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Why the Welsh said yes, but the Northerners no: The role of political parties in consolidating territorial government

Abstract

This article focuses on the role played by the Labour Party in two devolution referendums, in Wales in 1997 and in the North-East region in 2004. Comparing the positive vote of the Welsh and the negative vote of the North shows how the governing party – the Labour Party which has also been historically dominant in each of these regions – contributed to the contrasting outcome. Our argument is that dominant parties impact both in their formal (structural, institutional) and non-formal (cultural, identity) aspects. The crucial role of the leading party is thus to enable (or constrain) a sub-state space for politics and popular mobilisation on territorial grounds.

Introduction

An increasing number of European countries defy the traditional dichotomy of unitary state vs. federation. Over the last three decades, Britain, Spain, Italy and France have been at the forefront of a wave of regionalisation – the creation of subnational legislatures with extensive political powers which still fall short of the constitutional entrenchment which characterises federations. There may be good reasons for studying contemporary Britain in this perspective, with the devolution settlement soon to be put to the test by the Scottish independence referendum in 2014. This article, however, instead takes one step back and looks at the attempts to institute devolved legislatures from the late 1990s. The primary focus is on the contrast between Wales and *the dog that didn't bark*; English regionalism, as represented by the failed referendum on a directly elected Assembly in the North-East in 2004.

Numerous reasons have been posited as to why the North-East said 'No' in this referendum. Scholars argue that the limited powers granted to the proposed Assembly and the reluctance of Labour campaigners to argue for a regional assembly to chart a separate course from London whilst a Labour government was in power were key reasons.[1] North-East Says NO (NESNO), the campaign group against a regional assembly, itself offers a list which includes, amongst others: the decision to add conterminous local government reform to the debate; the Yes Campaign's failure to adopt a consistent message and a gimmick; and the overall brilliance and tactical *élan* of NESNO in targeting a simple anti-tax and anti-politician message to voters.[2]

The purpose of this article is to focus on another important variable which has thus far been insufficiently analysed: *the role played by the (formal and non-formal) structures of the dominant political party in the region*. Hitherto, the literature on regionalism and parties has tended to focus upon how regionalisation has affected parties; our analysis focuses upon the inverse, highlighting the role of a dominant party in affecting the public resonance for (its own) territorial reforms. More broadly, this suggests that the creation of a regionalised state from a previously unitary political

system is led astray if the dominant party is incapable of reflecting that development in its own structures. Such capacity, we will claim, requires extensive efforts at both the regional and the central level.

Through its comparative analysis the article seeks to demonstrate the important role of multi-level parties (MLP) in particular with regard to the successful prosecution of referendum campaigns. In making this case the purpose is not to argue that the intra-institutional structures of the MLP are the only decisive factor in explaining the success or failure of campaigns for regional devolution, but rather to explicate the manner in which they affect the trajectory – and, in a broader perspective, the process of regionalisation.

Studies from other European countries have shown that the dominant party may be decisive to the outcome of referendums when it comes to positioning, but even more so with regard to mobilising the vote.[3] Labour evidently failed to meet these expectations in 2004. In highlighting what was lacking in the North-East, a comparative approach is adopted here, which contrasts Labour's 2004 referendum campaign in the North-East with those held in Wales in both 1979 and 1997; in so doing it seeks to answer the titular question "why did the Welsh say yes but the North-East say no?" In making this case, the article proceeds, first, by a brief conceptualisation of the role played by political parties in creating and consolidating a multi-level system of governance, before the empirical analysis addresses the specific process in Wales in 1979 and 1997 which it then contrasts with that in the North-East in 2004.

Conceptualising the Role of Parties

State and sub-state politics unfold within political systems that differ substantially in terms of institutional structures, policy programs, party systems, collective identities, and levers of political influence. Capturing the relationship between these different territorial levels is decisive to accounts of modern politics; furthermore, as political parties are normally operative at both state and sub-state levels (including separatist

parties), the analysis of intra-party dynamics is equally essential. This raises a particular issue: the conceptual tension between national and regional party politics.

The research frontier on territorial politics has expanded over the last decade to provide much more nuanced observations on how parties respond in structural and ideational terms to regionalisation or federalisation.[4] Such changes in the formal allocation of power between territorial levels are found to be reflected in similar changes within the parties themselves, though in a less linear manner than what functionalist or rationalist theory would suggest. This is where the concept of the MLP becomes significant.[5] The institution of formal systems of multi-level governance pushes even the most unitary of parties to develop to match them. However, the way in which parties adapt varies with, among others, party competition at the regional level (spurred, in particular, by autonomist parties), the cleavage structure at the regional level, as well as party-specific features such as government-opposition role and inherited organisational and ideational structures.[6] For example, to remain with the British case: understanding how Labour operates as a campaigning, policy and ideological institution in *post-devolution* Wales (a topic beyond this paper's remit) requires grasping a complex power web. This includes the formal and informal relationships between: Members of Parliaments (MP, representing Welsh constituencies but legislating in Westminster); Assembly Members (AMs, representing Welsh constituencies – many along the same borders as MPs – in Cardiff Bay); the Welsh Labour leadership (including the Leader of the Labour Group in the Assembly *and* the [Shadow] Secretary for State for Wales at Westminster); the central leadership of the British Labour Party (the Labour Leader, their [Shadow] Chancellor); and the nomenclature in the regional and central party offices. It also involves understanding the non-formal relationships between different ideological tendencies within the party (left/right, nationalist/unionist, etc.) across these formal institutional lines.[7] Also pertinent are the different audiences the party is appealing to at the Welsh and British levels – the electoral appeal being more classically social democratic in the former, compared to the centrist 'Middle England' swing-seats the party must win at the latter.

With such complexities differing from national case to national case – and within nations, from sub-national case to sub-national case – analysing sub-state political processes thus entails the risk of concept stretching, a familiar problem for comparativists.[8] Yet, accounting for political processes below the level of the state requires an analytical footing that is applicable across different settings. The concept of the MLP is amenable to such analyses, however, providing an analytical tool through which to grasp the relationships of communication, coordination and conflict across and between the different territorial layers of political parties.

One obvious challenge in theorising the role of parties in relation to territorial reform is their multifaceted role in the process. Parties are initiators and designers of territorial reform. They are also arenas within which debate unfolds and where arguments are brought to bear.[9] Moreover, they are organisations that adapt and respond to external developments which they cannot fully control. And finally, they are constituent units of civil society on each of the territorial levels they operate, thus filling the space for politics that is opened up by the creation of legislative assemblies below or beyond the dominant national level.[10]

To further our knowledge of regionalisation and multi-level parties, all of these roles merit further investigation. As noted above, in the extant literature, an avenue that is arguably under-theorised is the significance of parties – and particularly the dominant party – in shaping public perception of (and thereby the viability of) territorial reform. Here, the dynamic between national and regional within each party may be of as great significance as the dynamic between parties. Its consequences are found not in evident political reforms, but rather in the way such reforms are enabled and furthered (or blocked) by the parties themselves. The structures of relevance are *formal* and *non-formal*, thereby necessitating closer scrutiny not only of how the parties are organisationally disposed but also the way in which ideas and discourses open or close opportunities for deepening territorial autonomy at the regional level.[11] The Wales and North-East are both cases where one party – namely Labour – is overwhelmingly the protagonist. In the case of Wales, it can be convincingly argued that the Labour Party

was the chief driving force in bringing about the devolution of power to an Assembly. The case for this view was put well by former Secretary of State for Wales, Ron Davies when he stated that '[i]t was all very well for academics and arm-chair critics to devise grandiose schemes which satisfied constitutional theories but unless there was support for the proposals within the Labour Party … then such schemes were pretty futile.'[12] James Mitchell agrees, describing 'the crucial debates' over devolution as 'those inside the Labour Party.'[13] As a result of this leading role, '[t]he entire devolution settlement bears the stamp of the Labour Party, its dominance the chief constraint [and enablement] on institutional arrangements'.[14] The exact same words could be used to describe the attempt to bring about devolution for the North-East. So what was different between the polities? Why did the North-East say "No" while the Welsh had previously said "Yes"? Before turning to this analysis, it is valuable to explain the historical background to the devolution debate.

Background: UK Devolution and English Regionalism

Britain has never been a conventional unitary state, but rather a state of unions, resulting from the conquest of Wales and Ireland by the English Crown, and the 1707 union between the Kingdom of Scotland and the Kingdom of England.[15] Bilateral dealings between London and each of the other territories have remained a key organising principle. When the Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales were created in 1999, the two legislatures accorded to that tradition by obtaining different sets of law-making powers. Separate terms were already established for Northern Ireland. Such complexities were enhanced by the fact that subnational autonomy would pertain only to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Westminster thus remained the supreme legislator not only for Britain as a whole, but also for England; the entity accounting for 83% of Britain's total population was kept non-existent as a constitutional entity.[16] The question of remedying this was far from clear.

Proposals for the devolution of power from Westminster to England date back as far as the 1890s, peaking between 1910 and 1914 as part of the debate within the Liberal Party over 'Home Rule all round'.[17] Then, as was the case under New Labour decades later, it became an issue as a secondary effect of a primary debate over devolving power to another nation – in the 1990s to Wales and Scotland, in the 1910s to Ireland. Proposals then involved calls both for an English parliament (rejected by, amongst others, Lloyd George on the basis that 'the progressive North would never submit to be placed under the control of the semi-feudal south'[18]) and sub-state English regional assemblies. Key champion of the latter was Winston Churchill who, in 1911, produced a memorandum suggesting the UK be divided into ten segments: Scotland, Ireland, and Wales would have parliaments, alongside seven English assemblies with more limited powers over local affairs[19] - a proposal he repeated again in 1912, upping the number of assemblies to '10 or 12'.[20]

The debate over English 'Home Rule' in the 1910s ultimately fizzled-out as federalism was deemed unfeasible and England uninterested, with Ireland treated as a separate and specific issue legislatively. 'Leaving England out' was not Labour's intention, however; as a corollary of Scottish and Welsh devolution, the government planned to install eight regional assemblies in England, adding to the devolved London Assembly.[21] Generally regarded as a logical response to the representative asymmetry introduced by 'Celtic' devolution, this was arguably a reactive rather than proactively sought policy. There are also questions of how well thought out it was: The revival of the previously rejected – and one-time 'Churchill-ian' – approach was specifically justified as democratization of the pre-existing regional structures, the Government Offices of the Regions; however, the apparent source of the formal, institutional boundaries of these 'regions' were 1938 civil defence plans for repelling a Nazi invasion.[22] Nevertheless, the plan was to start the regionalist ball rolling across Lloyd George's 'progressive North', but when plans for referenda in Yorkshire and Humber and the North West were dropped, the process was set to begin in the North-East alone, statistically the most Labour-inclined region of Britain.

The not unreasonable strategy for the referendum in the North-East on 4 November 2004 was that Labour's supporters would follow 'their' party's policy. Polling in the run-up to the referendum found that amongst those 'certain to vote' in the upcoming 2005 general election and already decided upon whom they would be voting for, over half (55%) opted for the Labour Party.[23] Yet come the referendum, the North-East said "No" – or rather, it *shouted* it: 'more than three-quarters of Labour partisans either did not vote or voted 'no': among those who voted just 38% said 'Yes'.'[24] Take the example of Hartlepool, where Labour had won a successful by-election on 30 September – and moreover, 76% of the electors had voted for parties which supported a "Yes" vote in the referendum; when it came to the referendum, less than five weeks later, only 17% voted "Yes" – the population then reverting to form one year later with 83% of Hartlepool electors voting for "Yes" supporting parties in the general election.

This clear failure of the Labour Party to persuade its voters in the North-East to say "Yes" to devolution was in contrast to the situation in Wales – another 'region' in which Labour is and has been the dominant party, where in 1997 Labour managed to convince a majority of its core support – albeit a marginal one – to accept devolution. Turning to this case first, therefore, why did the Welsh say "Yes"?

Analysis: The Case of Wales

The linkage between the example of the campaigns for devolution in Wales and that of the North-East of England has been made before, most notably by Rebecca Davies.[25] Both are areas of historical Labour Party dominance with similar socio-economic circumstances. There are also, however, many differences between the two. Variables which have to be noted when looking at differences between the 1979 and 1997 campaigns in Wales and the 2004 campaign in the North-East include: national identity vs. regional identity; the point in the electoral cycle where the referendum took place; a history of intra-party debate over devolution; the existence of a regional nationalist party, *etcetera.* None of these should be discounted and play into the analysis proffered

here. However, the variable specifically focused upon here is the role of the dominant political party in the regions – the Labour Party – and how power-relations and cultures within the party may have contributed to successful and unsuccessful campaigns.

As Davies notes, "[t]he result of the North-East referendum vote [...] bears a striking similarity to the result of the first devolution referendum held in Wales on 1 march 1979, when by a majority of 4 to 1, the Welsh electorate rejected the Labour government's proposals for a Welsh Assembly".[26] Not a single county voted 'Yes' in what came to be known as the 'St David's Day massacre'.[27] So what, focusing specifically upon the role of the Labour Party only at this point, changed between that result and the result in September 1997 when the electorate narrowly endorsed devolution by a margin of only 6,721 votes (a 30% shift in favour of devolution)?

With regard to the Labour Party and its campaigns, the key shift was that the internal-division openly displayed in 1979 between Labour MPs who supported and opposed their party's policy all but disappeared in 1997. Wales in 1979 saw a divided party reacting to a policy many saw foisted upon them. Alun Michael, a later Labour First Minister in the National Assembly, recalls of 1979 that there was "a big divide within the Wales Labour Party – one that was very deep and damaging".[28] Six leading Welsh Labour MPs, amongst them future leader Neil Kinnock, led a vocal 'Labour No Campaign' providing a legitimising presence for those who might oppose devolution but feel bad about voting against "the Party". According to them "the devolution distraction" had been forced upon the party in Wales by "Zealots";[29] then Speaker of the House of Commons, and Welsh Labour MP, George Thomas, described the referendum as 'forced on Wales' on the basis of 'noisy nationalist propaganda'.[30]

Ultimately, there was a general lack of enthusiasm in 1979: even the leadership under Jim Callaghan (who represented a Welsh seat), defending a policy of Michael Foot's (also representing a Welsh seat), was hardly energised. There was no party political broadcast and few Constituency Labour Parties (CLPs) campaigned for a 'Yes' vote – indeed, so poor was the turnout from Labour members to campaign that

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supporters of the nationalist party Plaid Cymru were forced to deliver Labour leaflets in their place.[31]

This division had, in part, to do with how the party perceived itself. For some, the party in Wales was a regional section of the British party, for others it was constituent of a distinct nation. This division between nationalist and Unionist wings was (and is) long-standing and well noted; commentators normally hypothesise the existence of a particular division within Welsh Labour between two tendencies: A division labelled separately as between 'nationalist' and 'unionist' wings;[32] 'British' and 'Welsh' Labour;[33] and 'the 'British wing' and ''Home Rule wing of the party'.[34] At the time those within the party against devolution largely attacked it as a nationalist policy which would divide the working class Labour was meant to represent.[35]

By 1997 this divide had, if not disappeared, faded. Divisions still existed amongst MPs (Llew Smith MP and Ray Powell MP, for example, did not support the proposals). Yet figures such as Paul Murphy, Treasurer of the Labour No Campaign in 1979, was now on the Labour Front bench and (at least publically) supportive, while the Secretary of State for Wales, Ron Davies, who had been against devolution in 1979, was now a firm, enthusiastic supporter. Far more than before, the Labour party was happy to see itself as a *Welsh* party – 'the true party *of* Wales' as it re-branded itself – than the labour Party *in* Wales (as it was nevertheless still officially known in '97). Thus, in 1994 Shadow Welsh Secretary Ron Davies drew upon openly nationalist rhetoric when he described how:

> Like the Scots we are a nation. We have our own country. We have our own language, our own history, tradition, ethics, values and pride… We now in Wales demand the right to decide through our own democratic institutions the procedures and the structures and the priorities or our own civic life.[36]

Similarly, where in 1979 the leadership – *despite holding Welsh seats* – had arguably failed to engage with the campaign, in 1997 Tony Blair threw his considerable weight behind the campaign while Head Office pumped money into the Principality –

seeing this, not Scotland, as the 'marginal' battleground. It is also important to note that, whilst in 1979 the accusation had been that devolution had been a top-down policy dropped on the Welsh party, the subsequent years had seen a far more in-Wales campaign develop within the party in support of the policy to the extent that, by the time Labour was re-elected, there was a far-greater sense that this was a policy which came from *within* the party in Wales, not from the central leadership.[37]

That said, this is not to say that there was a greater enthusiasm amongst the party's grass roots: a perusal of the leader of the Yes Campaign – and future AM - Leighton Andrew's book *Wales Says Yes* (1999) shows this not to be the case. It is also true to note that devolution was always an elite project, this only going further to emphasise the point: if Labour's support for the concept of Welsh devolution was crucial to its enactment, then so it also was to the contemporary instigation of the debate itself. The desire for constitutional reform (alongside those which constrained its ultimate form flowed not from the bubbling-up of a civic desire for Welsh devolution but from the Welsh Labour Party *itself,* as Labour was unaware before launching the referendum campaign of the existing level of demand for a Welsh Assembly.[38]

With regard to the change from 1979 to 1997, therefore, the key differences were that: Labour was more united in support of the policy; here was a greater sense that the policy had developed within the party in Wales, rather than a sense of top-down imposition from the centre; Labour in Wales had a clearer identity as a distinct entity – as a *Welsh* Labour Party – campaigning for a *Welsh* Assembly; and there was greater campaigning enthusiasm and input from the national party come the referendum campaign itself. With this in mind, how does the situation within the Labour Party in the North-East compare come the 2004 referendum campaign?

Analysis: The North-East Case

The following empirical analysis draws upon elite interviews with key figures within the party, the majority of whom agreed to talk on the basis of anonymity. Interviewees

include a figure from Head Office in London who travelled up for the campaign; a leading member of John Prescott's Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) heavily involved in the referendum planning and campaign; three former North-East Labour MPs – here identified as 'A', 'B' and 'C' – all of whom have since retired; and a former Regional Director of the West Midlands. Those agreeing to talk on the record include Emma Lees, Regional Director of Labour North at the time of the referendum; Kevan Jones, MP for Durham North; and Nick Brown, MP for Newcastle Upon Tyne East, former Minister for the region and at the time of the referendum Chief Whip.

The argument drawn from a reading of the two referendums discussed above is that attempts at territorial reform benefit greatly from the dominant party within that region (especially where that party is the instituting party) having the structures in place, both formal and non-formal, to be engaged with and support the subsequent campaign. With this in mind there are two questions which need to be addressed:

(1) to what extent was there a NE Labour Party to campaign for devolution (i.e. was Labour in the North-East a regional party, or just the wing of the dominant party focused around the centre); and

(2) to what extent was the plan for this policy derived from actors within the regional (as opposed to the national) level of the party, and what degree of support within the regional party could it lean upon?

These are addressed here in two parts.

To what extent is there a North-East Labour Party?

When questioned whether a 'North-East Labour Party' exists, Kevan Jones MP (North Durham) is very clear that it does, declaring "Oh very much so, I used to chair it."[39] Things are not so simple here, however, as the institution Jones chaired was actually the Labour North regional board, something quite different to a North-East Labour Party.

<u>Formal institutional structures</u>

The fact is that, formally, a 'North-East Labour Party' did not exist in 2004 – nor does it today. The Labour Party in England is divided into regional parties: there is no 'English Labour' Party[40] as there are Welsh Labour and Scottish Labour parties. Nevertheless, there was and is no North-East Labour either.[41] Instead, the regional level of the Labour Party which covers the North-East of England is 'Labour North'. This regional structuring - determined by media regions rather than ones of strict identity - covers areas not only of the North-East, but of the North West also; the North-East, as regionally defined, has 27 seats, while Labour North covers 34.[42]

In 2004 Labour North formally existed as an institution in the shape of a regional office and the aforementioned regional board. The Office consisted of the Party's Regional Director (Emma Lees, then Thorne), a Deputy Regional Director and two Regional Organisers – one press officer and an administrator. This team was expanded when the referendum campaign itself started, however, with more people moving 'up North' for the duration, in particular from Labour's Head Office in London and from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). The regional office managed the regional board which the officers themselves formally worked for. This board was a separate structure made up of the chair of the Northern Group of MPs in the PLP, two trade union representatives elected out of the Trade Unions and Labour Party Liaison Organisation (TULO) committee, representatives of the Northern Group of council leaders and party members elected to represent particular areas of the 'Northern' region (as defined by the party).

This board met every two months and was primarily a forum in which the regional director would present a 'summing up' report on what had been done during the period – including presentations on such issues as recent polling – with the board giving feedback and discussing future work.[43] The powers and responsibilities of this board appear to be little in practice; Nick Brown MP (Newcastle Upon Tyne East), former Minister for the Region and Chief Whip in 2004, makes as much clear when he admits "I could not describe its functions to you and I understand Labour Party

structures quite well. I mean, I could have a stab at it but I couldn't completely do it."[44] Engagement with the grassroots of the party in the North also appears minimal. This formally occurs through the regional conference to which many Constituency Labour Parties (CLPs) no longer send delegates.[45] In this institutional set-up the regional office thus was (and is) the major driving force.

How important was this lack of a formal Labour organisational structure concomitant with the North-East region with regards to the 2004 referendum? The idea that it may have affected the party's ability to campaign is rejected by those involved in North-East Labour Politics across the board. While, as Nick Brown puts it, "there is no regional Labour Party capable of pulling together the different Labour barons, and counts, and sub-bosses, or whatever you want to call it, for the Labour Party in the North-East of England", nevertheless "there is a very strong Labour party in the North-East region, it's very well networked together, it's perfectly capable of coming together for a common purpose". The problem, in his view, was that "this wasn't their common purpose." Another Labour MP who represented a North-East seat at the time of the 2004 referendum – since retired – agrees, stating that he doesn't "think that [the lack of a formal North-East Labour Party] necessarily made a massive amount of difference to be honest" and he was "not sure whether, if the Labour Party had a North-East General Secretary or a different structure, it would have necessarily made any difference" to support for a North-East Assembly. The real problem, he argued, was that there was not "a genuine demand within the community and within the party" for such a body.[46]

Non-formal institutional structures

With this in mind it makes sense to shift focus from the nature of the party's formal institutional structures as elements which may have helped determine the referendum result to the effect of non-formal institutional factors. Specifically, if a North-East Labour Party did not exist *formally,* did it nevertheless exist *non-formally*? As noted above, one of the conclusions drawn from the Welsh experience is that, for the membership of a

Regional Party Level to invest in devolution to their region, a clear sense of identification with the region is important. As Nick Brown puts it "there is no political *structure* that is analogous to the Labour Party in Scotland or the Labour Party in Wales for the Labour Party [in the North-East]" but "there is a pride in the North-East, there is a sense of region".[47] Of primary interest here, therefore, is how the party in the North-East sees itself – the extent to which a 'North-East Labour' identity exists within the party and beyond.

Many pieces have been written asserting a common culture and identity across the North-East region.[48] Often, however, such discussions return to geographical definition. For example, for Nick Brown, "there is a clear [North-East] regional identity, not least because we are the bit between Yorkshire – which has a very clear regional identity – and Scotland, which has a very clear regional identity."[49] Kevan Jones, agrees such a collective North-East identity exists, asserting "it has got a regional identity, the region". Emma Lees – Regional Director of Labour North at the time of the referendum – echoes Brown and Jones that "there is a strong identification to the North-East … of all the parts of the UK – bar Cornwall or London – the North-East as a geographical region is a strong one, loyal [to Labour] and very tribal."[50] She adds the corollary, however, that "It is difficult; it's not as if you cross a border and say 'welcome to the North-East' or anything".

This question of a shared identity was not an insignificant issue in the mind of Labour figures campaigning for a Yes vote. As one leading figure within the ODPM and Prescott's referendum campaign team in the North-East, reflects: "That was certainly one of the things people on the campaign spent a long time thinking about … and I think it's fair to say, actually, it is a difficult thing to pin down anywhere, but I think it's particularly hard to pin down in a region."[51] Such difficulty was demonstrated by a January 2004 YouGov poll which found that only 25% of North-East residents named their region correctly, with the far wider designation of 'the North' being particularly popular.[52]

This confusion – if that is what it is – may have much to do with the clear sub-regional divisions over identities that exist within the North-East. A then member of Labour's Head Office in London, themselves from the North-East and who travelled North with other staff for campaigning events in 2004, disagreed with the notion that "the North-East sees itself as 'the North-East'" as "kind of a London-esque attitude". As they saw things, identities such as 'Geordie' or 'Mackem' overrode/override any such cross-regional identification.[53] Emma Lees further notes that it is unclear "if people in some parts of Northumberland may see themselves as part of the North-East". This was a point that NESNO recognized in their campaign, seeking to play on divisions in identity and intra-regional rivalries. As Will Norton, a leading member behind the scenes describes: "Northumberland has a distinct identity. It has its own form of bagpipes, its own flag and what amounts to its own tartan" and as far as he could see "[v]ery few of the inhabitants … were keen on an Assembly based in Durham and elected mainly by votes in Tyne and Wear."[54]

With regard to the identity of the Labour Party itself, Kevan Jones raises a similar spectre, explaining: "We've got the Northern Regional Labour Party in terms of structure. But in saying that, there's obviously always tensions between Teeside versus Tyneside". When asked if such divisions were problematic for the party in campaigning for an Assembly he replies:

> "Yeah there is that, but that's a sort of an amorphous thing. There is an identity to the North-East, but people on Teeside will say for example, well, hang on, this must be a Newcastle dominated group, a Tyneside dominated group, so there's those dynamics as well in there which I don't think any of this took into consideration."

Again, here Nick Brown agrees with Jones, discussing how different communities within the North-East are:

> "quite happy to work together on specific things for the advantage of both but the political identities are separate and people like it that way. No one's against cooperating to the advantage of both, but the fear of being taken over by the neighbour, to the disadvantage of

one and perceived advantage of the other runs very deep. It's all historic – and its very prevalent."

Significantly, alongside these sub-regional identities/antagonisms were further intra-party divisions which further undermined the search for a common, focused identity. According to the member based out of Head Office: "North-East politics has always seemed to be slightly different from the other English region politics … Newcastle is a small group of actors, pretty influential, couple of tribes, not always getting on … there's the politics of some very, very strong politicians up there." What this means, they claim, is that when the issue of a shared identity within the party in the region came up, intra-party partisan identities took preference over a shared regional identity.

The question of whether a North-East Labour Party can be said to exist is thus a difficult one. Certainly, however, in comparison to the Welsh Labour Party example discussed before, any such non-formal identity was, and is, far less clear. Perhaps the best description of the situation is given by Nick Brown who, despite asserting that a North-East identity exists, goes on to reflect:

> "The best way to think of us is as the Balkans. The Balkans are an identifiable region, but it's got lots of little bits within it – that is how we are. People are very committed to their local community."

The Labour Party in the North-East, it would appear, might also be conceptualised in such a manner. It is hard, therefore, to claim that a North-East Labour Party existed either in formal or non-formal terms. Keeping with the Welsh Labour comparison, it might be said that 'the Labour Party in the North-East' exists as a powerful entity, but there is no 'North-East Labour Party'.

Was there support within the Party and if so where from?

Where did the policy of devolution to the North-East come from? Figures closely connected to the Labour Party were involved with groups advocating regional

devolution in the North-East, such as the Campaign for a Northern Assembly (CAN), from as early as 1991. Tony Blair had signed a document calling for a regional assembly as early as 1994**.** When the North-East Constitutional Convention (NECC) was set up in 1998-99 the Labour Party was represented on the committee alongside the LibDems, Green Party, trade unions, academics, voluntary groups, faiths, etc. and the Convention itself focused upon signing-up Labour MPs to the idea of an elected regional assembly. Of these, a small number - Alan Beith, Joyce Quinn, David Clelland and Jim Cousins – strongly supported the principle of regional assemblies.[55] However, few of those who expressed support for the policy of regional devolution 'were active and regular campaigners for the cause however' and as Rallings and Thrasher note, there 'had been little bottom-up demand for an assembly in the North-East' from party members, or the public at wide. [56]

Rather, the decision that the North-East should be offered an assembly, it is widely agreed, was a top down choice which came specifically from the Deputy Prime Minister and Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, John Prescott MP. Part of a wider policy of English regionalism (which, as noted, was arguably adopted primarily in reaction to 'Celtic' devolution and pre-existence of 'democratisable' sub-state structures) the North-East was selected as the testing ground for a referendum not on the basis of local party enthusiasm, or even political advancement – unlike in Wales and Scotland, there was no regionalist threat to Labour. Rather, it was the belief that – not least because of party tribalism amongst the electorate – a Yes vote was most likely to be attained there. This decision making process was symptomatic, in many ways, of the power relations within Labour at this time, especially with regard to the centralization of control. Discussing the policy of elected regional assemblies in general, the then member of Labour Head Office in London describes how:

> "this all came from a culture of the General Secretary and senior members of the party not being able to say "no" to the leader … someone rang [Head Office] from Number 10, "this must happen" and you know, it did, and it happened with very limited push-back. And to a lesser extent this was certainly the case with Prescott as well, where he said "I want these regional

forums where we're going to have, you know, a new level of elected politicians, and it's going to be great! And there's going to be a sort of regional autonomy and it's in fitting with what we're doing in Scotland and Wales – and this is what's going to happen." And basically, at the time, no one really said no to Prescott."[57]

Kevan Jones tells a similar story. According to Jones "what you had was obviously John Prescott, it was his baby, which I'm not sure helped the situation either, in terms of promoting it." He does accept that there was some regional interest, but only is so far as it consisted, in his words, of Prescott "and his smoke filled rooms amongst regional figures".[58] The North-East Labour MP – since retired – who was previously quoted also provides a similar description. The policy, they claim, came from:

> "John Prescott and a number of people within the region who, some of them obviously have Labour Party, Liberal party connections, but that in a sense didn't really feed through to the grassroots Labour Party member, let alone the grassroots Labour party supporter. I think it was a campaign that … there was a certain type of people that were involved in it but that wasn't entirely replicated throughout the stratas of membership and Labour voters on the doorstep."[59]

Nick Brown offers a more conciliatory view; when asked if claims of the referendum being a top-down decision taken by Prescott are fair, Brown answers: "he didn't think that at the time and in fairness to him he had some reason in thinking there was support for it. Because there were people who believed a regional assembly model was the correct democratically based response, the proportionate response, to devolution." Part of the problem, according to Brown, is that such support amongst North-East MPs was shallower than Prescott realized and often granted for reasons of party collegiality rather than true belief. In Brown's words: "I was a moderate supporter of it at the time, I think, just because you want to pool your own views with those of your colleagues … but I didn't take an active part in the campaign … My heart wasn't in it."[60]

That decisions regarding a regional campaign would be top down might be expected since, in terms of vertical power structures within Labour, viewed as a Multi-level Party, the Regional Party Levels (RPL) had – and have – very little autonomy or

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influence from the Central Party Level (CPL). As the member of Labour Head Office in 2004 describes:

> "Labour is centralised around the leader and then Head Office delivers what the leader wants. Obviously Head Office will have their own agenda and their own things they want that the Leader's office may not fully comprehend or get involve with, like a fundraising or a field operation strategy for example, or the sort of administrative stuff that the Leader's office wouldn't know or care about – but they will pull the leavers of all the regional offices"

But, as they continue, when it comes to such vertical intra-institutional power relations, some RPLs are more equal than others. As the Head Office worker puts it:

> "Some regional offices are stronger than others and some regional directors are stronger than others, but I have to say that Labour North-East, or rather Labour North, has not traditionally been a particularly strong region in terms of levers – and even the ones which are strong – the West Midlands for example – say Head office or the leader's office ring up the regional director of the West Midlands and ask him to deliver X, Y and Z, it'll happen."

This picture of Labour North as a relatively weak regional office is backed up by a former Regional Director of the West Midlands, according to whom "there was greater political importance I think applied to the West Midlands because it had such a swathe of marginal seats and historically that had been the case, whether that be Worcester woman under Tony Blair or what have you winning the marginal seats in the seventies under Wilson before."[61]

Campaigning from Regional Party Level

Even if the decision to campaign for a North-East Regional Assembly did come from the central (national) party leadership, in a top-down manner, this is not necessarily to preclude the possibility that figures within the regional party level supported it. Indeed, Emma Lees says that she does not recall anyone "voicing any negative opinions on the referendum campaign at all" at meetings of the regional board.[62] All 17 of the North-East Labour MPs gave their support for the Assembly proposals.[63]

Nevertheless, what is clear is that, regardless of a lack of opposition, there was a wide-spread lack of engagement within the party in the North-East. According to one former North-East Labour MP (B), in office at the time of the referendum, "there was a scepticism about it" and "whilst there wasn't that expressed publically, I think it's fair to say, you would talk to senior figures within the local authority movement and they would have concerns".[64] Kevan Jones provides a similarly unenthused picture with regards to his northern colleagues in Westminster:

> "Some people who were for it [campaigned], yes, in other cases [there was] a lot of lukewarmness because I think a lot of people by then, including myself, were saying we're not enamoured by the actual structures to be put in place. And I think, to be honest, amongst some MPs, they'd say where is that going to interface with their role down here [Westminster]?"[65]

On the amount of campaigning by party members, Jones adds that: "[beyond] Prescott charging round the region … there wasn't a great deal of activity, I mean if you said in my constituency did they do a lot of campaigning? No they didn't. One or two zealots who wanted it, but overall it was quite a lacklustre effort." His personal views clear, Jones similarly does not believe that there was great disappointment within the Labour Party in the North-East after the failure to secure a 'Yes' vote in the referendum, stating: "I think amongst certain people who were looking to get, obviously, positions in that new Assembly, yeah there was a lot of that, but I don't think that … it was actually."

Whilst avoiding the same charge of 'zealots' and jobs-for-the-boys as Jones, Nick Brown describes his experience as the same:

> "most of the Labour party didn't think it was the right answer. I know of no constituency which ran a grassroots campaign. … I did a couple of radio interviews on all this and that was about the extent of it. I didn't mobilise my own constituency team. I have quite a good operation in the constituency, but we carried on, we didn't put ourselves out – and there was certainly no sense of loss afterwards."

The former North-East Labour MP (B) paints a similar picture. Despite emphasising that he could "only largely speak for my GC and the rest of it", his sense is that: "a lot of

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people in the party didn't feel any sort of connection to the campaign, you know, council figures and the rest just got on with the job, I don't think there was any great sort of wide spread sense of failure or tragedy though out the party"[66] Yet another former North-East Labour MP (C) – on the basis of anonymity – even claims that North-East Labour MPs and Conservatives at Westminster struck an informal, secret 'non-aggression pact' which amounted to an understanding that, if the Conservatives kept out of the campaign in the North-East, Labour MPs would also, thereby aiming to suffocate the policy through silence.[67]

This latter account is rejected by other Labour figures spoken to – even on the basis, again, of anonymity. William Norton, who helped lead the NESNO campaign makes no mention of it in his account (2008) and Bernard Jenkin, the shadow minister in charge of the Conservatives' below-radar 'NO' campaign notes that "there was far more disillusion amongst Labour MPs about both the principle of regional government and the shape of the proposal".[68] The narrative of the Conservatives is that their lack of engagement in the campaign was caused by a desire to avoid that a NO vote be seen as a pro-Tory vote in a region historically antagonistic towards the party. Ultimately, rather than waging an 'air war' or a 'ground-war' in the referendum itself, Labour delegated a great deal of the campaign to the organisation 'Yes for the North-East' (Y4tNE) and followed a deliberately arms-length relationship with the group. This, party figures clarify, was with an eye to avoiding any contamination of the pro-assembly message with the 'stench' of politicians (the target of NESNO's anti-politics campaign). Practically, however, it meant very few Labour Party boots on the ground.

Shallow Support from the Central Party Level

How does the lack of enthusiasm evident in the above square with the fact that, publically, all of the MPs in the North-East region supported the policy? Where was the opposition and grumbling? Partly, this veneer of support may have something to do with the fact that, whilst a 'North-East Labour Party' may not have existed in 2004, the

party in the North-East was nevertheless contained many of the 'big beasts' of the central leadership: Tony Blair, Alan Milburn, David Miliband, Stephen Byers and Nick Brown were all Labour MPs representing seats in the North-East. Two issues derive from this.

First, while the idea for a regional Assembly in the North-East may not have developed out of the North-East party as a collective *per se,* the leadership did have strong roots there – thus muddying the issue. Second, it may have meant that those who were against the plans for a regional Assembly may have been reluctant to speak out. As the member of Labour's Head Office puts it bluntly: "Tony was a North-East MP at the time, you've got Milburn, you've got Byers… So presumably none of them [Labour opponents] felt so strongly about it that they wanted to die in a ditch over it."[69] Nick Brown, who as Chief Whip in 2004 would have had a good idea of opinion amongst fellow members of the Northern Parliamentary Labour Party expresses a similar point: "There were not Members of Parliament in the North-East who were willing to vociferously oppose it. One or two of them might have done, I'm not saying they wouldn't, but most of them had this moderate supporter point of view, of *very* moderately supporting it. We would all go along with it."[70] Even amongst the party leadership, however, it is not so clear that – placing Prescott to one side – there was much support for devolution to the North-East. Kevan Jones claims: "I don't think to be honest that the leading members of the government in the North-East were actually in favour of it [the assembly] either".[71] Describing the Government of which he was a member, Nick Brown claims only that "people were half-heartedly sympathetic to the idea in general terms" and boldly states that he thinks "Tony Blair was very much a sceptic that this was the correct way forward, and I think that was Gordon Brown's position as well. The trumpet for this was most definitely John [Prescott]."[72]

None of this should be taken to say that the Labour Party did not campaign for a Yes vote. Labour governmental figures who visited the NE or made media pronouncements regarding the referendum included such 'big names' as Tony Blair, Gordon Brown, Richard Caborn, Peter Hain, Harriet Harman, Ken Livingstone, Peter

Mandelson, Jack McConnell, Alan Milburn, David Miliband, Rhodri Morgan, John Prescott, Nick Raynsford and John Reid. Emma Lees is clear that central support was forthcoming for the entirety of the campaign[73] and the leading figure within Prescott's campaign team rejects the argument that the campaign was under-resourced:

> "in the run up to the North-East referendum there were resources sent from all over the country, so every region of the Labour party sent stuff, and we did packs of stuff for CLPs, there was phoning from the National Communication Centre, there was a script, we sent stuff out to the local parties to do campaigning and street stalls and things. There was a road show that John Prescott did with his wheel of fortune… There was a direct mail –five thousand direct mails for each CLP…"[74]

The perception that Labour's campaign as half-hearted could also be seen as grounded in a misunderstanding of what a referendum campaign at a regional level entails. The issue, seen from the centre, was that "it's very difficult to appreciate till you're doing it how completely different a referendum is to an election". Comparing the referendum experience to fighting an election seat by seat, the scale of the first "is so vast that our whole way of thinking about campaigning is about voter ID and then playing at the 2% margins, to get 2% more than the other people in your marginal seat. It doesn't translate to a referendum at all."[75] More significant, according to, all interviewees within the Labour 'machine', was the ill-fated timing of the referendum.

Commenting on the view by the NESNO that they, as the underdogs, had slain the Labour electoral 'leviathan', for example, the member of Prescott's campaign team disagrees:

> "I think anyone who'd been involved would know that it wasn't the 'Labour leviathan'. The Labour leviathan was not focused on the North-East referendum… So when I say the leviathan was not focused on the North-East referendum, it was because they were fighting the European elections in June 2004 and getting ready for the General Election of June 2005 and if you've not worked in politics, then you don't realise how early you start to try and win the General Election. Basically, you're starting to try and win the General Election before the European Elections, you have to fight the European Elections and you use that for testing a

few things, and then you're really wanting everyone to pile straight into winning in the following year."[76]

This cyclical matter of campaigning priorities meant that "it was just a really crowded schedule. It wasn't happening everywhere so it was never going to be the thing that captured the imagination of Head Office in London." The ultimate conclusion, once again, however, was a lack of interest and engagement by much of the party in the North-East whose eyes were focused on different, 'more important' prizes.

The overarching picture regarding levels of support within the Labour Party in the North-East for a regional assembly is thus that there was a wide-spread lack of enthusiasm, engagement and campaigning beyond an elite group based around the regional office and John Prescott's campaign team. At the regional level, there was sense within the party that the policy was 'dropped' upon them from outside and while there was no open argument from members, a passive opposition existed within sections of the party – not least council members and MPs. At the central level, while support may have been given vocally and in terms of campaign resources, there was little interest or sense of necessity.

Conclusion

As the previous analysis had sought to demonstrate, political parties provide a crucial – and hitherto under-theorised – mechanism for consolidating multi-level polities. Analysis of the Welsh and North-East cases reveal the formative role played by the leading party; in opening a sub-state space for politics, but also in framing regional identities and sustaining popular mobilisation on territorial grounds. Furthermore, a party operating across multiple territorial levels relies upon not only formal organisational structures but also on a set of non-formal aspects, such as consolidated regional identities and horizontal identification to the regional party.[77] In order to add flesh to the bone of these structures, conscious efforts are required on each of the

territorial levels. Effective political groundwork must translate identities and ideas rooted in the region into bread-and-butter issues of consequence to the region itself.

In the case of the North-East such factors were missing. There were no formal regional party structures within which debate could take place and support for such a policy grow; existing formal structures were relatively unengaged from party members and had a weak degree of autonomy and influence within the MLP. Furthermore, party members in the North-East were unable to articulate a clear sense of a regional or a regional party identity; both sub-regional (e.g. Newcastle vs. Sunderland) and meta-regional (i.e. 'the north' in opposition to 'the North-East') identities appear to have taken precedence. Beyond identity, members in the North-East felt that the genesis of the policy was not from within the region – and certainly not from within the regional party – but rather a top-down decision thrust upon them from the central party level, for which there was no need. There was a collective lack of enthusiasm and a lack of campaigning amongst Labour MPs, councillors and grassroots in the North-East; and while the central party leadership in the UK Government provided vocal and paper resources, it was not actively engaged itself, as its campaigning focus was elsewhere.

In each of these the contrast between the North-East and Wales is instructive. While the 1979 referendum was largely perceived as pushed forward by London, its replay in 1997 leant upon politics developed not only *for*, but *by* and *of* the Welsh – or, one could almost say, by and of Welsh Labour. The Labour Party in Wales played a decisive role in providing not only the structures, but the latent identity which together could be played into the emerging political space in Wales. The Welsh Yes majority, marginal as it was, is in many ways not a narrative of Welsh nationalism *but a success story of the multi-level party in action*.

With this in mind, when determining the apposite conditions for an MLP campaigning for the devolution of power to a regional level, four key factors can be proposed as important variables positively effecting the likelihood of a successful outcome: First, the existence of formal institutional party structures, correlative with the regional level to which devolution is proposed, to provide regional leadership and a

forum for debating regional affairs; Second, the existence of a non-formal collective party identity linked to these structures, both vertically within the Party (e.g. identification with 'the Labour Party' as a British-wide institution) and horizontally (e.g. identification with 'North-East Labour' as a regional institution); Third, a dominant perception that the policy of regionalism is generated from the regional party level and not simply passed down from the central office; and fourth, that the central party provide engaged support for the policy in any campaign. All four of these factors, it is argued, are vital if a party wants to campaign successfully for regional devolution of power.

The narrative of the 'Northern No' as opposed to the 'Welsh Yes' to devolution is typically seen as one of popular sociology and lack of public sentiment, as reflected in the age-old perception of English regionalism as 'the dog that didn't bark'. Yet it is also an account of an incompletely developed multi-levelled party that failed to install requisite organisational structures and develop a credible regional narrative. The response to what regionalism is for cannot be administrative convenience alone and must appear more than a 'tacked-on' policy response to constitutional change elsewhere. If parties are the backbone of democracy, their organisational and ideational structure – and its development *vis-à-vis* territorial demands – is key to understanding the consolidation of regionalised states.

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Notes

[1] Mussons, Tickell and John, 'A decade of decentralisation?', 79.

[2] Norton, *White Elephant,* 464-73.

[3] Svensson, 'Denmark: the referendum as minority protection'; Uleri, 'On referendum voting in Italy'.

[4] cf. Swenden and Maddens, *Territorial Party Politics in Western Europe*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

[5] Moon and Bratberg, 'Conceptualising the multi-level party'.

[6] Swenden and Maddens, 'Territorial party politics in Western Europe: a framework for analysis.', 14-15. See also Fabre and Méndez-Lago, 'Decentralization and party organizational change: the British and Spanish statewide parties compared.'; Bratberg, 'Institutional resilience meets critical junctures: (re)allocation of power in three British parties post-devolution' ; Detterbeck and Hepburn, 'Party politics in multi-level systems: party responses to new challenges in European democracies'.

[7] On these ideological divisions see: Moon, 'Welsh Labour in Power: 'One Wales' vs. 'One Nation'?'.

[8] Sartori, 'Concept misformation in comparative politics'.

[9] Hopkin, 'Party matters. Devolution and party politics in Britain and Spain'.

[10] Jones and MacLeod, 'Regional spaces, spaces of regionalism: territory, insurgent politics and the English question'.

[11] Moon and Bratberg, 'Conceptualising the multi-level party'.

[12] Davies, *Devolution: A Process not an Event*, pp. 5-6.

[13] Mitchell, James. *Devolution in the UK*, 159.

[14] Henderson, 'A porous and pragmatic settlement: asymmetrical devolution and democratic constraint in Scotland and Wales', 158; *cf.* McAllister, 'The new politics in Wales: rhetoric or reality', 596; Hopkin, 'Party matters', 183-86.

[15] Mitchell, 'Evolution and devolution: citizenship, institutions and public policy.' The concept is also a response to the conceptualisation of Britain as a "union state" in Rokkan and Urwin, *The Politics of Territorial Identity*.

[16] Mawson, 'Britain: the rise of the regional agenda to combat increased fragmentation?'

[17] Jalland, 'United Kingdom Devolution 1910-14: Political Panacea or Tactical Diversion?'

[18] Ibid., 766.

[19] Ibid., 765.

[20] Ibid., 774.

[21] Oliver, *Constitutional Reform in the UK,* 278-94.

[22] Norton, *White Elephant: How the North East said NO, 39.*

[23] Rallings and Thrasher, 'The North-East referendum – the result and public reaction', 66.

[24] Ibid., 63.

[25] Davies, 'The devolution referenda in Wales 1979 and 1997'.

[26] Ibid., 129.

[27] Jones and Jones, 'Labour and the Nation', 257.

[28] Andrews, *Wales Says Yes*, 30.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Thomas, *Mr Speaker: The Memoirs of Viscount Tonypandy,* 129.

[31] Andrews, *Wales Says Yes,* 29-30; Deacon, 'Review: Devolution in Wales', 415.

[32] Andrews, 'Getting Welsh Labour Wrong'; Morgan and Mungham, *Redesigning Democracy*, 196.

[33] *Western Mail*, 9 May, 2007.

[34] Hughes, 'Cowbridge woman'.

[35] See Neil Kinnock: Hansard, HC Deb 03 February 1975, vol. 885, 1031.

[36] Quoted in: Jones and Jones, 'Labour and the Nation', 260.

[37] See Andrews, *Wales Says Yes*.

[38] Seyd 'The citizens' response: The performance of the devolved bodies', 92 writes that the decision to found the Welsh Assembly was not 'the product of overwhelming popular demand'. Indeed, according to McLean and McMillan (2005, 40), in terms of extra-party socio-political desire for greater powers, 'while frustration at the imposition of Conservative policies undoubtedly existed in Wales, it was less keenly felt than north of the border [in Scotland].' In each case, these point to the political agency of Labour in Wales as decision maker. See also Chaney and Fevre, 'Ron Davies and the Cult of 'Inclusiveness': Devolution and Participation in Wales.'

[39] Interview: Kevan Jones MP (North Durham)

[40] Denham 'Speak for the English Ed Miliband'

[41] To the extent that the Labour Party is a formally unitary party the lack of a 'North-East Labour Party' – let alone an *English* Labour Party – is to be expected; after all, *formally* there are not separate Labour Parties in Wales or Scotland. Yet, whilst this might be strictly true, it is nevertheless the case that Welsh Labour and Scottish Labour have separately branded identities and again, whilst formally Ed Miliband is the Leader of Welsh Labour and Scottish Labour, in the shape of Carwyn Jones and Johann Lamont, they have separate *de facto* leaders.

[42] Interview: Emma Lees, Regional Director of Labour North Regional Office in 2004. See also http://www.labournorth.com

[43] Ibid.

[44] Interview: Nick Brown MP (Newcastle Upon Tyne East).

[45] Ibid.

[46] Interview: anonymous MP (A).

[47] Interview: Nick Brown MP.

[48] e.g. Colls and Lancaster, *Geordies: Roots of Regionalism,*; Lanigan, 'Region-building in the North-East: regional identity and regionalist politics'; Kirk, *Northern Identities: Historical Interpretations of 'the North' and 'Northernness'.*

[49] Interview: Nick Brown MP.

[50] Interview: Emma Lees.

[51] Interview: Member of ODPM in 2004.

[52] Norton, *White Elephant: How the North East said NO*, 97.

[53] Interview: Labour Head Office.

[54] Norton, *White Elephant*, 256.

[55] Sandford, 'The grassroots and the elites: campaigns promoting regionalism in England'.

[56] Ibid., 46; Rallings and Thrasher, 'The North-East referendum – the result and public reaction', 69.

[57] Interview: Labour Head Office.

[58] Interview: Kevan Jones MP (North Durham).

[59] Interview: anonymous Labour MP (A)

[60] Interview: Nick Brown MP.

[61] Interview: Former Regional Director of West Midlands Labour (period not given to preserve anonymity).

[62] Interview: Emma Lees.

[63] Norton, *White Elephant*, 87.

[64] Interview: Former MP (B).

[65] Interview: Kevan Jones MP.

[66] Interview: former Labour MP (B).

[67] Interview: former Labour MP (C).

[68] Interview: Bernard Jenkin MP (Harwich and North Essex).

[69] Interview: Labour Head Office.

[70] Interview: Nick Brown MP.

[71] Interview: Kevan Jones MP.

[72] Interview: Nick Brown MP.

[73] Interview: Emma Lees.

[74] Interview: ODPM.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Interview: ODPM.

[77] Moon and Bratberg, 'Conceptualising the multi-level party'