Churchill to Rothermere, 20 November 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/227/68.
671 Neville Chamberlain diary, 16 March 1934, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/23A.
I.D.L. MPs had backed his opposition to the Betting and Lotteries Bill.\textsuperscript{672} Whatever the justification for Churchill’s opposition to the Bill with its crackdown provisions against petty gambling - yet another instance of his removal from the Party line - it had little to do with Indian diehardism. His expectation of loyalty to him on this unrelated topic suggested that he saw I.D.L. members as his own praetorian guard. This was not necessarily how the other diehards would have chosen to identify their role.

As for the bookmakers, Churchill was confident enough to place bets with other MPs that the India Bill would not receive the Royal Assent in the existing session with federalism included in it.\textsuperscript{673} Hoare’s former PPS, Lord Brabourne, writing from the Governor’s residence in Bombay, thought that neither the Indian Civil Service nor the Police supported the White Paper but did not see how, once its proposals had developed impetus, it could be scuppered.\textsuperscript{674} Furthermore, the Indian liberals also rejected the White Paper proposals, even stating that they would rather work under the existing constitution. As Churchill reported gleefully to his wife, ‘the Government have not a single section of Indian opinion behind their plan.’\textsuperscript{675} Yet, as has been emphasised, a problem for the diehards was that since events in India, helped by their own encouragement to the Princes, removed the immediate likelihood of the most controversial aspects of the White Paper coming into force, so their opposition to the policy in the Commons was undermined. Some counselled Churchill that since his position in the House was weak and that if successful would help Labour to win the next election with the resultant loss of India entirely, he would be better advised to accept the Report and then work to improve it by a series of considered amendments. This act of statesmanship, Lord Melchett assured him, would rejuvenate his flagging popularity in the country and place him ‘in a predominant position.

\textsuperscript{672} Churchill to Orr-Ewing, 20 November 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/227/61.
\textsuperscript{673} Violet Pearman to M. Petherick, 29 November 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/225/93 and replies to A.C.Crossley and Richard Law, 30 November and 6 December 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/225/96, 98; Churchill duly paid-up, Pearman to Petherick, Crossley and Law, 2 August 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/240(B)/180.
\textsuperscript{674} Lord Brabourne to Baldwin, 16 October 1934, Baldwin Papers 106/348.
in the Conservative Party. The fight, however, had been too long and bitter for this kind of climb down.

On 12 December, the debate on the Joint Select Committee Report was concluded with speeches from Churchill and a conciliatory Baldwin. Churchill’s ‘fine speech was in Austen Chamberlain’s opinion ‘the best that he has made for some time’. 75 Tories rebelled, joined by 53 Labour MPs, a figure larger than had been anticipated. The Lords then rejected Salisbury’s amendment to Halifax’s motion by 239 to 62 with the help of the former Viceroy, Lord Reading, despite a convincing performance from Lloyd. This was a poor result given that there were over one hundred members of the I.D.L. in the House of Lords. Churchill put down the peers’ timidity to their emasculation by the Parliament Act (which he had helped instigate!). Whilst admitting that the vote in the Lords had tarnished the relative success of the I.D.C. in the Commons, he still believed it possible that he could defeat the federal proposals.

Although now busy writing a script for an unexecuted jingoistic film about the reign of George V for Alexander Korda, Churchill had studied closely the division list on the Commons debate. Six members of the I.D.C. actually voted with the Government. Yet Hoare was not complacent. Given the centrality of keeping Lancashire on side, he feared that without further tariff concessions on cotton textiles, there could be a defection of all or most of the Lancashire MPs. Yet, as he appreciated, the Government still retained an advantage in that even some of its sceptical backbenchers did not want to see all the remaining time in the session squandered on the India Bill when the ensuing General

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676 Lord Melchett to Churchill, 22 November 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/225/75-80.
677 Baldwin said he would ‘bear no malice’ to anyone who voted with the diehards. Baldwin to the Commons, 12 December 1934, 296 H.C. Deb. 5s., cols. 521-2.
678 Beaverbrook to Sir Robert Borden, 22 December 1934, Beaverbrook Papers C/52.
679 Austen to Ida Chamberlain, 15 December 1934, Austen Chamberlain Papers 5/1/680; Austen Chamberlain to the Commons, 12 December 1934, 296 H.C. Deb.5s., col. 464.
680 Hoare to Willingdon, 13 December 1934, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(4)/1197.
681 see Chartwell Papers 2/225/131.
Election would be more largely fought on domestic issues. On the other hand, Hoare wrote to Willingdon that on top of the doubts created by the Princes’ actions, ‘many Conservatives who are doubtful about the Bill are wondering whether in face of the German situation it is wise to go on with a programme that divides the party.’ With Amery, Churchill was now also warning about this threat (which will be the theme of Part Three of this thesis) and, as we shall see, the Government were conscious of the danger of the India diehards and rearmer coalescing.

It was at this moment that Churchill briefly diverted his attention to the very domestic issues which were also besetting the Government. Lloyd George had launched his campaign to fund a massive investment programme in town and country, organised by a new statutory council to combat unemployment and encourage an emigration back to the countryside. Churchill immediately issued a statement to the press, avoiding details and criticism of the Chancellor, Neville Chamberlain, but comparing favourably Lloyd George’s ‘refreshing’ speech which deserved ‘the closest attention’ with ‘the recent utterances of the deplorable politician who now maunders at the head of the Government.’ Lloyd George had given Austen Chamberlain the impression that he wanted a Cabinet reshuffle which would bring him (Austen Chamberlain) in to replace Simon and that MacDonald also would have to relinquish the Premiership. If Churchill’s future was discussed then no record of the fact remains. Yet, whatever the electoral capital to be made out of it, with so much opposition to the old War Leader on personal grounds alone from indispensable members of the Cabinet, Baldwin would surely have had great difficulty bringing his old enemy into the Government even without the added pressure of the diehards.

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684 Hoare to Willingdon, 3 January 1935, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(5)/1208.
686 Churchill’s statement to the Press Association, 18 January 1935, Lloyd George Papers G/141/1/1.
687 Neville Chamberlain diary, 28 January 1935, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/23A.
688 Neville Chamberlain claimed that he would not sit in the same Cabinet as Lloyd George and after some vacillation, Baldwin reassured his Chancellor that ‘he could not serve with L.G. since that would inevitably split the party.’ Lloyd George himself concluded that Baldwin could not offer him an olive branch without ‘shifting Neville, Runciman and possibly Simon [therefore] he adviseably shrinks from quarrelling with them and the Diehards simultaneously.’ Neville Chamberlain diary, 28 January and 5 February
Meanwhile Lloyd George was receiving contradictory advice. Lothian encouraged him to keep his movement ‘entirely non-party’ whilst Rothermere told him to do the reverse. Rothermere’s logic was that since the Liberals would not have their lost leader back, that Labour did not need an ally, that Europe was swinging to the Right, and that there was nothing in his ‘New Deal’ ‘that [could not] be adopted by the Conservative Party’, Lloyd George should attach himself to the Tory diehards. By coming ‘out very strong on India and air armaments’ he would in two years ‘be the leader of the Conservative Party and once more Prime Minister.’ As with similar suggestions in the past, Rothermere seemed oblivious to Lloyd George’s lack of Imperialist views. What is interesting, however, is that on these issues he encouraged Lloyd George to believe he would be a more likely leader of this group than would be Churchill. Not surprisingly, Lloyd George’s supporters in the Tory Party were not diehards but came from the left of the Party. Even although Lloyd George had previously co-operated, not without self-interest, with Austen Chamberlain and Churchill over their condemnation of the Government’s grip on which politicians could be allowed to broadcast on the BBC, this was not the basis for a new alliance of the past masters. Churchill had been trying to enlist Lloyd George’s support over air rearmament but the latter opted for League of Nations’ sponsored disarmament instead, dashed any such hopes of the two pulling in tandem. Any serious talk of a Churchill-Lloyd George

1935, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/23A. Lloyd George to Sir Edward Grigg, 13 January 1935, Lloyd George Papers G/141/20/1. 689 note of conversation with Baldwin, Tom Jones diary 17 November 1934, Jones Diary with Letters, pp. 138-9; This did not stop Chamberlain and MacDonald retaining doubts, however, as to whether Baldwin might not be tempted to bring him in all the same. Neville Chamberlain diary, 3 May 1935, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/23A. 690 Lothian to Lloyd George, 20 December 1934, Lloyd George Papers G/141/28/1. 691 Rothermere to Lloyd George, 25 January 1935, Lloyd George Papers G/141/43/1. 692 In this spirit, Harold Macmillan argued that Lloyd George was wasting an opportunity associating himself with the socialists and should instead join forces with the ‘Next Five Years’ group (the body of eleven Tory progressive MPs of which he was spokesman) to work within the National Government’s ranks for change. Harold Macmillan to Lloyd George with copy of his press statement, 21 January 1935, Lloyd George Papers G/141/30/1 and G/141/30/40. 693 Lloyd George, Churchill and Austen Chamberlain to J.H. Whitley (Chairman of the BBC), 23 August 1933, Lloyd George Papers, G/4/5/3. 694 Churchill to Lloyd George, 24 November 1934, Lloyd George Papers, G/4/5/8.
ticket, with both still remaining true to their principles, was by now essentially doomed to failure.

iii). The Wavertree By-Election

If Churchill had been contemplating re-associating himself with Lloyd George then his attention was immediately diverted back to India with the decision of Randolph to fight the Wavertree by-election in Liverpool against the official Conservative candidate. It is absolutely clear that this decision was taken without his father’s knowledge and approval. Churchill was furious that Randolph had taken this action but decided to stand by him publicly, fearing the damage that could be done if Randolph was left alone to destroy himself and the cause with it.695

Rothermere decided, without waiting for encouragement from Churchill, to throw full newspaper support behind Randolph who was, after all, his employee on the Sunday Dispatch. The Daily Mail gave Randolph not only newspaper coverage but ‘cover[ed] the constituency with placards’ on his behalf. The Duke of Westminster promised £500 towards Randolph’s fighting fund, Churchill gave a further £200 and the right wing eccentric Lady Houston, £100.696 The Indian Assembly at Delhi also assisted Randolph’s campaign by rejecting the proposed trade deal, further casting doubt on the future of Lancashire’s perilous textiles economy when placed increasingly at the mercy of Indian politicians.

The decision on 22 January of the I.D.L. Executive to campaign actively on Randolph’s behalf, which was also endorsed by the I.D.C. Committee, came as a surprise to Churchill who had anticipated a more cautious approach.697 These Conservative MPs were now

pledging themselves to oppose the official candidate of their party. Having previously been unsure whether to travel up to Liverpool to join the campaign, the I.D.L.'s decision also made it easier for him to do so. Naturally the leading diehards were annoyed that Randolph had decided to stand without consulting them and felt that the action stood to lose the group members and possibly, although Churchill disagreed, the Party Whip. The psychological effects of the I.D.L. backing down from a fight might well have been worse. Instead, Randolph's meeting were blessed by the presence of supportive Tory MPs and a proper agent and campaign organisation were established. The Liverpudlian electorate being composed of sectarian divisions as well as ideological ones, the I.D.L. Executive members' Lord Fitzalan encouraged the Catholic voters to back Randolph and Carson did likewise for the Protestant electorate.

Some of the diehards were sufficiently obsessed by the Indian issue to risk the Whips' removal and, as we have seen, the scale of many of their own constituency majorities was sufficient to give them this confidence. Churchill attempted to pre-empt this possibility by firing a salvo at a speech to the Bristol I.D.L. on 25 September by assuring the Party that I.D.C. MPs would not back down under such intimidation. Churchill asserted that if the Whip was removed, then the I.D.C. member merely needed to win a vote of confidence from his own constituency Conservative Association which would come as 'a rebuke' to the Government from 'a number of the strongest and safest Conservative seats throughout the country'. Churchill even asserted that the full use of 'the party machine' to stop his twenty-three year old son from representing the Conservative interest in 'Parliament where for so many generations his forbears had borne their part' was 'pitiful'. This counter-offensive was strengthened when Sir Robert Horne, made a public declaration that if the Government attempted to intimidate diehard MPs then he himself would refuse the whip.

On 30 January, Churchill finally delivered his BBC broadcast on India, four years after he had first requested to do so. It was the only broadcast speech on the subject he was allowed to make during the whole controversy. As he could not resist reminding his listeners, of the thirteen speakers the BBC had chosen to broadcast, he was one of only two to represent the diehard point of view. Rhetorically it was a masterpiece of nationalistic oratory, denigrating the Bill as ‘a monstrous monument of shams built by pigmies’, but the more discerning listener might have noted the triumph of vivid conjecture over more reasoned prediction.\textsuperscript{702} Hoare hoped that the broadcast ‘was too extreme for the BBC hearers who are on the whole rather a quiet lot’.\textsuperscript{703}

On 2 February, Churchill, in some alarm, telegraphed Randolph to forewarn him that if he attempted to turn the by-election into an issue of smashing the National Government then he would not come and speak on his behalf. Churchill’s pronouncements, not least his radio broadcast, certainly implied that the National Government was undermining true Conservatism, but to his son he now fumed that the ‘mass party rightly favour real National Government’ which would be achieved with the destruction of the Liberal vote at the next election and that he himself was intending to stand as the ‘Conservative and National’ candidate.\textsuperscript{704}

The same day as Churchill was hurriedly imparting this advice, the Nazeing branch of his stronghold in the West Essex Conservative Association passed a motion condemning his ‘consistent opposition to the National Government’ and suggesting that if his son was going to stand as an Independent Conservative in Wavertree then there was a ‘highly dangerous precedent for the adoption of an Independent Conservative candidate in the Epping Division, who would undoubtedly now be welcomed by many loyal supporters of Mr

\textsuperscript{702} Text of Churchill’s broadcast, 30 January 1935, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.2., pp.1053-61.
\textsuperscript{703} Hoare to Willingdon, 31 January 1935, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(5)/1229.
\textsuperscript{704} Churchill to Randolph Churchill, 2 February 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/246.
Baldwin and the present Government’. Churchill replied that he had been authorised by the West Essex Central Association ‘to oppose the Indian policy of the late Socialist Government, which has now become the policy of the present National Government.’ Churchill alluded that he was a supporter of the concept of the National Government but objected to one headed by the ‘international socialist’ Ramsay MacDonald. Arguing that ‘the Conservative Party ... must recover its pre-eminence and cohesion’ before the next General Election, Churchill looked to a real National Government which would be a ‘reunion of all those forces which carried us through the Great War and broke the General Strike’.

Churchill spoke at the eve of poll, arguing that the future of the Empire was more important than loyalties ‘to a leader like Mr Baldwin or MacDonald’. He claimed, somewhat surprisingly, that with a ‘Socialist’ as Premier and, rather less surprisingly ‘a Socialist at the head of his Majesty’s Opposition’, to say nothing of the socialist Lord Chancellor and Disarmament Conference representative, it was intolerable that it was ‘the Socialists who had foisted this Indian Federal policy upon the Conservative party...which lies tame and dumb’.

Wavertree went to the polls on 6 February. With over ten thousand votes, Randolph came almost within three thousand votes of the official Conservative and five thousand behind the winning Labour candidate. The ‘little brute Randolph’ as the fifty-five year old Hoare described the boy thirty-two years his junior, ‘got more votes than we expected’ whilst, unsurprisingly, Churchill (senior) and the Duke of Westminster thought the prodigal child’s performance ‘magnificent’ and ‘glorious’. Churchill’s belief, however,

705 The Times, 9 February 1935.
706 ibid.
707 Churchill to the Wavertree electors, 5 February 1935, Complete Speeches vol.v., p. 5469.
708 The precise figures were: Labour, 15,611; Conservative 13,771; Independent Conservative 10,575; Liberal 4,208.
that the result meant ‘no harm done’ was less realistic than Hoare’s pleasure that the fact that Randolph had ‘kept our man out will undoubtedly do both Winston and him a good deal of harm in the party.’

iv). The rejection of the India Bill in India and its acceptance in Britain

On 11 February, Churchill wound-up for the diehards on the India Bill’s Second Reading. For his own part, Hoare felt he had gone ‘as far as I could without the gravest risk of endangering the Bill with the moderate Conservatives.’ When the division took place, 84 Conservatives made up the 133 votes against the 404 cast for the Government. For the diehards, this was as good as it was going to get.

Preparing for the Bill’s ascension to the Committee Stage, Churchill informed Rothermere that the I.D.L. had:

formed an ‘Amendment Committee’ which will be able to furnish a continuous brief to all our MPs for their use during the protracted debates of next year. Lord Rankeillor formerly a Deputy Speaker and versed in every detail of Parliamentary procedure will be the Chairman, and Professor Lindemann, Sir Michael O’Dwyer and probably Mr J. H. Morgan, the well-known constitutional lawyer, will be the members. Thus the entire opposition to the Bill will be considered as a whole and the danger of mutually contradictory amendments avoided. It would not be possible to form a more competent group.

At one point in the thirty-six days allotted to the Committee stage, Churchill sought to insinuate that the only Princes prepared to enter federation had been bribed and attempted to force Hoare into statements which would put him at odds alternately with British India and the Princes. This made Hoare all the more nervous about the response of the Princes to the project. Yet, regardless of how well the debates proceeded, Churchill conceded

privately to his wife that with a regular diehard turn out of around fifty, there was no cracking the Government’s unsinkable majority in the votes and therefore he contrived to force as few a divisions as possible.\textsuperscript{714} This was, in itself, something of an admission of pending defeat, from which it was now appeared to be too late to dodge.

Extraneous events could, however, retrieve the situation and held out the hope of doing so when Hoare’s worst fear, outright rejection of federation by the Princes, came to pass. Churchill wrote in jubilation to his wife that the Princes’ rejection, on top of the rejection of the Government’s plans from virtually every other section of the Indian political classes including the Congress ‘wrecks the federal scheme against which I have been fighting so long. It may also lead to the withdrawal of the whole Government policy’.\textsuperscript{715} Hoare claimed to Willingdon that the Princes decision came as ‘a surprise’, a statement which suggests he had ignored or disregarded all the obvious indications of this result which had been increasingly apparent to others. Certainly the Cabinet were genuinely taken aback by the decision, to the extent that many ‘were asking whether it was worth going on with the Bill at all.’ Quoting Sir Austen Chamberlain as being ‘horrified at the state of affairs’ Hoare decided to blame the Viceroy, at least having the brutal honesty to write to him assuring him of the fact that the Cabinet:

\begin{quote}
were getting little or no help from your end and that whilst the die-hards were kept fully informed as to what was happening and were daily using great influence with their friends amongst the Princes, we appear to be inert and helpless.
\end{quote}

Hoare assured Willingdon that if his ministers were happy about federation being dropped then they could forget about the rest of the Bill proceeding, since he would have nothing more to do with it, and furthermore the Bill’s withdrawal ‘might very well mean the fall of the Government, but it would certainly mean the end of Indian legislation for this Parliament and probably for many years to come’. George V was reportedly so angry that

\textsuperscript{715} Churchill to Clementine Churchill, 2 March 1935, ibid., p. 1097.
he was even threatening to snub the three ring-leading Princes at his forthcoming Jubilee. Of course these words were deliberately intended to frighten Willingdon into action, but Hoare knew that the situation was so serious that if the Viceroy couldn’t be frightened into achieving success then his job - and perhaps those of the rest of the Cabinet - was on the line.

Whilst for the moment the Government’s majority in the Commons could still be whipped into shape, Hoare was in no doubt that they were now on the ‘edge’ of a ‘first-class Parliamentary crisis.’ It was the Executive which had forced the Indian constitutional initiative on the Legislature and it was the Executive’s will which was now under the greatest strain. Furthermore, the Cabinet were determined to keep the support of Sir Austen Chamberlain and the swathe of moderate supporters outside the Cabinet who thought like him. As Hoare pointed out not only to Willingdon but to his old colleague the Governor of Bombay, Chamberlain had agreed with him that All India Federation was the only workable framework for the Bill and that if they ‘could not proceed with Federation’ then they would ‘almost inevitably have to drop the Bill altogether’. Indeed, there was a considerable danger that if the Bill was passed without the Princes entering a Federation then a future Labour Government could easily build on the Act to produce something much worse to Tory sensibilities. Hoare was aware of the rumour that with Rothermere’s money Churchill and Courtauld were in daily correspondence with some of the Princes, gaining information about their intentions before the Government did, leaving ‘the House astonished’ that Churchill ‘seemed to know everything that was happening’ whilst Hoare ‘seemed to know nothing.’ Furthermore, Hoare believed that it was the Princes’ Counsel, Denis Pritt (a left wing Labour Party lawyer) and J. H. Morgan, ‘the constitutional jackal of the Morning Post and the die-hards’ who, because of their dislike for the Government, had provided the Princes with the biased interpretation which encouraged

them to reject Federation. It had, seemingly, not occurred to Hoare that the Princes, rather than being the undiscriminating victims of these lawyers, might have employed their judgement safe in the knowledge that they opposed the Government's Indian schemes in the first place!

In the Commons, Hoare stalled for time, claiming that the negotiating process with the Princes was ongoing and that a positive result was still compatible with Federation. Churchill, however, leaped at the opportunity to print and circulate the Princes' speeches showing the essential incompatibility of their demands with that of a workable Federation. This was dispatched to all Members of both Houses, the press and to the membership of the I.D.L.719

Just when events in India were going smoothly for the diehards, the home front was suddenly thrown into crisis again. Churchill fell out with his 'uncontrollable' son on learning that Randolph, 'entirely against [his] wishes', was publicly backing an Independent Conservative candidate with Lady Houston’s money against the Conservatives in the Norwood by-election scheduled for 14 March. Without support from his father or the I.D.L. and in backing a candidate who had briefly flirted with Mosley, Randolph’s actions were certainly ill-considered. Only one MP, 'and he a crack-pot' in Churchill’s words, appeared on the platform with him. Even Rothermere’s press failed to rally to his call and Beaverbrook personally tried, without success, to dissuade him from his course.720 In the event the Conservatives retained the seat and Randolph’s candidate lost his deposit, attaining only 2,698 votes, his failure to split the Tory vote and the non-involvement of the I.D.L. leaving Churchill to optimistically muse that his own reputation had not been seriously damaged by the incident.721

The situation in Churchill’s constituency was, however, deteriorating. By early March, the Nazeing, Waltham Abbey, Buckhurst Hill and Epping branches had all passed censorious motions against Churchill’s actions. ‘Against this’, he wrote to his holidaying wife, ‘Chigwell and Harlow have passed strong resolutions of support and encouragement, and the great voting masses of Woodford and Wanstead seem quite solid. There is some trouble however in South Chingford. Loughton chilly. Woodford magnificent.’ Churchill was taking no chances and now aware that Wavertree was a major irritant to his constituents saw advantage in being able to postpone his constituency’s annual meeting, on account of its chairman’s illness, until the end of March by which time ‘the excitement of Wavertree’ ought to have subsided. This prospect was not helped by Randolph’s interference in Norwood which Churchill asserted he would ‘have nothing to do with ... except to bear a good deal of the blame’.722 An attempt to deselect another diehard, Victor Raikes, by his Ilkeston constituency was defeated by an overwhelming 594 to 6 at a meeting of his Association and Churchill reported to his wife that it was being said that 150 MPs of all hues were prepared to support MPs’ rights of conscience against ‘the intrigues of the Central Office’.723 When the West Essex Unionist Association meeting came, although the debate lasted two and a half hours, of the two hundred party members in the meeting only twenty-four voted against Churchill. His home power base was, therefore, about as solid as could be hoped for a controversial politician.

Churchill thought that MacDonald was ‘almost a mental case - ‘he’d be far better off in a Home’ whilst Baldwin was ‘crafty, patient and almost amazingly lazy’. The lack of a strong head who was a ‘commanding mind ranging over the whole field of public affairs’ suggested that in the ideal world, Churchill believed the Government needed to be led by either himself or by Lloyd George. As for the Liberals’ lost Leader, Churchill thought Lloyd George wanted ‘to come in and join’ the Cabinet in a ‘kind of War Cabinet’, which

Churchill would also be invited to join. Churchill however protested to his wife that he was 'disinclined to associate [himself] with any administration this side of the General Election.' \(^{724}\) Hoare was still of the opinion that Churchill was 'determined to smash the National Government and believes that India is a good battering ram as he has a large section of the Conservative party behind him.' \(^{725}\) According to Thomas Jones, Baldwin was adamant that Churchill should be excluded from entering the Government and that 'the Party would resent taking him in', certainly before the General Election. \(^{726}\) Baldwin had lifted him back out of the political wilderness in 1924 and did not wish to do so again.

Churchill told his wife that both Lord Hugh Cecil and Salisbury, despite 'seemingly at the point of death, continue to exert themselves with unshakeable conviction ... Of course the Government will get their beastly Bill through, but as the Princes will not come in, all the parts I have objected to will remain a dead letter.' \(^{727}\) In May, Churchill asked Victor Raikes to give him a list of up to thirty MPs who 'had borne the brunt of voting and speaking' so that he could invite them to a dinner at Claridges he was organising for 'our team'. \(^{728}\) The dinner was held on 31 May and attended by forty-one MPs, twelve peers and five others with Churchill proposing the toast to Lord Salisbury as the Bill would shortly be passing up to the Lords. \(^{729}\)

The Bill's Report stage was completed on 30 May with Hoare almost lamenting to Willingdon that the debates it produced always became duller once Churchill 'drifted

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\(^{724}\) Churchill to Clementine Churchill, 2, 10 March and 13 April 1935, ibid., p. 1097, 1115, 1139.

\(^{725}\) Hoare to Willingdon, 10 March 1935, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(5)

\(^{726}\) Thomas Jones to an unidentified person, 12 May and 2 June 1935, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.2., pp. 1171, 1187.

\(^{727}\) Churchill to Clementine Churchill, 13 April 1935, ibid., p. 1140.

\(^{728}\) Churchill to Victor Raikes, 10 May 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/240(B)/120.

\(^{729}\) Churchill to Lord Salisbury, 29 May 1935, Salisbury Papers S(4)208/85 Amongst the MPs present were: Bracken, Craddock, Donner, Gretton, Knox, Lennox-Boyd, Page Croft, Purbrick, Raikes, Nairne Sandeman and Charles Taylor. The peers were: Ampthill, Carrington, Clive, Fitzalan, Lawrence, Lloyd, Midleton, Mount Temple, Phillimore, Rankeillour, Rothermere and Salisbury; the five others were: Leslie Cranfield (Editor of the Daily Mail), H.A. Gwynne, Sir James Hawkey, Professor Lindemann and Capt. H. Orr-Ewing.
away towards cocktail time.’\textsuperscript{730} The Bill had 473 clauses and 16 schedules. During its passage it had spawned 1951 speeches (960 of them by Hoare who had also answered 15000 questions) filling 4000 pages of Hansard with 15.5 million words.\textsuperscript{731} On 5 June 1935 Churchill conceded defeat on the Third Reading, lamenting that ‘all the machinery, prestige, and loyalty of the Conservative party [had been] used contrary to its instincts and traditions’. But his warning to the Government was clear - there was a danger that mingled with ‘the crashing cheers’ which they would receive in the successful passage of the Bill there could be ‘the knell of the British Empire in the East’ and that after the General Election the diehards would make ‘a larger proportion’ of the Government’s ‘forces’. This would necessitate the Government paying attention to the diehards’ views.\textsuperscript{732} 84 Conservatives and 38 Labour members divided against the 386 Government votes. Two days after his last speech on the India Bill, Churchill was back in the Commons urging increased air defence. The following day, Ramsay MacDonald resigned as Prime Minister and Baldwin moved next door into Number Ten.

The Bill passed its Second Reading in the Lords on 20 June by 236 to 55, without a division on the third reading taking place. Whilst the peers did however succeed in amending one area of the Bill so that British Indians on the Council of State would be elected by direct rather than indirect election, the diehard peers put up little resistance. The ‘Hedgers’ had again beaten the ‘Ditchers’. The Royal Assent was granted on 2 August but without sufficient Indians being prepared to operate the Act, it was effectively still-born. Only in the cosmetic and sometimes artificial world of Westminster had the Government really won the battle and even here Baldwin had reason to breathe a sigh of relief with the Chief Whip to whom he was ‘so close’.\textsuperscript{733}

\textsuperscript{730} Hoare to Willingdon, 31 May 1935, India Office Papers, MSS.Eur.E.240(5)/1308.
\textsuperscript{731} Butler, \textit{Art of the Possible}, p. 55.
\textsuperscript{732} Churchill to the Commons, 5 June 1935, 302 H.C. Deb.5s., cols. 1909, 1925, 1924.
\textsuperscript{733} Baldwin to Captain Margesson, 4 August 1935, Margesson Papers 1/3/11.
Churchill wrote to Willingdon's successor as Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, assuring him that so long as the Princes were not unreasonably bullied into federation he need expect no factional in-fighting from the diehards at home (Churchill thus spoke, using throughout the term 'we' as if he spoke unanimously for them, a way in which he would not have done in 1931) accepting that the Royal Assent to the India Bill ended the matter. In this note of conciliation, however, Churchill could not help again letting slip that after the forthcoming General Election, with the resulting loss of the more moderate Tory MPs sitting for marginal constituencies, the diehards would 'count more in the new Parliament than in this fat thing'.

To Sir John Anderson, Churchill anticipated that 'not much will happen [in India] in the next few years'. Churchill therefore saw the Indian issue, the cement which had bonded him together with the diehard group, as unimportant in the foreseeable future. Other issues would dominate the group. Churchill's old colleague, Lloyd George hoped his crusade for economic reconstruction would remould British politics. It was unclear how this would excite the diehards together in brotherhood. For Churchill, the issue would be air rearmament.

734 Churchill to Lord Linlithgow, 8 August 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/236/155.
The Indian Campaign in Perspective

Whatever the deficiencies of Churchill’s proposals for the Government of India, it was by no means clear in the 1930s that the British Raj was necessarily on borrowed time,\textsuperscript{737} and as R.J. Moore has pointed out, the failure to operate the federal provisions in India was not because of the dilatory attitude of the Viceroy but because, satisfying no one, they were not ‘a workable solution to the Indian problem.’\textsuperscript{738}

India gave Churchill the support of a cohesive faction in the Party which he had not had before 1931 when he was a lone politician searching for allies. After 1931 he was a fully integrated, if not always personally popular, member of the diehard group. Over India, the fortunes of the diehards and that of Churchill were one and the same. Therefore it is misleading to follow the career of Churchill during this period without seeing him as part of that larger whole. Whilst Martin Gilbert has produced a detailed narrative concerning Churchill’s activities over India,\textsuperscript{739} the biographical nature of this great monument to him could easily mislead the reader into believing that he was virtually alone in his fight over India. Indeed, the I.D.L. receives only a handful of relatively brief mentions. In fact, far from being marginal figures, analysis of the diehard group has shown that the majority of their number did not fit into the ‘Colonel Blimp’ mould, but were, rather, acceptable to a wider spectrum of Conservative voter than this image suggested. Nor were they mere amateurs. The I.D.L had considerably more members with knowledge of India then there were in the White Paper support group. In the legal and constitutional arguments which

\textsuperscript{737} For example, all the countries of Europe, twenty in all, if taking their populations combined, still had nearly 30 million fewer inhabitants than India whose population was then one fifth that of the world. Yet whilst the 322 million peoples of Europe felt that even in peacetime they had to rely upon 2,229,719 armed troops to keep themselves secure, the states of India were safeguarded by a paltry army of 234,000 men (of which only 60,000 were British). These figures, current at the time of the crack down on the civil disobedience campaign, hardly suggested that Britain’s position in the sub-continent was being maintained only by the obvious manifestations of martial subjugation. For the diehard angle on these statistics, see Morning Post, 29 December 1932.

\textsuperscript{738} Moore, \textit{Endgames of Empire}, pp. 37-8.

\textsuperscript{739} see Gilbert, vol.v.
surrounded the Bill, the diehards had recourse to sound and well-respected counsel and but for the death of Lord Birkenhead in 1930 would have been championed by one of the most dazzling lawyers of the age. They counted amongst their number the son of the great Prime Minister blessed of Tory memory, Lord Salisbury, as well as the offsprings of the Dukes of Devonshire and Norfolk. In a political Party hardly devoid of snobbery, this was not without its worth.

What they lacked was a leading figure and Churchill emerged to fill this role. Churchill’s past and his personality ensured that he may never have been fully trusted as ‘one of us’ by the diehards740 and his leadership was sometimes viewed as counter-productive.741 However, political history is full of individuals who were not compatible with one another but saw advantage (personal or ideological) in working for a common cause. The I.D.L. Parliamentary Secretary, Patrick Donner realised this fact as did Lord Lloyd’s comments, which whether intended merely as courtesy to Churchill for all his work at the end of the campaign, were nonetheless correct - that he could not ‘begin to conceive’ what the diehards ‘should have done in this controversy without your leadership.’742

The diehards who had opposed the 1921 Irish Treaty never made remotely the public impact that they did over India, and that is partly because over Ireland they lacked a

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740 This point was most forcibly made well after the event in 1969 by J.C.C. Davidson who recalled that ‘Churchill wasn’t really a Conservative, and he cut very little ice with the Conservative Party; in fact, the diehard Tories who opposed us over India never regarded Churchill as a Conservative at all, but as a renegade Liberal who had crossed the Floor ... Thus, although the Tory opponents of the Government’s Indian policies welcomed Winston’s support, they always rather apologized for the fact that Winston was in their camp’. Although there is much in this, it must however be stated that not all of Davidson’s recollections in his memoirs have been fully corroborated by other sources. Davidson memoirs, p. 384. Referring to Churchill’s previous liberal approach to India when he had vigorously condemned the brutal suppression of an Indian demonstration, Sir Alfred Knox, for instance, agreed that ‘Churchill’s weight is largely neutralised among real Tories by his unfortunate attitude in the past over the Dyer case’. Knox to Lord Sydenham, 24 June 1931, Stuart Papers, MSS.Eng.hist.c.620/59.

741 By the end of the campaign, Wolmer thought that Churchill had become ‘an awful incubus’ to the diehards. Salisbury, increasingly embarrassed by Churchill’s antics at a time when he thought the Bill was ‘becoming more and more discredited’ felt that Churchill’s presence was hindering the campaign since ‘if it comes to be believed that our object is to break up the party, the House of Commons may stick its toes in and vote black is white to save the Government - and the House of Lords may do the same.’ Wolmer / Salisbury correspondence, 28 February 1935, Salisbury Papers S(4)208/29-32.

742 Lloyd to Churchill, 12 June 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/240(B)/161.
public and articulate figure of Churchill’s standing. Herbert Samuel’s claim that ‘If [Churchill] were not there to give leadership and energy and to form a centre for this movement, I believe that very little would have been heard of it from the beginning’ was not without foundation. Churchill’s links with Rothermere and, in particular, the Duke of Westminster was also a vital source of revenue for the diehards. The regularity in which Churchill’s own country house, Chartwell, was used as the meeting forum for the diehards to plan strategy also confirms the centrality of his position within the group’s structure.

No diehards emerged from outside the Conservative Party itself, lending credence to their repeated insinuation that the India policy was merely pursued in order to keep the other ‘National’ parties happy. In June 1934 over 100 Tory MPs wrote to the press advocating that the National Government’s component parties’ co-operation should become a permanent objective. As Tom Stannage has noted, only about ten of these signatories had pre-1931 parliamentary experience and they could mostly expect to lose their seats at the next election without being able to call on the support of all non-socialist voters. Diehard signatories were noticeable by their absence.

J. M. McEwan has suggested that the India diehard campaign pushed most Conservative MPs, and in particular their Cabinet members, into sticking with ‘National’ allies all the harder. Derby had attempted to ingratiate himself with Lloyd by writing to him that he ‘realised ... the difference between you and Winston Churchill: that while Winston is

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743 Samuel to the Commons, 27 March 1933, 276 H.C. Deb. 5s., col. 736.
744 Conceivably Rothermere’s detestation of Baldwin would have led him to fund the I.D.L. anyway, but no such claim could be made for the Duke of Westminster.
745 Donner, Crusade, pp.136, 134. Admittedly Donner was writing his memoirs fifty years after the event, at a time when Churchill’s reputation appeared unshakeable and when association with the War Leader no doubt reflected well, but the surviving letters, notes and memoranda of the Chartwell Papers tend to support the view that Churchill was involved in the strategy - certainly in the broader sense - as well as in the public statements of the I.D.L.
746 Tom Stannage, Baldwin Thwarts the Opposition, 1980, p. 47.
747 McEwen, unpublished PhD, pp.349-50.
out to break the Government that is far from being your wish. Meanwhile, the Daily Mail interpreted Lloyd’s speech at Wavertree to be arguing that the by-election:

‘s should be our re-juvination as a Conservative Party’ free from National Government alliance. His challenge makes this clear - that any important access of Conservative votes to [Randolph] Churchill will proclaim beyond contradiction the desire of the Conservative Party to re-establish its independence.

This made no sense to Edward Cadogan, a sceptic on the Joint Select Committee, who did not see how Indian reform would be prevented by helping to divide the National Government and thereby helping the even more concession conscious Labour Party. Churchill seems to have speculated that the National Government was going to lose the next Election anyway regardless of whether he managed to reshape its composition or not, but that such party political considerations, he loftily told Cadogan, were not pertinent to the Joint Select Committee’s deliberations.

Hoare’s suggestion that it was the U.B.I. which was largely responsible for saving the India Bill allowed Thompson to bask in the fact that if it were true then it meant that ‘the continued existence of the National Government [was] due to the U.B.I., as they would hardly be in power now if they had been beaten on the India Bill’.

The India Bill, together to some extent with disarmament policy, (although both these causes had their Tory sympathisers) were concessions that the Conservatives made to their National Government partners in order for Tory dominance of domestic issues to be accepted. These were the two policies which Churchill in particular chose to target. In this way, Churchill, the ex-Liberal, could even be viewed as the most resolutely ‘Tory’ of the alternative Party leaders on offer should the ‘National’ leaders become discredited.

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748 Derby to Lloyd, 18 June 1934, Lloyd Papers 19/5  
750 Cadogan to Churchill, 23 March 1934, Chartwell Papers 2/224/18.  
Whilst not for one moment questioning his sincerity on the issues of India and rearmament upon which there is no evidence to suggest he was other than genuinely concerned,\(^{753}\) it is probable that Churchill was happily aware of this fact. This was not necessarily ignoble, rather it was proper that an experienced politician should have wanted to take responsibility for the views which he advanced.

In an important letter, inexplicably ignored by historians, Sir Austen Chamberlain reported to his sister a weekend in 1933 that he had spent with Churchill at Chartwell:

He anticipates that he and his Indian Die-Hards will continue to hold about 1/3rd of the Party, that the India Bill will be carried but that the fight will leave such bitter memories that the Govt. will have to be reconstructed. Only Ramsay, S.B., Sam Hoare, Irwin and perhaps the Lord Chancellor are so committed that they would have to go. Simon could stay and it would still be a National Government, but who is to lead it? Obviously I am the man! And so he led me up into a high place and showed me the kingdoms of the world. I was not greatly tempted.\(^{754}\)

This seems to come closest to what Churchill, in his calls for a real broad National Government, had in mind all along. If the Government was going to be an alliance of the moderate Conservative Party leadership and that of other moderate factions, then why could it not also be an anti-socialist rainbow alliance of all the groups, including, in his own case, the representative of the diehards who were, after all, supported by over 80 Tory MPs and between a third and a half of the Party caucus. Baldwin's stated vision of the Conservative Party as the August 1931 crisis approached may even have encouraged him in this view.\(^{755}\) In fact Baldwin had actually contemplated resigning once the India Bill was passed, believing that the diehards would not return to the Party fold if he assumed

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\(^{753}\) As Dr Paul Addison has observed, 'historians who believe that Churchill's Indian campaign was purely a tactical struggle against Baldwin need to explain why throughout the Second World War Churchill conducted a tooth-and-nail struggle in private against all attempts to introduce representative central government in India.' Paul Addison, 'The Political Beliefs of Winston Churchill', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th Series, Vol. 30., 1980, p. 41.

\(^{754}\) Austen to Hilda Chamberlain, 28 October 1933, Austen Chamberlain Papers 5/1/637

\(^{755}\) Before he decided to join the National Government, Baldwin had claimed that the Conservatives' 'can form, and we hope to form, a national party' based on their composition of individuals with a wide spectrum of views from left to right. *The Times*, 18 December 1930 and 17 July 1931, Ball, *Historical Journal*, vol. 29, pp. 160-1.
the Premiership, but might if Neville Chamberlain took over for five years before giving
way 'to a younger man'.

Thus, far from Dr McEwan's claim, it may well have been the
fear of losing the diehards and their huge constituency majorities from the Party
altogether, that prevented the fusion of the 'National' parties from taking place. This,
with the reluctance of the National Liberal and National Labour groups, some of whose
number held out the hope of eventual reconciliation with their former colleagues, allowed
the Conservative Party Chairman, Lord Stonehaven, to argue against the immediate
creation of such a 'National Party' fusing all three component parties into a liberal-
conservative centre party.

As for the succession, Neville Chamberlain was certainly more right wing than Baldwin,
leading Camrose to warn Baldwin that the Simonites might not serve under Chamberlain,
thus effectively ending the National Government. This was neither Baldwin's nor
Chamberlain's wish and during August 1935 Baldwin definitely decided to retain the
leadership. Yet, how much more pleasant it would have been for Churchill still, if
instead of Baldwin or Neville Chamberlain, it had been his old coalitionist partner Sir
Austen Chamberlain who sedately presided from the top of the rainbow conglomerate of all
the talents that Churchill desired. Perhaps, as Churchill hinted in January 1935, the great
Lloyd George could also be brought back, after which only a resurrection appearance by an
immortal Lord Birkenhead could be prayed for. Amid such a band of brothers, Churchill
would have felt at home. Whatever the political and practical reality of this wish, it
does seem to have been on Churchill's mind. This made his warnings to the Government all
the more trenchant that after the 1935 Election had lost them their northern marginal seats
and returned the Party to its southern English power base, thereby, the diehards would
have a stronger voice in the Party. In the game of politics, Churchill was still very much a
player.

756 Neville Chamberlain recording a conversation with Baldwin in his diary, Neville
Chamberlain Papers 2/23A/11 February 1935.
757 Stannage, Baldwin Thwarts the Opposition, p.48.
758 Neville Chamberlain in his diary, Neville Chamberlain Papers 2/23A/25 March and
29 April 1935.
PART THREE
DEFENCE AND FOREIGN POLICY
Chapter One
National and International Defence

i). Churchill’s strategic importance in 1935

In *Churchill, a Study in Failure*, Robert Rhodes James has suggested that after his subject’s ‘egocentric ... obsession’ in pursuing his ‘lamentable struggle’ against the India Bill, it was extraordinary that he should think his re-admission to the Cabinet likely. This overlooks the argument that when on 23 October 1935 Baldwin announced that a General Election would be held on 14 November, there were three reasons why Churchill could expect such a call should his Party and their allies again prove victorious. First, if a National Government was truly a coalition of different creeds brought together for a common purpose (the prevention of a Socialist Government at a time of international economic and political instability) then Churchill was the most recognisable spokesman for the right wing in this spectrum. For instance, despite his personal animosity for the wilderness Liberal, Baldwin had seriously considered bringing Lloyd George into the Government with his ‘New Deal’ plan of action as a way of bringing the ‘progressive’ wing into the National spectrum. Secondly, Defence was re-emerging as a major issue and Churchill had identified himself strongly over the last two years with this cause. Thirdly, and most recently, in contrast to some diehards, Churchill had gone out of his way to show that these two stances were compatible with public loyalty to the Baldwin leadership. No better manifestation of this can be found than at the pre-Election Conservative Party Conference at Bournemouth in October. Having got his amendment unanimously passed calling for greater rearmament, he delighted the delegates by praising Baldwin as ‘a statesman who has gathered to himself a greater volume of confidence and goodwill than any public man I recollect in my long career’. Baldwin responded that he

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760 Unsatisfied by Baldwin’s Indian policy and his on-going failure to swing to the right, the diehard MPs the Duchess of Atholl, A.J. K. Todd, Lieutenant-Commander Astbury, Sir Joseph Nall and Linton Thorp KC, temporarily resigned the Conservative Whip in May. Duchess of Atholl etc., to Baldwin, 21 May 1935, Baldwin Papers 107/94.
rejoiced that the differences he had experienced with the diehards and with Churchill in particular, were now 'at an end'.761

Dr John Charmley has gone beyond the assertion that Churchill's defence campaign was compatible with returning to the Cabinet by claiming that it was so in tune with Government policy that it made his return even more likely. This overstates the case. As we shall see, Baldwin specifically ruled out the public promotion of sweeping rearmament in 1935 which Churchill wanted to see under-pinning the Conservative electoral campaign. Whilst Churchill's bad judgement and individualist temperament were the most frequently quoted reasons for Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain's desire to exclude him from the Cabinet 'team', both these men feared the fact that Churchill's call for rearmament, by commending itself both to the parliamentary party and to the caucus, might lead to power falling to him and consequently away from themselves. As we shall see, rearmament re-established Churchill's position across the Conservative Party. Since improvement in his standing was not what the Leadership wanted, they blocked his re-admission to the Cabinet. In view of this, it is difficult to sustain the full implications of Dr Charmley's claim that rearmament 'provided the means for a rapprochement between him and the Party leaders'.762

Yet, the case for Churchill's inclusion in the Government as the representative of an important faction in Parliament and the Party could also be turned on its head to advocate his exclusion. The fact that the Government was 'National' did not bind it to represent in its Cabinet every spectrum of non-Socialist opinion. Apart from Hailsham's rather marginal appointment to the War Office, the National Cabinet formed in the anti-socialist landslide of 1931 avoided appointing any overtly Tory or Imperialist tribunes. Amery, for example, had significant factional support for his Imperial protectionist views in the parliamentary party and the caucus, but was as much excluded as Churchill. The

761 Reported in *The Times*, 5 October 1935; the Baldwin/Churchill correspondence of 6 and 7 October 1935 was equally gushing: Chartwell Papers 2/237/101 and 102.
Baldwin-MacDonald axis defined ‘National’ to mean moderate (in their own image) rather than broad ranging. 1931 was the date in which the tone set by ‘New Conservatism’ became the established creed acceptable to all the mainstream political forces except old style ‘diehard’ Conservatives, Cobdenites and traditional Labourites. Furthermore, it is not clear that the consideration given to bringing Lloyd George into the Government in order to harness the support of the equally excluded ‘progressive’ faction boded well for Churchill’s inclusion. After all, having given it some thought, Baldwin finally decided to spurn Lloyd George, not to integrate him into the club.

As far as bringing back Churchill was concerned, much depended on whether Baldwin regarded the civil war over India in his Party to be due to the right wing’s exclusion from the Cabinet, or whether the revolt had been contained because of that very exclusion. Secondly, Defence may have re-emerged as an electoral issue, and Churchill’s identification with that issue may have been established, but it was not obvious to a Government conscious of the popular support for the jargon of ‘peace’ that Churchill’s analysis of the defence issue was the one to win elections. Thirdly, Churchill’s new found loyalty to the Party Leadership might have seemed compatible with his record of dissent over India and air rearmament during the excitement of an Election campaign when the Party Leadership were at least closer to his standpoint that the Opposition Parties with whom they were about to go the polls. It was by no means clear, however, that Churchill’s loyalty would prove any more enduring when the Socialist spectre of office had once again receded in the morrow of an 1935 National victory than it had after that in 1931. Baldwin, therefore, had to weigh up all these contradictory factors before making his decision.

763 Although the Cobdenites in the guise of Samuel’s National Liberals were momentarily caught up in the ‘National’ tidal wave, they extracted themselves in 1932 in defence of Free Trade. Yet, as their raison d’être Free Trade as a major public issue was marginalised in the face of an unmoving protectionist majority in the Commons and by other issues, including the worsening international political situation. As a result of this, pure Free Trade proceeded to play a less significant part in their public persona compared to the mixture of social New Liberalism and enthusiasm for Geneva and disarmament which began to replace the non-Whig Liberals’ nineteenth century ardours for temperance and nonconformity as familiar characteristics.
In Part Two of this thesis we concentrated on Churchill’s Indian diehard crusade. It is therefore necessary before proceeding further to chart the course of his secondary campaign during this period for rearmament and in particular, for the rebuilding of the RAF in the face of an increasingly hostile Germany.

ii). The Rearmament Crusade

Whilst at the Exchequer, Churchill had axed the defence forces budget mercilessly on the basis that economies were needed and that the Ten Year Rule which anticipated Britain’s involvement in no major war for the next decade justified the armed forces as a target. Given that his period at the Exchequer coincided with the European détente of Locarno, negotiated by his ex-Coalitionist colleague Sir Austen Chamberlain, the destruction of Britain’s fighting potential seemed more expedient than the removal of the social welfare programmes of Neville Chamberlain which also enjoyed Churchill’s support.

During 1932 the situation had begun to alter. The League of Nations had already proved impotent in the face of Japanese aggression in Manchuria. Indeed, both Churchill and Austen Chamberlain had been broadly sympathetic to Japan’s attempt to stabilise her interests in that volatile part of the world. More importantly still, Germany’s experiment in parliamentary democracy appeared to be drawing to a close with her aggressive right wing coalitions scarcely managing to contain the rise of the Nazis. Meanwhile, Baldwin told the House of Commons with helpless fatalism that there ‘was no power on earth’ which could protect the British people from being obliterated from the skies since ‘the bomber will always get through’.

764 Baldwin to the Commons, 10 November 1932, 270 HC Deb 5s., col. 630.
Baldwin's speech re-launched Churchill's interest in air technology, spurring him to build bridges with the Imperialist Leo Amery and to write an article for the *Daily Mail* arguing for the re-development of the RAF should the Geneva disarmament talks fail.

The following week he made his first major speech in the Commons on the subject. In it, he tied together the main strands of what was to become his central argument. Commencing in a light-hearted vein that MacDonald had led British negotiations at the disarmament talks and that his opposition to MacDonald was 'one of my most consistent themes' he stated that whilst the League of Nations itself was 'a priceless instrument of international comity' disarmament conferences would not work and rested only on the utopian unreality of 'the poor good people of the League of Nations Union'. Churchill took the view that Britain with its 'Imperial responsibilities ought to be very careful not to meddle improvidently ... in this tremendous European structure' laid out at Versailles whereby France guaranteed the territorial integrity of small countries like Belgium, Poland, Rumania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia in the same way that the British navy had protected small nations through its mastery of the seas. To undermine French security at the disarmament conference was to unsettle the territorial integrity of all these countries in the face of re-emerging German militancy which, in direct conflict with the British Empire, would seek 'the restoration of lost territories and lost colonies'. Finally, he contradicted Baldwin's fatalism and reminded the Leader of his Party that 'the responsibility of Ministers to guarantee the safety of the country from day to day, and from hour to hour, is direct and inalienable.'

Perhaps the most noticeable feature of this argument was not that Britain should involve itself in continental entanglement but rather that by not undermining the French, Britain could best be kept out of such a conflagration. He repeated this theme in subsequent key-

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765 Churchill had been Air Minister in the Lloyd George coalition Government from 1919-1921.
766 Amery diary, 22 November 1932, p. 287; Churchill in the *Daily Mail*, 17 November 1932.
767 Churchill to the Commons, Debate on the Address, 23 November 1932, 272 HC Deb 5s., especially cols. 74, 80-5 and 90-2.
note speeches. This was not a fashionable view as Churchill admitted, since the received wisdom of the day was that armaments races caused war (hence the need for disarmament) and that heavily armed France was therefore the chief barrier to disarmament and a general appeasement of Europe. Government policy during the Thirties developed this theme further, asserting (with some truth) that Britain could not sustain an armaments race without the counter-productive destruction of her balance of payments and facilities for credit. As far as the right wing were concerned, if Britain was to consolidate her Empire, she could not also be expected to stretch to guaranteeing lots of new untested countries in Eastern Europe which should either (as Churchill desired) be protected by France or (as some on the right wing began to ponder) be subsumed in a German hegemony as a bulwark against either going Communist voluntarily or being seized by the Red Army. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Churchill of 1932-3, keeping solidly right wing company because of the India campaign, should have developed this line of isolationist strategic thinking and that Liberal MPs could stand up in the Commons and say that ‘he and his friends are really a lot of miserable Little Englanders’.770

Whilst there was still the hope of general disarmament, Tories like Anthony Eden could decry Churchill’s supposedly unconstructive quips and arguments for armed isolation.771 Yet, to all but the most committed pro-Genevans (i.e. supporters of the League of Nations), Hitler’s decision to pull Germany out of both the disarmament talks and the League, together with the growing number of revelations about the general obnoxiousness of the

768 Churchill to the Commons, Geneva Disarmament Debate, 23 March 1933, in which he declared ‘Thank God for the French Army’ (the attitude described in France as Britain’s desire to fight down to the last Frenchman) and a similar message on 13 April 1933, 276 HC Deb 5s., cols. 542, 545-8 and 2793-4. He told his constituents that Britain should be sufficiently armed to be ‘strong enough if war should come in Europe to maintain our effective neutrality, unless we should decide of our own free will to the contrary’: Churchill at Theydon Bois, 12 August 1933; and at Chingford on 13 November that MacDonald’s aims of ‘interfering on the continent and trying to weaken France and strengthen Germany’ was a ‘Socialist foreign policy’ quoted in Gilbert vol.v., pp. 489 and 494.
770 Geoffrey Mander to the Commons, 23 March 1933, 276 HC Deb 5s. col. 583
771 Eden to the Commons, 23 March 1933, 276 HC Deb 5s., cols. 615-6.
Nazi regime, called into question the assumptions of the British Government. If Germany could not be stopped from rearming, then Britain would have to stop trying to denude France of its defences and might even have to consider some modest rearmament herself. This was a milder form of the stance with which Churchill was now identified. Meanwhile, whilst the Conservative Party caucus was with considerable effort being prevented from declaring for the Indian diehards, a motion from these very diehards' leaders - Lord Lloyd and Churchill - calling for British rearmament was passed unanimously at the Party Conference in October 1933. The Cabinet could not afford India diehardism and the traditional right wing concern of defence to fuse as a joint attack on the Government's policies. As a result, the Government's decision to commence rearmament for strategic defence reasons also had the advantage of associating the Party Leadership with the aspirations (if not the urgency of action) of the spreading rearmament lobby in the rest of the Party. The modest increases in the size of the RAF - the defence force targeted as the most inadequate - was also a response to the popular fear of the bomber. It was not the differences between the diehards and the rearmers which undermined Churchill's case. Before the Abyssinian crisis brought into immediate question the manner in which Britain should involve herself in international disputes with far-reaching consequences, there was no important pressing division between the rearmers on foreign policy nor did any prominent diehard speak out against British rearmament. In the absence of such barriers to a unified position, the Government would have faced a formidable Tory opposition had it not, albeit cautiously, commenced rearmament. Robert Rhodes James has argued that the Indian campaign injured Churchill's stance on defence.  

Firstly, it is necessary to draw a distinction between Churchill's rearmament campaign from 1932 and his views on foreign policy from 1935, the former commanding broader support than the more specific details of the latter. Secondly, it was Churchill's formidable position as both an Indian diehard and a rearmament spokesman that was a factor in encouraging the Government to commence the very rearmament which

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772 Rhodes James, Churchill, a Study in Failure, pp. 213-5.
Rhodes James presumes by implication to have been hindered by Churchill’s involvement in the Indian campaign.  

Aware that he was making headway in pushing the Government into action, Churchill’s tactics on defence were consciously less confrontational than over India, thereby providing the Government with the leeway to make concessions. Armed by information supplied from public servants (in breach of the Official Secrets Act) Churchill sought to demonstrate that the Government’s figures on Germany’s growing Air Force (which was supposedly illegal under the terms of the Versailles Treaty) were underestimates. Before his Amendment to the Address of 28 November 1934, Churchill wrote to Baldwin outlining the general course he intended to take. As well as calling for the strengthening of scientific research into defence measures against bombers, Churchill alleged in the Commons that on current projections the Luftwaffe would be double the size of the RAF during 1937 and that it should become Government policy over the next decade to maintain an Air Force larger than that of Germany. Frances Stevenson, viewing the debate from the Gallery, wrote in her diary that when Churchill sat down he received ‘almost an ovation’ since there was ‘no doubt that [his] line greatly pleased the Tory Party’.  

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773 On 4 March 1934 the Defence White Paper called for the creation of 4 new squadrons and on 2 July the Cabinet agreed to prioritise the air force over other defence requirements. As the Military Assistant Secretary to the CID, Colonel Pownall recorded in his diary for 30 July 1934: ‘It is extraordinary the effect of (so called) public opinion, the press and the Lord Lloyd-Churchill group on the minds of Ministers. It is slow working perhaps, but if continued it has inevitable effects’ (quoted in Gilbert Churchill vol.v., p. 553n). That afternoon, Baldwin had continued the appeasement of Churchill’s position by announcing in the Commons that in view of the importance of the Air, that Britain’s defences were on the Rhine, not the chalk cliffs of Dover. During 1935, Baldwin also became aware that the Executive Committee of the I.D.L. wanted formally to widen the scope of their organisation ‘to include not only India but also all Imperial questions including Defence and the general maintenance of Conservative Principles.’ Circular from Viscount Wolmer, Chairman of the I.D.L. Executive Committee to members, 3 April 1935, Baldwin Papers 107/57-8.  

774 In particular Major Desmond Morton, the head of the CID Industrial Intelligence Centre and, from 1935, Clive Wigram, the head of the Foreign Office’s Central Department.  

775 Churchill to Baldwin, 24 November 1934. He repeated this conciliatory course of action sending a full Memorandum to Baldwin on 28 April 1935 with ‘the main outline of the case which I propose to unfold to the House when the promised debate on Air Estimates takes place in the early part of May.’ Baldwin Papers 1/167.  

776 Frances Stevenson diary, 30 November 1934, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.2., p. 950. Lord Winterton agreed that ‘in the opinion of the House’ Churchill had ‘made an eloquent speech’. Winterton to the Commons, 28 November 1934, 295 HC Deb 5s., col.923. It should be noted, however, that Lloyd George’s speech was also well received by Tories. In it, the
disagreeing with Churchill’s figures, Baldwin salvaged the situation for the Government by agreeing to an extra 300 first-line aircraft to maintain the RAF’s superiority. As Hoare recorded for the benefit of the Indian Viceroy, this halted Churchill’s attempt ‘to bring on to the centre of the stage and to gather round him the very many people who are worried about German rearmament and what they believe to be the weakness of the Air Force.’ This together with a further £10 million promised in the Defence White Paper of 4 March 1934, contained Churchill’s offensive until 25 March.

Only six days after the Air Under-Secretary had accused Churchill of exaggerating German air strength figures in the Commons, Hitler informed the Foreign Secretary, Sir John Simon, that the Luftwaffe had actually surpassed the size of the RAF. It being not then realised that the Nazi Dictator was lying, the news of this played into Churchill’s hands, making him appear better briefed on the comparative air strengths than the humiliated Government and underlining his call to rearm quickly. Writing triumphantly to his wife, Churchill confided that ‘a good many of those who have opposed me on India now promised support on this’. Events looked brighter still when the Daily Telegraph published statistics which appeared to show that the Luftwaffe’s front-line strength was now double that of the RAF. Churchill could, therefore, be forgiven for mentioning in the course of the Commons debate on 2 May that Baldwin’s statement of November 1934 claiming that Germany’s air force size was half that of the British and the Air Under-Secretary’s assertion of March 1935 that the RAF would still retain superiority by the end of 1936 had both been seriously defective.

other great ‘wilderness’ figure of the 1930s suggested that they might come to see Germany as a bulwark against Communist Russia and that a fresh attempt should be made to convince her that Britain and France would disarm with her: Lloyd George to the Commons, 28 November 1934, 295 HC Deb 5s., col.920 and Stevenson diary, ibid. 777 Hoare to Willingdon, 29 November 1934, India Office Papers MSS.Eur.E240/1184. 778 Winston to Clementine Churchill, 5 April 1935, Spencer-Churchill Papers, Gilbert companion vol.v., pt.2., p. 1129. 779 Daily Telegraph, 26 April 1935. Some indication of who Churchill was appealing to for support on Air rearmament can be gleaned from those he wired to read the Daily Telegraph’s article. The nine politicians were the Liberals, Lloyd George, Sir Archibald Sinclair and General Seely; his Tory ex-Coalitionist colleagues Sir Austen Chamberlain and Sir Robert Horne; Lord Winterton and Frederick Guest and the India diehards’ Sir Henry Page Croft and Lord Wolmer.
This was the situation as Baldwin approached the electorate. Churchill now appeared to hold a number of cards with regard to rearmament and with a little help from Hitler, he had helped to make the Government look dangerously ill-prepared. Keeping him excluded from the discipline of Government therefore promised difficulties for Baldwin.

On India, Churchill had advocated policies which pulled in the diametrically opposite position to his Party Leadership. On defence he pulled in the same direction, the only difference being on the greater level of strength he wanted applied. The Government just managed to contain the Indian offensive but did not want to have to face a further assault on a different issue, launched with less punch but no less subversion. As for Churchill’s developing enthusiasm for the League of Nations, this was perfectly suited to the Government’s new line on foreign policy.

iii). Collective Security and the 1935 General Election

By 1935 Churchill had emerged not merely as a spokesman on rearmament but also as an articulator of a new foreign policy to go with it. Some aspects of it - like the refusal to countenance giving Germany her colonies back - were part and parcel of the Tory right wing’s Imperialist outlook. Here, Churchill was wholly in tune not only with Lord Lloyd but also with Leo Amery who had disagreed with him over India. However, the unravelling of the Versailles peace in Europe with Germany’s re-emergence as a military threat led Churchill to re-evaluate his desire to keep Britain out of the continental balance of power. France could no longer be left to shoulder the maintenance of a 1919 European Order which had already been superseded by the remilitarisation of Germany. Yet, supporting an Anglo-French Entente to block mounting German hegemony was a reversion to the 1914 balance of power widely decried as the cause of the arms race and ipso facto the Great War. Advocacy of this would have flown in the face of the received wisdom of the
early 1930s with supposedly disastrous electoral consequences. In contrast, support for the
League of Nations was clearly widespread. Yet, without America, Japan, Germany (and
shortly Italy) and with the Soviet Union a new but distrusted member, was not the real
politi k of the Council of the League really in large part the joint will of Britain and
France? If its constitutional provisions for upholding existing treaties (like Versailles)
were to be taken seriously, then it was even more the club of the 1918 victors that its German
detractors feared it to be. As such, it was far from being the new moral international polity,
greater than the sum of its parts, which Woodrow Wilson had envisaged and to which it
had been sold to a public perennially worried by the perceived high stakes of the back room
balance of power politics over which they feared they had neither control nor
comprehension. For Churchill, the moral language of the League was, thereby, the best
way of making a return to pre-1914 Europe acceptable to the British electorate. Britain
would bolster France against Germany not in the name of the Entente’s old balance of power
secret diplomacy but in the name of the League and its provisions for ‘collective security’
against aggression. Since disarmament would no more bring peace ‘than an umbrella would
prevent rain’ he even suggested that the League should drop its ‘haggling’ about
disarmament altogether and proceed as a re-created Concert of Europe, addressing
Germany’s grievances where appropriate before Germany, rearmed, moved into a
challenging position.780

Churchill’s problem with the development of this theory was that others on the Tory
right, seemingly taken in by the Geneva rhetoric, did not view the League as the
opportunity that he saw it to be. Its association with disarmament had not endeared it to
the traditionally militarist Tory right, although with the prospect of disarmament
receding from 1935, this fear looked increasingly unrealistic. Secondly, the right’s
nationalism naturally viewed international bodies with suspicion. Given the League’s
commitment to international arbitration and self-determination of peoples, it was hardly

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780 Churchill in the Devonshire Club, 14 November 1933, quoted in Gilbert Churchill,
vol.v., p. 494; Churchill to the Commons, 7 November 1933, 281 HC Deb Ss., col. 141
surprising that zealots for the British Empire viewed it with suspicion. Despite the
tangible evidence that it offered no such threat,\textsuperscript{781} diehards like Colonel John Gretton perorating about Britain's need to look to its old Imperial allies and not to 'the sham structures of the League of Nations'.\textsuperscript{782} With the Conservative Leadership increasingly adopting commitment to the League as the slogan of their foreign policy, some saw that this risked enhancing the division in the Party with the right. Misinterpreting the situation, Beaverbrook encouraged Amery to believe that he would 'almost inevitably' find himself 'in the position of leader' if the Cabinet continued with their Genevan enthusiasm thereby creating a 'very solid rump of the Party, much bigger than the Indian rump' who would look to him for an alternative. Beaverbrook suspected that probably once Churchill realised this, he would 'come round the corner and go against the Government but that he is incapable of leading.'\textsuperscript{783}

In fact, most Tory MPs were content to endorse the League in the summer of 1935. Churchill may have backed, in parliamentary terms, the losing side on Indian reform but at least that was not going to be an issue fought out at the forthcoming General Election. There was less reason why he should back the same group with their apparently even less popular dislike of Geneva. In any case, since Churchill already had their support on rearmament there was some justification for his being allowed latitude over the League, particularly since he repudiated its disarmament reputation. With the 1935 General Election being, to a significant degree, fought on this very popular pro-Geneva platform, it seemed to make sense both for Churchill's popularity with the electorate as well as for his public displays

\textsuperscript{781} If the United States had joined, then matters might have been different, but there was no sign of the ending of American isolation in 1935. Far from seeking to curtail it, so far, Geneva's main Imperial policy had been to legitimise yet further the British Empire's expansion, granting it fresh mandates in Africa and the Middle East over what had previously been German colonies.

\textsuperscript{782} Gretton to the Commons, 23 March 1933, 276 HC Deb 5s., col. 562.

\textsuperscript{783} Amery diary, 3 October 1935, p. 400.
of affection for the Party Leadership who were also working on the assumption that talking up the League would reap electoral rewards.784

Whether deliberately or not, Baldwin’s decision to fight a General Election on a policy of backing the League of Nations in action against Italy’s invasion of Abyssinia ensured that he fought on an issue commanding seemingly overwhelming public support whilst diverting attention from the National Government’s failure on the domestic front to crush unemployment in the depressed regions.785 Since both Government and Opposition parties all commended the League of Nations, Labour and the Liberals were justified in questioning why Baldwin had chosen such an issue on which to go to the people.786 Cynically as it transpired, Baldwin’s adoption of his Opponents’ love affair with Geneva was rather in the manner that Lord Derby, in Disraeli’s picturesque language, had stolen the franchise reform clothing from the bathing Whigs in 1867. Labour, therefore, concentrated on insinuating that Baldwin’s interpretation of the League’s usage was that of Churchill - as a cloak to recommence the dreaded arms race. In fact, no less than Neville Chamberlain himself had originally proposed fighting the Election on the Geneva platform as the justification for rearmament, but this was over-ruled by Baldwin.787 Arthur Greenwood’s electoral broadcast drew attention to this supposed mask for rearmament, and Labour’s rather lurid platform slogan ‘A Vote for the Tories is a Vote for War’ did not risk excessive subtlety.788 Churchill, with an honesty which Baldwin had no wish to hear aired publicly on an election trail, responded that since the international situation was now ‘more

784 Amery put his own exclusion from the post-election Cabinet down to his opposition to the great totem of support for the League - sanctions against Italy (Amery diary, 16 November 1935, p. 403).
785 As one historian of the 1935 Election has pointed out, in an age before detailed opinion polls, it can not be determined for sure that the League and Abyssinia were the chief interests of the electorate. However, the exposure the issue received, both in the majority of candidate’s addresses and as the first and most major issue in all the three main Parties’ official manifestos, suggests that politicians certainly thought that it was the most important one for the electorate: Stannage Baldwin Thwarts the Opposition, pp.153-8 and 171-3.
788 Stannage, pp. 135, 145 and 158.
dangerous than it was in 1914' rearmament was not only essential but inevitable.\(^789\) In order to disassociate himself from this sort of talk, Baldwin announced to the Peace Society that he gave his word that 'there will be no great armaments'.\(^790\)

As was widely predicted in the run up to polling day, the National Government were returned in the Election with their huge majority at the dissolution of 405 reduced to a still overwhelming 240. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Churchill anticipated that with the likely reduction in the number of Conservative MPs after the Election, the proportion of India diehards - coming as they largely did from the safer seats - would 'count more in the new Parliament' than in that elected in the landslide of 1931.\(^791\) Having anticipated his return to the Cabinet, he later recalled with bitterness Beaverbrook's words on Election night that he was 'finished' since 'Baldwin has so good a majority that he will be able to do without you.'\(^792\) Hoping for the Admiralty, Churchill found this rejection hard to accept and nurtured the desire that if he was not going to be offered office immediately then he might be brought into the Cabinet in February of 1936.\(^793\) Yet, Beaverbrook was right. As *The Times* put it 'Mr Baldwin will be under no obligation to make reluctant concessions to the extremists of either wing' of his Party.\(^794\)

Given the acrimony that had developed over the Indian debate, Churchill's belief in Baldwin's ability to forgive and forget may have seemed naive. His long term *bête noire*, the anti-gambling pro-temperance Virginian and first female Tory MP, Nancy Astor, made sure that Baldwin - should he be tempted to offer Churchill a post - was reminded of his personal disloyalty, national unpopularity and warmongering zeal.\(^795\) Yet, Churchill had


\(^{792}\) Churchill's recollections of election night (draft for *The Gathering Storm*, 1948), Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.2., p. 1324.

\(^{793}\) Nicolson diary, 21 November 1935, p. 228.

\(^{794}\) *The Times*, 18 November 1935.

counselled for a November Election and his offer of help to the Party on the Election campaign trail had also been welcomed. His involvement on the CID's Air Defence Research sub-Committee also suggested that he had shaken off his factionalist image and was keen to make what contribution he could so long as it did not publicly gag him.

Indeed, the offer to Churchill to sit on the sub-Committee may have encouraged him to believe that this was the preliminary to his being taken fully into the counsels of State as a Cabinet Minister. Hoare had minuted in August that in conversation with Eden and Churchill on the emerging crisis in Abyssinia, Churchill 'now regarded the Indian chapter as closed [and that] he was anxious to co-operate with us.' On Air Defence, Churchill even began sending the new Air Minister, Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, advance notice of what line he wanted to take in the Commons, reassuring him that he would publicly receive all the help Churchill could deliver 'in the great task you have so courageously undertaken.' To borrow once again from Disraeli, this really was flattery laid on with a trowel.

With the successes of his rearmament motions at the 1933 and 1935 Party Conferences and the growing audience he was receiving in the Commons on the issue, there were therefore plausible reasons for believing Churchill’s adoption of rearmament had done his career prospects more good than harm. This was not, however, the only consideration for Baldwin. Hoare had been informed that Churchill’s acceptance of an armed forces portfolio would have serious repercussions for relations with Germany, possibly even throwing into doubt the future of the Anglo-German Naval Treaty which Churchill had, after some pause, expressed concern at as a breach of the Versailles Treaty. There is, however, little

796 Churchill to Baldwin, 7 October 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/237/102; Churchill/Lord Stonehaven correspondence, 12 and 16 October 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/245/29 and 30.
797 Churchill to Baldwin, 6 July 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/244/5.
798 Record of conversation of 21 August 1935 made by Hoare, Templewood Papers VIII:1.
800 Sir Eric Phipps to Hoare, 25 October, 1 and 2 November 1935, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt. 2., p. 1309. The Agreement, which permitted Germany to build a navy up to 35% that of the British not only breached the terms of the Versailles Treaty and, therefore also, the League of Nations, but was negotiated without the knowledge of Britain’s supposed ally and Versailles co-signatory, France. These were points which Churchill raised in the Commons, stating that in breaching collective security the Treaty was not ‘at all a matter
documentary evidence that the foreign policy implications of a Churchill appointment weighed as heavily on Baldwin's mind as the domestic, or rather the party political, considerations. As we are developing here, Churchill's growing popularity in the Party over rearmament seemed to cause Baldwin more fear than pleasure.

As in 1931, Baldwin refused to regard the right wing of his own Party to be suitable as Ministers in the National Government, preferring to give posts to a former Leader of the Labour Party and the remaining forces loyal to the National cause from the old Liberal Party. One Tory MP, Oliver Locker Lampson, wrote to Churchill suggesting a hare-brained scheme to:

oppose the return of Ramsay and Simon etc., into the Cabinet and that our opposition to these personalities at this juncture might offer Baldwin an excuse not to take them, and therefore increase your chances.801

Aside from the political unreality of destroying a 'National' component of a just returned National Government, Locker Lampson was naive to think that Baldwin might want to lose the scapegoats for what his detractors regarded to be his own torporous moderation.

The Times questioned the new found loyalty of the Tory right wing to their Leader since despite having fifty or sixty of the 439 returned Government MPs they were not given a single representative in the Cabinet whilst seven of the twenty-two strong Cabinet were National Labour or National Liberals who were represented by only 41 MPs. The Times attempted to defend the validity of this by suggesting that the Tory right wing's 'sub-acid hostility to the Government' and their 'clamour for indefinitely large armaments' had been an electoral liability in contrast to the contribution made by the moderate and National candidates whose line had been more in keeping with the Party manifesto. For good

for rejoicing': Churchill to the Commons, 11 July 1935, 304 HC Deb 5s., cols. 543-4 and 550. Hoare defended the Treaty to the Cabinet as a method for Britain 'to control German programmes of naval armaments' and that 'the French Government had sent a Note which could be described as one of criticism rather than of outraged surprise': Cabinet Papers CAB 23/82/4.

measure, Dawson then rubbed in Baldwin’s victory over the right wing of his own Party by asserting that his majority circumvented ‘the mischief which might have been wrought by special groups in a more evenly divided House of Commons’ and that, therefore, Parliament could ‘proceed with its work without fear of interruption from purely political intrigues’.

Churchill was furious that The Times had suggested that Baldwin ought to ignore the fifty or sixty ‘Right-wing Conservatives’ who would, anyway, only be interested in ‘purely political intrigue’. In an unsent letter to the newspaper, Churchill asked ‘what reason is there for a quarrel at the present time?’ since the Indian issue was dead, the Government were finally grasping the necessity to increase defence spending, no departures on Irish or Colonial policy were anticipated and that if differences did emerge, the right wing might ‘have worthier motives than place-hunting and intrigue’. Interestingly, despite the continuation of long-term unemployment in parts of the country, Churchill did not ever raise domestic issues as a possible source of division. This suggests a definite refutation of any alliance with Lloyd George and the Left wing of the Conservative Party. Right wingers like Oliver Locker Lampson recognised that defence issues were now the ones which would be central to the circle of MPs around Churchill. Garvin wrote to Churchill to encourage him that his ‘greatest hour’ was his ‘for the taking’ since whilst only a quarter of the parliamentary Tory Party had supported him on India, three-quarters would support him on defence, an issue on which the only other serious contender for the Party Leadership, Neville Chamberlain, was out of his depth.

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802 The Times, 28 November 1935.
805 Garvin to Churchill, 3 September 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/237/5.

Others also saw the Air Ministry or Defence as the portfolio for Churchill: H.A. Gwynne to Churchill, 14 May 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/2443/89; Frederick Guest to Churchill, 5 December 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/238/105; E. George Spencer-Churchill to Churchill, 27 November 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/238/70.
Despite his public display of reconciliation with the Government, Churchill still kept an eye on factionalism, asking Patrick Donner to draw up a list of those diehards not returned at the Election. Donner assured him that he would ‘certainly keep in touch with our ‘whips': I anticipate little difficulty in keeping the Group together. It has become a habit with them.' 806 Almost a quarter of the diehards no longer sat in the Commons after the Election, twelve having retired from the House 807 and eight having been defeated. 808 However, none of the ring-leaders had gone down, and some of the new MPs who had replaced those who had retired might be expected to have right wing views equally congenial to their constituency association.

Even if Baldwin's sweeping majority denied the diehards the pivotal strategic position they had anticipated earlier in the year, there was no doubt that Churchill had with him the makings of a potentially formidable group in the new Parliament who shared his call for more vigorous rearmament. Rearmament seemed, to the right, to scupper Geneva which had become indelibly associated to them with disarmament. The implications of the Abyssinian crisis now put to the test the cohesion of the Tory right towards Churchill's position on Geneva.

iv). The Hoare-Laval Crisis

As we have seen, Baldwin had won the General Election having made support for the League of Nations the central message. As Churchill's old friend, the Liberal leader, Sir Archibald Sinclair, pointed out, the National Government had adopted Liberal and Labour policy on the League to win an election. The 'rotten trick' that this involved was even more

Despite his public display of reconciliation with the Government, Churchill still kept an eye on factionalism, asking Patrick Donner to draw up a list of those diehards not returned at the Election. Donner assured him that he would 'certainly keep in touch with our 'whips': I anticipate little difficulty in keeping the Group together. It has become a habit with them.\(^806\) Almost a quarter of the diehards no longer sat in the Commons after the Election, twelve having retired from the House\(^807\) and eight having been defeated.\(^808\) However, none of the ring-leaders had gone down, and some of the new MPs who had replaced those who had retired might be expected to have right wing views equally congenial to their constituency association.

Even if Baldwin's sweeping majority denied the diehards the pivotal strategic position they had anticipated earlier in the year, there was no doubt that Churchill had with him the makings of a potentially formidable group in the new Parliament who shared his call for more vigorous rearmament. Rearmament seemed, to the right, to scupper Geneva which had become indelibly associated to them with disarmament. The implications of the Abyssinian crisis now put to the test the cohesion of the Tory right towards Churchill's position on Geneva.

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twisted given the fact that it involved Conservative Central Office helping ‘Leo Amery & his fifty supporters who have declared against the Govt’s policy on the main issue before the country and to defeat Liberal & Labour candidates who are supporting it’\textsuperscript{809}

The argument that Churchill was never accepted by the India diehards as truly one of their number because of his Liberal past and that subsequently the anti-appeasers did not trust Churchill because of his previous association with the India diehards may, at first sight, seem broadly plausible. However, by that logic, Amery who had opposed the diehards on India (although not on other Imperial questions) could not have successfully marshalled them in their shared hostility to Geneva. Furthermore, whilst the pro-Indian reformers who now commended Geneva had been joined in this new enthusiasm by Churchill, he and they meant entirely different things. Their support for Geneva ranged from acceptance of popular feeling in the country through to a genuine desire to do away with the pre-War diplomacy which had allegedly resulted in the catastrophe of 1914. Churchill, as we have seen, supported Geneva because he saw it as a way of recreating the old Entente Cordiale against Germany which had stopped the creation of a German hegemony over Europe. Furthermore, Churchill wanted to be back in the Cabinet and support for Geneva (whatever that meant in practice) was Party policy. Had Churchill taken an anti-Genevan line, he would have acknowledged his unsuitability for office in the post-election Government formed upon this peak of League enthusiasm. Between 1929 and 1935 Churchill had fought a guerrilla war from outside the Government against Party policy and had lost. Baldwin’s post-1935 majority was still of a magnitude that suggested that the same tactics would not gain him a seat in the Government by replaying the factional card. Churchill’s subsequent vacillation over where he stood on the Abyssinian War was the inevitable result of his trying to play both to the right wing and to the Leadership of the Conservative Party. This stance was compromised further when, with the leaking of the

\textsuperscript{809} Sinclair to Churchill, 13 October 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/237/114. Amery was appalled at the Government’s ‘great demonstration’ in favour of ‘the Geneva delusion’ although during the election campaign itself Amery ‘had to restrain for the time being [his] criticism of the folly of their League of Nations policy’: Amery to Churchill, 2 September 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/237/2 and Amery diary, 14 November 1935, p. 403.
Hoare-Laval agreement, the most vocal body of the parliamentary Party held a position even further to the Left in favour of Geneva.

The cause and events of the Abyssinian War are outside the confines of this thesis. Suffice to say that Italy’s invasion of October 1935 presented the British Government with a major dilemma. If they antagonised Mussolini over this indefensible act of aggression, then they ran the risk of alienating a potential bulwark against Hitler. Hitler’s intentions to undermine and invade Austria were at that stage checked by Mussolini’s desire to prevent any such development. With this in mind, the British and the French had joined Italy in the so-called Stresa Front in April in order to build this anti-Hitler solidarity. This had Churchill’s blessing. Furthermore, condemnation of Italy might provoke resentment not only in Rome but in Paris, since the French Government were also keen to build on the alliance seemingly created at Stresa. On the other hand, Hoare had stated at Geneva only in September that the League of Nations was the basis of British foreign policy and this pledge had been the centrepiece of the National Government’s Election manifesto. To publicly repudiate such a stance so quickly would not only have looked humiliating but would give the understandable impression that members of the National Government had never really been sincere about supporting Geneva and had only cynically embraced it to win the Election. The dangers implicit in permitting this revelation were underlined further by the results of the ‘Peace Ballot’, organised by the fanatically pro-Genevan League of Nations Union and published in June 1935 in which the overwhelming majority of its over 11 million respondents favoured action through the League.

810 Churchill to the Commons, 2 May 1935, 301 HC Deb 5s., col. 600.
811 Hoare reported this worry in even starker terms to the Cabinet that the French ‘in the event of a Clash were showing every sign that ...they would be on the side of Italy ... Either we should have to make a futile protest, which would irritate M. Mussolini and perhaps drive him out of the League and into the arms of Germany, or we should make no protest and give the appearance of pusillanimity’: Cabinet Papers, 19 June 1935, CAB 23/82/9.
812 On the question of using economic and non-military measures to stop an aggressor, over 10 million said yes, 600,000 said no and a further 900,000 abstained or were doubtful. On the question of using military measures against an aggressor, the voting saw 6.8 million saying yes, 2.4 saying no and a further 2.4 million doubtful/abstaining. See Donald S. Birn, The League of Nations Union 1919-1945, 1981, p. 150; Neville Thompson The Anti-Appeasers, Conservative Opposition to Appeasement in the 1930s, 1971, p. 71.
Despite having eleven months of forewarning of Italy's likely course of action between the Wal Wal incident of December 1934 and the actual invasion in October 1935, the British Cabinet took no decisive course of action, only then to rush into endorsing the new Foreign Secretary, Hoare, into trying to find, with France, a compromise solution for Italy. The result of this was the Hoare-Laval Pact which attempted to balance preserving some of Abyssinia's territory with granting recognition to large parts of Italy's conquest. When the details of this agreement were leaked in the French press, uproar followed. The deal appeared to commit the twin wrongs of rewarding Italy for her aggressive action whilst ignoring Geneva at the same time. As Brendan Bracken reported to Churchill, 'the Foreign Minister of a country that has just re-elected a Government in order to sustain the principle of collective security, went to Paris and dealt a mortal blow to the principle he was supposed to sustain.'

Much might be said in defence of the proposal. The Italians had already quickly gained control of much of the Abyssinian territory and seemed unstoppable. Only by declaring war or bringing Italy to her knees by economic sanctions could her conquest be reversed. A declaration of war seemed unthinkable and even less advisable given the fact that thanks to her defence cuts, Britain had only a small army, little air force and, in the crisis spot of the Mediterranean, a badly debilitated navy which was prey to the Italian forces. Even if the truth was rather different, Italy at least managed to give Britain the impression of military might. Nor were sanctions a safe option. If they showed signs of working (and for this they would have to include a ban on exports of oil upon which the Italian military machine depended) then Mussolini had the potential to be sufficiently unbalanced to declare war on Britain with all the problems that involved. Churchill, having invited the Geneva-sceptic Lord Lloyd over to Chartwell to discuss the crisis back in August, had written to Hoare warning him of this possibility. Yet a ban on oil to Italy would be

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unworkable unless the whole world community abided by it. Unfortunately, with major countries like the United States not being members of the League of Nations, sanctions would have the effect of annoying Italy and driving it towards Germany without reversing its African conquest.

To the Imperialist right, the Government’s pre-Election decision to revert to support for the League flew in the face of its logical short-comings (its lack of key members) and against the policy of Austen Chamberlain when Foreign Secretary. This argument suggested that Locarno had symbolised the abandonment of the ill-starred League, re-heralding the age of regional pacts, since if the League’s Articles 10 and 16 of the Covenant were still to be in force then ‘Locarno was clearly superfluous and meaningless.’ The anti-Geneva case over Abyssinia was bluntly put in the Commons by the veteran diehard, Colonel John Gretton, who argued against the imposition of any sanctions which might produce a war. Instead of the ‘platitudes’ of League action, Gretton argued that the Government ‘ought to face realities’ that since France would not fight Italy the burden would fall entirely upon Britain and her Mediterranean fleet (the only League naval power besides the non-combatant France). Caught in this dilemma, it is hard to see what course the British Government could have steered without at least sacrificing part of their international strategy. However, British public opinion did not view the situation in such a detached fashion and a public which three years later cheered their Prime Minister for avoiding war by consenting to the carve-up of a democratic European country were, over Abyssinia, outraged that their Premier was avoiding the possibility of war by consenting to the carve-up of a backward slave-trading despotism, which, even more than Czechoslovakia, truly was a far away country of which they knew little.

When the news broke of the Hoare-Laval proposals on 9 December 1935, Churchill was holidaying in Majorca. According to reports he received from Bracken, Baldwin was now

816 Col. Gretton to the Commons, 19 December 1935, 307 HC Deb 5s., cols. 2089-90.
fighting for his political life. Hoare’s actions were opposed by ‘all the Liberals, and most of the Conservatives’, most world opinion, The Daily Telegraph’s owner Lord Camrose and even the normally loyal Dawson of The Times (although they were supported by the anti-Genevans, Rothermere and Beaverbrook). Hoare himself was entirely isolated in Parliament, deprived even of the support of the anti-Geneva Tory right wing who would ‘never forgive him for India [whilst] the pussyfoot Tories who backed him up in India [were] now his most bitter critics.’

Churchill’s son confirmed this impression, adding that ‘even anti-Sanctionists like Alan Lennox-Boyd are ... horrified that the Government should have involved themselves in such a humiliation’ whilst Bracken, like Beaverbrook, was ‘torn between his desire to see sanctions terminated and Baldwin exterminated.’

If Churchill was to return to the Cabinet then this was an obvious moment for Baldwin to sound the retreat by calling for him. He was, after all, an experienced politician, untainted by the Hoare-Laval scandal who was now believed to be representing the views of the Left and the majority of the Conservative Party on League collective security, yet with a recent history of championing the Party’s still vocal right wing on other issues. Eden, the leading pro-Genevan in the Cabinet, wrote to him not entirely in jest about the elder statesman’s possible return to Government. Randolph Churchill’s view was that ‘the disgruntled elements in the Cabinet’ by which he chiefly meant the War Minister, Duff Cooper, and presumably the League of Nations Minister, Eden as well, wanted Churchill’s ‘inclusion as an offset to Baldwin.’

Hitler had supposedly expressed with great alarm to Beaverbrook the ‘foregone conclusion’ of Churchill’s return to office although Beaverbrook had reassured him that ‘there was no possible chance of it.’

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Writing with the tremendous benefit of hindsight, Churchill later wrote in *The Gathering Storm* that had he decided to return from the Mediterranean in the midst of the crisis he:

might have brought an element of decision to the anti-Government gatherings which would have ended the Baldwin regime. Perhaps a Government under Sir Austen Chamberlain might have been established at this moment.822

In fact, this was wishful thinking. Churchill's absence allowed him to avoid taking sides. Had he done so he would have discredited himself either with the right or the left of the Party depending on the line he chose to adopt. In contrast, by biding his time he seemed sure to benefit from the foreseeable result of the Government's diplomatic fiasco - a call to increase spending on the defence forces.823 In the meantime, Churchill urged his son in the strongest terms not to publish any personal attacks on Government Ministers, especially Baldwin and Eden, since this would be 'very injurious' to his own position.824 The Government was bruised, but would survive so long as it backed down and sacrificed Hoare. The Whips reportedly panicked the Tory backbenchers into believing that a defeat for the Government in the division lobby would force, not merely its leading lights' resignation, but also a General Election.825 According to his brother Neville, Sir Austen Chamberlain had gone to the Conservative backbench Foreign Affairs Committee on 17 December intending to speak in the Hoare-Laval agreement's defence only to find that the policy was regarded with such hostility that he fuelled it with what Amery described as 'a speech of high moral indignation'.826 This *volte face* may also have been encouraged by Baldwin who implied to him that he would be rewarded for his support with Hoare's place at the Foreign Office. In the Commons debate, the senior statesman weighed in to defend Baldwin

825 Randolph to Winston Churchill, 17 December 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/238/238. The idea of an Election was constitutionally unfounded but it had the same desired effect which John Major was later to employ with his threatened 'suicide pact' when faced with rebellion over the European Communities Finance Bill in 1994.
from Attlee's accusation that he had behaved dishonourably, a 'challenge which every Member of the National party will resent and resist.' Having got Chamberlain to play his game, Baldwin then subsequently denied him Office, implying that he was 'gaga' into the bargain. Churchill had wanted Chamberlain to return to the Foreign Office and was not inspired by Baldwin’s choice of the 'lightweight' Eden. Instead he kicked out his heels in Marrakech with Rothermere and Lloyd George, ruminating that Baldwin was 'a fool' given the 'terrible situation on his hands, not to gather [Lloyd George's] resources & experience to the public service.'

Whatever his misgivings, Churchill’s deliberate unavailability for comment during the crisis has to be seen as a tacit acceptance of the difficulty of his own position over a complicated question with far reaching implications. In part, this may be attributed to his desire for personal advancement but as his speeches and correspondence make clear, he seemed genuinely unable to decide whether Geneva or Stresa represented the best hope of containing Germany. In this respect, his approach was little different from the

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831 Thompson, Anti-Appeasers, p. 78. As Dr Thompson puts it (p. 80), Churchill ‘delivered strong speeches on every possible side of the question.’ Churchill claimed in April 1936 that he had advised Hoare and Eden in August 1935 not to push France too far against Italy and that given the military and international situation he ‘had strongly advised the Government not to try to take a leading part or to put themselves forward so prominently’ and that Eden in particular had done the reverse. According to Hoare’s notes of the time, Churchill was not prepared to act without French support, but knowing that it was unlikely to be forthcoming he was for making it clear that Britain would fight but for France’s reticence, thus keeping alive the image of Britain’s commitment to the League’s collective security policy at the expense of Anglo-French relations. Churchill advised Hoare that ‘the real danger is Germany and nothing must be done to weaken the anti-German front. The collapse of the League will mean the destruction of the instrument that may be chiefly effective as a deterrent against German aggression.’ Meanwhile, Eden told Harold Nicolson that Churchill had been ‘all out for blood and thunder’ an impression shared by
from Attlee’s accusation that he had behaved dishonourably, a ‘challenge which every Member of the National party will resent and resist.’\textsuperscript{827} Having got Chamberlain to play his game, Baldwin then subsequently denied him Office, implying that he was ‘gaga’ into the bargain.\textsuperscript{828} Churchill had wanted Chamberlain to return to the Foreign Office and was not inspired by Baldwin’s choice of the ‘lightweight’ Eden.\textsuperscript{829} Instead he kicked out his heels in Marrakech with Rothermere and Lloyd George, ruminating that Baldwin was ‘a fool’ given the ‘terrible situation on his hands, not to gather [Lloyd George’s] resources & experience to the public service.’\textsuperscript{830}

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\textsuperscript{828} Austen to Ida Chamberlain, 15 December and to Neville Chamberlain, 20 December and to Hilda Chamberlain, 22 (December) 1935, Austen Chamberlain Papers 5/1/717 and 718 and Neville Chamberlain Papers 1/27/124; Earl of Avon \textit{The Eden Memoirs. Facing the Dictators}, 1962, p. 316; Chamberlain later believed that he had ‘done much to save [Baldwin] in December when an adverse vote would have been a direct vote of censure & necessitated his resignation’, see Austen to Hilda Chamberlain, 15 February 1936, Austen Chamberlain Papers 5/1/725. \\
\textsuperscript{829} Winston to Clementine Churchill, 26 December and 8 January 1936, Spencer-Churchill Papers, Gilbert, companions’ vol.v., pt.2., p. 1363 and pt.3., p. 11. \\
\textsuperscript{830} Winston to Clementine Churchill, 26 and 30 December 1935, Spencer-Churchill Papers ibid., pt.2., pp. 1363, 1365. \\
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faltering indefinite lurches that represented the Government's foreign policy. With the anti-sanctions cause being led from the backbenches by Imperialists like Amery and from the frontbench by Neville Chamberlain, Churchill saw no gain in prolonging the agony and by May 1936 both he and Austen Chamberlain had spoken out for their termination. Chamberlain's view was also that of Churchill that the issue was secondary compared to facing the German challenge. The Government's announcement that sanctions were being terminated on 18 June was accepted by the vast majority of the parliamentary Conservative Party, with only its left wingers, Vyvan Adams and Harold Macmillan, voting against and resigning the Party Whip as a result. By February, the socialite and MP, Sir Henry Channon, had already discerned a mood within the Party, as in the country, that standing by the League had been an expensive folly and that the Hoare-Laval pact should have been implemented after all. Indeed, on the strength of his resignation speech, some Tory MPs thought that Hoare 'would be Prime Minister before the end of this Parliament'.

The Abyssinian War and in particular the Hoare-Laval crisis provides us with an insight into the balance of factions within the Conservative Party on the issue of international defence. Amery and his delegation of 100 MPs demanded from Baldwin an announcement that Britain would not resort to force in the dispute but this did not necessarily imply opposition to Geneva. We can, however, come to some tentative conclusions about the those who listened to his dinner table conversation at Cherkley in September 1935 (Nicolson diary, 21 August 1935, p. 211; Bruce Lockhart diary, 21 September 1935, p. 330). By April 1936 with the Rhineland re-militarised and the need to ally closely with France apparent, Churchill wrote to The Times about the great sacrifices the French had made in order to endorse Britain's pro League stance on Abyssinia, see Churchill to Lord Cranborne (Parl. Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs), 8 April 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/253/26-8; Hoare's notes on his meeting with Churchill, 21 August 1935, Templewood Papers VIII:1; Churchill letter of 17 April 1936, printed in The Times, 20 April 1936.


833 Channon diary, 24 February 1936, in Robert Rhodes James, Chips, The Diaries of Sir Henry Channon, 1967, p. 77; Winterton diary, 19 December 1935, p. 211. Writing twenty years after the event, Amery thought that had Baldwin stood firm behind Hoare, 'a score, perhaps, of Conservatives would have voted against the Government, a few more might have abstained' with common sense, Austen Chamberlain and the Party Whip keeping the rest on side. Amery, Political Life, p. 185.

834 In fact, hardly any British politician thought the Abyssinian invasion ought to have been rectified by Britain going to war with Italy. Even the Labour Party, resolutely committed to the Geneva process but still imbued with a strong spirit of pacifism, opposed military action against Italy. Thompson, Anti-Appeasers, pp. 67-8. The new Labour
different factions in the Party by examining where its MPs stood over other aspects of the Abyssinian question. Although claiming to his colleagues not to be 'rattled,' Baldwin was certainly aware of the magnitude of the division in the Commons raised to the surface by the Hoare-Laval agreement. Whilst suspecting that his majority might fall to 'about 100' he told his anxious Cabinet that 'it was a worse situation in the House of Commons than he had ever known' and that, therefore, although he did not yet know which line to take 'he would stand or fall by what he said' to the Commons.835

Where the parliamentary Party stood with regard to the League can best be gleaned from examining the Early Day Motions (EDMs) signed during the Hoare-Laval crisis.836 Two EDM's were supportive of the 'constructive' Hoare-Laval plan (and therefore anti-Geneva). Of the 16 names on the first, 11 had been India diehards earlier in the year including Patrick Donner (supposedly until then, Churchill's unofficial Whip) and Sir Alfred Knox.837 28 MPs signed the second and similarly worded EDM. 10 of these were ex-India diehards, including the Duchess of Atholl, Sir Jospeh Nall and Sir Henry Page Croft.838 Against this, the previous day, 11 December, 18 Tories had signed an EDM leader, Clement Attlee, argued that it would be folly to attack Fascism 'from without' since it would inevitably 'fall by its own inherent rottenness'; Attlee to the Commons, 22 October 1935, 305 H.C. Deb.5s., col.35.

835 Baldwin to the Cabinet, 18 December 1935, Cabinet Papers CAB 23/90B/58 and 66.
836 We can not gather from division lists on which side of the issue Tory MPs stood since they all voted with the Government on Labour's amendment (which would have implied a lack of confidence in the Government) and almost all of them backed Winterton's Party loyalist amendment which managed to combine rejection of Hoare-Laval with a more general commitment to the Government. In fact, Winterton's amendment, so important in getting the Government off the hook, had actually been drafted with the assistance of Baldwin, Simon and Neville Chamberlain. James C. Robertson, 'The Hoare-Laval Plan' in Journal of Contemporary History, vol. 10, No. 5, July 1975, pp. 454-5. Only a handful of MPs like Amery, Gretton and Page Croft could not bring themselves to vote on the Winterton amendment but virtually all the other familiar India diehard names trooped through with the Government.
837 The diehards in full were: Alexander Browne, Major Carver, Major-General Clifton Brown, Sir Cyril Cobb, Patrick Donner, W.L. Everard, Col. Albert Goodman, Major-General Sir Alfred Knox, Sir Joseph McConnell, Annesley Somerville and Herbert Williams
supportive of Geneva and condemnatory of Hoare-Laval. The Marquess of Hartington was the only former India diehard to sign this list. The following day another EDM was launched, signed largely by Liberals also supporting the Geneva line. The main anti-Hoare-Laval EDM came on 19 December as an amendment to one launched by the Labour Leadership. The Amendment declared the agreement 'unacceptable' and called on the Government 'to resume the policy outlined in September by the Foreign Secretary at Geneva and overwhelmingly endorsed by this country at the recent General Election'. This attracted 47 names with a further six listed as supporting a similar EDM. Eight of these names had already signed the EDM of 11 December, although only one (Hartington) was a diehard. Five other diehards joined him on this fresh publication of pro-Genevan politicians.\textsuperscript{839}

The pattern that emerges from these statistics shows that whilst the division between pro- and anti-India diehards was not identical to those for or against Geneva as expressed in support or opposition to the Hoare-Laval Pact, a larger proportion of former diehards associated themselves with the anti-Geneva stance on this than in the League's defence. However, the division was not comprehensive nor were the majority of former diehards moved to declare one way or the other.\textsuperscript{840} Outspoken critics of Geneva like Leo Amery and Colonel Gretton, for instance, did not sign up, and in the upper chamber Lord Lloyd also put

\textsuperscript{839} Lieut-Col. Acland-Troyte, Major William Carver, Thomas Somerset, Annesley Somerville and Gordon Touche. Major Carver and Annesley Somerville had both changed sides, having previously signed the anti-Geneva EDM.

\textsuperscript{840} Of course, EDM's should be treated with some caution. Unlike the results from the division lobby, they were not a comprehensive list. As with the diehards, most Conservative MPs did not sign any of these EDMs at all and the publication of the names in Parliament's \textit{Notices of Orders of the Day} was rather less reliable than the division lists published in \textit{Hansard}. \textit{Notices of Orders of the Day} follows the procedure of listing the main sponsors of the EDM and then, on subsequent entries, reprinting some of those names with the additions of further names as they were added over time. Whilst this rather haphazard procedure was liable to contain omissions, it was sufficiently comprehensive to provide a basis for some tentative conclusions. There is, for instance, no reason why any omissions of names that it made should have been disproportionately at the expense, for instance, of the diehards than of their opponents, any omissions on either side being broadly likely to cancel each other out.
alliance with Italy above the rhetoric of the League. What can be deduced is that those India diehards who expressed a preference and wanted to sideline Geneva were more in evidence that those who clung to the League. Yet, at the time of the Hoare-Laval crisis this view was dwarfed by those Tories aware of the great public hostility to such a stance. However, as support for the League proceeded to fail in restraining Italy, the anti-Genevan pro-Stresa faction appeared increasingly to have been vindicated in practice, if not in principle. This is not to say that the failure of sanctions proved that Stresa would have succeeded in the keeping of the European peace, but merely that the alternative Genevan strategy was seemingly pregnable.

v). Office Denied

Churchill's decision not to intervene in the December crisis was probably correct. Without support from Austen Chamberlain it is hard to see how he could have brought down Baldwin and thus he would have looked once more the failed opportunist. To Churchill, still in Morocco, Baldwin seemed either to be poised to retire or to opt for 'a strong reconstruction' which would surely involve, with a little help from 'destiny', calling for the advocate of rearmament to the Admiralty. Yet his precarious position between spokesman for the right wing and loyalist to the Leadership was once again put to the test by his son's decision to stand for Parliament on a controversial ticket.

The Ross and Cromarty Unionist Association were furious that Conservative Central Office had tried to foist upon them Ramsay MacDonald's son, Malcolm, as their candidate in the forthcoming by-election. For a National Government that was now largely being accused of

841 Before the crisis had intensified, Lloyd had warned a seemingly receptive Neville Chamberlain of the strategic dangers to Britain if she alienated Italy. Charmley, Lord Lloyd, pp. 198-9.
being a Conservative one in all but name (albeit only a moderate Conservative strain), the necessity to increase the National Labour element was obvious. Unfortunately for the Government, the local Scottish Unionists did not see why they should be the unfortunate recipient of this view. As a result they approached Randolph to stand as a Unionist candidate against MacDonald, the official National Government candidate. Whilst sympathetic to his son’s views and ambitions, Churchill wrote wearily to his wife:

how unfortunate and inconvenient such a fight is to me. ‘Churchill v MacDonald’. If they get in, it would seem very difficult for Baldwin to invite me to take the Admiralty or the [Defence] co-ordinating job, and sit cheek by jowl with these wretched people ... How will Baldwin take it? Will he regard it as a definite declaration of war by me? I have of course expressed no opinion whatever, and Randolph will make it clear he is acting entirely on his own.843

Whilst Randolph was not technically standing against the National Government844 he was nonetheless causing it discomfiture. The Times tried to insinuate, incorrectly, that his candidature was at his father’s prompting, which encouraged another of Churchill’s now regular letters to the newspaper’s proprietor accusing misrepresentation.845 However, given that his own son, Oliver, had been a Labour MP until the last Election, Baldwin could hardly make capital out of what Churchill’s son was up to. Rothermere and Beaverbrook who both vigorously supported Randolph’s candidature, appreciated this fact and got Oliver Baldwin to write an article on Randolph. Churchill was however inclined to believe that the episode finished off his chances of returning to the Cabinet, musing (correctly as it transpired) that Hoare would probably go to the Admiralty after a decorous interval to recompense for his transgressions.846 Meanwhile, Churchill seemed to be all things to all men. He wanted to be back in the Government847 - and would have accepted an

843 Winston to Clementine Churchill, 8 January 1936, ibid., pp. 5-6.
844 Randolph tried to emphasise this point, reminding The Times on 16 January 1936 that he was ‘the official Unionist candidate in support of the National Government.’
847 On top of his regular letters from Morocco to his wife expressing his desire to return to the Admiralty, Churchill gave his dinner guest, Victor Cazalet, the impression that he was ‘furious’ at being excluded from the Government: Cazalet diary, 13 February 1936, p. 179.
offer if it came - whilst holidaying in the sun with the Government’s enemies, Rothermere and Lloyd George, during which time his son was appealing to the right wing rebels of that Government in the far north of Scotland. Randolph’s subsequent convincing defeat by MacDonald seemed, once again, to imply rash judgement on the part of the younger Churchill and, possibly, that the historic family name was not necessarily an over-riding electoral asset.848

Meanwhile, the British harassment of Italy through the sanctions policy had implications for British strategic interests in the Mediterranean and this related to Churchill’s continuing monitoring of Egyptian affairs. The proposed withdrawal of British troops from Cairo had been his first Imperialist charge against his own Party Leadership in 1929 and with this proposal entering its enactment he got together a deputation of MPs to speak to Baldwin on the subject.849 The deputation consisted of those who had opposed him over India (Lord Winterton, Colonel Spender-Clay, Sir Edward Grigg, his old Coalitionist colleague Sir Robert Horne, his cousin Freddie Guest and the Liberal National MP, George Lambert) and his fellow Indian diehards, Colonel Gretton and Sir Roger Keyes. The binding thread between these colleagues was therefore less their cohesion within the diehard group as the fact that they were senior backbench figures, the majority of whom were members of The Other Club of which Churchill was not only the co-founder (in 1911) but also still one of the leading lights.850 Austen Chamberlain had suggested the fusing of this group with ‘the Defence Group’ that he sought to cement with Churchill of pre-war politicians to petition Baldwin on rearmament and thought that Lloyd should join the group.851 Lloyd, in agreement with Churchill on Egypt as on India and rearmament, urged caution before the parliamentary recess, although he reportedly later regretted such a stance, having been ‘misled’ by the scope of the Egyptian Treaty. Churchill took this

848 The voting figures were National Labour (MacDonald) 8,949; Labour 5,967; Randolph Churchill 2,427; and the Liberals 738.
849 Chartwell Papers 2/251/72.
850 Of the deputies, only Gretton, Lambert and Spender-Clay were not Other Club members.
851 Violet Pearman to Austen Chamberlain’s private secretary, 12 June 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/266(B)/211.
opportunity to write to Eden to complain about the way in which the Government would force through their policy without Parliament having an inkling.\textsuperscript{852} However, with more pressing concerns, there was no question of Egypt becoming an obsession in the way that had India. The Observer's Editor, J.L. Garvin was amongst those who articulated the Right's fear that by alienating Italy over Abyssinia, Britain had an enemy to contend with in the Mediterranean which could strike at the heart of the supply route of the Empire. This view was subjected to a 'deluge of eloquence' from Churchill who deduced the need to strengthen the British naval presence in the Mediterranean rather than leave British communications 'at the mercy of so unreliable a thing as Italian friendship.'\textsuperscript{853}

Whilst the Tories concerned over Egypt and Italy now appeared to be inter-locking with those on the Right concerned over the perceived deficiencies in Britain's defence policy, the cohesion of this group was still loose. Amongst those senior Tory politicians who, despite their own reservations, had opposed Churchill over India, Lord Winterton and Sir Austen Chamberlain now appeared to be moving decisively closer to him over the international situation. Furthermore, the Abyssinian debacle could only help to focus minds on the defence issue. Here, the debate was developing not merely along the lines of the levels of expenditure needed, but also the manner in which the defence of the realm was organised, raising the option of creating a fresh Government portfolio, a Minister for the Co-ordination of Defence.\textsuperscript{854} Austen Chamberlain certainly viewed Defence as a central concern of the Party, writing to his sister that if there was any truth in the rumour that Baldwin proposed 'to hand over Defence to Ramsay MacDonald there will be a howl of indignation & a vote of no confidence.' Rather, he took the view that 'there is only one man who by his studies & his special abilities & aptitudes is marked out for it, & that man is Winston Churchill'.

\textsuperscript{852} Churchill to Eden, 22 August 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/257/88.
\textsuperscript{853} Nicolson diary, 22 April 1936, p. 258.
\textsuperscript{854} The Commons debated creating a Defence Ministry in mid-February. Amery opposed the measure as the workload, in Sir Edward Grigg's words, would be heavier than that with which even Churchill could 'wrestle'. Austen Chamberlain criticised the Government for its indolence and argued that whilst a full Defence Ministry was unworkable, a new post should be created for a Cabinet member responsible for co-ordinating the C.I.D. (which he would chair) and the Chiefs of Staff Committee. Amery, Austen Chamberlain and Grigg to the Commons, 14 February 1936, 308 HC Deb 5s., cols. 1321-5, 1360-6 and 1370.
even though he doubted that either Baldwin or his brother, Neville, wanted him back in the Government.855

Churchill was aware that Baldwin did not, by choice, want him in the Government, a fact that he had now to ‘recognise’.856 As we asserted at the commencement of this chapter, the reason for this was not that Churchill was politically finished - but rather the contrary. Writing to Neville Chamberlain, Hoare explained that he had been offered a choice of the Admiralty or the new Defence portfolio since ‘on no account’ would Baldwin:

contemplate the possibility of Winston in the Cabinet for several obvious reasons, but chiefly for the risk that would be involved by having him in the Cabinet when the question of [the Prime Minister’s] successor became imminent.857

Unknown to Churchill at this moment, Baldwin was contemplating making Neville Chamberlain the Defence Co-ordinating Minister and filling his vacancy at the Exchequer with Austen Chamberlain. Baldwin seemingly proposed that Neville Chamberlain would continue to live in 11 Downing Street as the Premier’s right hand man and heir apparent. Chamberlain replied that he would ‘consider it’ despite the fact that he ‘did not want to leave the Exchequer’. He thought that Hoare or his brother Austen were ‘the only possible appointments’ and that he hoped it would not be his brother ‘especially as after his speech it wd be said that he had been given the post to shut his mouth.’858 Meanwhile brother Austen counselled Neville not to take the Defence job since Churchill was the ‘one man in his opinion really suitable’. Others discussing the proposal with Neville disagreed. Kingsley Wood thought ‘it would never do to have Winston’ and supported Austen for the job. Margesson, the Chief Whip, also deprecated Churchill and ‘suggested Inskip or

858 Neville Chamberlain’s diary, 16 February 1936, Neville Chamberlain Papers 23/a.
(preferably) W. Elliot’ whilst Runciman thought Churchill’s genius at the post would soon wither away and believed Hoare ‘would be best and that we ought not to be too ‘squeamish’ about taking him in so soon.’ On this basis Neville Chamberlain told Baldwin that he did not want the job and ‘after reviewing the whole field came back to my original view that Sam was the best man’. Baldwin thought that it ‘looked as if’ it would have to be so, and reluctantly took Chamberlain’s advice that the matter ‘was too urgent’ to postpone the appointment until after Easter.859

Baldwin’s clear opposition to breathing life back into Churchill’s career was not the unanimous view of other Government supporters. The Daily Telegraph was writing about his chances for the Defence Co-ordination post being ‘prominently mentioned’ with ‘great interest.’860 Whilst protesting that it would not ‘break his heart whatever happens’, Churchill began to think that given the fact that all the likely contenders were seemingly ineligible in one way or another, he might be offered the post despite Baldwin’s reluctance.861 When Sir Roger Keyes told Baldwin that Churchill’s appointment was in both the Party and the national interest, Baldwin inferred that he would be a disruptive force in the Cabinet.862 In the event, the ineligibility of the other candidates led Baldwin to make the unlikely appointment to the Defence Co-ordination Ministry of the Attorney General, Sir Thomas Inskip.

Whatever might be said in favour of Inskip’s subsequent conduct at his new post (particularly with regard to switching the emphasis from bomber to fighter command which proved an important factor to the outcome of the Battle of Britain), the decision to give him the job was ‘astonishing’.863 He had shown no particular interest in Defence and his appointment seemed to suggest both (and related to one another) that Baldwin did not

859 Neville Chamberlain’s diary, 19 February 1936, Neville Chamberlain Papers 23/a.
860 Daily Telegraph, 3 March 1936.
862 Baldwin said he had to consider ‘the smooth working of the machine’: Keyes to Churchill, 28 February 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/251/90.
863 Amery diary, 13 March 1936, p. 411.
take rearmament seriously and would not have Churchill back under any circumstances whatsoever. Only days before, Amery had recorded in his diary that ‘smoking-room talk’ had reached such a level of ‘dissatisfaction’ that he was being told not to be surprised if eventually he was ‘forced to take the lead and call the Conservative Party out of the coalition’. Now he recorded that the Inskip appointment would ‘prove to have greatly shaken [Baldwin’s] authority in the House of Commons.’864 The German remilitarisation of the Rhineland had begun shortly before the appointment was made and on top of his party political worries, Baldwin may have feared that a Churchill appointment at this time of crisis would be interpreted as a virtual declaration of war in Berlin.865 For Churchill, as we shall see, the appointment of Inskip convinced him that he could not climb back into the Cabinet solely through ingratiating himself with key groups inside the Conservative Party. National security was under threat and so it was to the broader, cross-party domain that he proceeded to appeal. He was also determined not to be side-lined by a junior appointment in the Government. When he called for the creation of a Ministry of Supply to deal with munitions, Churchill ‘went out of his way to explain that he did not want the job for himself’ and suggested Sir Kingsley Wood for the post.866 Meanwhile, Churchill’s reputation with the Government was certainly dented by his friendship with Professor Lindemann whose dogmatic promotion of eccentric schemes on the Air Defence Research sub-Committee of the C.I.D. brought its respected Chairman, Henry Tizard to the brink of resignation. Tizard wrote to the Air Minister, Lord Swinton (formally Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister) complaining of Churchill’s ‘gross discourtesy’ in ‘circulating an attack on the Committee without taking the trouble to learn my views beforehand’.867 Swinton

864 Amery diary, 10 and 13 March 1936, pp. 410-11.
865 Austen Chamberlain though that Baldwin had denied Churchill office ‘for fear lest Hitler take his appointment ill and because the Prime Minister has a little mind and is both jealous and unforgiving.’ Austen to Hilda Chamberlain, 15 March 1936, Austen Chamberlain Papers 5/1/729. The Government were determined to avoid fighting over the Rhineland: Harold Nicolson’s report of conversation with Ramsay MacDonald, Nicolson diary, 10 March 1936, p. 248; Baldwin to the Cabinet, 11 March 1936, Cabinet Papers, CAB 23/83/292-3.
866 Sir Maurice Hankey to Inskip recording a conversation he had with Churchill, 19 April 1936, Cabinet Papers 21/435, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.3., p. 107.
take rearmament seriously and would not have Churchill back under any circumstances whatsoever. Only days before, Amery had recorded in his diary that ‘smoking-room talk’ had reached such a level of ‘dissatisfaction’ that he was being told not to be surprised if eventually he was ‘forced to take the lead and call the Conservative Party out of the coalition’. Now he recorded that the Inskip appointment would ‘prove to have greatly shaken [Baldwin’s] authority in the House of Commons’. The German remilitarisation of the Rhineland had begun shortly before the appointment was made and on top of his party political worries, Baldwin may have feared that a Churchill appointment at this time of crisis would be interpreted as a virtual declaration of war in Berlin. For Churchill, as we shall see, the appointment of Inskip convinced him that he could not climb back into the Cabinet solely through ingratiating himself with key groups inside the Conservative Party. National security was under threat and so it was to the broader, cross-party domain that he proceeded to appeal. He was also determined not to be side-lined by a junior appointment in the Government. When he called for the creation of a Ministry of Supply to deal with munitions, Churchill ‘went out of his way to explain that he did not want the job for himself’ and suggested Sir Kingsley Wood for the post. Meanwhile, Churchill’s reputation with the Government was certainly dented by his friendship with Professor Lindemann whose dogmatic promotion of eccentric schemes on the Air Defence Research sub-Committee of the C.I.D. brought its respected Chairman, Henry Tizard to the brink of resignation. Tizard wrote to the Air Minister, Lord Swinton (formally Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister) complaining of Churchill’s ‘gross discourtesy’ in ‘circulating an attack on the Committee without taking the trouble to learn my views beforehand’. Swinton

864 Amery diary, 10 and 13 March 1936, pp. 410-11.
865 Austen Chamberlain thought that Baldwin had denied Churchill office ‘for fear lest Hitler take his appointment ill and because the Prime Minister has a little mind and is both jealous and unforgiving.’ Austen to Hilda Chamberlain, 15 March 1936, Austen Chamberlain Papers 5/1/729. The Government were determined to avoid fighting over the Rhineland: Harold Nicolson’s report of conversation with Ramsay MacDonald, Nicolson diary, 10 March 1936, p. 248; Baldwin to the Cabinet, 11 March 1936, Cabinet Papers, CAB 23/63/292-3.
866 Sir Maurice Hankey to Inskip recording a conversation he had with Churchill, 19 April 1936, Cabinet Papers 21/435, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.3., p. 107.
himself complained bitterly to the Cabinet about Churchill’s attitude on the sub-Committee implying that like Lindemann he was extremely disruptive, intransigent, not a team player, and wrong.\textsuperscript{868}

Denied Office, Churchill now attacked Baldwin in the Commons for failing to show any visible sign of leadership over the Abyssinian crisis which provoked Londonderry to warn Churchill about the dangers ‘of hitting the poor little man too hard because it will evoke a wave of sympathy which he will be able to stimulate by platitudinous broadcasts.’\textsuperscript{869} This view was shared by another parliamentarian, Churchill’s cousin and loyal supporter Frederick Guest who advised Churchill to stick to ‘smashing the hypocritical humbug of the Pacifist Socialist Party’ and thus shore up the Government rather than trying to ‘break down SB’ since ‘the party will simply and immediately crown [Neville Chamberlain]. You can lead the Conservative party but you cannot break the Party machine.’\textsuperscript{870} It was generally accepted that Baldwin, now in his thirteenth year as Party Leader, would probably not wish to remain at the helm for much longer. Neville Chamberlain was the clear successor by now but if Defence were to last as the major issue in British politics then it was not the one with which he was most identified. In this sense Defence did indeed provide a platform for Churchill to emerge as the Tory spokesman on the great issue of the day. As the veteran Austen Chamberlain reportedly observed to his brother, 1936 was the first time since Lord Salisbury’s Government that the House of Commons had been divided on foreign policy.\textsuperscript{871} However, without a Carlton Club style \emph{putsch}, there was no clear way in which Churchill could succeed Baldwin when he was not even in the Cabinet. He had

\textsuperscript{868} Swinton to the Cabinet, 6 July 1936, Cabinet Papers 23/85, ibid., p. 235.
\textsuperscript{869} Londonderry to Churchill, 9 May 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/254/23; Churchill regarded Baldwin ‘perfectly incompetent at home’ as well, Churchill to Sir Abe Bailey, 8 October 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/259/37.
\textsuperscript{870} Frederick Guest to Churchill, 19 June 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/255/38-9.
\textsuperscript{871} Reported by Neville Chamberlain to the Cabinet, 6 July 1936, Cabinet Papers 23/85, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.3., p. 233. Oliver Locker Lampson wrote to Churchill encouraging him that his stance on Defence marked ‘a peak point in your national importance.’ Locker Lampson to Churchill, 21 July 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/256/61. According to the \textit{Oxford Times} of 6 November 1936, when Churchill came to speak at the Oxford Union he drew ‘the largest crowd of undergraduates since Mr Lloyd George came to the same hall in 1912’. Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.3., pp. 384-5n.
tried playing the Party loyalty card and had not been rewarded for it with the Defence Co-
ordination portfolio and it seemed as if Baldwin would not have him at any price. Indeed,
it was not now clear who the Premier could sack in order to give Churchill an appropriate
job. Eden was at the Foreign Office with pro-Genevan credentials and was, at any rate, only
six months into the job. Baldwin had just given the Admiralty to Hoare, Swinton was
gradually rebuilding the RAF from the Air Ministry, Duff Cooper was a ‘hawk’ at the War
Office and Inskip was hardly going to be replaced only three months after his appointment.
Churchill had ruled himself out for a Ministry of Supply and there was no question of him
taking a post which did not involve the Defence issue which he had now made virtually
his whole raison d’être for remaining in politics. For all these reasons, it was hard to see
how Churchill could supplant Chamberlain as Baldwin’s successor merely by repeatedly
demonstrating loyalty when he controlled none of the Leader’s power of patronage which
was consciously being used to exclude him. His only chance was that the course of events
would completely discredit the Government’s approach, calling for a complete
reconstruction and thereby necessitating his return with his alternative strategy. This
strategy was increasingly involving support for an encirclement of Germany under the guise
of League of Nations’ Collective Security and, with some exceptions, the supporters of
Geneva were predominately on the centre and left of the British political spectrum.

Although the denial of the Defence Co-ordination job appeared to destroy Churchill’s
peace-time chance of returning to office through the normal means, it did not kill the
agitation which he had helped unleash. Lord Bayford, a former junior minister in the
Lloyd George Coalition and current Chairman of the Association of Conservative Clubs told
his Association that Churchill’s inclusion in the Cabinet would ‘give great satisfaction in
many Conservative circles’. More importantly, Churchill was now in regular contact
with disaffected senior backbenchers.

872 Lord Bayford to the Conference of the Association of Conservative Clubs, 23 May 1936,
reported in the Daily Telegraph, 25 May 1936.
Writing after the Second World War in his memoirs, Sir Henry Page Croft recalled that for two years after the end of the Indian rebellion, Churchill led a 'little band' who regularly met up over dinner and at weekends to discuss their response to Britain's defence deficiencies. Whilst Page Croft implies that this grew out of their activities fighting the India Bill, in terms of those who regularly met up, the group was not exclusively diehard.873 Once they had been 'working together [for] about a year'874 their meetings suddenly became public knowledge. Under the banner headline ‘ANTI-BALDWIN ‘SHADOW CABINET’ MEETS’ the Liberal News Chronicle reported that ‘Mr Baldwin’s most notable critics’, Churchill, Sir Austen Chamberlain, Sir Robert Home, Sir Edward Grigg and Sir Henry Page Croft had met at Lord Winterton’s country house, presumably to discuss the forthcoming Cabinet appointments to the Colonial Office and the Admiralty. Denied an interview with Winterton, the roving reporter was left to speculate and glean the musings of some locals in a nearby pub.875 Sir Austen assured his brother Neville who relayed the information to Baldwin, that the group was genuinely worried about the deficiencies of defence policy, rather than displaying any hostility to the Government in general; this encouraged another of Baldwin's musings about Churchill's lack of judgement.876 One Cabinet Minister was sufficiently incensed at this senior backbench factionalism to shout 'Traitors' at the alleged conspirators in the Commons chamber, whilst

874 Croft, My Life of Strife, p. 286
875 News Chronicle, 25 May 1936, pp. 1-2; Channon diary, 26 May 1936, p. 80. Winterton had started corresponding with Churchill on forming a strategy for pushing the Government into greater Air rearmament in July 1935: Winterton/Churchill correspondence, 26 and 29 September 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/244/33 and 34-6.
876 Tom Jones’ note in his diary of a conversation with Baldwin, 22 May 1936, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.3., p. 166. A decade later, Page Croft backed Austen Chamberlain’s protestation that the meeting was not a conspiracy against the Baldwin Government but merely a gathering of those determined to bring to parliamentary attention Britain’s defence deficiencies: Croft, My Life of Strife, p. 286.
Baldwin made matters considerably worse by referring to the meeting as occurring at 'the
time of the year when midges come out of dirty ditches'.877 The previous month, Austen
Chamberlain had spent the weekend at Chartwell where he discussed the German threat
with Churchill, Page Croft, Robert Boothby, Robert Horne, Edward Grigg and Professor
Lindemann. Writing to his sister of the weekend, Chamberlain wrote 'Is it a Cave? Well
some would like to make it so, but I am not a Cave man.'878 Yet, in the aftermath of the
Rhineland invasion and Baldwin's appointment of Inskip instead of Churchill, an incensed
Sir Austen was forced to admit that 'I am being driven into opposition or nearly so'.879

Meanwhile Churchill and Austen Chamberlain furthered their collaboration over their
proposal to introduce a secret session of Parliament where the country's Defence deficiencies
could be openly debated and acted upon without the glare of public attention (and therefore
by implication Party discipline). Chamberlain shared Churchill's francophilia and even,
in principle, his desire to bring Russia into the alliance against Hitler.880 The Government
neither wanted a secret session which they suspected would cause national alarm nor to
have to be subjected to a four hour speech on defence from Churchill.881 Instead,
Chamberlain and Churchill decided to lead a delegation to meet the Prime Minister in
synchronisation from one led from the Lords by Salisbury, with Churchill suggesting to
Baldwin that this way the Government could hear its supporters' concerns 'without public
disadvantage.'882 With Labour refusing to get involved,883 this 'Defence Group' consisted
'only of people who were all associated in one way or another in the pre-war days, and
nearly all of whom have served in the Cabinet or held office.'884 As a result, it was
dominated by Other Club members. A third of its twenty-one members were old India

878 Austen to Ida Chamberlain, 23 February 1936, Austen Chamberlain Papers 5/1/726.
880 Austen Chamberlain to Churchill, 4 July 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/266/84.
881 Cabinet Minutes for 6 July 1936, Cabinet Papers 23/85, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.3.,
pp. 234-5.
882 Churchill to Baldwin, 21 July 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/270/1-3; Churchill to Austen
Chamberlain, 21 July 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/270/5.
diehards which, as a ratio of the parliamentary Party, made it disproportionately diehard orientated. As the senior Privy Councillor, Austen Chamberlain led it, but it was Churchill who planned its organisation. The delegation was received at 10 Downing Street on 28 July with a further deputation on 23 November from the same group proving equally unable to prod the Government into greater action. As a tactic, it proved virtually worthless.

Correspondence with senior political ‘has-beens’ did not, in itself, give Churchill a commanding platform from which to return to Government Office. Lloyd George felt that:

Winston has no following in the country. He has no ‘region’ on which he is based for support like the Chamberlains in the Midlands, the Stanleys in Lancashire, the Aclands in the West. He’s a stunter. He can put things neatly: ‘SB has chosen between the devil and the Neville’, and last year ‘between the devil and the deep LG.’

Half way through 1936, Churchill found himself lacking not only a territorial base to apply pressure for his promotion. The Prime Minister was the ultimate arbiter of patronage and as Sir Henry Channon perceived the situation in his diary, Baldwin ‘hated’ Churchill just as the latter was ‘consumed with contempt, jealousy, indeed hatred for Baldwin, whom he always denigrates’. Churchill seemed to be no nearer to office than at any time since 1930.

885 Amery, Political Life, p. 197.
887 Channon diary, 28 and 15 May, pp. 80 and 79.
Chapter Two
Issues Beyond Party

i). Churchill and the Conservative Backbenchers

Hitler's remilitarisation of the Rhineland, yet another breach of the Versailles Treaty, had strategic implications beyond being merely the stroll into the back garden that liberal enlightened opinion, as expressed by Lord Lothian, thought it to be. As well as making a German invasion of France strategically easier, it hampered the French Army's ability to offer effective security to Czechoslovakia, undermining Paris's foreign policy of creating a Little Entente to block Germany's designs in Eastern Europe. The Tory Left, regarding France's refusal to be drawn against Italy as a cause of the fiasco of Britain's attempt to take a strong line on Abyssinia, were hardly moved to support Paris now that she requested help. The Tory Right who, in Austen Chamberlain's phrase, regarded France's pact with Russia as 'almost a betrayal of Western Civilisation' were equally unsympathetic, fearful of being drawn into her security web in the dark continent of unstable Eastern Europe. On 12 March the French Foreign Minister, Flandin, in London for a League of Nations Council meeting, met Churchill at his flat opposite Westminster Cathedral with Hoare (not yet back in the Government), Home and Austen Chamberlain making up the other guests. In the evening Churchill spoke to the backbench Foreign Affairs Committee arguing for an Anglo-British front in the League to apply the principles of the Covenant against the German incursion. The opinion of the meeting seemed to favour Churchill, who was supported by Austen Chamberlain, but a subsequent meeting of back-benchers a couple of days later was less pro-French, partly for fear 'of being drawn in on the side of Russia. The Government were convinced that going to war over the Rhineland would be deeply unpopular in Britain with unfortunate overtones not only there but also in Germany,

888 See Austen Chamberlain to Count Vladimir d'Ormesson, 28 March 1936, Austen Chamberlain Papers 41/125.
889 Churchill to Flandin, 12 March 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/252/27.
890 Thomas Jones to a friend, 4 April 1936, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.3., p. 90.
891 Britain's refusal to assist the French in enforcing the Versailles and Locarno Treaties conflicted with her obligations to respect them under the League of Nations. Yet, the British public who had worn their admiration for the League so publicly at the time of the
which, once defeated, might fall to Communists. As Harold Nicolson observed, this was ‘why the Russians are so keen on it’ whilst the feeling in the Commons was ‘terribly pro-German, which means afraid of war’.892

Churchill’s National Labour ally, Harold Nicolson who had become the Vice Chairman of the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee took a gloomy view of the Tory Party mood. Whilst they agreed with Churchill’s advocacy of defending the British Empire ‘and the Rhine frontier’ and might eventually come round to supporting Churchill in ‘a solid block for his League of restricted commitments and unlimited liabilities’, in the meantime:

the general impression left was that the majority of the National party are at heart anti-League and anti-Russian, and that what they would really like would be a firm agreement with Germany and possibly Italy, by which we could purchase peace at the expense of the smaller states’ of Eastern Europe.893

This interpretation suggested a huge swing in the Party away from the position highlighted by those who had been outraged by the Government’s breach of collective security at the time of the Hoare-Laval crisis. In fact, it was not far removed from Austen Chamberlain’s desire to bury the hatchet with Italy and recreate the Stresa Front in the hope that they could ‘try to come to terms with Germany,’ but if not, that Britain would at least be armed should Hitler be uncompromising. Yet he felt the national attitude was ‘so irritated with France’ as well as with Italy that Stresa was dead.894

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892 Nicolson diary, 10, 11 and 23 March 1936, and his letter to his wife, 12 March 1936, pp. 248-50 and 254; Baldwin agreed that a war would ‘probably result in Germany going Bolshevik.’ Eden shared the French conviction, articulated in the Cabinet by Halifax, that if they did not fight Germany now, they would be fighting her in three years time when, as Duff Cooper the Secretary for War pointed out, Germany would be in a yet stronger military position. Yet, as to the future prospect of such a war ‘some members of the Cabinet were very sceptical about this assumption’. Cabinet Papers, 11 March 1936, CAB 23/83/292-3.

893 Written after the meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Nicolson diary, 16 July 1936, p. 269.

894 Austen to Hilda Chamberlain, 10 May 1936, Austen Chamberlain Papers 5/1/733.
Unlike the largely irrelevant 1922 Committee, the backbench Foreign Affairs Committee assumed considerable importance as the forum for expressing views at moments of crisis. In this sense it was a mechanism for reacting to crises and not for formulating strategy to anticipate them. There were other ad hoc gatherings of Tory MPs during this period but few had lasting significance. Inspired by the backlash to the Hoare-Laval debacle, the December Club - or 1936 Club as it was known to some of its members like Harold Nicolson - was formed by the pro-collective security Major-General Edward Spears in February 1936 for up to 35 like-minded MPs on foreign affairs. However, it achieved little in the way of the coherent pressure on the Government in the face of international crises that it promised, although it was to attract several well qualified after dinner speakers.

In the light of the Rhineland remilitarisation, the Foreign Affairs Committee meeting of 17 March attracted over 200 in attendance. A former India diehard, Victor Raikes, made out the case for non-involvement in the Rhineland crisis, a view which Amery shared. Amery himself reiterated his belief that Britain should not over-step her commitments to France beyond those agreed at Locarno and this line Austen Chamberlain appeared broadly to endorse. Amery's Imperialist priorities were demonstrated by his attitude that whilst the Rhineland crisis should be allowed to 'fizzle out in talk', if there was any truth in the rumour that the Government were going to give back Tanganyika to Germany then there would 'be a real fight'. Approaching Churchill for assistance, Amery recorded that the Member for Epping 'was prepared for battle, though with some reserve as to the possibility of doing something as part of a general European settlement.

When Churchill tried to explain to the Foreign Affairs Committee his belief that the League could be used as the traditional mechanism for British power politics in preventing the continental hegemony of any one power, many Tories questioned his interpretation of

895 Amery diary, 17 March 1936, p. 411.
896 ibid, 7 March and 3 April 1936, pp. 410 and 413.
the League’s function. When Amery suggested that it might force Britain to abandon its security mechanism on ‘some technical or minor issue’ of ‘universal collective security’, Churchill back-tracked that ‘he was not thinking of the Covenant but of more specific arrangements under the aegis of the League’. This would have come as news to Churchill’s forthcoming band of non-Tory collaborators who joined him under the banner ‘Arms and the Covenant’. Noting that to his more immediate right wing audience Churchill wanted to bury Britain’s differences with Italy, Amery thought that ‘it is amazing to see how far he has come round since he declared himself an out and out sanctioneer last October.\(^897\)

By the middle of 1936 Churchill’s views straddled all wings of the Party. The right wing agreed with his call for greater rearmament, his rejection of giving back Germany’s old colonies, his (new found) call to end sanctions against Italy and his plea for non-involvement in the Spanish Civil War. Yet, these were all to greater or lesser degrees Party policy anyway and only a few Party mavericks disagreed with them in principle. Whilst the Tory right were not interested in joining France in her attempt to build a European security pact against Germany, most accepted the Locarno commitments to defend France against German invasion and Churchill’s Francophilia was shared by Austen Chamberlain and to a lesser extent also by Amery.\(^898\) Churchill’s support for the League was also still Party policy although, with sanctions in the course of being abandoned, it was clear that the commitment was now extremely shallow, despite Eden’s occupancy of the Foreign Office. It was Churchill’s failure to allay the Tory right’s fear that the League was essentially antagonistic to British national interest that marginalised him as their tribune of a more assertive foreign policy. As well as its international character, it was partly the League’s legacy of supporting disarmament and attracting liberal minded intellectuals that made it so unappealing to the right. Perhaps the main barrier, however, was that it now included the Soviet Union amongst its members. Churchill’s desire to bring Stalin into the collective security alliance against Germany was anathema to those on the

\(^{897}\) ibid, 30 April 1936, p. 415.

Tory right who felt that, whatever Hitler’s flaws, he was, at least, a vigorous anti-
bolshevik. Amery regarded the Foreign Affairs Committee to be ‘practically solid’ against
Churchill’s ‘continental arrangements that committed us to Russia’ leading Churchill -
whilst ‘against declaring that we washed our hands of Russia and Eastern Europe’ - to make
the qualification that neither could Britain commit herself to military intervention on
Russia’s behalf. Austen Chamberlain remained initially silent on this, unsure where he
stood. Amery tried to urge the hard-line opponent of Hitler and Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign
Office, Vansittart, that ‘Germany could only come into a satisfactory and stable European
system if Russia is left out of the picture’ As far as Amery was concerned:

instead of leaving the three sources of danger, Germany, Russia and Japan to
neutralise each other, we were committing the world and ourselves to
participation in their struggles (and as far as our interests were concerned on the
wrong side).

This was not merely a right wing response but one shared by the Prime
Minister himself
who confided to the Churchill-Austen Chamberlain Defence delegation in July 1936 that ‘if
there is any fighting in Europe to be done, I should like to see the Bolshies and the Nazis
doing it’ and that Britain should not be drawn into such a conflict even if France went to aid
her Russian ally ‘owing to that appalling pact they made’. To Amery, the logic of this
was to rebuild the Stresa Front with Italy so as to prevent Russia from helping to encircle
Germany. Amery joined Churchill’s fight to rearm the RAF and wrote to him at the
outset to assure him that ‘those of us who care for the safety of the Empire will have to
fight hard and fight together’ - sentiments with which Churchill concurred. But the
two of them differed on the role of Geneva with Amery’s emphasis on ‘the Empire’ leading

899 Amery diary, 16 July 1936, pp. 424-5.
900 ibid., 7 May and 28 July 1936, pp 416 and 426.
901 ibid, 13 February 1936, p. 407.
902 Baldwin to the Defence deputation, 29 July 1936, Premier Papers 1/193/141.
903 Maurice Cowling, The Impact of Hitler: British Politics and British Policy, 1933-1940,
1975, p. 225.
904 Amery/Churchill correspondence, 2 and 14 September 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/237/2
and 3.
him to relegate the importance of stretching British Imperial resources to the rescue of
Eastern Europe. Amery thought that if the League was not already dead then it was 'bound
to collapse another time and to drag us into desperate dangers.'\textsuperscript{905} An early stalwart of the
European integration movement,\textsuperscript{906} Amery was obsessed with creating externally Tariff
defined federations, not just for the British Empire but for a Danubian Federation which
would eventually include Germany. This seemed remarkably similar to the \textit{Mitteleuropa}
schemes of the old German Imperial Chancellery, but Amery did not seem to worry about
German European hegemony so long as it did not involve the \textit{Wehrmacht} in Paris or in
'British' Tanganyika, a possession to which he attached great strategic importance.

For most Tory Imperialists, standing firm against any prospect of giving back to Germany
Britain's mandated colonies was crucial. Sir Henry Page Croft seconded Duncan Sandys'
motion at the Conservative National Union's Conference in October 1936 demanding a
Government assurance to this effect, Baldwin having been characteristically vague on the
issue.\textsuperscript{907} Patrick Donner's little coterie\textsuperscript{908} may have been formed in the backlash to
Hitler's Rhineland remilitarisation, but it was stopping Hitler in Africa that inspired
some of its most concerted action.\textsuperscript{909} Here, the Right and Churchill were indisputably
fighting on the same side, even if, for Churchill, it was a less important priority.

\textsuperscript{906} Amongst his initiatives in this direction, Amery joyfully recorded in his dairy that
over dinner he had 'preached the gospel of European union' to Henlein, Hitler's stooge
\textsuperscript{907} Richard Griffiths, \textit{Fellow Travellers of the Right: British Enthusiasts for Nazi
\textsuperscript{908} This group consisted of Donner, Ronald Cartland, Charles Emmott, Alan Lennox-Boyd
and Duncan Sandys and met every Thursday to consider what questions on Defence to probe
Ministers within the Commons at Question Time. Donner, \textit{Crusade}, p. 191.
\textsuperscript{909} Donner joined Amery, Winterton, Colonel Ponsonby, A.A. Somerville and Duncan Sandys
on a deputation to Baldwin on this issue and wrote in strong terms to the \textit{Morning Post} on the
subject on 1 May 1936. As well as those by the above, similar letters to the press making
clear their opposition to appeasing Hitler in the colonies were written by the right wing
politicians, Sandeman Allen, Page Croft, Charles Emmott, Alan Graham, Frederick Guest,
Perhaps Churchill’s chief supporter from amongst the old India diehards was Viscount Wolmer who shared his vision of rearmament and League-based collective security.\textsuperscript{910} Lord Lloyd was supportive of Churchill with regard to rearmament, having seconded his speech to the 1935 Party Conference.\textsuperscript{911} The other great India diehard peer, Salisbury, shared his concern about the state of Britain’s defences. The Duchess of Atholl, acquainted with \textit{Mein Kampf}, was similarly supportive of Churchill’s views on Germany.\textsuperscript{912} The general position for a discernible section of the Tory right could, however, be summarised by its parliamentary ‘Imperial Policy Group’: to make no colonial concessions to Germany (nor in Egypt for Italy), to build up British forces, to defend France and Belgium from attack but not Eastern Europe where concessions to Germany should be made and to remove the League of Nations’ coercive clauses.\textsuperscript{913} These views were articulated by Leo Amery but created a dilemma for Churchill. As we have seen, the right supported his call for rearmament, but despised Geneva and did not wish to encircle Germany, especially not if Soviet Russia was to be brought into the grand alliance. This explains the right’s acceptance of the strategic reality brought about by Germany’s remilitarisation of the Rhineland with regard to Eastern Europe. Not afraid of alienating this group, Churchill now made clear to them that restraining Germany necessitated ‘the aid of Russia and all the minor countries in the East and South of Europe’ and that this could only be achieved through the use of the League of Nations which was ‘the means by which all these overwhelming forces can be assembled’ and ‘by which the greatest unity can be obtained in this country.’\textsuperscript{914} Churchill

\textsuperscript{910} Wolmer to the Commons, 18 June 1936, 313 HC Deb 5s., cols. 1241-3; Wolmer/Churchill correspondence, 18 and 22 June 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/255/36 and 46.
\textsuperscript{912} Duchess of Atholl to Churchill, 29 April 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/253/158-60. See also, Hetherington, \textit{Katharine Atholl}, p. 169.
\textsuperscript{913} Imperial Policy Group policy statement signed by Lords’ Mansfield and Phillimore and by Alfred Wise, W. Nunn and Kenneth de Courcy, April 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/253/36
\textsuperscript{914} Churchill to Alfred Wise (Tory MP for Smethick and member of the Imperial Policy Group), 9 April 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/253/37-8; Churchill was highly critical of anti-League Tory MPs in conversation with Sir Maurice Hankey since whilst under ‘no illusions’ about the League’s weakness, he saw ‘that the British people will not take re-armament seriously except as part of the League policy’. Churchill wanted Britain to undertake with France a detailed study as to whether the Soviet Union was ‘a fit ally worth having or
re-asserted his belief in the encirclement of Germany and that this could be used under the cloak of League ‘collective security’ as a continuation of the four hundred year tradition in which ‘to oppose the strongest power in Europe’ Britain had, as he viewed it, involved herself on the continent ‘by weaving together a combination of other countries strong enough to face the bully’.915 Yet, as even his admirers pointed out to him, the case for rearmament and peace-time encirclement was hardly in the spirit of League policy.916

We may get a further insight into the scrambled groupings of viewpoint in the parliamentary Conservative Party by examining the list of supporters for an Early Day Motion launched on 29 June 1936 calling on the Government ‘to eschew any military or other commitment which would have the appearance of an alliance between Great Britain and France and Soviet Russia and adheres firmly to the desire for closer relations between Great Britain, Germany, and France’. Only four former India diehards were amongst the 48 names listed in the *Notices of Orders of the Day* for this right wing motion signed by men like Amery and Bonar Law’s son, Richard Law.917 Again, the evidence suggests that the diehards were no longer acting collectively on foreign policy issues any more than were the former India reform supporters.918

ii). Building the Cross-Party Alliance

With Office denied to him and the Rhineland remilitarised, Churchill wrote to Lord Robert Cecil, the tireless President of the pro-Genevan pressure group, the League of Nations Union (LNU), on the growing totalitarian menace in Europe, suggesting that once

not’. Hankey to Inskip, 19 April 1936, Cabinet Papers 21/435, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.3., p. 108.
915 Churchill to Londonderry, 6 May 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/266/35.
917 *Notices of Orders of the Day*, Early Day Motion for 29 June 1936, with additional names added on 30 June, 1 and 6 July 1936.
918 The diehard signatories were Col. Howard Clifton Brown, Lawrence Kimball, Alan Lennox-Boyd and Sir Frank Sanderson.
his organisation had addressed the ‘ways and means’ of adopting its principles, they would ‘need a secular arm’. Churchill suggested that he ‘might help in this’. This was not an unconditional surrender to the LNU by the bellicose senior statesman. As he made clear, the LNU would also have to come round to his thinking since:

It seems a mad business ... to try and tame and cow the spirit of our people with peace films, anti-recruiting propaganda and resistance to defence measures. Unless the free and law respecting nations are prepared to organise, arm and combine they are going to be smashed up. This is going to happen quite soon. But I believe we still have a year to combine and marshal superior forces in defence of the League and its Covenant.919

Churchill had been making increasingly favourable references to the League in speeches since July 1934 (and intermittently before that), but his position was still essentially ambiguous and, as has been repeatedly asserted, appeared to rest on little more than the use of the League as a cloak to make British rearmament acceptable to the public. This rearmament was to be used in the interests of asserting British real politik which would give Britain the choice of independence or continental engagement, according to circumstance. His approach to the LNU onwards was evidence that Churchill now wanted to be seen to be promoting a coherent collective security strategy, whereby national defence became not the end in itself but the tool of an international defence system.

Between 1934 and 1936, Churchill had experienced considerable difficulty convincing the Tory right that the League could assist national defence interests. He now risked out-pacing Austen Chamberlain who, although a supporter of the principle of the League, saw regional pacts as the more immediate form in which to practice German containment. During 1936, Churchill was to identify himself much more closely with the LNU than Chamberlain, their former honorary Vice-President, was prepared to do. Although gradually sympathetic towards it, Chamberlain was uneasy about having to bring the

919 Churchill to Lord Robert Cecil, 9 April 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/282/9-10; As Churchill put it to his son his efforts were directed towards ensuring that ‘all the Peace societies’ were prepared ‘to support genuine military action to resist tyranny or aggression’. Winston to Randolph Churchill, 13 November 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/283/118.
Soviet Union into this anti-German pact which Churchill was now considering.\(^920\)

Churchill’s contemplation of this stance signalled a major departure from the method in which he had tried and failed to regain office since 1931 as the tribune of the right wing faction.

As well as pushing the LNU towards the direction of rearmament, Churchill had to ensure that it focused on the German danger rather than its current obsession with Italy, against which he wanted the sanctions policy dropped.\(^921\) He was also increasing in communication with the Anti-Nazi Society, a largely Jewish body alerted to the emergence of a menacing Germany by its anti-semitism. It was from this association that the ‘Defence of Freedom and Peace’ movement under its slogan ‘Arms and the Covenant’ sprung.\(^922\) This latter group, often referred to as the ‘Focus’, avoided publicity, meeting largely in private before launching their Albert Hall meeting in December ‘under the auspices’ of the LNU. In May Churchill spoke at a private lunch for the ‘Focus’ circle attended chiefly by Jews and concerned members of the Liberal Party like his friends Sir Archibald Sinclair and Lady Violet Bonham-Carter. Churchill made clear, despite initial hesitancy, that Britain would have to pursue a policy of full-scale rearmament if it was to stand up to Germany and suggested a manifesto should be drawn up setting forth the groups aims ‘and on this basis enlist members and supporters from every section of public’.\(^923\) The burden of the group’s funding was supplied by three of its Jewish members, Eugen Spier, Sir Robert Waley-Cohen

\(^920\) Only when the Tory right wing were particularly offended by the spectre of international Communism by Russian intervention in the Spanish Civil War did Churchill retract on his campaign for making a diplomatic approach to Moscow: see Churchill to the Commons, 5 November 1936, 317 HC Deb 5s, cols. 318-9.
\(^921\) Churchill to Lord Robert Cecil 9 and 18 April 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/282/9; Churchill to A.H. Richards (Secretary of the Anti-Nazi Society), 1 June 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/282/123. In conversation with Hankey however, Churchill seemed to take a much more warlike line against Italy, demanding that it came to terms with the League of Nations or face being bombed, a line he did not take in correspondence with others. See Hankey to Inskip, 19 April 1936, Cabinet Papers 21/435, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.3., p. 107.
\(^923\) Churchill to the ‘Focus’ group, 19 May 1936, reproduced in Eugen Spier Focus, 1963, p. 20-22.
Churchill hosted a further lunch in his flat for members of the group including the Tory MPs Locker Lampson and the Imperialist minded Duncan Sandys (Churchill’s new son-in-law) and the General Secretary of the TUC, Walter Citrine with whom Churchill had crossed swords during the General Strike ten years previously. There it was agreed amongst this politically diverse group to launch a research committee which would keep all the ‘Focus’ members fully briefed, to look positively towards Russia as an ally against the German threat, and to launch the organisation nationally in October. In the meantime it was agreed to name the group the ‘Defence of Freedom and Peace Union’ and that, as Churchill deduced, it should not form a ‘new and rival society to existing organisations, but only a welding together of those organisations.’ Cheered by the fact that the TUC Conference had voted for rearmament, Churchill deduced from this that ‘Labour is more alive than many of the Conservatives.’ He hoped that the group would now be in a position to get ‘large numbers’ of prominent Labour men to join, helped by the fact that Walter Citrine should chair their great launch meeting. This sounded like a man who had lost all interest in becoming Leader of the Conservative Party through the traditional process although he was keen to entice the ultra-respectable Austen Chamberlain to come to the group’s meetings even if only in an observatory role. For the group’s official launch at the Albert Hall, Churchill wanted representatives from the internationally minded New Commonwealth Society, the LNU and the Trades Unions on the platform with Sir Austen and himself as the main speakers. However, nervous after his former experiences on the

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924 Spier contributed £9600 to Focus between May 1936 and the summer of 1939, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.3., p. 162n; A.H. Richards (Anti Nazi Council) to Churchill, 29 July 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/283/3. According to Dr John Charmley, who cites the research of the controversial David Irving as his source, a further £25,000 was provided by Waley-Cohen. Charmley Churchill, p. 315.
925 Notes of meeting held in Churchill’s flat on 24 July 1936 by A.H. Richards on 29 July 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/283/4-6; Churchill also received encouragement from others to launch such a campaign: Eleanor Rathbone (Independent MP) to Churchill, 18 November 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/260/109-110.
926 Churchill to A.H. Richards, 21 October 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/283/64; Churchill to Lord Robert Cecil, 21 October 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/286/47; Notes of Churchill’s speech in the Savoy Hotel, 15 October 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/283/51-2.
927 Churchill to Austen Chamberlain, 17 October 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/283/43.
928 Churchill to A. H. Richards, 21 October 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/283/64.
LNU Executive when he had found it full of ‘some of the worst cranks I have known’, Austen Chamberlain preferred not to be directly associated.\textsuperscript{929} When Citrine objected to Lord Lloyd being present because of the difficulties it would create with Trades Unionists, Churchill appears to have agreed not to press for his India diehard colleague’s inclusion.\textsuperscript{930} Few better examples of Churchill’s abandonment of the right wing at this particular moment could be presented than this concession and he even planned to ‘get in touch’ with Attlee once the ‘Freedom and Peace Union’ was properly launched.\textsuperscript{931} As he put it to his son, ‘all the Left Wing intelligencia [sic] are coming to look to me for protection of their ideas, and I will give it whole heartedly in return for their aid in the rearmament of Britain’.\textsuperscript{932} He knew, however, that he had to be careful, warning Lord Robert Cecil who was busy collecting signatures amongst his left of centre friends that ‘unless you have hope of strong Conservative support, it will only concentrate the Tory antagonism upon the League of Nations Union’.\textsuperscript{933}

Dr Neville Thompson has written that the ‘Defence of Freedom and Peace’ group’s ‘chief function was to provide Winston Churchill with an organisation and a platform in his campaign for arms and the Covenant’.\textsuperscript{934} One of its prominent members, Norman Angell, thought that ‘if and when Churchill goes into the cabinet, [the Freedom and Peace Union] will ... simply dissolve’.\textsuperscript{935} However, whilst it is true that as their ablest platform

\textsuperscript{929} Austen Chamberlain to Lord Tyrrell, 13 February 1933, Austen Chamberlain Papers 40/22; Austen Chamberlain to Churchill, 29 November 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/286/55-6.
\textsuperscript{930} A. H. Richards to Churchill, 4 November 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/283/93; Richards had previously wanted Lloyd’s inclusion: Richards to Churchill, 4 June 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/282/126. As Dr Charmley rightly observes, Lloyd was sympathetic to the Arabs and this may not have endeared him to the Jewish Anti-Nazi League members within the group: Charmley, \textit{Churchill}, p. 316.
\textsuperscript{931} The indomitable right winger, Lady Houston, was amongst those appalled that Churchill was now championing the League of Nations, and promised to finance him ‘to run out Baldwin’ if only he would drop his commitment to the League: Lady Houston to Churchill, 6 and 18 November 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/260/10 and 113-4; Frederick Guest/Churchill correspondence, 23 and 27 November 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/260/158 and 162.
\textsuperscript{932} Winston to Randolph Churchill, 13 November 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/283/118.
\textsuperscript{933} Churchill to Lord Robert Cecil, 2 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/286/65.
\textsuperscript{934} Thompson, \textit{Anti-Appeasers}, p. 129.
\textsuperscript{935} Sir Norman Angell to Lord Allen of Hurtwood, 17 November 1936, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.3., p. 416.
speaker, Churchill made the most of the exposure the group were able to give him, several of its members were extremely distrustful of his motives. The central intention of the group was to enlighten public and ‘informed’ opinion by providing information in support of their anti-German objectives. This, of course, corresponded with Churchill’s promotion, but that would be the result, not the central function, of the group’s intriguing.

In accepting the Presidency of the British Section of the New Commonwealth Society, Churchill further pinned down his position towards supporting League based collective security. This association was more commonly known about at the time than the private luncheons he was having with ‘Defence of Freedom and Peace’ members. The parliamentary section of the New Commonwealth was largely made up of Liberal MPs and left wing Conservatives but also included a smattering of Tory protectionists as well as Churchill’s maverick National Labour friend, Harold Nicolson. Whilst its members included such anti-Genevan MPs as Neville Chamberlain (whom Churchill consulted before accepting the Presidency) the group’s philosophy was clearly similar to that of the LNU although even more otherworldly. Yet it was influential, and when Churchill

936 Eugen Spier recalled the reluctance of most of the ‘Focus’ group to place Churchill at the helm of their campaign and that Sir Robert Waley-Cohen thought Churchill would drop the group’s aims once he got back into the Government: Spier, Focus, pp. 43 and 47.
937 The New Commonwealth Society called for ‘the promotion of International Law and Order through the creation of a Tribunal in Equity and an International Police Force’. Although agreeing with the ‘root of the matter’ Churchill claimed not to consider himself bound by all of the New Commonwealth’s views: Churchill to Lord Robert Cecil, 21 October 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/286/46.
938 The parliamentary group’s signatories requesting Churchill to accept the Presidency included the Liberal MPs Robert Bernays, Clement Davies, Megan Lloyd George, G. le.M. Mander and Labour’s Josiah Wedgwood and F. Seymour Cocks. Vyvyan Adams, John P. Morris, Robert Boothby (Churchill’s former PPS), E.L. Spears, Sir Patrick Hannon and J.T.C. Moore-Brabazon represented various strands of Conservative opinion. It was also signed by Lord Davies the LNU’s Vice-President and Chairman of the New Commonwealth Society.
939 According to Amery, Neville Chamberlain had shown signs of having ‘gone cranky on foreign affairs’ to Londonderry by claiming that he really did favour an international police force (Amery diary, 25 April 1936, p. 414).
940 The founder and Chairman of the New Commonwealth Society, Lord Davies, went so far as to suggest to Churchill that in speaking out for collective security he should ‘refrain from attacks either upon nations or individuals’ since he should speak as a prophet rather than a politician (?): Davies to Churchill, 18 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/285/113. Nonetheless, the Society’s journal turned the argument on its head by arguing that the fact that its programme had been adopted by one so ‘realistic and practical’ as Churchill was proof of its potency: editorial of The New Commonwealth, December 1936, No.3., Vol.5.
addressed it at the Dorchester Hotel on 25 November there were around 450 people in attendance, including politicians and diplomatic representatives from over forty countries and, as the New Statesman put it ‘numerous Tories, some of them the most extreme Die-hards’.941 In accepting the post, Churchill reaffirmed his assertion that collective security meant the rearmament of the strong nations in order to defend the weak.942 The Tory extreme right, as expressed through the pages of Lady Houston’s Saturday Review, did not believe pro-Genevans capable of this great leap, arguing that Churchill was undermining his call for British rearmament by such ‘coquettes with these disarmament fanatics’. The paper’s belief that these people were at one with the Baldwin Government and that therefore Churchill was joining them as a bridge back into the Cabinet943 demonstrated the right’s inability to comprehend the scale of the Government’s disengagement from the Geneva process since the manifest failure of the Italian sanctions policy.

His relations with the New Commonwealth, the LNU and the ‘Focus’ group all suggested Churchill was looking outside the Conservative Party for support, but he was mindful of the need not to divorce himself completely from the Tory right. It was fortunate for his position that the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War did not provide an occasion for arbitration from Geneva in what was a matter of internal sovereignty since this would have put his Covenant rhetoric to the test against keeping on side with the majority of Tories. He was aware that ‘the great bulk of the Conservative Party [were] very much inclined to cheer the so-called Spanish rebels’ and he wrote to the French Ambassador to warn him that if his country intervened to help the Spanish Government then there was a danger of a British realignment against Communism which would leave Britain and France ‘estranged’.944 It was important that a future Spanish Government could not close the

942 Churchill to Sir James Hawkey, 8 June 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/284/38; Churchill to Lord Davies, 5 June 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/284/18-19.
Straits of Gibraltar (and thus the Mediterranean with its route to the British Empire) in the event of a European war. The logic of this to Tories like the Duchess of Atholl was to support the anti-Fascist left wing Government. Most Tories, however, took the view that Spanish nationalists like Franco would not submit so easily to German whims, whilst a pro-Communist Spain would immediately succumb to a Nazi invasion which would thereby close the link to the Mediterranean for the British anyway. With some exceptions like Sir Henry Channon, who took a laid-back view of the danger from continental Fascism, and Victor Cazalet, India diehards were well represented amongst those Tory MPs who were openly sympathetic to tolerating a situation which favoured Franco’s rebels. Churchill similarly desired strict British neutrality in the struggle, although towards the end of 1936 he was considering whether Britain and France should not direct the League towards trying to implement a peace-keeping role in halting the Spanish conflict. Austen Chamberlain, meanwhile, never made any public pronouncement on the conflict whatsoever.

Non-intervention was both the safest option for preventing the escalation of the conflict into a European war and, since the non-intervention worked to the advantage of Franco who received arms and assistance unhindered from Italy and Germany, it contented figures on the Tory Right like Page Croft who considered Franco ‘a gallant Christian gentleman.’ Churchill had no desire to destroy his credibility amongst the Tory Right by appearing

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945 The Duchess of Atholl was joined in this view by the Tory MPs, Captain J.R.J. Macnamara, Major Jack Hills and Vyvian Adams. Hetherington, Katharine Atholl, pp. 173-4.
946 Croft, My Life of Strife, pp. 270 and 276.
948 Churchill to André Corbin (French Ambassador to London), 31 July 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/256/777-8; Churchill to Vyvyan Adams, 7 August 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/286/11; Churchill to Eden, 27 November 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/260/167-8; Spier Focus, notes of Churchill’s comments at the Savoy Hotel, 29 October 1936, p. 42.
949 Page Croft to the Commons, 29 October 1936, 316 HC Deb 5s., cols. 72-3; Thompson Anti-Appeasers, pp. 118-9.
overly sympathetic to the Communists as the Duchess of Atholl - now ‘Red Kitty’ - had done. Such a move would have been entirely counter-productive in trying to convince the Conservative Party to stand up to Hitler, and he made a point of condemning Moscow’s interference in Spain, to the annoyance of his new occasional dining partner, the Russian Ambassador. If such zealous organisations as the Anti-Socialist and Anti-Communist Union were not disturbed by Churchill’s new friends on the Left then he was probably pretty safe from charges of fellow-travelling. Indeed, it was figures from the Tory Right who expressed admiration for his Commons speech on Defence of the 12 November which criticised the Government for not responding sufficiently quickly to the need to rearm. Baldwin made what Amery thought ‘a most lamentable confession and one which filled the House with dismay’ by stating that he had not commenced rearmament earlier because it would have been unpopular.

The Albert Hall rally of the LNU and the ‘Movement for the Defence of Freedom and Peace’ witnessed the now customary Churchill speech calling for collective security. Amongst those on the platform, which included twenty MPs in all, were the Tories, Robert Boothby, Duncan Sandys, Oliver Locker Lampson, the Duchess of Atholl and Lord Wolmer. Others on the platform included Lord Davies of the New Commonwealth Society, the Liberal leader, Sir Archibald Sinclair and Lord Melchett. With typical pedantry, Sir Austen Chamberlain had declined to take part in the meeting or join the organisation’s committee, despite agreeing with its programme and being prepared to have

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950 Churchill rejected the Duchess’s plea for him to listen to her and Noel Baker’s case for the Communists and to attend the ‘Annual Congress of Peace and Friendship with the USSR’: Churchill to the the Duchess of Atholl, 18 November and 15 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/260/112 and 2/261/56.
954 Amery diary, 12 November 1936, p. 430.
955 Other Tory parliamentarians in support of the group included Ronald Cartland, Paul Emrys-Evans and John McEwan.
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954 Amery diary, 12 November 1936, p. 430. 
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his support read out at the meeting.\textsuperscript{956} Citrine, in the chair, made clear that the speakers were making a personal contribution and that this was not the launch of a ‘Popular Front or Centre Party’.\textsuperscript{957} This was probably a reference to rumours articulated in the left wing \textit{New Statesman} that whilst for the moment ‘no new party or organisation is to be formed ... the logic of present politics is surely the formation of a Centre front with Winston Churchill as the effective leader, if not as the potential Prime Minister’ of a coalition of moderate Left and Right forces.\textsuperscript{958} \textit{The Spectator} had likewise predicted that the meeting would further elevate Churchill’s reputation, commenting that ‘if he bids for the role of democratic leader there may be considerable stirring in the square half mile south of Trafalgar Square.\textsuperscript{959} As later correspondence the following year suggests, the organisers of the ‘Defence of Freedom and Peace’ had no intention of setting up a Popular Front as a political unit, its Secretary getting extremely worried that Churchill’s request ‘what other party’s support [do] you contemplate having, especially Labour’ might be an attempt to transform the organisation from a gathering of private citizens to one shored up by ‘parties and organisations’.\textsuperscript{960} Yet the success of the Albert Hall meeting was only a demonstration of the forces that could be marshalled once a momentum was established. The difficulty was in sustaining this momentum when in competition with other distracting issues. With this in mind, Citrine had managed to prevent Churchill at the Albert Hall tying his message to a statement about the King.\textsuperscript{961} It was the revelation of Edward VIII’s desire to marry Mrs Simpson, then in the process of divorcing her second husband, that now diverted Churchill’s energy and threatened to destroy his political leadership of the coalition of Collective Security supporters.

\textsuperscript{956} Austen Chamberlain to A.H. Richards, 12 November 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/283/99; Spier \textit{Focus}, p. 59n.
\textsuperscript{957} Reported in \textit{The Times}, 4 December 1936.
\textsuperscript{958} \textit{New Statesman}, 21 November 1936.
\textsuperscript{959} \textit{The Spectator}, 20 November 1936, quoted in Thompson, \textit{Anti-Appeasers}, p. 130
\textsuperscript{960} Violet Pearman to A.H. Richards, 22 December and Richards to Churchill, 31 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/283/132.
\textsuperscript{961} Walter Citrine \textit{Men and Work}, 1964, p. 357.
iii). Leading the King's Party?

Baldwin had already spoken to Lord Salisbury at Hatfield House about the coming difficulty with the King's marital intentions and with Lord Selbourne, Salisbury had suggested that Baldwin receive a deputation of 'the elder statesmen ... Austen, Winston, Crewe, Derby etc' as well as Attlee to 'strengthen [Baldwin's] hands.' Churchill told Salisbury that he could not join the delegation since by doing so he would 'lose all influence over the King' who would be likely to consult him. From this angle Churchill would, supposedly, be able to exert independent influence on Edward to end his relationship with Mrs Simpson. It also kept his own options open should the political Establishment be brought down over the issue.

Churchill had seemingly been briefed on the King's attachment towards Mrs Simpson by Walter Monckton (the King's legal adviser) in July and had indeed expressed a desire that the King would end the damaging liaison. According to his own recollections, he did not see the King on the subject until 4 December, the day after the Albert Hall rally. Edward had asked his Prime Minister's approval before seeing Churchill, whom he had selected, as Churchill prophesied, as an adviser independent of Government patronage. On meeting the King, Churchill was given the impression that Baldwin was determined to force an immediate abdication whereas the Monarch desired, and needed, a fortnight to weigh up the options. Churchill was shocked at the effect the stress was having on the King's health and believed that his desire for time would be granted. He wrote urgently to Baldwin urging this point. During this period of delay several eventualities could have emerged ranging from the King's direct appeal to the country (forming a King's Party and perhaps the resignation of the Government) to his decision to finish his relationship with

962 Salisbury to Baldwin, 12 November 1936, Baldwin Papers 171/272.
963 This, at any rate, was how Churchill described his position to Lord Salisbury:
964 Such was the rift and role reversal between the King and his first Minister that Baldwin soon wished he had not given permission for the meeting between Edward and Churchill. H. Montgomery Hyde, Walter Monckton, 1991, p. 66.
965 Churchill to Baldwin, 5 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/264/110.
Mrs Simpson. Indeed, considerable pressure was being put on her via Beaverbrook to end the affair herself, saving Edward’s crown as a result.966

The question of delaying a decision was pivotal. If Churchill’s hope that the King would decide to put his duties before his private life were not practicable, then Churchill toyed with various schemes to keep Edward on the throne including that Mrs Simpson should become Duchess of Cornwall rather than Queen or that any children she had by Edward would be barred from the succession.967 Baldwin, however, refused to countenance such a scheme and made the fact clear to Edward ensuring that the issue was a stark one between denial of Mrs Simpson or immediate abdication. According to the India Secretary who wrote to the Viceroy on the subject:

It was pointed out at the Cabinet that this might involve the resignation of the Government and that in this case it would give rise to a Constitutional issue of the first magnitude, viz the King v. the Government. It seemed that the King had been encouraged to believe that Winston Churchill would in these circumstances be prepared to form an alternative Government.968

The Tory MP, Victor Cazalet, recorded in his diary almost verbatim what Amery had also noted in his own diary, that ‘stories are rife about a plot to make [Churchill] Prime Minister, have an election, supported by Rothermere and Beaverbrook - a kind of ‘French Revolt’ What folly.’969 Salisbury wrote to Churchill expressing his ‘great anxiety’ less Churchill’s position was changing from counselling the King to finish with Mrs Simpson to

966 Most of this information comes from private notes made by Churchill shortly after the abdication now available for scrutiny in the Chartwell Papers 2/264/6-15. The value that can be put upon their accuracy can not be guaranteed but they are supported by his letters to Baldwin, 5 December 1936 and Lord Salisbury, 9 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/264/110 and 82-4.
968 Lord Zetland to Lord Linlithgow, 27 November 1936, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.3., p. 440; Sir Henry Channon had already heard the rumour of this via Leslie Hore-Belisha to Lady Cunard: Channon diary, 22 November 1936, p. 107.
969 Cazalet dairy, recorded shortly after 7 December 1937, p. 187; Amery diary, 4 December 1936, p. 431. Amongst the options the anti-Churchillian John Reith at the BBC feared was that ‘we might have the King as a sort of dictator, or with Churchill as PM, which is presumably what that worthy is working for.’ Reith diary, 6 December 1936 in Charles Stuart (ed.) The Reith Diaries, 1975, p. 191.
that of championing the King whatever the decision to which he came. Churchill advised the King to consult with his supporters, Lord Beaverbrook and the Ulster Premier Lord Craigavon, and that by gaining time he was ‘gaining good positions and assembling large forces behind him’. It is a matter of personal interpretation as to whether these forces could be a reference to forming an alternative Government if need be, or merely, that there was a body of influential people prepared to ensure that the Government did not bully the King into making a hasty decision one way or the other. Disastrously, in what Amery regarded to be ‘a most mischievous manifesto’ in the Sunday newspapers, Churchill allowed his detractors to suggest personal motives by writing that:

If the King refuses to take the advice of his Ministers they are of course free to resign. They have no right whatever to put pressure upon him to accept their advice by soliciting beforehand assurances from the Leader of the Opposition that he will not form an alternative administration in the event of their resignation, and thus confronting the King with an ultimatum.

This seemed to raise the scenario whereby if the King challenged his Ministers (to whom the Opposition were now similarly committed) Churchill would be the obvious person upon whom he would ask to form an interim Government. Whilst Churchill may not have intended, or foreseen, this interpretation of his comments it could easily be used by his opponents to suggest he was looking out for himself in the crisis.

971 Churchill to King Edward VIII, 5 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/264/100-1.
972 Amery diary, 6 December 1936, p. 432.
974 If this line had occurred to Churchill at the time of his article then he certainly did not discuss it earlier that day in conversation with the Constitutional lawyer, Professor J. H. Mogan. This is because Morgan (who had been the India diehards’ chief Counsel and was ‘in complete agreement’ with Churchill on rearmament: see Morgan/Churchill correspondence, 5 June and 2 July 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/236/27-8, 92) wrote to Churchill the following day that this possibility had just occurred to him. His advice was that if the King called on Churchill to form a Government then the support of forty or fifty MPs would be enough to keep him in power until a dissolution upon which ‘on so grave an issue’ Churchill might ‘sweep the country’. Quite how Churchill’s followers were to beat the combined electoral machines of the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Parties in such a contest was not mentioned: Morgan to Churchill, 6 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/264/94. Subsequent gossip supposedly from a friend of a friend of Mrs Simpson supported the rumour of Churchill’s intention to form a King’s Friends Government citing Churchill’s meeting with ‘an eminent constitutional lawyer’ in support of this (Amery diary, 20 December 1936, p. 434). Morgan is presumably the lawyer in question here.
Now that the affair was at last public knowledge, the desired period of reflection for the King was cut short. Churchill's public contribution to the debate was not only that the King must be given time but that the Cabinet had not, alone, the authority to force his abdication since Parliament would also need to be consulted. All this raised the spectre of what Baldwin least wanted - a divisive public debate about where the Monarch's duty lay. Churchill argued that the reverse was true, that 'if an abdication were to be hastily extorted, the outrage so committed would cast its shadow forward across many chapters of the history of the British Empire.976

The assertion that Churchill genuinely wanted to force the Government's resignation so that he could form a fresh administration of 'King's friends' is fatally contradicted by the advice he gave to King Edward. The advice was that:

The only possibility of Your Majesty remaining on the Throne is if you could subscribe to some such Declaration as the following:-

'The King will not enter into any contract of marriage contrary to the advice of His Ministers.'977

This formula would have ensured that the King could not have insisted both upon marrying Mrs Simpson and remaining King. Thereby, it would have prevented any circumstances through which the Government would have been forced to resign. The charge that Churchill desired such a course so that he could lead the King's Party therefore collapses. Unfortunately for Churchill, others were unaware of the advice he had given which may also explain the failure of historians using secondary sources to prove Churchill's real

975 J.A. Spender to Churchill, 6 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/264/97; Amery diary, 7 December 1936, p. 432; Percy Loftus (Tory MP) to Churchill, 8 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/264/86.
977 Churchill to King Edward VIII, 7 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/264/89. This document is corroborated by what Robert Boothby told Sir Henry Channon - that Archibald Sinclair and Churchill had worked on the formula 'As long as I am King I will never contract a marriage against the wishes of my Ministers' which, they hoped, would have diffused the immediate crisis: Channon diary, 7 December 1936, p. 121.
motives. Only those who were with him during the restless weekend working out the formulae (Winterton, Sinclair and Boothby) could vouch for his actual strategy.\textsuperscript{978} It was through sources like these that Sir Henry Channon and the \textit{New Statesman} were able to pronounce Churchill’s innocence in the matter to what remained a sceptical audience, the \textit{New Statesman} pronouncing that ‘when all is known [Churchill] will be found to have played no intriguer’s part ... His advice to the King, my informer says ... will be found to have been impeccable from every constitutional point of view’.\textsuperscript{979}

Part of the problem seems to have been that Churchill genuinely believed that given time, Edward would either agree to drop Mrs Simpson or, as he later said to Baldwin:

\textit{if for any reason the Simpson divorce does not go through it will be felt by many millions of people throughout the Empire that the abdication could have been avoided ... Surely the Prime Minister will lie under the charge of having left his Sovereign in ignorance of the legal facts, and thus confronting him with an unreal dilemma?}\textsuperscript{980}

Monday, 7 December was the first parliamentary opportunity that presented itself after the official disclosure of the crisis. When Baldwin announced that he had no further statement to make on the royal situation, Churchill, as Amery recorded in his diary:

\textit{tried to get an assurance that ‘no irrevocable step would be taken before the House had received a full statement’ and tried to develop the question into a little speech. He was completely staggered by the unanimous hostility of the House, as well as being called to order by the Speaker.}\textsuperscript{981}

\textsuperscript{979} Churchill mentioned his advice to his arch critic, Geoffrey Dawson: Churchill to Dawson, 9 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/264/78. Channon found out what had actually been the advice from Boothby. (Channon diary, 7 December 1936, p. 121); Lord Winterton later claimed ‘inner knowledge’ proving Churchill’s motives had been entirely honourable with regard to the King’s abdication (Winterton, \textit{Orders of the Day}, p. 223). Having dined with Churchill on 6 December, Winterton was in a good position to know Churchill’s state of mind. \textit{The New Statesman} also said it believed ‘an intimate friend of Mr Churchill’s’ as the source for his innocence in the matter. \textit{New Statesman}, 12 December 1936, ‘A London Diary’.
\textsuperscript{980} Churchill to Baldwin, 22 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/264/47-8.
\textsuperscript{981} Amery diary, 7 December 1936 p. 432.
Winterton later reflected that Churchill had received ‘one of the angriest manifestations I have ever heard directed against a man in the House of Commons’.\textsuperscript{982} The National Labour MP, Harold Nicolson, watching how Churchill had ‘collapsed utterly in the House’ was not alone in feeling that Churchill had ‘undone in five minutes the patient reconstruction of two years.’\textsuperscript{983} Boothby agreed, telling Churchill in exasperation that his intervention had ‘reduced the number of potential supporters’ of their position on the crisis ‘to the minimum possible’ which he thought was ‘now about seven in all’.\textsuperscript{984}

Meanwhile Churchill was warned that if he pursued his course then ‘those of us who have worked with you in the Freedom and Peace movement [would have to] dissociate ourselves from your standpoint.’\textsuperscript{985} This reinforced the fears of those in the group who had been wary of giving him too prominent a role in the first place.\textsuperscript{986} In the aftermath of his Commons flop, Churchill found himself surrounded in the Commons smoking room by some of his ‘most loyal supporters’ roundly accusing him of ‘playing for his own hand’. As Boothby informed him, these supporters could no longer follow him blindly ‘because they cannot be sure where the hell they are going to be landed next’.\textsuperscript{987}

Churchill back-tracked in the Commons on 10 December following the King’s announcement of abdication. Amery thought that despite rising ‘in face of a hostile House’ Churchill’s

\textsuperscript{982} Winterton, \textit{Orders of the Day}, p. 224.
\textsuperscript{983} Harold Nicolson diary, 7 December and his letter to his wife, 9 December 1936, p. 282 and 284. After discussing it with the Liberal MP, Robert Bernays, Blanche Dugdale, the well connected LNU Executive member and Zionist, timed Churchill’s complete self-destruction down to three minutes: Blanche Dugdale’s diary, 8 December 1936 in N. A. Rose (ed). \textit{Boffy: the diaries of Blanche Dugdale 1936-47}, 1973, p. 34. Boothby hoped that the diminution in his authority would be only ‘temporarily’: Boothby to Churchill, 11 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/264/72. Victor Cazalet described Churchill’s flop as ‘almost pitiable, if he did not deserve it for what he has done.’ Cazalet diary, p. 187 whilst Sir Henry Channon felt that Churchill’s interjection had done ‘the King’s cause great harm’ Channon diary, 7 December 1936, p. 121.
\textsuperscript{984} Boothby to Churchill, 7 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/264/93.
\textsuperscript{985} Henry Wickham Steed to Churchill, 7 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/264/88.
\textsuperscript{986} Spier \textit{Focus}, p. 47.
\textsuperscript{987} Boothby to Churchill, 11 and 7 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/264/71 and 93.
strategic retreat was 'an admirably phrased little speech.'\textsuperscript{988} The episode had however done nothing to dispel the continuing doubt over Churchill's judgement and motives and it is little wonder that he was seen a few days later still looking 'distraught.'\textsuperscript{989} The assertion that he had wanted to use the issue to seize power personally was perhaps the most damaging aspect of his intervention. That the King was also supported by the notoriously anti-Baldwin press lords, Rothermere and Beaverbrook, seemed to confirm that picture.\textsuperscript{990} It is not clear how quickly others began to follow Amery's revision that such allegations had been 'unjust' since being 'personally very fond of the King' it was primarily Churchill's horror at 'the King's difficulties [which] may also have helped upset his judgement.'\textsuperscript{991} Yet, Churchill had bounced back from seeming political death before, and by 12 December he was back in the Commons making what Winterton regarded 'one of the best speeches of his life' on defence policy.\textsuperscript{992} Whatever its long term implications, however, at least in the short term the crisis reversed the fortunes of Churchill and Baldwin.\textsuperscript{993} As Amery recorded for posterity, the Prime Minister:

\begin{quote}
    a few weeks ago [had driven] us all to despair by his fatuous confession that he had done nothing about defence because public opinion was pacifist, and it seemed clear that the sooner he was got rid of the better. And yet for this particular [abdication] crisis he was ideally fitted.\textsuperscript{994}
\end{quote}

Boothby's not disinterested advice reflected his desire to coax Churchill further towards the Left and the Collective Security advocates since:

\begin{quote}
    the Die-hards are not fundamentally loyal to you, that the Press Lords (and especially one of them) are your most dangerous enemies, and that Brendan [Bracken] is the best friend and the worst counsellor in the world.\textsuperscript{995}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{988} Amery diary, 10 December 1936, p. 433; Dawson claimed to be similarly impressed by the 'thoroughly sound, constitutional point of view' represented by the speech: Dawson to Churchill, 11 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/264/70.
\textsuperscript{989} Dugdale diary, 15 December 1936, p. 34.
\textsuperscript{990} Bruce Lockhart diary, 10 December 1936, p. 361.
\textsuperscript{991} Amery diary, 7 December 1936, p. 432.
\textsuperscript{992} Winterton diary, 12 December 1936, p. 223.
\textsuperscript{993} Bruce Lockhart diary, 10 December 1936, p. 361.
\textsuperscript{994} Amery diary, 10 December 1936, p. 433.
\textsuperscript{995} Boothby to Churchill, 11 December 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/264/72. Bracken's most recent biographer has described the difference between Boothby and Bracken towards
iv). The Baldwin Regime Passes Peacefully to its Close

The relatively subdued tempo of Churchill's campaign during the first half of 1937 has been attributed to two primary factors. On the one hand, it may have indicated that the 'Freedom and Peace' movement had collapsed as a result of his damaging antics during the Abdication crisis. Quoting *The Spectator*'s view that 'the reputation which [Churchill] was beginning to shake off of as a wayward genius unserviceable in counsel has settled firmly on his shoulders again', Dr Neville Thompson has concluded that the crisis 'brought to an abrupt end the moves to put Churchill at the head of a popular front ... [although even without this] it would almost certainly have been killed by other serious differences among those who hoped to bring it about' like the contrasting responses of Left and Right to the Spanish Civil War.996 On the other hand, the relative lack of continental developments focused public attention away from defence and foreign policy and this would probably have happened even had Churchill's support not been fractured. In respect of the calming international scene, Churchill feared that the gestures of the Government had so reassured MPs 'that it is a matter of public comment that it is difficult to keep a House when the gravest matters are being discussed.'997 In view of this apparent absence of a discernible continental threat, it was not surprising that the 1937 King's Speech devoted only a quarter of its space to external affairs where previously it had donated almost half. In a clear rejection of comprehensive Collective Security, for the first time since 1931, it also made no pledge towards the League of Nations.998 Churchill's desire to bring the Soviet Union into a security pact against Germany, perhaps his single most unpopular advocacy as far as the Tory Right were concerned, was made to look even more worthless when in June 1937 Stalin appeared to disable Russia's military machine by purging it of its High

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997 Churchill to the Commons, 4 March 1937, 321 HC Deb 5s., col. 578.
998 Marion L. Kenney 'The Role of the House of Commons in British Foreign Policy during the 1937-8 Session' in *Essays in Honor of Conyers Reed*, 1953, pp. 159-60.
Command. Meanwhile, Russian intervention in the Spanish Civil War had confirmed the Tory right's worst fears that whatever its capability, Moscow was still inspired by the spirit of international Communism and was, thereby, a completely untrustworthy ally. Whilst one historian has written that it was not until the 'the eleventh hour before Munich' in 1938 that Churchill advocated a Franco-British-Russian alliance,\footnote{Richard Howard Powers, 'Winston Churchill's Parliamentary Commentary on British Foreign Policy, 1935-1938' in The Journal of Modern History, vol. 26., 1954, p. 182.} he had been intermittently stressing the value of such a possibility and it did him no good with the majority of the Conservative Party.

By March, Churchill was writing to the increasingly estranged Lord Rothermere that 'Parliament is dead as mutton and the Tory party feel that everything is being done for the best and the country is perfectly safe.' The previous month, Churchill's friend and scientific adviser, Professor Lindemann, standing as an Independent Conservative, had become a victim of this sense of security by coming third with a quarter of the votes in the Oxford University by-election.\footnote{The voting was: Independent 7,580; Conservative 3,917; Independent Conservative (Lindemann) 3,608.} Unsurprisingly in this climate, Neville Chamberlain's lunch table talk made it 'clear that Winston will not be invited to join Chamberlain's Cabinet' not least since working with him, with his lack of judgement, was 'like arguing with a Brass band.'\footnote{Dugdale diary, 27 February 1937, p. 39.} Furthermore, as far as the Government was concerned, Churchill's counsel was scarcely worth having. He was 'irritable' as to whether his memorandum on the Luftwaffe had been circulated to the C.I.D and whether he would be receiving the Air Staff's criticisms as he had previously through his membership of the Air Defence Research sub-Committee. In fact, Swinton and the Air Ministry had come to the conclusion that Churchill's figures were valueless compared to their own and that there was little to be gained sharing secret information with him if he was not going to accept it. Yet despite his continual criticism of it, he was not removed from the sub-Committee.\footnote{Sir Maurice Hankey to Inskip and Baldwin, 1 March 1937, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.3., pp. 585-6.}
Churchill’s attempts to unite the Conservative backbench behind him also looked to be in
difficulties. In November, Amery had been afraid that Churchill ‘had captured a good
many Conservatives’ for the cause of League collective security against Germany.1003 By
March 1937 however, the veteran Observer Editor J.L. Garvin was expressing the views of a
‘growing’ section of the Conservative Party that Germany should be allowed to expand her
hegemony over Eastern Europe, creating the Mitteleuropa she had sought before the First
World War.1004 Sir Norman Angell put this view down to the Tories desire to build a
bulwark against Soviet Communism and that unless more Conservatives joined the LNU,
thus preventing it from being:

captured by the Left, more and more will that collective resistance to German
domination which you have urged become unpalatable to Conservatives, and the
greater will be the tendency to accept the surrender solution.1005

A further blow to the cause occurred on 16 March when Sir Austen Chamberlain died. As
Churchill told his widow:

In this last year I have seen more of him & worked more closely with him
than at any time in a political & personal association of vy nearly forty
years. I feel that almost the one remaining link with the old days indeed
the great days has snapped.

These were not merely emollient words to a grieving widow. As Neville Chamberlain
concurred ‘Austen had a great admiration and affection’1006 for Churchill and although
they were temperamentally very different, apart from the fading figure of Sir Robert
Horne, the two of them were the last two senior Tory members of the ‘Old Gang’. Yet, for
Churchill, Sir Austen’s death was both a curse and a blessing. It removed a political ally
who had helped to bring respectability1007 to the defence and foreign policy causes which

1003 Amery diary, 5 November 1936, p. 429.
1004 Garvin in The Observer, 21 March 1937, see Thompson, p. 34.
1006 Churchill/Ivy Chamberlain correspondence, 18 and 20 March 1937 and Neville
Chamberlain to Churchill, 18 March 1937, Chartwell Papers 1/298.
1007 Reminiscing in 1939, Viscount Lee thought that Austen Chamberlain commanded more
parliamentary influence in his last years than he had when in the Government, a view
shared by Chamberlain’s most recent biographer. Alan Clark (Ed.). A Good Innings: The
Churchill now championed, and left him alone as the only backbencher of statesman-like rank to argue for armed Collective Security. From a personal standpoint, this magnified Churchill’s role as the one great alternative voice and his highly praised ‘sober’ speech urging support for the Government’s continuing neutrality towards Spain suggested that he was on his way to inheriting Chamberlain’s dignified mantle in the eyes of the Commons, in contrast to the usual reproach about his erratic judgement.

The death of Sir Austen Chamberlain and the succession, two months later, of his brother to the Premiership were the two Conservative Party landmarks of 1937 for Churchill. Since his return to the Tory fold, if he had a chance of attaining the Leadership then it was - one way or another - in succeeding Stanley Baldwin. Yet, as he publicly admitted when the moment for the succession finally arrived, ‘there never was any doubt that Neville Chamberlain would succeed Baldwin. No rival candidate was even discussed by serious people’. Accepting the situation with good grace, Churchill stated that whilst Chamberlain ‘had few friends and shuns society ... he is a man of the highest character ... [who] carries the flag of righteous endeavour’, On 31 May, Churchill, who with Austen Chamberlain’s death was now the most senior Conservative Privy Councillor in the Commons, seconded Lord Derby’s motion nominating Chamberlain to the Party Leadership.

After praising Baldwin as a ‘massive figure’ Churchill announced to cheers that ‘no one was so active in pressing forward the policy of rearmament’ as Neville Chamberlain. The occasion demanded that he sing the new Leader’s praises, but his choice of identifying Chamberlain with his own hobby horse suggested that he wished to clamber back into the Party mainstream. This said, he could not help giving the double-edged commendation of Chamberlain as a Parliamentarian who would ‘not resent honest differences of opinion’ in Party debate.

1008 Eden to Churchill on his speech to the Commons of 14 April 1937, 16 April 1937, Chartwell Papers 2/296/16.
1009 Churchill in Colliers Magazine, 16 October 1937.
Whilst completely out of the running for the Leadership, further clues were evident that Churchill still nourished hopes of readmittance to the Cabinet. In writing to the Duke of Windsor he stated that he was delaying paying the ex-King a visit until later in May since he did not wish to be out of the country when the reconstruction came since whilst he was 'not very keen upon office' he would, nevertheless, 'like to help in defence'.

Whilst fearing the consequences of what he might do in office, Sir Henry Channon thought that Churchill had a better rapport with Chamberlain than with Baldwin and that after his:

brilliant speech on Spain, Churchill's 'stock' has soared, and today people are buying 'Churchills', and saying once more that he ought to be in the government, and that it is too bad to keep so brilliant a man out of office.

Churchill described himself to Channon as 'really the leader of the Opposition as the Labour people are so ineffectual, weak and uneducated'.

The Chief Whip, Captain Margesson, had written to Chamberlain in March suggesting popular appointments for the reconstruction of the Cabinet. It is worth quoting at length his comments about Churchill, who he had not listed for a Cabinet appointment 'for obvious reasons':

if, however, you should ultimately decide to include him, I suggest for your consideration that he might go to the Board of Trade. He has the experience and drive, his friends in the Party are right wing, but he himself is a low tariff man. As there is so much to do in that Department, he would be kept thoroughly busy and out of mischief. His appointment to the Board of Trade would keep him well away from the Defence Departments, where he would be a great nuisance.

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1011 Churchill to the Duke of Windsor, 30 April 1937, Chartwell Papers 2/300.
1012 Channon diary, 15 April 1937, p. 150.
1013 Channon diary, 4 May 1837, p. 154.
1014 Margesson to Neville Chamberlain, March 1937, Neville Chamberlain Papers 8/24/1.
It is worth noting from this that Margesson, whose eye was trained purely on the parliamentary Conservative Party, regarded Churchill’s allies there to be predominately right wing. This flies in the face of the evidence that Churchill’s growing associations with the collective security advocates distanced himself from the Right. It is worth noting in support of Margesson’s interpretation that Gwynne at the right wing Morning Post also thought a Churchill appointment to the Cabinet with command of one of the fighting services would ‘offend’ the supporters of Geneva with their ‘leaning towards pacification’, 1015 This suggests that some Tories realised that Churchill’s commitment to Geneva was as a fig leaf for national rearmament. We must, therefore, be careful in not interpreting too strictly Tory opposition to Geneva (as the international ‘peace’ forum beloved of the LNU) with opposition to Churchill. Whilst considering his public use of the Geneva rhetoric to be dangerous, many right wing Tories may have realised that Churchill’s aims were, at least in part, also theirs. 1016 Secondly, Margesson’s advice suggests that Churchill’s comments on rearmament were clearly not regarded as useful to a Government supposedly wanting to move public opinion down that path. Thirdly, Margesson concluded his analysis of Churchill’s worth by stating that a post at the Board of Trade ‘would minimise the alarm which his return to the Cabinet might otherwise occasion in some quarters’. 1017 Perhaps this is a reference to the views of the non-Tory component in the National Government or even to the Official Opposition (although it is unclear why that should have been off-putting to the Conservative Chief Whip). Alternatively, Margesson may possibly have had in mind the delicate sensibilities of Adolf Hitler whose confidence Chamberlain was to hope to win by the policy of appeasement.

1015 Gwynne to Neville Chamberlain, 21 May 1937, Neville Chamberlain Papers 8/24/4.
1016 If the Left could realise this then there is no reason why the Right could not. As the New Statesman commented at the time of the Albert Hall meeting, ‘he still talks about collective security and the League, even though Geneva is now an obvious camouflage for an alliance. Putting it that way pleases the rank and file of organizations like the League of Nations Union.’ New Statesman, 21 November 1936, ‘A London Diary’.
1017 Margesson to Neville Chamberlain, March 1937, Neville Chamberlain Papers 8/24/1.
When the War Secretary, Leslie Hore-Belisha, reported to Chamberlain Churchill’s desire to serve in the new Cabinet, Chamberlain used similar language to that which Baldwin had used before him: ‘If I take him into the Cabinet ... he will dominate it. He won’t give others a chance of even talking.’ This sense of avoiding what Chamberlain described ‘anyone who will rock the boat’\textsuperscript{1018} is a central theme of our study of Churchill’s failure to be promoted out of the Conservative backbenches. The National Government included everyone except the right wing, Lloyd George and the Socialists - those who would ‘rock the boat’. It was a coalition of different shades but of no contrasts. It was the reason why, whatever choice of tactics he employed, Churchill was always going to be excluded from major office in the peacetime endeavours of the National Government.

\textsuperscript{1018} Quoted in R.J. Minney \textit{The Private Papers of Hore-Belisha}, 1960, p. 130.
Conclusion:
The Compatibility of the Indian and Defence Campaigns

Sir Robert Rhodes James may lament that the India campaign disconnected Churchill from the progressives and the 'New Conservative' mainstream, but as Dr John Charmley rightly observes, his association with the diehards was bonded by the same repugnance towards British public displays of weakness that made him an opponent of appeasement.1019 Indeed, if Churchill had been tied down in minor office between 1929 and 1935, the distractions of his post might even have acted to retard the development of the full scope of his critique on Government defence and foreign policy.

Rhodes James notes in support of his argument that Duff Cooper, Harold Macmillan and Anthony Eden were anti-appeasers alienated from Churchill because of his former India diehardism.1020 Yet, stance over India was not necessarily the reason for their failure to accept his leadership from 1935. They were, for instance, quite prepared to criticise the leading architects of appeasement - Neville Chamberlain, Sir John Simon, Lord Halifax and Sir Samuel Hoare - whom they had supported as the leading architects of Indian reform. Nor does Rhodes James mention that the respected Sir Austen Chamberlain worked closely with Churchill between 1935 and his death in 1937 on defence and foreign policy despite being on the opposite side over India. Similarly, Leo Amery worked with Churchill on some aspects of the defence issues from 1935 despite favouring Indian reform. Where he differed from Churchill and kept his own counsel on these issues was because he had a different response to dealing with Hitler, not because he had once disagreed with Churchill over the constitutional make-up of the Indian sub-continent. Nor does Rhodes James mention prominent India diehards like Lords’ Wolmer and Lloyd who backed

1020 Rhodes James Churchill, a Study in Failure, p. 213. Even the right wing historian, Maurice Cowling, has written that 'India failed [Churchill] and divided him from natural allies like Derby and Austen Chamberlain' - despite this assertion, no evidence is provided to demonstrate any strain that the fight over India placed upon Austen Chamberlain and Churchill's cooperation from 1935. Cowling, Impact of Hitler, p. 240.
Churchill on the majority of his pronouncements after 1935 and stood with him in opposition to Munich. Had Anthony Eden been so resolute over Munich as these right wingers dismissed by Rhodes James in his influential work, then Neville Chamberlain might have been in considerably greater difficulty.

Whilst the India diehards shared Churchill’s strong reservations about Baldwin in the years covered in this study, Maurice Cowling is right to note that ‘the most significant diehards supported [Neville] Chamberlain’ from his succession in 1937. Chamberlain had gained ground with this group during 1936 with his condemnation of sanctions against Italy. Yet, once again, the case should not be over-stated. Our study has shown that from 1935 there was wide scale support amongst former diehards for Churchill’s rearmament campaign and that on foreign policy, whilst there was a tendency to oppose League action (particularly if it hampered reconstructing the Stresa Front or favoured embracing Soviet intervention in European affairs) there was no coherence of diehard opinion in any one direction, with some actually supportive of Collective Security. Maurice Cowling identifies Churchill’s closest personal allies at the time of Munich as Robert Boothby, Duncan Sandys, Roger Keyes, Brendan Bracken and Lord Lloyd. In fact, all these men were prominent India diehards except Sandys (who only entered Parliament in the campaign’s closing stages and was, at least, an Imperialist) and Boothby. Furthermore, the suppositions made by Cowling, Rhodes James and Thompson need to be modified further still. Dr Jorgen Rasmussen argues that 37 of the 267 MPs who sat continuously in the Commons between December 1934 and May 1940 were India diehards. His assumption that since the diehards were Imperialists then these diehards were the Imperialist group in its totality, is an over-simplification. He shows, however, that as far as the instances he has selected as demonstrative of opposition to appeasement up until 1940 are concerned, the

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diehards ‘differed little from the non-imperialists’ as a proportion of opponents of appeasement.1024

The truth appears to be not that Churchill and the diehards found themselves united on India only to take rival stances on foreign policy but that from 1935, the diehards could no more form a united comprehensive policy on how to deal with the international situation than the non-diehards. Indeed, given his twists between armed isolation, support for Stresa, support for the League (in a nebulous interpretation of its aims), support for Stresa again, defence of Eden’s resignation, support for regional pacts and so forth, Churchill’s own views on the conduct of foreign policy could scarcely be said to be intellectually water-tight in this respect. There is little consistent link between the views any group of Tory politicians held on India pre-1935 and on foreign policy after that date. In view of this, it is difficult to sustain the assumption that India diehards (like Churchill) could not appeal to anti-appeasers purely on account of their past diehardism any more than that anti-appeasers (like Amery and Austen Chamberlain) could not appeal to former India diehards after 1935 on foreign policy. This can only encourage us to question the received wisdom that Churchill’s diehard stance between 1929 and 1935 was central to his exclusion from major Office in the second half of the 1930s.

Churchill’s relations with the press underline the difficulty he faced in keeping a constituency of support solid throughout the period. Given the declining sales of the Morning Post, and the lukewarm India diehardism of Beaverbrook, it was the Rothermere press which sustained the diehard viewpoint through the mass media. The Daily Mail also supplemented the I.D.L. print run with publications of its own.1025 Both Churchills,

1024 Rasmussen takes opposition to Hoare-Laval (in which he finds few diehards), membership of the ‘December’ and Amery-Eden groups against appeasement, together with signatures on Early Day Motions, key divisions and the 1940 Norway Debate as the measures of anti-appeasement. Rasmussen, p. 178.
1025 The biggest single such publication was the Daily Mail’s 1934 ‘Blue Book’, ‘Save India for the Empire’, which contained a foreword by Lord Carson, a main article by Michael O’Dwyer, seven articles by Rothermere and brief statements from 14 Tories (the Churchill line being, on this occasion, represented by Randolph rather than Winston) on why they sought to ‘oppose surrender’. Thompson Papers, MSS.Eur.F.137/53/(A)/131.
father and son, were on the Rothermere payroll. Randolph wrote for the *Sunday Dispatch* whilst Churchill himself wrote eleven articles for the *Daily Mail* in 1934 and thirteen in 1935, but found no time to write any in the five months between October 1934 and 27 March 1935. Churchill was, therefore, a vital bridge between Rothermere and the diehards. Beaverbrook’s *Daily Express* provided no more than half-hearted support for the cause. Against this was ranged the media forces of the Establishment. The *Daily Telegraph* supported the Government’s India policy although its owner was not personally hostile to Churchill. The *Times*, however, lost no opportunity to denigrate both Churchill and the diehards, and the BBC used its monopoly control of broadcasting to deny Churchill access to the airwaves until after the Joint Select Committee Report had been adopted as Party policy. In the end, the diehards lost the fight in the media,

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1026 Beaverbrook thought that on India Churchill was fighting out his ‘farewell tour of politics’ before retiring from Parliament. At any rate, thought Beaverbrook, if Churchill continued for much longer on his present course, his future might be decided by Baldwin trying to ‘put a veto on him in his constituency.’ Beaverbrook to the former Canadian Premier, Sir Robert Borden, 28 March and 7 January 1934, Beaverbrook Papers C/52. The India Office view reported to R.A. Butler was that Beaverbrook ‘opposes Reform chiefly because of alliance with [the] *Daily Mail*, but has no sincere views’. India Office Memo ‘Most Secret - To Be Destroyed’, undated but clearly first half of 1933, Butler Papers F73/21. 1027 The *Daily Telegraph* backed the Government with ‘a particular presentation of views calculated to mitigate differences among Conservatives’. J.C.C. Davidson was particularly delighted that the Telegraph’s owner, Lord Camrose, wanted to help the Government with the ‘education’ of the Party on India and suggested that Hoare should ‘visit him ... and give him in broad outline the general policy of the Government, and also consult him as to how best to deal with Winston’s opposition.’ Memorandum on the publication of the Joint Select Committee Report for J.C.C. Davidson, Davidson Papers, MSS.Eng.hist.c.561/209; Davidson to R.A. Butler, 9 March 1933, Davidson Papers, MSS.Eng.hist.c.561/63; Lord Camrose to Churchill, 25 October 1933, Chartwell Papers 8/326/(no sub-ref.). 1028 In November 1933 Churchill wrote to the *Times* owner, bringing to his attention the ‘petty bias and suppression’ of anti-White Paper letters from leading I.D.L. spokesmen to the paper. Churchill to J.J. Astor, 6 November 1933, Chartwell Papers 2/194/91. In fact, since the I.E.S.’s foundation in 1930, the *Times* had published ‘no fewer than 42 letters either from the Society as a body (10 in all) or from its individual members (Sir Michael O'Dwyer heading the list with 11, followed by Mr Wasis Ameer Ali and Lord Sydenham).’ Dawson in *The Times*, 19 January 1933. The tone of the newspaper’s reporting and commentary was, however, undeniably supportive of the Government’s policy. 1029 The BBC’s willingness to do the Government’s bidding was already widely acknowledged and prompted the Commons debate of 22 February 1933. On 23 August, Churchill wrote a letter co-signed by Lloyd George and Austen Chamberlain to the Chairman of the BBC complaining about the Corporation’s refusal to give air space to politicians who had not been nominated by their Party Leader or the Whips Office. The negative reply at least gave the hope that no precedent had been created. Churchill, Lloyd George and Austen Chamberlain to J.H. Whitley, 23 August 1933, Lloyd George Papers G/4/5/3.
with 22 of the 26 leading national and provincial morning newspapers supporting the Committee’s recommendations.1030

It is true that the press on whom Churchill had relied during the India campaign were, broadly, not supportive of his departures on foreign policy from 1935. Rothermere saw no option but to appease Hitler1031 and Beaverbrook was essentially an isolationist.1032 Dawson at The Times, like Reith with the BBC, ensured that Churchill’s efforts continued to be down-played. As on India, the Morning Post had been broadly sympathetic towards Churchill’s air rearmament campaign1033 and with its incorporation into the Daily Telegraph in October 1937 Churchill began to find support from a paper which, with daily sales of 500,000 copies, was now achieving double the sales of The Times.1034 Whilst during 1936 Churchill began also to draw support from the Liberal News Chronicle.1035

1030 Bridge, Holding India, p. 134.
1031 Rothermere’s position was one adopted more generally by the far right: belief that Germany had become so powerful that Britain should urgently rearm, whilst at the same time looking for accommodation with such an anti-Communist bulwark, as well as being contemptuous of the League of Nations. Rothermere was so impressed by Germany’s rejuvenation that he feared as early as April 1935 that ‘it really looks as if the war will be here soon after the end of summer.’ The Daily Mail’s special correspondent, George Ward Price, was particularly charitable towards Germany until it marched uninvited into Prague in April 1939. Cowling, Impact of Hitler, pp. 118-9; Rothermere to Churchill, 29 April 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/243/60; Daily Mail, 16 June 1936; Griffiths, Fellow Travellers of the Right, pp. 163-8.

1032 Beaverbrook viewed the Empire rather than League writs over Europe as the unit for defence. Despite this, his Daily Express came out in favour of surrendering Britain’s Mandated Territories to Germany, to the annoyance of the very Imperialists with whom Beaverbrook was normally more in tune. Donner, Crusade, p. 197; Cowling, Impact of Hitler, p. 119.

1033 Nevertheless, Gwynne had been (rightly) prone to believe that his figures for Luftwaffe air strength were exaggerated. Churchill/Gwynne correspondence, 14, 15 and 21 May 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/243/86, 87-8 and 89.

1034 Despite his friendship with Baldwin, the Telegraph’s owner, Lord Camrose, began to emerge as amongst the more supportive of Churchill’s rearmament campaign. The Telegraph proved to be the only right wing Fleet Street newspaper to take a sceptical view of the Munich Agreement. During 1938, when Churchill was sacked as an Evening Standard columnist on account of his views, he wrote a fortnightly political article for the Telegraph instead. Duff Hart-Davis The House the Bertris Built, 1990, pp. 85, 90-2; Camrose to Churchill, 14 May 1935, Chartwell Papers 2/235/97.

1035 Arthur J. Cummings of the News Chronicle, irritated by Lloyd George’s attitude towards Germany, wrote to Churchill, associating himself with him and with the many non-Tories who now wanted to see him ‘at the top - or very close to the top’. The tone of his paper was broadly in tune with Churchill’s condemnation of the Government’s foreign policy. Cummings to Churchill, 25 May and 24 September 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/254/88 and 2/258/79.
outside this and the *Morning Post / Daily Telegraph*, the press could hardly be said to be a springboard for his parliamentary campaign.

Churchill’s rearmament campaign, in tune with public horror at the alleged power of the bomber, concentrated upon building up the RAF. This policy made Little Englandism more, not less, attractive since air defence was the best military form of isolation from continental interference desirable. Yet, especially after the Rhineland remilitarisation, Churchill talked the language of reinforcing Britain’s continental commitment through collective security. Had he underpinned this in 1936 by supporting conscription and the reallocation of funds towards the Army, a continental commitment from Britain might have been plausible. But as it stood, a home defence based upon air strength was useless as far as stopping Hitler in eastern Europe was concerned and of limited use should he tread over Locarno’s territorial marker flags. Churchill’s policy therefore involved placing Britain in danger of being drawn into a continental war at a time when he was advocating military priorities which undermined the country’s ability to be useful in such a conflict. That there was a large constituency within the Conservative Party (as indeed elsewhere) who were worried by Britain’s air deficiencies made his promotion of air rearmament the popular armed force to champion politically. It was not until late in the appeasement crisis, and well beyond the time frame of this study, that Tory politicians started taking a serious interest in rebuilding the woefully inadequate British Army, because this implied the continental engagement that they were trying to avoid. In fact, the state of the Army probably would have made the most basic fulfilment of the Locarno pact extremely difficult for Britain. Ironically, it was Leo Amery, much less keen on continental involvement than Churchill, who tried to build up an Army league to do for the British soldier what the Navy League had done for the pre-war development of the Dreadnought.1036

If the Army was necessary to fight wars on the continent and Fighter Command needed to safeguard home defence then the Royal Navy was the link line of the British Empire - the

unit of security which appealed to the Tory right wing. Yet, how could it, especially its southern Asian colonies and Pacific dominions, be guaranteed against Japan when during 1936 twelve of its fifteen capital ships were obsolete and Britain’s post-Abyssinian uncertainty towards Mussolini tied her down to a Mediterranean commitment to safeguard Egypt and Palestine? British Imperial strategy demanded rapprochement with Italy and the right’s exasperation with the sanctions policy which Churchill had initially supported during 1935 was the hard headed logical expression of this. Whilst Churchill harboured hopes of succeeding to the Admiralty during 1935-6, compared to the RAF or European collective security, he devoted relatively little time to the needs of the navy, and thereby, to the Imperialist strategic analysis.

Supporters of Austen Chamberlain’s and Churchill’s stress on an Anglo-French alliance like the India diehard, Lord Lloyd, were aware of the danger to the arteries of the British Empire created by a hostile Italy in the Mediterranean. In view of this, Lloyd shared the view of the Foreign Office’s Permanent Under-Secretary, Sir Robert Vansittart, that rapprochement with Italy was strategically crucial. Yet, there was no common right wing foreign policy alternative since, as we have seen, the diehards had as many different approaches to the problems thrown up by international relations in the second half of the 1930s as had everybody else. This was even the case with the old Imperialists like Amery, Robert Brand, Douglas Malcolm, Lionel Curtis and Reginald Coupland who were no more co-ordinated in their approach to foreign policy despite being members of the ‘Milner Group’ than they were with Dawson, Simon and Halifax with whom they shared their All Souls’ Fellowships.

Whilst Amery held a vague Tory Imperialist disinclination to become embroiled in preventing Hitler’s moving East towards the Danube, others of that Tory hue, like Lord

1037 It was not until April 1936 that Churchill began to speak unequivocally in public against continuing sanctions against Italy.
1038 Wm. Roger Louis, In the Name of God, Go!: Leo Amery and the British Empire in the Age of Churchill, 1992, pp. 112-3.
Lloyd, were less sanguine, and ended up supporting guarantees towards an anti-Nazi Balkan Entente. Given Amery’s sympathetic approach towards a German Mitteleuropa, his later distress at the Austrian anschluss and opposition to the Munich agreement is as surprising as Churchill’s compliment to him that he was ‘the only person’ whose judgement had proved consistently sound in the preceding three years and that he (Churchill) regretted having supported the Government’s anti-Italian view on Abyssinia. Amery had accepted appeasement which did not directly endanger British Imperial territory or the integrity of France, but he did loathe Hitler’s ‘gangsterism’ and ‘powers of darkness’ as well as the manner in which Neville Chamberlain made ad hoc surrenders without an apparent strategy of containment.

The three major Tory ex-ministers excluded from the National Government were Churchill, Amery and Austen Chamberlain. Those who seek to explain Churchill’s exclusion from the Cabinet after 1935 as the result of his prior battle against Indian reform may have difficulty explaining why the pro-reformers, Amery and Austen Chamberlain, found themselves equally excluded. Amery himself could not understand the real reason - that neither Baldwin nor Neville Chamberlain wanted alternatives with dynamic views in their Governments. His expectation of office when Neville Chamberlain formed his Cabinet made his rejection particularly embarrassing. Yet (apart from when it embraced the League of Nations) on foreign policy, Amery could scarcely be said to be in regular opposition to the Government until the Austrian anschluss. Austen Chamberlain had been as contradictory over Hoare-Laval as Churchill. All were agreed on the issue of keeping the mandated territories out of German hands. If Churchill’s tactics can be criticised for not bearing fruit, then it is fair to say that others were equally unsuccessful.

1039 Charmley, Lloyd, p. 219.
1040 Amery diary, 22 March 1938, p. 499.
1041 Wm. Roger Louis, In the Name of God, God, pp. 116-8.
1042 Cowling, Impact of Hitler, pp. 224-5.
At one stage Sir Samuel Hoare, having been sacrificed on the altar of the League in December 1935 in defence of rapprochement with Italy, had appeared a possible choice of the Tory right for the future Leadership of the Party. That many of the same right wingers were diehards who only months before had been at his throat over India merely underlines the point being made here about Churchill - that a politician’s stance on India did not necessarily prevent his opponents on that question later supporting him on other issues. Not only was Hoare friendly with Amery, but he also had Beaverbrook’s backing - the press lord seeing him as his next Bonar Law, and the future Prime Minister after Neville Chamberlain. From 1937, Beaverbrook compromised Hoare personally to the tune of £2000 a year to keep him in politics while Hoare repaid him with information, and by pressing Neville Chamberlain to admit Beaverbrook to the Cabinet. At any rate, back in the Cabinet, Hoare’s conduct was virtually indistinguishable from that of the rest of the Government (or, once at the Home Office, irrelevant to the defence issue) ruling him out as a potential standard bearer of the Right faction.

Hoare lost his opportunity to bid for the leadership by associating himself with the Cabinet consensus. Amery and Eden at different times (especially in 1938-9) also lost opportunities to influence events by holding their tongues. Austen Chamberlain’s sense of decorum also ensured that he was unsuccessful in producing any major change in Government foreign policy (as was also largely the case on Indian policy) and his defence of the Government over Hoare-Laval and his failure to receive his due reward for the act also highlights the dangers of seeking accommodation with the Leadership without the guarantee of political remuneration for services rendered. The occasions when Churchill tried to ingratiate himself with the Party Leadership in the hope of preferment were no more successful in improving his chances of attaining a Government post. His zealous embrace of Collective Security before the 1935 Election, ensuring that he was in tune with

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1044 Lord Hartwell, *William Camrose, Giant of Fleet Street*, 1992, p. 210; Cross, *Hoare*, pp. 291-3, disputes that Hoare rendered services to Beaverbrook specifically as a result of the payments. Since Hoare was already Beaverbrook’s friend anyway, this might technically be the case.
Party policy, meant that he could not have returned to lead the right wing in support of the Hoare-Laval agreement even had it been his wish to do so. His periods of relative suppression of criticism of the Government in early 1936 in the hope of the Defence Co-ordination job and again in 1937 in the hope that Neville Chamberlain would admit him to the Cabinet went without reward. If appeasing the Conservative Leadership paid no dividends then it is hardly surprising that he returned to a more factional approach.

This study of Churchill and the Conservative Party between 1929 and 1937 has demonstrated that neither his ingratiating flirtations with the Party leaders nor his attempts to orchestrate support from the right wing faction were successful because neither Baldwin nor Neville Chamberlain wanted trouble makers in the 'National' Government at any price. Necessarily, this dissertation has concentrated on Churchill's relations with the Tory right wing faction which was the major political lever he used during the period. This should not blind us to his association with those who had shaped politics before 1929. The former Coalitionist Tory Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Robert Horne was broadly supportive of Churchill's stance.\textsuperscript{1045} With the other surviving Tory Coalitionist, Sir Austen Chamberlain, also largely in agreement with most of Churchill's rearmament campaign and Sir Edward Grigg, Lloyd George's former Private Secretary, similarly a regular confidant, Churchill remained associated with the survivors of the generation defeated on that fateful day in the Carlton Club in 1922. It was this Edwardian generation that comprised the backbone of the deputations of 1936 sent to instil Baldwin with the need to increase the pace of rearmament.\textsuperscript{1046} There was now no question (as for Churchill there

\textsuperscript{1045} This dated from at least 1934 when Churchill first suggested to him forming a 'Defence Group', through the Defence Delegations of 1936 and beyond. See for instance, Horne to Churchill, 3 October 1936, Chartwell Papers 2/266(B)/169. Although not a diehard, he had also been lukewarm about the Government's India policy.

\textsuperscript{1046} For the view that Churchill's essentially Victorian Whiggish outlook in ordered scientific progress was shattered by the First World War ensuring that he was subsequently a romantic reactionary see Paul Addison, 'The Political Beliefs of Winston Churchill', \textit{Transactions of the Royal Historical Society}, 5th series, vol. 30, 1980, pp. 23-47; Maurice Cowling, \textit{Religion and Public Doctrine in Modern England}, vol. 1, Cambridge 1980, especially pp. 304-312. Dr Addison also makes the point that Churchill's spirituality was closer to the 'lightly worn' religion of Lloyd George, Birkenhead and (albeit an opponent in 1922) Beaverbrook than to that of figures like the puritan Sir John Reith and the 'Anglican tone of the governing class between the wars' symbolised by Lord Halifax. Paul Addison,
had been between 1929 and 1931) of allying with Lloyd George himself. The former war
Premier’s advocacy of disarmament and admiration for some of Hitler’s policies ensured
that Churchill had no option but to spurn attempts to support his old boss. In view of
this, Baldwin had no need to fear the sort of re-emergence of an ex-Coalitionist challenge to
his authority which had preyed on his mind in 1924 at the time of his appointment of
Austen Chamberlain to the Foreign Office and Churchill to the Exchequer. Whilst this
fear no longer existed for Baldwin, the bonds that remained between Churchill and the
veterans of Lloyd George’s Government, especially the legacy of his friendship with Lord
Birkenhead, were stronger than the ties that Churchill felt for the generation that
supported the Baldwin supremacy. Those Edwardian days were, to Churchill, ‘the old
days, indeed the great days’ and a poor comparison to the ‘years that the locusts hath
eaten’ during his exclusion from Government.

‘Destiny, history and providence: the religion of Winston Churchill’, in Michael Bentley
(ed.), *Public and Private Doctrine: Essays in British History presented to Maurice Cowling*,
Cambridge 1993, pp. 239, 249
1048 Churchill to Ivy Chamberlain, 18 March 1937, Gilbert, companion vol.v., pt.3., p. 626;
Churchill to the Commons, 12 November 1936, *Complete Speeches*, vol.vi., p. 5806.
APPENDIX

The relationship between I.D.L. local branches established, the constituencies they covered, the MPs who represented them and whether they voted with the diehards on the Second Reading of the India Bill, February 1935.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I.D.L. Branch</th>
<th>constituencies covered</th>
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<th>diehard?:</th>
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Cardiff East: Morris
Cardiff South: Evans

Chelsea: Chelsea: Hoare

Chichester: Chichester: Courtauld

Chippenham: Chippenham: Cazalet

City of London: City (2 MPs): Bowater
Grenfell

Christchurch: New Forest & Christchurch: Mills, J.D.
(inc. Barton-On-Sea sub-group)

Colchester: Colchester: Lewis

Dover: Dover: Astor, J.J.

Ealing: Ealing: Sanderson

East Devon & Exeter: Honiton: Drew
Exeter: Reed

Eastbourne: Eastbourne: Slater

Epping: Epping: Churchill

Essex Urban: Leyton East: Mills, F.
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Norfolk:
Norfolk Southern
King's Lynn
Great Yarmouth
Norwich (2 MPs)

Norfolk:

Newcastle East
Newcastle North
Newcastle West
Hexham
Wansbeck

Nottinghamshire:
Nottingham Central
Nottingham East
Nottingham South
Nottingham West
Bassetlaw
Broxtowe
Mansfield
Newark
Rushcliffe

Oldham:
Oldham

Peterborough:
Peterborough

Plymouth:
Plymouth Davenport

(NL)
Grattan-Doyle
Leech
Clifton Brown
Cruddas
Christie
Fermoy
(NL)
(NL)

North Hertfordshire:
Hitchin

Nottingham
Wilson

Nottingham
O'Connor
Gluckenstein
(N Lab)
Capon
(N Lab)
(Lab)
(Lab)
Taistock
Asseton

Oldham:
Kerr

Peterborough:
Burgley

Plymouth:
(NL)
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N.B.: * = diehard

(NL) = MP was National Liberal

(N Lab) = MP was National Labour

(Lab) = MP was Labour

All other MPs were Conservative
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