



REFERENCE ONLY

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON THESIS

Degree **PhD** Year **2007** Name of Author **REPVALDSEN, David Aiy**

COPYRIGHT

This is a thesis accepted for a Higher Degree of the University of London. It is an unpublished typescript and the copyright is held by the author. All persons consulting this thesis must read and abide by the Copyright Declaration below.

COPYRIGHT DECLARATION

I recognise that the copyright of the above-described thesis rests with the author and that no quotation from it or information derived from it may be published without the prior written consent of the author.

LOANS

Theses may not be lent to individuals, but the Senate House Library may lend a copy to approved libraries within the United Kingdom, for consultation solely on the premises of those libraries. Application should be made to: Inter-Library Loans, Senate House Library, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU.

REPRODUCTION

University of London theses may not be reproduced without explicit written permission from the Senate House Library. Enquiries should be addressed to the Theses Section of the Library. Regulations concerning reproduction vary according to the date of acceptance of the thesis and are listed below as guidelines.

- A. Before 1962. Permission granted only upon the prior written consent of the author. (The Senate House Library will provide addresses where possible).
- B. 1962-1974. In many cases the author has agreed to permit copying upon completion of a Copyright Declaration.
- C. 1975-1988. Most theses may be copied upon completion of a Copyright Declaration.
- D. 1989 onwards. Most theses may be copied.

This thesis comes within category D.

This copy has been deposited in the Library of _____

This copy has been deposited in the Senate House Library, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU.

David Aly Redvaldsen

**'The British and Norwegian Labour Parties in the
Interwar Period with Particular Reference to 1929-
1936: Electoral Prospects'**

**A thesis submitted for the award of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, University College London,
2007.**



UMI Number: U591911

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI U591911

Published by ProQuest LLC 2013. Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This work is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.



ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

**I, David Aly Redvaldsen, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own.
Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has
been indicated in the thesis.**

Abstract

The thesis compares the British and Norwegian Labour parties between 1918 and 1939. It argues that the Norwegian Labour Party was more successful than its British counterpart in the interwar period. This was particularly true for the 1930s, which after the Depression started in 1929 were the crucial years for resolving the political struggle between the wars.

Success clearly depended on the outcome of elections. For this reason two chapters concern the British party's campaigning in 1929, 1931 and 1935. The object is to discover how strong it was, what resources were available to it, its electoral tactics and to whom it appealed. Two parallel chapters treat the Norwegian party's electioneering in 1930, 1933 and 1936.

The question of electoral appeal is important because highly influential research by Gøsta Esping-Andersen (1985) and Gregory Luebbert (1991) found that an alliance between urban workers and the family peasantry was the key to Socialist success. This thesis aims to move beyond such a view. In the comparison of Britain and Norway it explains relative success in terms of the trajectories of the two parties, the effect of the Depression as well as labour movement strength and funding.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the following individuals who contributed to the content of the thesis: Mary Hilson (first supervisor), Kathleen Burk (second supervisor), David French and Knut Einar Eriksen. Miles Irving of the UCL Department of Geography drew the maps. The People's History Museum, Manchester and *Arbeiderbevegelsens Arkiv og Bibliotek*, Oslo gave me permission to reproduce the illustrations relating to respectively Labour and *Det norske Arbeiderparti*.

In the academic year 2003-2004 I received financial assistance from the Department of Scandinavian Studies at UCL and from the Anglo-Norse Society, London SW1 through the latter's Dame Gillian Brown Scholarship. I am grateful to both these institutions.

Contents

Abstract	3
Acknowledgements	4
List of tables	6
List of illustrations	7
Abbreviations	8
Introduction	9
Chapter 1	31
Chapter 2	89
Chapter 3	151
Chapter 4	192
Chapter 5	234
Appendix 1	267
Appendix 2	272
Appendix 3	274
Appendix 4	275
Appendix 5	278
Illustrations	281
Bibliography	289
Maps	309

List of Tables

- 0.1 Charles Tilly's categories: a different schema. (p. 12)
- 1.1 Labour before the 1929 election. (pp. 34-35)
- 1.2 Labour and Socialist newspapers in 1928 and 1930. (p. 36)
- 1.3 The Bid for Power Fund 1929. (p. 44)
- 1.4 The general election 1929. (p. 50)
- 1.5 Labour membership in 1929 and 1931. (p. 55)
- 1.6 Labour and Socialist newspapers in 1931. (p. 57)
- 1.7 Funding received at the Scarborough conference 1931. (p. 61)
- 1.8 The general election 1931. (p. 68)
- 1.9 The Labour Party in 1935. (p. 72)
- 1.10 Labour central expenditure in 1935. (p. 78)
- 1.11 The general election 1935. (p. 85)
- 2.1 Membership of labour organizations 1930. (p. 93)
- 2.2 Campaigning during August, September and October 1930. (pp. 98-100)
- 2.3 The parliamentary election 1930. (p. 108)
- 2.4 DNA central expenditure 1933. (p. 114)
- 2.5 Campaigning during August, September and October 1933. (pp. 117-119)
- 2.6 The parliamentary election 1933. (p. 126)
- 2.7 Membership in labour organizations 1933 and 1936. (p. 131)
- 2.8 Campaigning during August, September and October 1936. (pp. 137-140)
- 5.1 British general elections. (p. 239)
- 5.2 Norwegian parliamentary elections. (pp. 239-240)
- 5.3 Labour Party membership. (p. 248)
- 5.4 TUC membership. (p. 249)
- 5.5 DNA membership. (p. 249)
- 5.6 AFL membership. (pp. 249-250)
- 5.7 Labour's League of Youth membership. (p. 251)
- 5.8 AUF membership. (p. 251)
- 5.9 Labour newspapers. (pp. 252-253)
- 5.10 DNA newspapers. (p. 253)
- 5.11 Labour election expenditure. (p. 255)
- 5.12 DNA election expenditure. (p. 255)

List of Illustrations

1. Coupon for the Bid for Power Fund of 1929. (p. 281)
2. 1929 Labour poster. (p. 282)
3. "Workers by hand and by brain." (p. 283)
4. The class dimension of the 1931 election (p. 284)
5. "All the People in Work" (1933) (p. 285)
6. 80, 000 unemployed demand a Labour majority. (p. 286)
7. Johan Nygaardsvold (1936) (p. 287)
8. End of campaign rally, Young's Square 1936. (p. 288)

Abbreviations

AUF *Arbeidernes Ungdomsfylking* (Labour youth organization)

AIF *Arbeidernes Idrettsforbund* (Workers' sports association)

AFL *Arbeidernes Faglige Landsorganisasjon* (Trade union confederation)

AOF *Arbeidernes Opplysningsforbund* (Workers' educational organization)

CPGB Communist Party of Great Britain

DNA *Det norske Arbeiderparti* (The Norwegian Labour Party)

NEC National Executive Committee

SAP *Sveriges Socialdemokratiska Arbetarepartiet* (Swedish Social Democratic Party)

SPD *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (German Social Democratic Party)

TUC Trades Union Congress

Introduction

Comparative history

This thesis is a study of the British Labour Party's participation in the elections of 1929, 1931 and 1935 and the Norwegian Labour Party's involvement in the elections of 1930, 1933 and 1936. More than that, however, it attempts to contribute to the discussion about what factors made for success for a Socialist party in the period. It is for this reason that a comparative approach was chosen. Studying two parties side by side is likely to bring out differences, and these differences have continuously been considered through the prism of success. Chapters 1 and 2 deal with electioneering, and here the relevant factors are the strength of each labour movement, the level of funding, the volume of propaganda, how the planning was conducted and how each party presented itself before the public.¹ Chapters 3 and 4 ask to whom each party addressed itself, and the subtext is whether they focused on the same groups. Chapter 5 brings out the differences uncovered in the other chapters, considers which were the important ones and covers the trajectories of the two Labour parties in the 1920s and 1930s.² An argument is made for why the last three elections in the interwar period were crucial.

The comparative method has the advantage of throwing new light upon an historical situation previously studied in isolation. It has a tendency to emphasize aspects that may not have been thought particularly important before.³ This is a function of its more rigorous scheme of establishing causality. John Stuart Mill's "method of agreement" entails looking at several cases having in common the phenomenon to be explained and the proposed causal factors.⁴ If closer investigation reveals vital similarities, the chances that the causes are true have been strengthened. It is also possible to contrast instances where a phenomenon is absent as are the proposed causes for the positive case. This is the "method

¹ For a discussion of the sources used in each chapter consult appendix 5.

² From now on the Norwegian Labour Party will be called by its abbreviation DNA (*Det norske Arbeiderparti*), while the British Labour Party will simply be called "Labour". "Labour" will only refer to DNA as a variant when the context is exclusively Norwegian.

³ The classic example of this is Marc Bloch's study of French agrarian history using the paradigm of the English enclosure movement. He found that similar developments had occurred in France, highlighting a factor that had scarcely been recognized before. H-G Haupt in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences. Volume 4* (Amsterdam, Elsevier, 2001), p. 2400.

⁴ Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers 'The Uses of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22:2 (1980), p. 183.

of difference". The latter method was recommended by Max Weber to examine a single factor as a cause: take as many cases as possible which differ in this one respect and see what the outcomes are.⁵ Depending on the results of the analysis, the proposed cause may either be ruled out or accorded "facilitating" or "necessary" status for the phenomenon to occur. These are some of the building blocks of comparative social theory. More than two national contexts are needed to "explain" Socialism, but my study interacts with what other scholars have discovered through comparison. In particular, it uses these two parties as case studies to comment upon an existing debate about what made Socialist parties successful in the interwar period.

The concern about relative success among Socialist parties has by its nature to be a comparative issue. Weber noted that the Socialists were actually one party extended to different polities.⁶ The French Socialist Party stressed this view in the interwar period by calling itself *Section Française de l' Internationale Ouvrière*. It follows that Labour parties are perhaps especially suited for an international comparison.⁷ Since success is the primary question, studying elections is a good way of approaching this. Incidental questions treated here include the degree of central control exercised by party headquarters, the support received from the wider labour movement when campaigning, the role of the main daily newspaper, funding, details about electioneering in the capital and social coalition building. These are compared, where relevant, in chapter 5. While not all the details about the parties have a direct bearing on the conclusion, it is a strength that they are there. This is because much comparative history is based on secondary sources, thus being interpretations of interpretations.⁸ There is equal coverage of both parties. Symmetry has been aimed for throughout. This is to ensure that "the historian is equally interested in both cases."⁹ It also goes some way towards avoiding the pitfall of comparing historiographies rather than

⁵ Stephen Kalberg, *Max Weber's Comparative-Historical Sociology* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1994), p. 152.

⁶ Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1978), p. 286.

⁷ They promoted Socialism, an international movement of thought, which may fruitfully be studied in its national variants. George M. Fredrickson 'From Exceptionalism to Variability: Recent Developments in Cross-National Comparative History', *Journal of American History* 82:2 (1995), p. 600.

⁸ A. A. Van Den Braembussche 'Historical Explanation and Comparative Method. Towards a Theory of the History of Society', *History and Theory* 28:1 (1989), p. 22.

⁹ John Breuilly, *Labour and Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century Europe. Essays in Comparative History* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1991), p. 2.

empirical details.¹⁰ The focus on Oslo, necessitated by the sources when describing electioneering, meant that London also had to be treated in some depth. For this reason, when choosing constituencies for a closer look at 1929 and 1935, those in London and the Home Counties were selected where possible. The other consideration was to examine seats where there was evidence of Labour's electoral appeal widening. This, in particular, means where there were white-collar workers, new housing developments, country people or, in 1935, Liberals belonging to declining associations. As for the candidate statements in chapter 3, they were chosen to make relevant points about national electoral appeal, although it is hoped there is some geographical variety. While random selection is an acceptable form of sampling,¹¹ both the constituencies and candidate statements were chosen to be relevant to the concerns of the thesis. It was possible to make the same point with a number of different locales; within these limits candidate statements were picked at random and for the constituencies described in chapter 1, areas in and around London were preferred. The selections and the sources used allowed the author to gain a good picture of certain trends, but for a fully-fledged social science investigation of local campaigning, more data would have been needed. Only in this way could universal generalizations be deduced from the facts.¹² As a contribution towards increasing validity, appendix 4 gives a statistical breakdown of Labour's national electoral appeal in 1929, 1931 and 1935. This mostly relates to topics rather than the social groups which are the focus of chapter 3. Overall, it should be possible for the reader to gain a wider understanding through the use of these, albeit limited, local examples.

When writing comparative history the researcher should be careful not to reify particular schemes or typologies. While these concepts are abstracted from historical practice, a great many comparisons fit only approximately into these boxes or are a combination of two or more.¹³ Charles Tilly's classification of works according to the two dimensions of *multiplicity of forms* and *share of all instances* has been highly influential,

¹⁰ See Stefan Berger 'Herbert Morrison's London Labour Party in the Interwar Years and the SPD: Problems of Transferring German Socialist Practices to Britain', *European Review of History* 12:2 (2005), p. 299.

¹¹ Adam Przeworski and Henry Teune, *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry* (New York, Wiley-Interscience, 1970), p. 31.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹³ Van Den Braembussche 'Historical Explanation and Comparative Method', *History and Theory* 28:1 (1989), p. 12.

but there are other ways.¹⁴ His ideal types of individualizing, universalizing, encompassing and variation-finding comparisons could for instance be regrouped as follows:

Table 0.1. Charles Tilly's categories: a different schema.

	FEW CASES	MANY CASES
DIFFERENCES	Individualizing	Variation-finding
SIMILARITIES	Universalizing	Encompassing

This is because whether the scholar is primarily interested in differences or similarities seems more vital than *share of all instances*. A different three-case typology is provided by Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers: comparative history as macrocausal analysis, parallel demonstration of theory or the contrast of contexts.¹⁵ These have the virtue of being complementary, studies of one kind suggesting the need for further investigations along the lines of the other types.¹⁶ How do these categories relate to my thesis? In the three-case typology mine is a study closest to the contrast of contexts.¹⁷ It does not try to show that a given theory is valid for both cases. Instead it does largely the opposite, endeavouring to show the limitations of a given social science explanation (to be described later) in two cases where such an explanation seems to be highly relevant. There is also the question of why historians compare, and the reasons may perhaps be subsumed under four main headings: 1. to ask questions, 2. to identify historical problems, 3. in designing research and 4. in reaching and testing conclusions.¹⁸ The fourth of these was the motivation when embarking upon the present study.

So why conduct this particular Anglo-Norwegian comparison? Although there is a great disparity in size between Britain and Norway— the population of the former was 16 times that of the latter in the 1930s— on a global scale the countries are similar enough to be relevant to one another. They are both kingdoms in North Western Europe with long histories of constitutionalism. Since the purpose of comparison is to discover causes rather

¹⁴ *Big Structures Large Processes Huge Comparisons* (New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 1984), p. 81.

¹⁵ Skocpol and Somers 'The Uses of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22:2 (1980), p. 175.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

¹⁸ Raymond Grew 'The Case for Comparing Histories', *The American Historical Review* 85:4 (1980), p. 769.

than just differences and similarities,¹⁹ these societies are not so alien to one another as to immediately call the results into question. While the author does not operate with a success against failure paradigm, as arguably Sheri Berman does in her interwar history by lauding the Swedish and damning the German Social Democrats, the advent of New Labour in the 1990s highlighted the limited electoral success that the party traditionally enjoyed.²⁰ A sideways glance at a party like DNA, which was hegemonic and lost no election between 1933 and 1965, is surely thus of interest. This study should provide a novel framework for British historians working on Labour. Some writings about DNA already exist in English; mostly they are the work of a single political scientist.²¹ A valid aspect of the comparison is the contingency of the timing of each party to government, which, it will be argued, had profound effects. This point is particularly well brought out by the Hornsrud episode in 1928 when DNA was in government for two weeks, but was turned out because it refused to be captured by the bourgeois parliamentary system or make compromises with its beliefs.²²

Just as different typologies exist for classifying comparative research, so there is a variety of methods for conducting such studies. Weber may be regarded as one of the founders of the discipline. Tilly describes his method as individualizing, and famous Weberian notions such as charisma, rationalization and bureaucratization were formulated with reference to world history.²³ Weber contrasted various instances of a particular phenomenon in order to understand the peculiarities of each instance.²⁴ He wrote history along analytical lines, and following in his footsteps makes for rigorous, thematic studies. The main problem for historians is his concept of ideal types. Weber believes reality to be

¹⁹ Mary Hilson, *Political Change and the Rise of Labour in Comparative Perspective. Britain and Sweden 1890-1920* (Lund, Nordic Academic Press, 2006), p. 18.

²⁰ The reasons for why DNA is felt to be more successful in the interwar period are on record in chapter 5, and are open to debate by those who dispute the findings herein. Berman, *The Social Democratic Moment. Ideas and Politics in the Making of Interwar Europe* (Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1998). See p. 14 of this introduction

²¹ Knut Heidar 'The Norwegian Labour Party: Social Democracy in a Periphery of Europe' in William E. Paterson and Alastair H. Thomas (eds.), *Social Democratic Parties in Western Europe* (London, Croom Helm, 1977); Knut Heidar 'Towards Party Irrelevance? The Decline of both Conflict and Cohesion in the Norwegian Labour Party' in Donald S. Bell and Eric Shaw (eds.), *Conflict and Cohesion in Western European Social Democratic Parties* (London, Pinter, 1994).

²² The government led by Christopher Hornsrud lost a confidence vote on its Socialist accession statement. See Ivar Arne Roset, *Det norske Arbeiderparti og Hornsruds regjeringsdannelse i 1928* (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1962).

²³ Tilly, *Big Structures Large Processes Huge Comparisons*, p. 88.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

infinitely complex and ideal types are simplifications designed to bring out particular features.²⁵ They are not accurate descriptions of reality, like most historical writing aims to be, but yardsticks against which that reality may be measured.²⁶ As such, they seem like “counterfactuals” in the eyes of many historians, who deride this way of gaining insight.

More firmly grounded in the discipline of history is Marc Bloch. Although Emile Durkheim explicitly made this point as early as 1895,²⁷ a single idea underlies Bloch’s comparative studies namely the logic of hypothesis-testing.²⁸ It is an adaptation of the experimental method to subjects where no experiments are possible, and a good test of the validity of explanations.²⁹ Using comparison Bloch was able to dispose of several “pseudo-causes”, which historians with insufficient evidence gleaned from just one case had made into explanations of phenomena. Even if all of Bloch’s comparisons were directed towards testing hypotheses, today’s scholars see many reasons for pursuing such studies. “Historians undertake comparisons because they want to question national explanations, build typologies, stress historical diversity, encourage scepticism vis-à-vis global explanatory models, or contextualize and enrich research traditions of one society by exploring and contrasting them with research traditions of historical identities,” according to Stefan Berger.³⁰ As mentioned earlier, the rationale behind the present study is to encourage scepticism about the established social science explanation of Social Democracy by Gregory Luebbert and Gøsta Esping-Andersen. But since most of the thesis deals with what was identified as incidental questions, how is the study of these aided by a comparative approach?

With the incidental questions of labour movement strength, central control, the role of the main daily newspaper, funding, etc. the goal is to isolate those factors which were significantly different between the two parties. Any such disparities will provide empirical causes answering to the main focus of differential success. If they largely point towards one of the parties as stronger, that is significant. If there are great similarities between Labour

²⁵ Kalberg, *Max Weber’s Comparative-Historical Sociology*, p. 85.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

²⁷ Stefan Berger ‘Comparative-History’ in Stefan Berger, Heiko Feldner and Kevin Passmore (eds.), *Writing History. Theory & Practice* (London, Hodder Arnold, 2003), p. 165.

²⁸ William H. Sewell jr. ‘Marc Bloch and the Logic of Comparative History’, *History and Theory* 6:2 (1967), p. 208.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

³⁰ ‘Comparative History’ in *op. cit.*, p. 164.

and DNA on these, that emphasizes the trajectories and historical context more. But the thesis does not use causal analysis to determine whether the empirical factors or the trajectories of the parties were more important. The reason is that it would have required “mental experiments” of “thinking away” certain elements in a factual chain of events.³¹ In this way it would have become a work of historical sociology rather than history. In any case, Weber, who is a proponent of this approach, is clear that causality cannot be established with exact certitude. “It is not [...] possible to prove a strictly inevitable causal relationship in [historical] cases, any more than it is possible in any other case of strictly individual events.”³² All of the incidental questions are juxtaposed in the final chapter, which means that they are considered analytically there as well as being part of the narrative in the earlier chapters. The incidental questions are thus set in the context of their own societies and also in the context of comparative labour history. This is important because losing sight of these questions could have meant narrating parallel stories rather than comparing.³³ Of course, what is really important in this comparison is success, while elections and other research questions are means of getting at that issue.

Comparisons are almost synonymous with transnational or international history, but it is not the only approach within these. Transfer history is especially associated with the names of Michel Espagne and Michael Werner, and looks at the interrelationship between two entities.³⁴ It originated in the 1980s with a group of researchers studying 19th century French and German intellectual history.³⁵ It is suitable for breaking down assumptions about cultures being monolithic. Although the approach is in fact complementary to comparative history and arguably a different facet of the same project,³⁶ it does offer a number of criticisms of the other discipline. According to transfer scholars, comparison supposes no links between the entities in order to fix them into abstract categories developed from the outside.³⁷ While it is perfectly valid to compare Bordeaux with

³¹ Kalberg, *Max Weber's Comparative-Historical Sociology*, p. 152.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 145.

³³ Berger ‘Comparative History’ in *op. cit.*, p. 168.

³⁴ Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka ‘Comparative History: Methods, Aims, Problems’ in Deborah Cohen and Maura O’Connor (eds.), *Comparison and History* (New York, Routledge, 2004), p. 81.

³⁵ Michel Espagne, *Les transferts culturels franco-allemands* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1999), p. 11.

³⁶ Chris Lorenz ‘Comparative Historiography: Problems and Perspectives’, *History and Theory* 38:1 (1999), p. 30.

³⁷ Espagne, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

Hamburg and Bremen, there is a risk of losing sight of the fact that these cities form a network within a European territory enjoying economic growth in common and having an overlapping culture.³⁸ This is a good example of where common developments affecting several entities may go unrecognized, but it has already been argued that comparative history is useful in finding such factors. It is what Bloch did when eliminating “pseudo-causes” brought up by historians studying a single topic.

Other criticisms of comparative history from this school relate to privileging the nation-state and differences between states.³⁹ These differences are further compounded by such studies, which ignore the transfers that are going on between these so-called homogeneous entities.⁴⁰ Furthermore, comparison is often used to promote a national point of view.⁴¹ However, in recent years some historians have begun advocating comparisons that do not put nations alongside each other.⁴² It is entirely possible to study a phenomenon in two or more nations without bringing in the state as such. Moreover, the history of a single nation can be comparative if the research questions are formulated using that method and explanations validated in the same way.⁴³ Such comparisons may be between regions, institutions or other entities, and prove that the method does not necessarily promote a national point of view more than any other type of history.

For their part, comparative historians point out that concentrating on transfers tends to be of limited use outside the histories of science, ideas or culture.⁴⁴ There is insufficient focus on resistance to transfers, such as by social groups that are subjected to them. It may be added that the paradigm of transfer derives from studies of France and Germany, two neighbouring countries. The approach may be far less useful when dealing with countries geographically or culturally further apart. Theda Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions* (1979) deals with France, Russia and China; how much cultural transfer can be expected among these? Another weakness with transfers is that causality is at risk of disappearing. When studying networks of intermediaries between two nations or entities, tracing

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

³⁹ Haupt and Kocka 'Comparative History: Methods, Aims, Problems' in *op. cit.*, p. 32.

⁴⁰ Berger 'Comparative History' in Berger, Feldner and Passmore (eds.), *Writing History*, p. 171.

⁴¹ Espagne, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

⁴² Fredrickson 'From Exceptionalism to Variability', *Journal of American History* 82:2 (1995), p. 588.

⁴³ Sewell jr., 'Marc Bloch and the Logic of Comparative History', *History and Theory* 6:2 (1967), p. 214.

⁴⁴ Haupt and Kocka 'Comparative History: Methods, Aims, Problems' in Cohen and O'Connor (eds.), *Comparison and History*, p. 32.

borrowings does not explain why change came about. A list of mutual borrowings does not give an answer to why these transfers were accepted.

Despite these criticisms by practitioners of transfer history and the allied *histoire croisée*, which seeks to bring the macro-, meso- and micro- levels of history together,⁴⁵ comparative history remains a valid undertaking. In a small way this is exemplified by the present study, where it is shown that Labour and DNA can be relevant to each other from an historical point of view, although there were few links between them in the interwar period. (This is because the Norwegians left the Socialist International in 1919,⁴⁶ only rejoining in 1938. The *Labour Year Book* in Britain consistently listed the Social Democratic Party as its counterpart in Norway, even after that party had ceased to exist in 1927.) Comparative history brings a fresh perspective to issues and possibly new explanations, and for these reasons it will not be supplanted by similar transnational schools. Transfer historians have reminded comparativists that cultures are not monolithic, which is not a bad thing. They also have a lot to offer historians of Socialism as an avowedly international movement.

The literature

Individual chapters fall within the boundaries of each national historiography, but in totality the thesis is a contribution to the comparative literature of Socialist parties. Despite some very interesting and worthwhile studies, this is somewhat thin on the ground. Stefan Berger wrote *The Labour Party and the German Social Democrats 1900-1931* and his study found that the differences between these two parties were smaller than had hitherto been realized. In particular, Labour as well as the SPD had a culture built around it.⁴⁷ A primary source such as *The Labour Organiser* bears his interpretation out. The question of how strong the labour movements were in Britain and Norway contributes to the success of each party, and social activities played a part in determining this. My findings are that the recreational side of the movement was more developed in Norway. It was for this reason that DNA's campaigning was more theatrical.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁴⁶ Geoff Eley, *Forging Democracy. The History of the Left in Europe, 1850-2000* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 177.

⁴⁷ Berger, *The Labour Party and the German Social Democrats 1900-1931* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1994)

Another study of Britain and Germany is John Breuilly's book *Labour and Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. It sets out to defend the comparative historian's practice of explaining differences in terms of concepts and debates derived from another national context. Breuilly argues against the *historicist* view that every situation has to be understood on its own terms. The concluding chapter in this book is an essay treating national peculiarities; in particular it advocates the *Sonderweg* thesis in Germany's case. It seeks to legitimate the practice of enquiry into the absence of some modern developments in German history pre-1918. This thesis does not apply Breuilly's method to a great extent. Although it notes, and indeed predicates, the weakness of Labour compared to DNA in the 1930s, it does not explain this judgement on the basis of an absence of an urban-rural class alliance, as some have, or the lack of counter-cyclical economic policies on Labour's part. Adumbrating part of the conclusion, counter-cyclical economic policies are instead seen as a product of the times and the timing of the Socialist party to government is considered more important.

One historian who objects to comparing one nation with another in terms of the "absence" of certain factors is Mary Hilson. Her recent *Political Change and the Rise of Labour in Comparative Perspective* discusses Britain and Sweden in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. She argues against the notion that Britain was exceptional compared to continental Europe, by pointing to the fact that every nation has some peculiarities not found elsewhere. Historians are in danger of supporting a constructed dichotomy between "British" and "European" so it is laudable that Hilson sets out to challenge this. The long introduction in this book is a statement of how comparative history may be done. It is particularly interesting that she is able to combine local and comparative history. At the same time her empiricism in abjuring teleological arguments and ideal types (understanding one country's history in terms of one or more others) means that she voluntarily renounces some useful hypothesis-forming tools.

A study which also treats Sweden but in relation to Germany is Berman's *The Social Democratic Moment*.⁴⁸ Its emphasis is on the role of ideas in influencing political outcomes as far as the Swedish SAP and German SPD are concerned. Berman's view is that both parties faced two major challenges in similar national contexts during the interwar

⁴⁸ See earlier reference to this.

years, which is the period concerned in her study. These were democratization at the conclusion of the First World War and then the Depression after 1929. The SAP's flexible, practical-minded Socialism put it in a good position to solve these problems, while the SPD's dogmatic and theoretical Marxism scuppered its chances of playing the leading role at these turning points. Furthermore, the SAP was open to pursuing counter-cyclical policies and sought to attract peasants; both policies which were regarded with a great deal of scepticism in the SPD. Although the countries concerned are different, her notion of crucial moments in history when political outcomes are decided has been useful for the present study. The Depression as one such moment seems to tally with the experience of nearly all democratic societies, as will be noted in chapter 5. On the other hand, it can be argued that for all the SPD's failings it was not so rigid and unbendable in choosing permanent co-operation with the Catholic Centre Party and the liberal German Democratic Party throughout the Weimar years. In the established explanation, discussed in the next paragraph, it was co-operation with other parties (albeit Agrarians) which allowed Socialist parties to gain power.

As mentioned at the outset, in the comparative literature there are two studies which have played major roles in the present thesis. They are Esping-Andersen's *Politics against Markets* and Luebbert's *Liberalism, Fascism or Social Democracy*.⁴⁹ Berman mentions the role of peasants, but the two scholars noted here focus on them and are responsible for the established social science explanation whereby the political role played by the classes of the countryside is crucial. For Esping-Andersen gaining the smaller farmers and smallholders for the party was a *sine qua non*, while Luebbert argued that a crisis agreement with agrarian interests cemented a new Social Democratic order. Both of these points of view are based on a Scandinavian paradigm, though Luebbert's study encompasses not just Denmark, Norway and Sweden but most countries in Western Europe and even Czechoslovakia. As a response to their findings, the politics of the period is covered in chapter 5 of this thesis, including the opportunities that existed for a deal with farmers, and chapters 3 and 4 deal with the social coalitions each party hoped to mobilize.

⁴⁹ Esping-Andersen, *Politics against Markets. The Social Democratic Road to Power* (Princeton N.J, Princeton University Press, 1985); Luebbert, *Liberalism, Fascism or Social Democracy. Social Classes and the Political Origins of Regimes in Interwar Europe* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991).

It is a particularly important finding of chapter 3 that Labour earnestly tried to gain the support of farmers and agricultural workers. If major differences between the parties had been found on this issue, it would have confirmed the conclusions of Esping-Andersen and Luebbert: in Britain Labour failed to gain ascendancy due to not seeking the support of rural inhabitants like its Scandinavian counterparts. The thesis does not invalidate what these two social scientists discovered because there still remains the question of how much support the British party received in the countryside, which is not answered here.

The established explanation is really directed towards the question of why social democracy came about, and why the system took root in the Scandinavian countries. The often illustrious records of the Socialist parties of Denmark, Norway and Sweden are followed back to the 1930s, when it is found that each of the three secured their grip on power by coming to an agreement with one or more rural parties. Thus it is concluded that an alliance between urban workers and the family peasantry based upon guaranteeing the existing distribution of wealth in the countryside, was the key to a political breakthrough.⁵⁰ Where no such compromise with farming interests came about for whatever reason, the Socialist party failed to gain a predominant role in government.⁵¹ It was “stifled”. By extension the hegemonic parties must have been more successful in the 1930s than those which failed to establish pre-eminence, such as Labour or the German SPD.

The method of going back to the origins of a phenomenon to explain it is by no means a bad one, but the established explanation in reality presupposes that there was only one path to democratic Socialism. As a starting point the explanation informed the chapters about to whom Labour and DNA sought to appeal in the crucial elections of the later interwar years. Though Luebbert’s version of the theory outlined above argues that there was no need to organize the rural masses in the Socialist party (in fact it might be inimical to do so⁵²), the absence of a separate Agrarian party in Britain meant that for any urban-rural alliance to take place, Labour must itself gain the support of farmers. A less strident version of the theory recognizes that there might not have been enough industrial workers in the population to secure a parliamentary majority, and it was therefore necessary to branch out to the people of humble means in the countryside. This is precisely what was

⁵⁰ Luebbert, *Liberalism, Fascism or Social Democracy*, p. 268.

⁵¹ Esping-Andersen, *Politics against Markets*, pp. xv-xvi.

⁵² Luebbert, *Liberalism, Fascism or Social Democracy*, p. 288.

found for DNA, and the justification for gaining support from smallholders and fishermen was either that they belonged to the working class too, or that industrial workers alone could not provide a majority.⁵³ Labour was not in the same situation, because Britain was much more industrialized than Norway or indeed any country at the time. Only 6.2 % of the population made its living from agriculture in 1931, and in the same year 78.07 % of English people belonged to the working class, according to one historian.⁵⁴ Thus Labour could easily gain the increment it needed in terms of votes from the urban workers. Nevertheless, it took a great deal of effort to attract both farmers and agricultural labourers in all of the three elections studied. Luebbert's thesis works for Norway only if it is conceded that the urban-rural alliance might take place also within the Socialist party. It was no hindrance to its deal with the Agrarian Party in 1935 that DNA successfully mobilized many people of humble means in the countryside. It had no option but to do so as the Norwegian constitution allocated 2/3 of the seats in Parliament to the rural areas. An urban-rural alliance was thus a necessary cause behind DNA's accession to government, but it does not follow that it was the same in Britain where conditions were different.⁵⁵

The electoral systems also differed, and it may be thought that DNA derived some advantage from proportional representation, and consequently that Labour suffered to a degree from the British system of single- or double-member constituencies.⁵⁶ In both countries the Communists were a minor grouping, so it stands to reason that proportional representation fragmented the unity of the capitalist parties, while leaving the Socialist party intact.⁵⁷ In 1931, for instance, Labour was left with 46 endorsed MPs, whereas by its national result of 30.6 % of the vote, it might have had 180 MPs under proportional representation.⁵⁸ In the Parliament elected in 1933 in Norway from which DNA's first

⁵³ The classic contemporary article was Dag Bryn and Halvard Manthey Lange 'Klasse eller folk' in *Det 20. århundrede* 1930, pp. 67-75. Cf. Knut Kjeldstadli "'Arbeider, bonde, våre hære...'" *Arbeiderpartiet og bøndene 1930-1939* in *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens historie* 2/1978, especially pp. 135-136.

⁵⁴ Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures. England 1918-1951* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 108, p.106.

⁵⁵ Witness the 1945 election which Labour won with a majority of 97, but left the Conservatives in control of rural England. Cf. Michael Kinnear, *The British Voter. An Atlas and Survey since 1885* (London, Batsford Academic and Educational, 1981), p. 57.

⁵⁶ And Norway had fixed-term parliaments of three years, which meant that DNA knew when elections were to be held, unlike Labour.

⁵⁷ At least after 1927 when DNA was reunited with the breakaway Norwegian Social Democratic Labour Party.

⁵⁸ Andrew Thorpe, *The British General Election of 1931* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 262.

serious government emerged, there were five capitalist parties represented but no Socialist party other than DNA. But it is not unambiguous that proportional representation worked to the advantage of DNA. It received 40.1 % of the votes in 1933, which is usually enough to form a government in a majoritarian system unless matched by another party. If Labour had reached the same percentage, there is no reason why it should not have enjoyed equal parliamentary clout.

In the British context two books and a thesis have proved very useful in preparing this study.⁵⁹ For Labour, and certainly in comparison with DNA, the election of 1931 was pivotal. Andrew Thorpe, who wrote a monograph on this election, argued that by the summer of 1931 the Conservatives were cruising to a great victory. Labour lost its chance of being a serious contender for power in the 1930s on account of this election. At the time of writing Thorpe believed his was an unusual position to take. The rejoinder to his determinism is that MacDonald's government achieved slightly better by-election results than the previous Baldwin government and, in any case, Labour was not planning on a 1931 election.⁶⁰ Much of Thorpe's work deals with Labour in office, as it does with the state of the Liberal and Conservative parties. The present thesis does not go into details about the 1929-1931 Labour government except for a few facts having a bearing upon the party's subsequent electoral difficulties. As such the government's failure to solve the unemployment problem has been discussed extensively by historians. As for the formation of the National Government, Thorpe claims that Sir Herbert Samuel, the acting Liberal leader, wanted to avoid a Conservative government because it might interfere with free trade.⁶¹ This indicates the damage that those who became National Labour did to their former party.⁶²

Like Thorpe, Tom Stannage in his book on the 1935 election, also considers media coverage, including the radio which was coming into its own in those years. He includes a

⁵⁹ E. A. Rowe, 'The British General Election of 1929', Oxford B. Litt. thesis 1959; Thorpe, *The British General Election of 1931*; Tom Stannage, *Baldwin Thwarts the Opposition. The British General Election of 1935* (London, Croom Helm, 1990).

⁶⁰ M. W. Hart, 'The Realignment of 1931', *Twentieth Century British History* 3:2 (1992), p. 197.

⁶¹ Thorpe *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88.

⁶² By agreeing to serve, the Labour renegades influenced the free trade Liberals who might otherwise not have entered what would have been a Conservative government. If politics had remained on a party basis, Labour would have done better for the rest of the 1930s.

statistical breakdown of the topics covered in the candidates' election statements.⁶³ This is besides plenty of material about how Labour campaigned. After Arthur Henderson's return to Parliament at the Clay Cross by-election in September 1933 on a peace and disarmament platform, in six more contests in October and November 1933 the party candidates followed suit.⁶⁴ The general success of these appeals ensured that the peace card was played at the subsequent general election. In 1935 Labour combined a principled foreign policy of disarmament and support for the League of Nations with an attack on the Government relating to the means test for unemployment benefit. Stannage also deals with the effects of the party apparatus coordinating the appeal of Labour in the run-up to the election, such as the membership campaigns in the aftermath of 1931, followed by "propaganda weeks" and then the "call to action."⁶⁵

In short, Stannage's monograph is very useful—as is Thorpe's—because they contain masses of information in a single place with a central overview. For the 1929 election the equivalent is the thesis by E. A. Rowe,⁶⁶ and all three have proved helpful in writing the present work. In particular the charts which each author provides with the topics of the election addresses by party, go to the heart of the question about electoral appeal. This has been an under-researched topic within the historiography of elections. To whom Labour appealed probably seems self-evident because the party was associated with the proletariat, but, as William Miller points out, it frequently stressed it was for the "workers by hand and by brain."⁶⁷ In 1929, until 1945 its best-ever result, Labour explicitly sought to defend the "lower middle classes" (more on this in chapter 3). Broad electoral appeals mattered because it seems that in the context of the 1930s, the Popular Front tactic was what brought left-wing parties to power.

In the Norwegian historiography there has hitherto been next to no focus on elections. The one exception, to my knowledge, is a thesis about DNA and the election of 1936.⁶⁸ There also exists a very long article about DNA and the peasants in the 1930s, and

⁶³ Stannage *op. cit.*, p. 11.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

⁶⁶ See previous page for full details.

⁶⁷ Miller, *Electoral Dynamics in Britain since 1918* (London, Macmillan, 1977), p. 37.

⁶⁸ Odd Sverre Norrøne, 'Arbeiderpartiet og Stortingsvalgkampen i 1936', Cand. Philol. thesis, University of Oslo, 1978.

this goes beyond its ostensible remit to deal with social coalition building. Its author, Knut Kjeldstadli, argues that in 1930 DNA sought the support of 7 or 8/10 of the Norwegian population rising to 9/10 in 1936.⁶⁹ The latter assertion is verified in chapter 4 and there is a relevant new discovery as to who was constituted as the ninth decile, in that the situation of small employers is clarified.

For a systematic overview of the period, possibly the greatest contribution has been made by the political scientist Stein Rokkan. Because he wrote from a comparative perspective, many of his results and observations are of particular use. Rokkan was a theorizer of the urban-rural cleavage in Norway, and pointed out that there was such a cleavage also within DNA. Basing his argument on a famous 1930 article by young party theoreticians Dag Bryn and Halvard Lange, he pictured the incipient conflict as one about the nature of the party. Should it cater primarily for the industrial working class or be a people's party?⁷⁰ Bryn and Lange had pointed out that whereas DNA received many more rural than urban votes in 1927, the members were still concentrated in the cities, particularly Oslo. The ratio of members to voters was 1:2.4 in Oslo, 1:5.1 in other cities but 1:8.5 in the countryside. They claimed that if fishermen, clerks and smallholders were added to the industrial proletariat of wage earners, then this "genuine" working class was about twice as prevalent in sheer numbers in rural than in urban areas.⁷¹ This claim by Bryn and Lange must have serious consequences for how (and where) the party campaigned.

Rokkan thought DNA had little choice in the matter of trying to appeal beyond its core constituency of unionized industrial workers. Making a comparison with Britain, he noted that the Conservatives of that country were able to stay in power for very long periods "due to their hold on the working class."⁷² In Norway there was not enough industry, and too few urban dwellers for DNA to obtain a majority solely from the proletariat of the cities. That the industrial segment of the population was in relative decline was noted by contemporaries. There were no more factory workers in 1930 than in 1920,

⁶⁹ Kjeldstadli "Arbeider, bonde, våre hære...", *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens historie* 2/1978, p. 151.

⁷⁰ Rokkan 'Norway: Numerical Democracy and Corporate Pluralism' in Robert A. Dahl (ed.), *Political Opposition in Western Democracies* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1966), p. 83.

⁷¹ Bryn and Lange 'Klasse eller folk', *Det 20. Århundrede* (1930), p. 69.

⁷² Rokkan 'Geography, Religion and Social Class: Crosscutting Cleavages in Norwegian Politics' in Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan (eds.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignment: Cross-National Perspectives* (London, Collier-Macmillan, 1967), p. 431.

whereas the population of working age had increased by 212, 000.⁷³ That was laid at the door of the crisis in the economy, a curable condition, but also put down to rationalization which could not really be stopped. Even so, there were voices calling for DNA to continue expanding among its old-time supporters.⁷⁴ It is in this context that Ole Colbjørnsen's articles of September/October in *Arbeiderbladet*, the party's main newspaper, calling for a "national campaign to build factories" must be seen.⁷⁵ At that stage Colbjørnsen believed that only industrial workers could be relied upon by the labour movement. These concerns are dealt with throughout the thesis and have also informed the chapters about Britain.

The issue that has concerned historians the most relating to DNA has been ideology; that is the 1918 radicalization of the party, subsequent Comintern membership and the timing of the shift back to reformism.⁷⁶ In the early 1920s among European Socialist parties DNA had probably "the most extreme position," but it was short-lived.⁷⁷ The moderation vs. radicalism issue does play an important part in the historical explanation offered for the question of success, but in an indirect and perhaps counter-intuitive way. In chapter 5 it is argued that radicalism in the context of the 1920s and 1930s was perhaps a better strategy for ultimately gaining governmental power than moderation. Reference is made to ideological shifts within the time period, and it is investigated to what extent this had a bearing on electoral appeal. In the case of DNA it will be seen that its leftward shift in 1930 had a greater effect on *how* rather than *to whom* it appealed. Similarly, Labour took on more of a Socialist guise in 1935, which made its appeals more about principles than in seeking support from particular groups. It had noted after the 1931 election that in future it would concentrate on making Socialists rather than seeking ephemeral support.⁷⁸ But the

⁷³ Kjeldstadli "'Arbeider, bonde, våre hære...'", *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens historie* 2/1978, p. 135.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

⁷⁵ Hans Fredrik Dahl, *Fra klassekamp til nasjonal samling. Arbeiderpartiet og det nasjonale spørsmål i 30-årene* (Oslo, Pax, 1969), p. 58.

⁷⁶ For a very comprehensive treatment of the debate see Hallvard Tjelmeland 'Avradikaliseringa av Det norske Arbeiderparti i mellomkrigstida. Ei historiografisk drøfting', Cand. Philol. thesis, University of Tromsø 1982. DNA was a member of the Comintern 1919-1923. See Knut Langfeldt, *Moskva-tesene i norsk politikk* (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1972); Per Maurseth, *Fra Moskva-teser til Kristiania-forslag. Det norske Arbeiderparti og Komintern fra 1921 til februar 1923* (Oslo, Pax, 1972).

⁷⁷ Stefano Bartolini, *The Political Mobilization of the European Left 1860-1980. The Class Cleavage* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 28.

⁷⁸ University of Manchester: Labour History Archive and Study Centre. Labour Party Archive. Notes for Speakers, p. 1745 in LP/ELEC/1931 folder marked SERIALS JN 1055 1931.

context and political circumstances of each election mattered more than ideology as for the broadening or contraction of electoral appeals to various groups.

The two parties

This final section of the introduction sketches the history of the two parties. The Labour Party's evolution in Britain did not diverge significantly from other Socialist parties on the Continent, but in the pre-1914 Socialist International it was "understood to be unique in Europe."⁷⁹ It was founded as the Labour Representation Committee in 1900 and became a regular party six years later after 30 of its candidates were returned to Westminster. Unlike the other parties it did not combine revolutionary goals with reformist practice, but was wholly reformist.⁸⁰ Its component parts were unionists affiliated through the Trades Union Congress and members of Socialist societies like the Independent Labour Party and the Fabian Society. In 1910 the Miners Federation of Great Britain affiliated to the party. This provided the bedrock of support in the coalfields, which later became its most secure constituencies and perhaps ultimately helped Labour replace the Liberals as the party of the left. That year saw two elections, caused by the issue of House of Lords reform, and in the second of these Labour won 42 seats and 6.4% of the vote.

War, revolution and working-class insurgency across Europe affected Labour too. In its new constitution of 1918 Clause 4 proclaimed the party's goal of national ownership of the means of production. It now allowed individual membership, making it a more regular political party and encouraging more women and middle-class people to join. Electoral reform meant that all men over 21 and most women over 30 henceforth could vote. This was to Labour's advantage, but a more direct reason for its great progress in that year was its much higher tally of candidates— 361 in 1918 compared to 56 in 1910.⁸¹ Whatever the reason, Labour advanced to 22.2% of the vote and got 63 seats in the Commons. Lloyd George remained premier of the Coalition of Conservatives and his wing of the Liberal Party.

⁷⁹ Ross McKibbin, *The Ideologies of Class. Social Relations in Britain 1880-1950* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991), p.1.

⁸⁰ Donald Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism. The West European Left in the Twentieth Century* (London, I. B. Tauris, 1996), p. 16.

⁸¹ Robert Self, *The Evolution of the British Party System 1885-1940* (London, Longman, 2000), p. 143.

The forward march of Labour continued. In the 1922 election the party increased its representation to 142 seats in the lower chamber on a level of support of 29.7%. The background to 1922's general election was the Conservatives withdrawing from the Coalition, and Tory leader Bonar Law formed his own government. But clearly ill, he decided to hand over power to Stanley Baldwin the following year, and the new Conservative prime minister chose to go to the country to receive a mandate for tariffs. Instead he lost his majority and the free-trade parties, Labour with 191 seats and the Liberals with 158, combined to turn him out. Thus the stage was set for a minority Labour government. Ramsay MacDonald, who had been leader since 1922, became prime minister. The 1924 Labour government lasted less than a year, but in 1929 the party won the election, still without a majority, and Ramsay MacDonald again entered number 10.

An important point in the debate about the politics of the 1920s is the fact that there was competition between the parties not just to form a government, but also to be the official opposition. That accounts for Labour's unwillingness to co-operate with the Liberals, as made clear by the resolution at the 1922 party conference against electoral pacts or alliances of any kind. Interestingly, in 1921 Labour spurned those left-wing Liberals who wished to combine forces against Lloyd George, though the terms were such that the mines, railways, canals and electricity would be nationalized.⁸² The leadership of Labour found common ground with the Conservatives over the issue of which the main parties should be. Conservative leader Stanley Baldwin said priority number one was "the disappearance of the Liberal Party [...] The next step must be the elimination of the Communists by Labour. Then we shall have two parties, the Party of the Right and the Party of the Left."⁸³

The 1929-1931 Labour government was a disappointment. Unemployment represented by far its greatest challenge, but beyond nationalization and some tentative plans for public works Labour had no solution. Within a year of taking office the crisis of the international economy pushed unemployment to its highest level since 1922.⁸⁴ By December 1930 it stood at an unprecedented 2.5 million. In August 1931 a financial crisis occurred and a National government was set up to deal with it, still led by MacDonald.

⁸² Richard W. Lyman, *The First Labour Government 1924* (London, Chapman & Hall, 1957), p. 88.

⁸³ Eley, *Forging Democracy*, p. 294.

⁸⁴ Ben Pimlott, *Labour and the Left in the 1930s* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 10.

Labour went into opposition, apart from just over a dozen parliamentarians who supported the National Government. Later in the autumn an election was held in which the Conservative-dominated National Government trounced Labour. The last phase of Labour's development between the wars thus occurred from 1931, and was a matter of rebuilding the party. It launched campaigns like "A Million New Members and Power" in 1932 and "Victory for Socialism" in 1934. Clement Attlee became leader in 1935, and in the election of that year it won back almost all the support it had had in 1929 and more than half its parliamentary representation.

As with Labour, the interwar years marked the coming of age of DNA, and hence was an exceptionally turbulent period. Founded in 1887, the party benefited from extensions of the franchise in 1898, when near-universal male suffrage was introduced, and 1913 when women got the vote on the same terms as men.⁸⁵ Its programme was copied directly from the SPD.⁸⁶ In the first parliamentary election after independence from Sweden had been attained, in 1906, DNA achieved 16% of the vote. Then followed an upward trend until 1918 when the party dropped by just over a percentage point to 30.9%, while getting more votes than in 1915. DNA had established itself as one of the major parties in Norway. It was of comparable size in terms of votes to the Liberals (32.7%) and the Conservatives (30.0%), although the electoral system worked to the advantage of the capitalist parties. A candidate needed more than half the votes in a constituency to win it outright, failing that there would be a second round, in which the other parties generally combined to keep the Socialists out. As a result of this system, the Liberals had three times more parliamentarians than DNA in 1918.⁸⁷

The perceived unfairness relating to parliamentary representation was undoubtedly a factor in the sharp leftward swing of DNA at its conference in the spring of 1918. Another important consideration was the 1917 October Revolution in Russia, of which DNA were enthusiastic supporters. It brought out certain radical strands in the party which had hitherto remained below the surface, unable to alter the dominant policy of steady reformism. One such group was the "Trade Union Opposition of 1911". They were Syndicalists, centred

⁸⁵ Knut Kjeldstadli, *Et splittet samfunn 1905-1935. Aschehougs Norgeshistorie 10* (Oslo, Aschehoug, 1994), p. 22, pp. 34-35.

⁸⁶ Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 12.

⁸⁷ Kjeldstadli, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

around the city of Trondheim and with Martin Tranmæl as their acknowledged leader. Other revolutionaries were based in DNA's youth organization. They wanted soviets and the dictatorship of the proletariat. The new leadership took DNA into the Comintern in 1919, and the party accepted the Twenty-One Conditions in 1921. At this stage its moderate wing broke away and formed the Social Democratic Party. Two years later, however, Comintern control proved too cumbersome for all but dedicated Communists, who formed their own party, while DNA left the International.⁸⁸

In 1927 DNA and the Social Democrats were reunited. In the parliamentary election later in the year, DNA achieved its best-ever result: 36.8%. In 1920 a new system of proportional representation had become law, so that in the 1920s DNA received its fair share of MPs. After the election it therefore took pride of place as Parliament's largest party for the first time. The next year a constitutional crisis occurred when the Conservative government resigned and attempts to mobilize a coalition of the capitalist parties failed. Would the King turn to DNA as the largest party and would it accept the commission? It did not have a majority behind it and scepticism of "ministerialism" was widespread.⁸⁹ DNA nevertheless accepted governmental responsibility with Christopher Hornsrud as prime minister. His accession statement was jarring in an extreme sense to the capitalist parties. It stated that the government's task was to implement Socialism, though it accepted that it was not a realistic prospect at the present time, and promised to be led by the interests of the working class in all its actions.⁹⁰

The government lasted only 18 days. Its principles proved unpalatable to the majority in Parliament. In addition, the director of the Bank of Norway influenced the Liberals behind the scenes to vote against Hornsrud. This is what DNA later meant by extra-parliamentary pressure being responsible for the defeat of its first government. Possibly as a result of the near-acceptance of "ministerialism" in 1928, the party's programme was radicalized somewhat in 1930. The capitalist parties had been given a fright by the emergence of DNA as the largest party, and concentrated on defeating it in the election of that year. DNA duly lost the contest, although it continued to advance in terms

⁸⁸ Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 33.

⁸⁹ For a discussion of this term see Eley, *Forging Democracy*, p. 89.

⁹⁰ Tim Greve, *Det norske Storting gjennom 150 år. Bind III. Tidsrommet 1908-1964* (Oslo, Gyldendal, 1964), p. 322.

of votes. In 1933 DNA presented itself as the party willing and able to deal with the Depression. It had formulated counter-crisis economic policies in opposition, and after winning the election it tried to form a minority government to implement these. Only in 1935 did it succeed in taking office under Johan Nygaardsvold. A deal with the Agrarians, who remained in opposition, allowed this to go ahead. The government remained in office for the rest of the interwar period, although it never had a majority.

Chapter 1. The Campaigning of the British Labour Party in the Elections of 1929, 1931 and 1935.

Introduction

This chapter examines how the Labour Party fought the three most important elections of the interwar period. In the six-year interval here under consideration the outcome of the political struggle between the wars was decided. The questions of interest here are the state of the labour movement at each election, the amount of money that was spent on campaigning, relations between associated groups within the party such as the Independent Labour Party, the Co-operative Party and the trade unions, how propaganda was produced and distributed, the role of Labour's main newspaper the *Daily Herald* and how the elections were prepared in general. The purpose of looking at these is to furnish data for the comparison. There is also coverage of London in particular and some examples of campaigning from various constituencies. The latter will provide a picture of how the party dealt with some practicalities on the ground. Many of these issues will be returned to in chapter 5.

The themes dealt with include central control, which is a vital aspect of how the campaigns were fought. The limits of it are obvious. Labour did not even have a single colour across the land; the divisional parties used whichever ones were traditional in their locality.¹ Another interesting point is that the lack of a fixed election date presented some problems for Labour. It did not choose the timing of any of these elections, which meant that its opponents held the advantage. This is particularly well brought out in 1931 when Labour had to interrupt its conference due to the announcement of a general election. But although Labour never knew the exact date of a contest, the central planning was conducted in an overarching way and did not greatly depend on the timescale. With no information on the electoral preparations of constituency parties, it cannot be said to what extent they were hampered by this factor. The question of electoral appeal is left to chapter 3, but where such considerations were entirely local they have been brought out here. For instance, the

¹ Witness attempts at the annual conferences to impose a unified colour. Cf. Annual Reports to Conference. In 1929 the Edmonton branch suggested just one colour (p. 33), in 1932 the Bristol Central Division suggested that the unified colour be yellow (p. 13) and in 1934 Enfield Trade Council and Labour Party had a preference for red (p. 25).

London Labour Party appealed to the middle classes through its newspaper in 1929, which was not the case for the national campaign in that year.

1929, 1931 and 1935 provided completely different contexts for the labour movement. In 1929 Labour was realistically aiming for a majority, although it was a tall order since the Conservatives had 396 MPs at the dissolution compared to Labour's 163.² 1931 was an extraordinary occasion because Labour had much shorter time to prepare, and its opponents included Ramsay MacDonald, Philip Snowden and Jimmy Thomas who had been recognized as some of the most senior Labourites in 1929. The party was forced to cut corners such as not standing in agricultural constituencies, which it had identified as the key to electoral progress two years before. For all its claims to be seeking governmental power in 1935, Labour probably had no chance of winning that election, either. The imperative was on returning as a credible opposition. Such concerns did not appear in the written records, which were strictly matter-of-fact. In newspapers and propaganda, on the other hand, the party constantly exaggerated its capabilities. The elections will be covered chronologically with sub-headings under each section to treat particular topics.

Background to the 1929 election

An important facet of importance in the 1929 election was the Trade Union Act of 1927, which sought to limit the political role of the Trades Union Congress by forcing unionists to contract-in if they wanted to affiliate to the Labour Party. In the two years since the passing of the Act, Labour had lost more than a quarter of its income from affiliation fees.³ Arthur Henderson, Secretary of the National Executive Committee, did not believe that the General Council of the TUC would be able to sign Labour's manifesto for the 1929 election, like it had in 1924, and suggested instead that the latter body issue its own manifesto dealing with industrial questions.⁴ Relations with the trade unions, however, would remain as close as was possible within the law. Union leaders might not have signed the manifesto, but they were closely consulted about the party's programme *Labour and the Nation* upon which it was based, as proved by the necessity to negotiate with the Miners'

² Calculated from F. W. S. Craig (ed.), *British Electoral Facts 1885-1975* (London, Macmillan, 1976), p. 14, p. 49.

³ G. D. H. Cole, *A History of the Labour Party from 1914* (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 195.

⁴ Minutes of the NEC 26 March 1928.

Federation and the Transport and General Workers Union over the details.⁵ In a joint session of the NEC and the General Council of the TUC, Ramsay MacDonald explained that suggestions from various affiliated bodies had been incorporated into the draft.⁶ The Rules Sub-Committee of the NEC dealt comprehensively with the effects of the Trade Union Act of 1927 in its meeting of 12 December 1928. In a memorandum attached to the minutes it was stated that most divisional Labour parties were reporting withdrawals of trade union branches, and in some constituencies the situation was “very serious indeed.”⁷ The reason for the branches leaving the party was inability to pay the affiliation fees to Labour, obviously caused by too few members contracting-in. In future, therefore, efforts to increase individual membership would have to be prioritized.⁸

In response to the 1927 Act Labour had set up a Bid for Power Fund which it hoped would amount to no less than £ 100, 000 by the appropriate time. On 8 June 1928 it stood at £ 11, 250 in hard cash with promises of another £ 5, 150 to come. The separate General Election Fund had a balance of £ 875 on 31 May 1928. A committee had been formed to administer the Bid for Power Fund; at its meeting in the late spring of 1928 it was noted that £ 5, 275 had been received from trade unions in answer to a circular with suggested methods for raising contributions.⁹ Later in June 1928 a cheque for £ 1, 000 was received from the Amalgamated Engineering Union as well as several smaller contributions of £ 250 each from various unions.¹⁰

In 1927 an agreement was reached between the Co-operative Party and Labour.¹¹ Known as the Cheltenham Agreement, it involved the former, while remaining a separate party, running candidates under the auspices of the latter and working in tandem with Labour during elections. Thus early in 1929 details of how to approach the coming contest were hammered out. George Shepherd, acting as Labour’s chief agent, reported on the plans his party had made for public meetings to be held before the dissolution of

⁵ Minutes of the NEC 23 May 1928.

⁶ Also taking place on 23 May 1928, but later in the day.

⁷ Marked “The Allocation of Political Levies as between the Central Political Funds of Trade Unions and their Branches.”

⁸ Stefan Berger, *The British Labour Party and the German Social Democrats, 1900-1931* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 101.

⁹ Minutes of the Consultative Committee on Labour’s Bid for Power Fund 31 May 1928.

¹⁰ Minutes of the NEC 27 June 1928.

¹¹ Labour had long wanted some sort of alliance with the co-operative movement. Ross McKibbin, *The Evolution of the Labour Party 1910-1924* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 43.

Parliament, and invited the participation of the Co-operative Party.¹² It was agreed that leading figures from the Co-operative productive and distributive sections would take part in some of the most important of these events, the cost of furnishing a speaker to be borne by the party to which he or she belonged. Furthermore, election agents in every constituency would be recommended to involve local Co-operative speakers and societies in their campaigning.¹³ What existed of posters and leaflets that would be used had already been sent to the Co-operative candidates and to their party centrally. The manifesto that the Co-operative Party was working on would in turn be sent to Labour at an early date.

Relations with the TUC, already considered in passing, were the last major issue pertaining to the campaign on which the minutes of 1929 shed some light. At the Joint Committee meeting two months before polling day, one of the items on the agenda concerned the *Daily Herald*.¹⁴ The TUC secretary Walter Citrine raised the matter of the formal ownership of the newspaper, and since his organization had been compelled to take full responsibility for it, it was appropriate also for the TUC to have sole ownership. Labour was in agreement about this, and ironically the only obstacle was that the matter had not been treated by the General Council.

State of the party and movement

Linked to the above is the question of how developed Labour was when it went into the 1929 election. The following table shows its vital statistics.

Table 1.1 Labour before the 1929 election.

Constituency parties	Individual membership	Affiliated trade unionists	Affiliated Socialists and Co-ops
578	227, 897	2, 044, 279 (91 chapters)	58, 669

¹² Minutes of the National Joint Committee of the Labour Party and the Co-operative Party 19 March 1929.

¹³ Some of these were affiliated to Labour anyway such as the powerful Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society. Rita Rhodes, *An Arsenal for Labour. The Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society and Politics 1896-1996* (Manchester, Holyoake Books, 1998), p. 72.

¹⁴ Minutes of a joint meeting of the Trades Union Congress General Council and the NEC of the Labour Party 27 March 1929.

(Source: Labour Party, *Reports of Annual Conferences. Thirty-sixth Report* (London, Labour, 1936), p. 59.)

There were 1, 867 women's sections with roughly a total membership of 250, 000.¹⁵ The party had a newspaper for female members entitled *The Labour Woman*, but it was not gaining a greater readership.¹⁶ The Research Department was wholly responsible for *The Labour Bulletin*, which had grown in size from 16 to 24 pages during the first few months of 1929 "in view of the General Election."¹⁷ The Labour League of Youth was still very much a subsidiary organization. During the previous year the NEC had considered the idea of setting up a national organization of youth, but had come to the conclusion that the time was not right.¹⁸ Financial difficulties prevented the hiring of staff for the League, and no subsidy could be forthcoming either. As a result the League of Youth consisted of some scattered branches and was not much in the way of an independent entity or electoral tool. The TUC had 3, 673, 144 members in 202 affiliated organizations.¹⁹ The damage caused to Labour by the 1927 Act can be seen from the fact that it lost more than 1.2 million affiliated trade unionists between 1927 and 1928.

The *Labour Year Book* was not published in 1929, which means that the number of Socialist newspapers existing in that year must be guessed at. This is unfortunate because between 1928 and 1930, Labour lost a number of newspapers including the *Aberdeen Citizen*, the only daily apart from the *Daily Herald*.²⁰ The table shows the situation in 1928 and 1930.

¹⁵ Labour Party, *Reports of Annual Conferences. Twenty-ninth Report* (London, Labour, 1929), p. 21.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹⁸ Labour Party, *Reports of Annual Conferences. Twenty-eight Report* (London, Labour, 1928), p. 22.

¹⁹ Walter Citrine (ed.), *Report of the Proceedings of the 61st Annual Trades Union Congress* (London, Co-operative Printing Society, n.d.), p. 79.

²⁰ Losing local newspapers could be detrimental to the expansion of the party in a locality. To take Wales as an example, in the 1920s the publications in Swansea, Merthyr, Caernarfon and Llanelli folded. It was no compensation that the *Daily Herald* had a national reach. Circulation was low in Wales and party members were often reluctant to promote it. Duncan Tanner 'The Pattern of Labour Politics, 1918-1939' in Duncan Tanner, Chris Williams and Deian Hopkin (eds.), *The Labour Party in Wales, 1900-2000* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2000), p. 123.

Table 1.2 Labour and Socialist newspapers in 1928 and 1930.

Year	Dailies	Weeklies	Monthlies	Quarterlies	Irregulars
1928	2	25	74	5	1
1930	1	16	71	-	1

(Sources: Labour Year Books 1928 (pp. 540-542), 1930 (pp. 557-559).)

In addition, *Reynolds News*, a co-operative Sunday newspaper with a circulation of about 283, 000 in 1929, supported Labour.²¹ The Co-ops also had two weeklies in 1928 and three in 1930 not included above.²² The *Daily Herald* had a circulation of about 325, 750 before the election.²³ The locations of the 16 weekly newspapers which almost certainly existed in 1929 shows that two were London papers, one was published in Birmingham, one in Edinburgh, one in Leeds, one in Glasgow, one in Bristol and the rest were scattered around usually medium-sized towns across Britain.

Electoral preparations

It is difficult to state exactly when Labour began preparing for the general election, as it naturally did not know when it would be called. A good starting point, however, is a circular letter from Arthur Henderson to the constituency and local parties dated February 1928. Although no autumn poll took place in that year as assumed in the circular, the document serves to define what the party centrally considered to be essential tasks. The branches must keep themselves in a state of alertness. The central party wanted a list of supporters or sympathizers to whom Ramsay MacDonald could direct an appeal for financial assistance. Money accruing from these donors would be added to the central election fund. The branch must, however, itself raise money for its election expenses if its candidate was running under the auspices of the divisional Labour party, and must report to Henderson on this as early as possible. The name and address of the election agent for the constituency must be sent to the Head Office, if none had already been appointed. The divisional Labour party must begin distributing propaganda and literature across its territory both systematically and regularly. Another very important task was making sure

²¹ E. A. Rowe, 'The British General Election of 1929', B. Litt. thesis, Oxford University 1959, p. 218.

²² Labour Year Books 1928 (p. 544), 1930 (p. 560).

²³ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

potential supporters were on the register of voters. Just as with the election agent, a candidate should be selected immediately if there was not already one in place and details sent to the Head Office for approval. It was advised that the candidate should be put before the public through “meetings, literature and general publicity.” Perhaps needless to say, the electoral machinery should be built up as for ward and polling district committees plus women’s sections. These had to carry out the crucial tasks of organizational work, literature distribution, canvassing and registration. The women’s sections must naturally try to secure an increase in female Labour members, especially focusing on the enrolment of young women over 21, who were to be enfranchised in the course of the year. In concluding, Henderson asked for these matters to be put especially before the executive committees of the branches.

When another circular to local parties was sent in December 1928, it was clear that there would be a contest in 1929.²⁴ Thus they were asked again to prepare. Every divisional Labour party that was fielding a candidate must immediately set aside £ 25- £50 for the run-up to the polling. It was hoped that sample election literature could be sent out in January 1929; that month would also witness area conferences of local agents. Any attempts to co-ordinate efforts within regions would be discussed at these, and Head Office also wanted to be informed about the use of parliamentarians as speakers. Henderson suggested that all constituency Labour parties should be made to send the names of MPs who had agreed to speak for them to the central organization before 1 June 1929. The rationale behind this was to ensure an even spread of qualified speakers. Equally, MPs should be sent a letter asking them what speaking engagements they were due to carry out.²⁵ Henderson, as secretary of the NEC, also reported that the national party had confirmed it would be holding a “demonstration” at the Albert Hall on 27 April 1929 to tie in with the day of the F. A. Cup Final.²⁶ This would mark something of a starting point to the official campaign, as Henderson thought that polling would take place within a month or six weeks of that date.

²⁴ Minutes of the NEC 19 December 1928.

²⁵ I have looked for lists of speeches in various constituencies in 1929, 1931 and 1935, but without success.

²⁶ Cf. minutes of the NEC 29 September 1928 and 5 November 1928. It was the brainchild of the Workers’ Travel Association.

Channels of communication were not exclusively top-down, though. The area conferences were the local parties' chance to be heard. Previous area conferences had thrown up the suggestion that the Party avoid issuing pamphlets for the purposes of campaigning, but confine itself to leaflets.²⁷ This was taken up by William Henderson, the son of Arthur and secretary of the Research and Publicity Committee, and as a result the Committee agreed to reduce the number of pamphlets planned. This hinted at efficiency in winning votes over the need to convince the people of the rightness of Socialism, because leaflets only covered the basic policies without a great deal of explanation or argument. The same meeting also gave the thumbs-down to a previously considered idea about releasing gramophone records for the campaign, when it became clear that the cost would be £ 500 for 12 records.²⁸ No more was heard of plans to produce "a good Labour film" either, which had been an item on the agenda for a previous meeting.²⁹ It had in any case required feedback from the constituency parties on what use they could make of one.

Finance

The election took place on 30 May 1929, and naturally Labour was busy preparing throughout the early months of the year. Because the *Daily Herald*, Labour's only daily national newspaper, would shoulder much of the burden for the party's outreach to the public, it was agreed that the associate editor or his boss should be present at future meetings of the Press Committee.³⁰ The object was to apprise an understanding of the general election arrangements, and it was agreed that it was a good idea. By the end of February the total value of receipts and promises was nearly £ 28, 000.³¹ It was now agreed that all outstanding promises should be called in. It was also decided that there should be a "self-denial week" to raise more funds and a voluntary trade union levy, but the suggestion of a certificate of subscription was rejected.

²⁷ Minutes of the Research and Publicity Committee 2 November 1928.

²⁸ Although under a different partnership with Columbia Gramophone Co speeches by MacDonald, Snowden, Henderson, Thomas and Margaret Bondfield were in fact recorded and sold at election time, the Party getting royalties of 2d. a record. Cf. Report on General Election Propaganda presented to Research and Publicity Committee 18 July 1929.

²⁹ Minutes of the Research and Publicity Committee 25 September 1928.

³⁰ Minutes of the Research and Publicity Committee 22 February 1929.

³¹ Minutes of the NEC 27 February 1929.

The Bid for Power Fund continued to grow in the run-up to the election. By 26 March receipts and promises had reached a total of approximately £ 36, 000.³² Advertisements for funding would cost £ 500 and would be deducted from the Fund. A month later it was concluded that the advertising and other attempts to “stimulate this Fund” had been reasonably successful, although no large donation had been received.³³ The total now stood at just under £ 40, 000. In the month of April, within five weeks of polling day, it was possible to discuss the specificities of how the money would be spent. Henderson suggested that the number of candidates be increased to about 575. This would necessitate about £ 20, 000 from the Fund to bankroll candidates not able to bear the whole of their campaigning costs. Taking into account the money already transferred to the General Fund (£ 14, 500), that would leave only £ 5, 000 for other expenses. What was decided at this meeting did not necessarily come to pass and Labour’s planning was not conducted with machine-like precision. Another plan of Henderson’s was to fund six to 12 local speakers, primarily women, to campaign in the last three weeks before polling day. These agitators would have a reasonable salary and be granted an expenses account, and the meeting accepted this idea also in principle.

The election

Possibly the first mention Labour made of the correct election date came two and a half months before 30 May.³⁴ Information that the Conservatives were booking halls for 29 May was interpreted as signalling what would be the end of the campaign. Knowing the election date 10 weeks in advance “gave Labour an excellent opportunity to prepare.”³⁵ 1 May 1929 saw the publication of the Labour manifesto, which was reproduced in full in the *Daily Herald*.³⁶ The official “kick off” to Labour’s electioneering had taken place four days earlier with Ramsay MacDonald’s 65-minute speech at the Albert Hall.³⁷ The meeting had been many months in the planning. According to the newspaper, exuberant enthusiasm was displayed by the audience, who had paid for admission, but who nevertheless gave

³² Minutes of the NEC 26 March 1929.

³³ Minutes of the NEC 26 April 1929.

³⁴ *Daily Herald* 15 March 1929, p. 1

³⁵ *Labour Organiser* IX (January 1934), p. 1.

³⁶ *Daily Herald* 1 May 1929, p. 1.

³⁷ *Daily Herald* 29 April 1929, p. 1.

handsomely to a collection.³⁸ MacDonald began by rounding on the other parties, and particularly laid into Lloyd George for his unemployment record during Coalition days. The reason was that the Liberal leader had recently unveiled *We Can Conquer Unemployment*, a counter-cyclical economic blueprint. Five-minute speeches were given by the five victors of 1929 by-elections, and there was communal singing led by F. O. Roberts MP.

From April deliveries of electoral materials started reaching the constituency parties and while the starting point for local campaigning must have varied, it is likely that the local branches actively began their electioneering efforts at this point, permitting a month-long campaign. A lot of preparation had gone into producing Labour's arsenal of propaganda. From the autumn of 1928 and until May 1929, the Press and Publicity Department concentrated on election work to the exclusion of other activities.³⁹ A scheme for the production of election literature was drawn up in September 1928, including the topics to be addressed and the use of props (loudspeakers, silent films, talkies, small projectors, signs and gramophone records). During February and March constituencies had word of the pamphlets, leaflets, speaker's notes (a joint venture with the TUC), election specials (i.e. newspapers), films and strawboards they would be using. A total of 20 pamphlets and 66 leaflets were available. 43, 000 leaflets were distributed, all of which were new or in revised form. In round numbers the manifesto reached a circulation of 8.9 million and 640, 000 copies of the two editions of the election newspapers were distributed.⁴⁰ There were 30 regular posters of which 10, 000 were hung up during the campaign; in addition there was a colour portrait of MacDonald and 11, 000 of these were hung.⁴¹ Most of the leaflets, pamphlets and posters about agriculture were available in Welsh.⁴² The last publications disseminated to the public for which the Department was responsible were the three special issues of *The Citizen*, 700, 000 of which were given

³⁸ The National Union of Labour Organisers and Election Agents suggested in their publication that collections should be taken at every meeting if possible. *Labour Organiser* IX (May 1929), p. 85.

³⁹ Labour Party Annual report 1929, p. 49.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 51. 643, 000 newspapers according to Report of the General Election Propaganda presented to the Publicity and Research Committee 18 July 1929.

⁴¹ Sales of it were 10, 000 rather than 11, 000 according to *ibid.* and it was one of the 30 posters.

⁴² University of Manchester: The Labour History Archive and Study Centre (LHASC), Labour Party Archive, LP/ELEC/1929/1. Order form no. 1 marked JN 1055 1929.

away.⁴³ Among other props were two films shown in a portable projector (“lantern”), one relating to the mining industry and one about nursery schools. There was thus no panoramic Labour film as had been discussed. But the projected gramophone records did see the light of day, containing speeches made by prominent figures in the party.

The *Daily Herald* was used as a forum to raise funds during the campaign. As an example, take its front page on Saturday 13 April, which was devoted to Arthur Henderson’s call for money to fight the election. This was followed by an editorial commending Henderson’s initiative.⁴⁴ The ILP ran an advertisement seeking money for its own election fund.⁴⁵ The *Herald* also had a direct role to play in driving the campaign forward. It published a propaganda broadsheet known as an election special and ran a daily series on Labour accomplishments called “The Labour record”, with equivalents lambasting those of its opponents. It also began printing “little letters”, which were appeals to specific groups to vote for its preferred party.⁴⁶ From the Socialist point of view the *Herald* was also the place to keep track of major events in the campaign. Labour’s first national broadcast relating to the election was given on 11 April by Arthur Henderson, some time before the campaign “kicked off.”⁴⁷ It brought a reply to a new scare story that Labour would abolish war pensions, and the newspaper lauded the speech as “[A] powerful appeal” which had committed a future Labour government to a great crusade against unemployment and want, including disease and human suffering caused by poor social and industrial conditions. Along with the peace issue this constituted Labour’s rhetoric and policies in a nutshell.

Labour could also contrast its ameliorations in municipal politics with the limited economic success of the Government.⁴⁸ Early in May Philip Snowden debated economic policy with Winston Churchill on the wireless, and showed that Labour intended to pay for projected improvements by taxing the rich more, increasing death duties and saving money

⁴³ 707, 000 according to Report of the General Election Propaganda,

⁴⁴ *Daily Herald* 13 April 1929, p. 1 and p. 4.

⁴⁵ *Daily Herald* 14 May 1929, p. 5.

⁴⁶ See chapter 3, p. 163.

⁴⁷ *Daily Herald* 12 April 1929, p. 1.

⁴⁸ Duncan Tanner, *Political Change and the Labour Party 1900-1918* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 438.

through cuts in wasteful expenditure, especially armaments.⁴⁹ The newspaper of course was of the opinion that Snowden had triumphed in the debate. He had in any case promised to abolish all taxes on food and necessities and to revise income tax downwards for people of humble means. He also accused the Conservatives of scaremongering tactics; this was a facet of election discourse of which Labour was highly aware, and had been at least since the Zinoviev letter in 1924. At the same time MacDonald was urging *Daily Herald* readers to strive for victory, saying it had never been nearer. So Labour's newspaper was utilized to boost morale. A week before the election, the front page carried news of "Labour's Whirlwind Campaign for Power."⁵⁰ For good measure, it additionally claimed that there was a slump in the fortunes of Lloyd George. The capitalist parties had each held conferences on how to kindle some enthusiasm, while MacDonald was setting "the North ablaze during his tour." It was calculated that Labour's candidates had planned a total of 14, 000 meetings before 30 May. The one due to take place in Birmingham later that evening, featuring the Labour leader, was predicted to be greater than anything held since the Chartists. Of course making such predictions was easy.

The regional campaign

A fundamental problem in describing Labour's electioneering is that it is hard to grasp the regional dimension of it. The records of the central party are confined to basic facts and figures, and in the annual reports the information about elections is spread out. This is primarily a result of the British constituency-based system, whereby each divisional party is responsible for its own campaign.⁵¹ Apart from a page's coverage in every issue of the *Daily Herald* during the election, which will be referred to later, there is no place where this information is collected.⁵² This is despite claims that Labour was "the most centralised

⁴⁹ *Daily Herald* 4 May 1929, p. 1. Taxing the rich logically followed on from Labour's representation of poverty and wealth. Cf. LHASC, Labour Party Archive, LP/ELEC/1929/1. Labour Speaker's Handbook 1929, p. 48, p. 51 and p. 105 with statistics on the enormous wealth of aristocrats and industrialists, contrasted with the poor and unemployed.

⁵⁰ *Daily Herald* 22 May 1929, p. 1.

⁵¹ Although writing for an earlier period, Duncan Tanner suggests that what happened in the constituencies was important because local parties could undermine the "national" image and strategy. They could also, however, reflect local views better. *Political Change and the Labour Party 1900-1918*, p. 79.

⁵² There is a blueprint for an ideal constituency election campaign which, however, leaves much to the discretion of the divisional party. See *Labour Organiser* IX (May 1929), pp. 102-103.

and disciplined of the three parties.”⁵³ A list of grants and loans afforded to constituencies exists, but very little can be derived from it. (For what it is worth it is reproduced as appendix 1.) In London, for instance, 32 divisional Labour parties received grants, covering half the seats in the city.⁵⁴ 15 of these were won by Labour in the election. The affluent residential constituencies of Lewisham West and Westminster Abbey received loans of c. £ 45 and £18 respectively, which showed some interest in progressing in difficult areas for Labour.⁵⁵ Showing the benefits of recruiting rich candidates are the Birmingham constituencies of Erdington, Ladywood and Sparkbrook, receiving between £ 100 and £ 250 each, which was much more than average, as gifts from Sir Oswald Mosley, the candidate for Smethwick. Other national-local interaction included the Press and Publicity Department preparing draft leaflets on local affairs for candidates and a specimen election address for each constituency. It also wrote articles rebutting charges from local opponents and helped with information on various issues.⁵⁶

Details of the leader’s election tour are available only because they were reported in the *Daily Herald*. From 14 to 25 May he took the following route around the country addressing mass meetings: Seaham to Scotland taking in Kilmarnock, Hamilton and Glasgow, then Kilsyth, Stirling, Perth and Inverness.⁵⁷ Next he travelled to the West of his homeland visiting Oban, then crossing south and across the border by way of Carlisle, Bradford, Liverpool, Birmingham, Bristol, Stoke-on Trent, Crewe and Manchester, before returning to his own constituency. Many short speeches were made along the way in places not mentioned above. MacDonald was an excellent orator.⁵⁸ His tour mostly took place in the strong Labour areas of Scotland and the North of England, with occasional visits to the

⁵³ Stuart Ball, Andrew Thorpe and Matthew Worley ‘Elections, Leaflets and Whist Drives. Constituency Party Members in Britain between the Wars’ in Matthew Worley (ed.), *Labour’s Grass Roots. Essays on the Activities of Local Labour Parties and Members, 1918–45* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005), p. 11. One of their reasons for supposing this is the frequency with which divisional party executives met. This is of little use in the present connection because it still means electioneering was planned in the constituencies.

⁵⁴ Grants to Candidates— General Election 1929.

⁵⁵ Conversely, too much money should not be spent in safe seats. *Labour Organiser* IX (July 1929), p. 225.

⁵⁶ Labour Party Annual report 1929, p. 51.

⁵⁷ *Daily Herald* 8 May 1929, p. 1. See map at the end of the thesis.

⁵⁸ Rodney Barker ‘Political Myth: Ramsay MacDonald and the Labour Party’, *History* 61:201 (1976), p. 51.

Midlands. Snowden's campaigning took place in the North, but that of Jimmy Thomas took him all over the country where he addressed scores of meetings.⁵⁹

Electoral expenditure

At least it is possible to tell how much Labour spent on campaigning. The Bid for Power Fund eventually reached the total of £ 49, 200.⁶⁰ Central expenditure in connection with the general election amounted to approximately £ 40, 000. A later calculation of how the Bid for Power Fund had been spent is as follows:

Table 1.3 The Bid for Power Fund 1929.

To Central Party for administration	£14, 500
Election grants to constituencies	£15, 000
Printing of pamphlets and leaflets	£10, 500
To General Fund	£9, 200
Total	£49, 200

(Source: Labour Party Annual report 1929, p. 221.)

This tallies with expenditure of £ 40, 000, because the £ 14, 500 for central party administration is supposed to have been spent on preparing for the election before the campaign had officially started.⁶¹ That still leaves the question of how much was spent in the constituencies. Including the £ 15, 000 which was channelled from central office, on average each Labour candidate spent £ 452.⁶² There were 569 candidates, thus spending a total of £ 257, 188. Adding the £ 25, 000 of central spending (£ 40, 000 minus £ 15, 000 in electoral grants) a figure of £ 282, 188 is arrived at for total expenditure.

⁵⁹ *Daily Herald* 30 May 1929, p. 1. Thomas has been credited with a great deal of charisma and the ability to appeal to the middle classes and the "rough" working class alike. Both might be attracted to his centrism, and the latter by his royalism, deference and denial that he was a Socialist. Andrew Thorpe 'J. H. Thomas and the Rise of Labour in Derby, 1880-1945', *Midland History* XV (1990), p. 112, pp. 122-123.

⁶⁰ Labour Party Annual report 1929, p. 46.

⁶¹ Cf. Labour Party Annual report 1929, p. 45. The sum "for General Election preparation" is here given as £12, 000. There is, however, a sum of £ 2, 500 noted as being transferred from the Bid for Power Fund to the General Fund in January 1929.

⁶² David Butler and Gareth Butler, *Twentieth-Century British Political Facts 1900-2000* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2000), p. 260.

London

Labour's official opening of its campaign had as mentioned taken place in the Albert Hall, but although MacDonald did not return to the capital after speaking there in early May, he wrote an article for the London Labour Party stressing the importance of the city.⁶³ Including the University seats, it had 63 Members of Parliament and could thus make a sizeable contribution to Labour's hopes of a majority. In conjunction with pieces from the *Herald*, the sources provide a few, but not many, details of how electioneering was conducted. It is not known how many members the London Labour Party had in 1929, but a year before the figure was listed as 32, 290.⁶⁴ This was correct according to the data submitted to the annual conference in 1928.⁶⁵ After that time some branches reported updated figures for 1928. The revised data brought forth another 2, 165 members for a total of 34, 455 close to the beginning of 1929. This is not an absolute figure, but it shows a healthy trend since 1927 when there were 29, 227.⁶⁶

As for the resources of London Labour, the data closest to the election mentioned a General Fund of £ 245 and an Election Fund of £ 350 as of May 1929.⁶⁷ It may be assumed that the Election Fund was drained completely, and it seems likely that the General Fund was also used primarily for campaigning. Otherwise it would not have grown exponentially from £ 27 to £ 245 in just one month. It stood at £ 675 as of 3 April, and the depletion of all but £ 27 of it later in the month is likely, but not certain, to have been due to election expenses.⁶⁸ It must remain guesswork how much London Labour spent, though it would be consistent with these numbers. Among the activities of the party were the issuing of a general election issue of *The London News* (May 1929 had 16 pages instead of the usual eight), the putting up of a polling day poster and the making of grants to constituency Labour parties where it was considered to be beneficial.⁶⁹ These were not especially comprehensive tasks, especially as it is clear the idea of a poster only just made it.⁷⁰ The

⁶³ *The London News*, May 1929, p. 1.

⁶⁴ *The London News*, February 1929, p. 4.

⁶⁵ *The London News*, April 1929, p. 2.

⁶⁶ *The London News*, February 1929, p. 4.

⁶⁷ *The London News*, June 1929, p. 3 and p. 6.

⁶⁸ London Metropolitan Archives, Acc 2417/A/1. Minutes of the Executive Committee of the London Labour Party 3 April 1929.

⁶⁹ *Loc. cit.* Minutes of the Executive Committee of the London Labour Party 7 March 1929; Minutes of the Executive Committee of the London Labour Party 2 May 1929.

⁷⁰ It was decided not to hang up such a poster in the 3 April meeting. See minutes for that meeting.

reason for these limited efforts lies in the constituency-based nature of British electioneering. It was the divisional parties who performed the campaigning, higher bodies only did so to a limited extent.⁷¹

It may be taken that the monthly publication was London Labour's most noticeable contribution to the campaign. *The London News* did not differ significantly from the rest of Labour's propaganda. The election issue was available for constituency parties at the rates of 6s. for 100 copies, 25s. for 500 copies or 42s. for a thousand.⁷² May 1929 brought the manifesto of the London Labour Party on the front page, page 3 was devoted to co-operators and page 5 had the heading "We *Shall* Conquer the Liberals," an instance of negative campaigning designed to stave off the perceived Liberal revival. But some issues mentioned were specific to Londoners. The party in the capital said it opposed Tory plans to transfer control of the tramways from the London County Council to the Traffic Combine.⁷³ This would turn a service run for the public good into a concern mostly run in the interest of private profit. Labour wanted the capital to have a municipal bank. Birmingham already had such an institution, and it would allow municipal expenditure with fewer running costs. These were the London-based issues with which Labour hoped to appeal in its manifesto, which appeared on page 1. Like the rest of London Labour's rhetoric and policies, the manifesto echoed the party's message centrally. This was what might be expected, but in one significant way London differed from the emphasis in the national campaign. A page in the election special contained an article intended for the middle classes.⁷⁴ This piece attempted to enter into the mindset of professionals and gave reasons why those with a white collar had hitherto shunned Labour. In actual fact, London Labour propaganda had throughout the 1920s stressed the unity of interests between it and this group.⁷⁵ It said there was nothing to fear, because Labour would elevate the workers in

⁷¹ This was seen as something of a problem within London Labour. At the most recent conference held on 1 December 1928 the Executive Committee of the London Labour Party was instructed to report on the feasibility of amalgamating all 29 borough parties into one giant organization. This might make parliamentary and municipal campaigning more efficient. See *Labour Organiser* IX (August 1929), p. 159.

⁷² *The London News*, April 1929, p. 5.

⁷³ *The London News*, May 1929, p. 1.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁷⁵ Tom Jeffery 'The Suburban Nation. Politics and Class in Lewisham' in David Feldman and Gareth Stedman Jones (eds.), *Metropolis London. Histories and Representations since 1800* (London, Routledge, 1989), p. 189.

order to achieve equality, rather than bring down the intelligentsia. And it would give the latter a security which their savings “for a rainy day” could not.

Examples from the constituencies

To illustrate what was happening on the ground a few examples from the fights in the constituencies will be appended. The localities were chosen to bring up points of interest, and are largely from the London area. Conservative-held Streatham was the sort of place where Labour was hoping to make progress. Even in “the tree-lined avenues of middle-class villas” every home was being canvassed and reports stated that the electoral machine was in good condition.⁷⁶ There were a few signs that Labour might advance in the division. New housing estates, albeit of owner-occupiers, at Streatham Vale were adding diversity to the area. Its candidate, Fred Hughes, assistant general secretary of the National Union of Clerks, hoped to woo Streatham’s tens of thousands of white-collar workers, including female typists and secretaries who might be new voters. There were a number of similar seats in well-to-do suburbs where Labour stated it hoped to gain the support of civil servants, city workers, women voters and new residents. At Putney the party used the incumbent Tory’s record of opposing votes for young women against him.⁷⁷ Labour’s candidate here, J. C. Lawder, also hoped for support from the 8, 000 domestic servants in the constituency. In nearby Wimbledon 20, 000 citizens had been added to the electoral register since 1924, and Labour was hopeful of doing well since the capitalist vote was split.⁷⁸ In Richmond there was “an uphill task” ahead, but the candidate claimed he was winning new adherents every day, especially young workers from the Ministry of Pensions at Kew.⁷⁹ In Kingston Labour’s candidate John W. Fawcett was a member of the National Union of Commercial Travellers, and aided by co-operators and trade unionists he claimed to be winning many votes from black-coated workers, who had a real presence there.⁸⁰ One of the best prospects was Lewisham East. Again, Labour claimed to be gaining much support from city workers and civil servants. The new housing estates at Bellingham and

⁷⁶ *Daily Herald* 9 May 1929, p. 7.

⁷⁷ *Daily Herald* 10 May 1929, p. 5.

⁷⁸ *Daily Herald* 16 May 1929, p. 4.

⁷⁹ *Daily Herald* 24 May 1929, p. 7.

⁸⁰ *Loc. cit.*

Downham were full of Labour-voting people.⁸¹ Lewisham West retained more of its old-time bourgeois character.

An even greater challenge was the Kent constituency of Chislehurst. It was described as one of the most difficult seats in the country to contest.⁸² Trade unionism was practically non-existent owing to the lack of industry, save the occasional paper mill. The residents were either millionaires or slum dwellers. Agricultural labourers and smallholders were to be Labour's target groups in this division, but they tended to be so badly off that many were alienated from the whole political process. To make matters worse, Labour had consistently been denied the use of halls to spread its message. Meetings were therefore held in the open air, often village greens. Such conditions made the Home Counties uncertain territory for Labour.

Of course the story was a different one in Labour strongholds like West Bermondsey and Rotherhithe. These two areas would have their candidates returned "with bigger majorities than ever."⁸³ So confident was Dr Alfred Salter of winning West Bermondsey that he devoted a week to campaigning in Maidstone, Kent.⁸⁴ The agent, John Douglas, spent half of his time bringing voters in two wards of North Soutwark to the poll.

Home County intimidation was reported from Colchester, Essex, where a landlord had sent window bills advertising the Conservative Party to his cottage tenants with the instruction to display them.⁸⁵ The newspaper reported, however, that rural voters were beginning to take in that the ballot was secret. Only a few of the above window bills were to be seen, and Labour was hoping to gain the support of half the rural population. Another constituency where Labour was hoping for support from those engaged in the primary occupations was Lowestoft. Its candidate Captain Basil Hall, R. N. had been visiting farms in the agricultural hinterland for a year leading up to the election.⁸⁶ He found the farmers friendly, and the labourers and their families were solidly Labour. Lowestoft had a fishing population of 6, 000 whom it was hoped would turn out for the party.

⁸¹ These were working-class developments. Cf. Matthew Worley, *Labour Inside the Gate. A History of British Labour between the Wars* (London, I. B. Tauris, 2005), p. 189.

⁸² *Daily Herald* 13 May 1929, p. 7.

⁸³ *Daily Herald* 14 May 1929, p. 7.

⁸⁴ The Bermondsey Labour Party "adopted" a poor local party in 1929 and tried to build an effective organization for it. Berger, *The British Labour Party and the German Social Democrats, 1900-1931*, p. 98.

⁸⁵ *Daily Herald* 22 May 1929, p. 7.

⁸⁶ *Daily Herald* 15 May 1929, p. 4.

These examples complement the coverage in chapter 3 about Labour target voters. Together with the sparse information about the national campaign, it is hoped that some interesting features of the contest have been brought out.

The end of the election

An issue of special importance to the party was that its most active campaigners should not go to their usual job on polling day, but should devote the entire day to helping Labour in their constituency.⁸⁷ Agents were therefore repeatedly asked to urge them to apply for leave. The morning should be spent on persuading the elderly, tradesmen, housewives and those working locally to vote.⁸⁸ Incoming trains carrying employees returning from work should be met. Towards the end of the day canvassers should try to persuade those living near the polling stations to vote.

MacDonald gave *Herald* readers special updates on how things were going, the last telephoned from Seaham two days before the election. “Go forward and spare no pains to make our cause triumph!” he said.⁸⁹ That night he also spoke on the wireless, apologizing for his hoarse voice caused by addressing 250, 000 people at election meetings.⁹⁰ He devoted some of his speech to debunking myths about his party, and completely denied that it was not a constitutional party.⁹¹ He warned against the Conservative misrepresentation of Labour as being against widows’ pensions and other social ameliorations. It had voted against certain such bills only because they were unfair and inadequate. He stated that his party believed in national unity, but that unity had to include “all classes and factions which give service to [...] the community.”

The result was a real boon to Labour. For the first time it became the largest party in the House of Commons. The share of the votes and seats were as follows:

⁸⁷ *Labour Organiser* IX (May 1929), p. 88.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

⁸⁹ *Daily Herald* 29 May 1929, p. 1.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.



Table 1.4 The general election 1929.

Party	Votes (change from 1924)	Seats (change from 1924)
Conservatives	38.1% (-10.1%)	260 (-159)
Liberals	23.6% (+5.8%)	59 (+19)
Labour	37.1% (+4.1%)	287 (+137)

Although Labour thus did not receive a majority, it had overturned the massive Conservative victory of 1924 and seen off a spirited Liberal revival. Once Labour had digested the results it pronounced itself satisfied with winning so many industrial constituencies and those with a mixture of manual and black-coated workers, but it urged even greater attention to the countryside, where there had been only modest progress.⁹² It was thought the key to a majority lay in the rural seats.⁹³

Conclusion: The 1929 election

The purpose of what has gone before was to determine how Labour fought the election of 1929. The central party monitored the electioneering, for instance by asking leading MPs about their speaking engagements and, conversely, divisional parties which speakers would be visiting them. This was to maintain an even balance across the country. Head office also sold propaganda to the local parties and carried out the central planning of the election campaign. This took place to a small extent after February 1928 and intensively after December of that year. Central planning included such considerations as what the pamphlets and leaflets would be about and what props were to be used (i.e. films, loudspeakers, gramophone records, etc.). Head office ran the national campaign, that is to say what was in the media and what was of general interest. It awarded grants to the constituency parties, and inside the capital more money could be forthcoming from the London Labour Party. This body also performed some electioneering tasks like publishing a manifesto and an election special of its newspaper, as well as putting up posters on polling day.

⁹² *Daily Herald* 4 June 1929, p. 4.

⁹³ Cf. McKibbin, *The Evolution of the Labour Party 1910-1924*, p. 151. He calls it a "mistaken view."

Central control of what was happening in the constituencies was limited to approving nomination of the chosen candidates, being told who the election agent was and communicating with the branches in the run-up to the election. Within these limits and those imposed by the propaganda available, the divisional Labour parties could do as they pleased. Really good coverage of what went on locally is not available in the form of an overview, but the nearest it is possible to get is the constituency page of the *Daily Herald*. This source suffers from being propagandistic, with perhaps a too optimistic slant on what was going on. There were also area conferences consisting of the members of the NEC, the central party and election agents from constituencies in particular regions. These permitted two-way communication about the technical and principal issues facing the party. The national campaign as treated above naturally had an impact on the result in every single constituency. Of the leading figures in the party MacDonald spoke primarily in Northern England and Scotland, Snowden in the North, while Jimmy Thomas's engagements took him all over the country.

Two great events of 1927 had an impact on the election two years later. The first was the Trade Unions and Trade Disputes Act which had the effect of reducing Labour's affiliated membership by 1.2 million in its first year of operation. Many local associations were lost due to the political fund of unions dwindling.⁹⁴ The response of the party was to set up a Bid for Power Fund which took donations from individuals, trade unions, local branches and women's sections. It ensured that Labour's campaign was well funded; more so than in 1931 and 1935 as will be seen later. The other notable development was the Cheltenham Agreement linking the Co-operative Party to Labour for electoral purposes. Co-operative societies consequently made a great effort in campaigning two years later in various constituencies, and not just where the Labour candidates were from their party. In this election relations between groups within Labour were not an issue. The *Daily Herald* was used to press the Labour cause, to collect funding and also to play a part in the organizing effort. For instance, it sought to inspire its readers to perform valuable tasks for the party. It also published electoral material of its own, like the "Little Mauve Book" which contained useful facts for activists.

⁹⁴ *Labour Organiser* IX (March 1930), p. 38.

Background to the election of 1931

The origins of the general election of 1931, held on 27 October, go back to the financial crisis of August of that year. Most of the plans made for fighting the campaign were laid after that time. This was certainly true as far as propaganda materials were concerned. In the summer of 1931 the Press and Publicity Department was engaged in writing and publishing literature for an autumn campaign, and it was envisaged that those materials would form the basis of Labour's election propaganda on a subsequent occasion.⁹⁵ Owing to the realignment of forces caused by MacDonald's, Snowden's, Thomas's and Sankey's defection to the National Government, most of this literature had to be pulped.

Straight after the formation of the National Government on 26 August 1931 an emergency meeting of the NEC was held at Labour headquarters in Smith Square. At the afternoon session it was decided that no official reaction to the events be promulgated until the entire labour movement had met.⁹⁶ At the evening session the first steps were taken by way of preparing for an imminent election. The NEC, General Council of the TUC and Consultative Committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party having met at half past two, the NEC put out a statement calling for the establishment of a "Labour majority" fund.⁹⁷ It instructed local branches to put their organizations in readiness, and help provide the means whereby Labour at a national level might gain a majority. The next day the three national committees met again, issuing a manifesto relating to the political crisis and an appeal for electoral funds with the signatures of the chairmen and secretaries of the three bodies.⁹⁸ The manifesto and financial appeal were naturally printed in the *Daily Herald* the next day.⁹⁹ Arthur Henderson was elected chairman at a meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party on 28 August, but it was not yet clear that the MacDonaldites' break with the party was final.¹⁰⁰ Lord Sankey was cheered when he turned up at the meeting to explain his actions and to pledge that he would never leave the Labour Party.

⁹⁵ Labour Party, *Annual Reports of Conferences. Thirty-second Report* (London, Labour, 1932), p. 63.

⁹⁶ Minutes of the NEC 26 August 1931 at 2 p.m.

⁹⁷ Minutes of the NEC 26 August 1931 at 5 p.m.

⁹⁸ Minutes of a meeting of the Three National Committees 27 August 1931.

⁹⁹ *Daily Herald* 28 August 1931, p. 1, p. 3.

¹⁰⁰ *Daily Herald* 29 August 1931, p. 1.

Early preparations and problems

Labour's troubles, however, had not begun with the defection of the MacDonaldites. To be in government during the Depression was no easy task, especially without a majority in Parliament behind it. A meeting held during the party conference at Llandudno in 1930 and chaired by George Shepherd, the National Agent, threw up a whole host of electoral problems, which indicate the low morale prevailing after 15 months in government.¹⁰¹ The rank and file was deemed not to have a proper connection with the movement nationally, and there was no contact between the leadership and even senior figures in the provinces. In other words, the grassroots were disappointed with what the government had achieved. The prestige of the *Daily Herald* had sunk in the eyes of the party members, as it was no longer a political organ but a popular newspaper. As a corollary it was not as effective in marshalling opinion within the labour movement, especially relating to the party's parliamentary activities. The party's speakers were not performing as well as they could on the platforms. According to the report from which these difficulties are taken, too much time was spent on apologizing for the Government's failures and not enough talking up its successes. A defeatist spirit was rife. At present the literature failed to meet the requirements of the movement and was "rather patchy." The two most important issues identified for the next election were unemployment and education. During the same meeting it also came up that it was difficult to find candidates for backward areas far from London.

It was the daily business of the NEC to prepare for the next election, whenever it would come. Since Labour was in charge of a minority government it was known that Parliament might have to be dissolved at relatively short notice.¹⁰² Thus at the end of October 1930 are found the beginnings of an electoral fund to replace the Bid for Power Fund of 1929. Henderson sent a letter to 550 known supporters of the party to try to raise cash for the next general election.¹⁰³ Not long thereafter the Election Appeal Fund contained £ 5, 525 compared to just £ 800 in the By-election Fund.¹⁰⁴ The endorsement of candidates was a regular business for the NEC, and the more candidates it had at an early

¹⁰¹ Minutes of Annual Consultation on Organizing Staff 10 October 1930.

¹⁰² The National Agent said the next election might come "as a 'thief in the night'." *Labour Organiser X* (January 1930), p. 1.

¹⁰³ Minutes of the NEC 27 October 1930.

¹⁰⁴ Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee 18 November 1930.

stage the better, because it would allow the chosen men and women to become familiar faces in the constituencies. At the beginning of 1931 it looked as if Labour would have a base of 519 candidates in readiness relatively soon.¹⁰⁵ Owing to defections and the hurried nature of the election, Labour was eventually only able to put 490 candidates in the field, but at the time the intention was of course to endorse many more.

There were some problems at this time between Labour and elements among its component parts. This is evident from the record of the same meeting mentioned above in connection with the tally of candidates. Two ILP candidatures were held up in the constituencies of Glasgow Kelvingrove and Camborne.¹⁰⁶ A letter was sent to Glasgow confirming the NEC's policy of not endorsing candidates on the financial responsibility of the ILP. This was a policy change from last time when the ILP had sponsored no less than 54 candidates. It suggested Labour wanted a greater degree of control of its MPs or of its constituent parts. Indeed, what precipitated the separation of the ILP from Labour was the 1931 Labour Party conference decision to uphold the standing orders against recalcitrant members.¹⁰⁷ The ILP wanted a free hand to vote according to the principles of Socialism. Relations were never put on a completely even keel again. In the election six unendorsed ILP candidates were returned to Westminster, and are usually counted as in the Labour group until 1932 when the ILP disaffiliated from Labour.

As for the Co-operative Party there was always at least the potential for tension, since two separate parties were in a perpetual working relationship. For instance, the new programme of the Co-operative Party had to be sent to the Joint Standing Committee to see whether it was compatible with *Labour and the Nation*.¹⁰⁸ At a later stage a Labour official, George Dallas, raised the issue of what was to be done about the monopolizing of divisional Labour parties by the Co-operative organization where it had the candidate, saying that "matters were becoming rather serious."¹⁰⁹ As an initial response it was decided that the National Agent should prepare a report for the committee. At least during the crisis it became clear that Labour in opposition continued to have the support of the Co-operative

¹⁰⁵ Minutes of the NEC 28 January 1931.

¹⁰⁶ Minutes of the NEC 24 February 1931.

¹⁰⁷ Worley, *Labour Inside the Gate*, p. 142.

¹⁰⁸ Minutes of the NEC 24 February 1931.

¹⁰⁹ Minutes of the Organization Sub-Committee 18 June 1931.

Party.¹¹⁰ The latter's National Executive and Co-operative Parliamentary Group affirmed that its MPs would be part of the Official Opposition under Arthur Henderson. The bodies completely approved that its minister A. V. Alexander had resigned along with the government. Any bureaucratic problems about who should be in control of constituency Labour parties would thus not have major repercussions at the national level, though it illustrated the semi-independent nature of the Co-op MPs which was potentially a problem for Labour.

State of the party and movement

Despite the crisis atmosphere and the utterly unpropitious situation Labour had found itself in during the election, in some ways the party was better off in 1931 than in 1929. This can be seen from the following table:

Table 1.5 Labour membership in 1929 and 1931.

	1929	1931
Constituency parties	578	608
Individual members	227, 847	247, 000
Affiliated trade unionists	2, 044, 279	2, 024, 216
Affiliated Socialists and Co-ops	58, 669	36, 847

(Source: Labour Party Annual report 1936, p. 54.)

The greater number of constituency parties this time had no effect on the election as Labour fielded 79 fewer candidates than in 1929. At the annual Trades Union Congress held between 7 and 11 September, the delegates were well aware that an election was upon them.¹¹¹ The TUC at that time had a membership of 3, 719, 401; this was somewhat higher than in 1929.¹¹² Although the membership affiliated to Labour is a more important variable (and this had sunk as shown above), the full strength of the TUC may be of some

¹¹⁰ *Daily Herald* 1 September 1931, p. 3.

¹¹¹ Walter Citrine (ed.), *Report of Proceedings at the 63rd Annual Trades Union Congress 1931* (London, Co-operative Printing Society, n.d.), p. 72.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 91.

importance especially in its unions' ability to give donations to the party and as an influence on voting.

As for the League of Youth it received something of an improvement in its status in 1931. The League asked for its branches to be allowed to appoint representatives with full voting powers to constituency and local Labour parties.¹¹³ Conference agreed to this on the proviso that such representatives were at least 18 years of age. The League became affiliated to the Youth Hostels Association, the Socialist Youth International and the National Workers' Sports Association in the course of the year. The first and third of these showed the League's role in the creation of and participation in labour culture.¹¹⁴ It recruited on the basis of its recreational activities and its radical, anti-militaristic ideology.¹¹⁵ It wanted to strengthen the political side and part of the proof lies in joining the Socialist Youth International, which it did upon the basis of having 3, 000 members.¹¹⁶ The NEC agreed to this after several resolutions in favour were passed at the League's annual conference. The League continued to have its own monthly bulletin.

The organization of women appeared to have suffered slight setbacks in 1931 in terms of numbers. There were now 1, 824 Women's Sections, a figure below 1930's tally of 1, 969 and also that of 1929 (1, 867).¹¹⁷ It is possible, though, that many of the sections apparently lost had been non-existent for some time. More complete records were beginning to be introduced and given the inaccuracies in the previous registers, it is hard to tell whether there had in fact been any real reductions at this stage. It was thought that just under 250, 000 women were members of sections of this type. Labour believed there had been some real reductions in numbers and blamed this on poverty. *The Labour Woman*, the monthly newspaper, had improved its content and circulation in the last year, but the party was still dissatisfied with its sales.¹¹⁸ *The Labour Magazine* continued to be published

¹¹³ Labour Party, *Annual Reports of Conferences. Thirty-first Report* (London, Labour, 1931), p. 14.

¹¹⁴ It was often reported how active the League was in promoting sports and leisure pursuits. The best example is a list showing the great range of activities taking place. *Labour Organiser* IX (November 1929), p. 219.

¹¹⁵ Stephen G. Jones, *Workers at Play. A Social and Economic History of Leisure 1918-1939* (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), p. 150.

¹¹⁶ LHASC: The Labour Party Report of the Conference of the League of Youth 9 January 1932 in folder marked Organisation Sub-Cttee Membership papers Jan-Apr 1932. Box marked By-election reports 24 July 1929- Sept 1937 Election Sub-Cttee Minutes 3 May 1934-1 Dec 1944 Box I.

¹¹⁷ Labour Party Annual report 1931, p. 34; Labour Party Annual report 1929, p. 21.

¹¹⁸ Labour Party Annual report 1931, p. 37.

jointly with the TUC,¹¹⁹ and the Research Department maintained its monthly Labour bulletin.¹²⁰

As for the Labour press, there continued to be some reduction in the number of newspapers published. In 1931 the party had newspapers as follows:

Table 1.6 Labour and Socialist newspapers in 1931.

Daily	Weekly	Monthly
1	16	69

(Source: Labour Year Book 1931, pp. 549-550.)

These figures hide one amazing success story. Despite the views among some Labourites that the prestige of the *Daily Herald* had diminished, the increase in circulation was phenomenal after 1929. As explained earlier the *Daily Herald* passed into TUC hands in that year, and soon the General Council reached a deal with Odhams, the publishing firm. Both the former and the annual conference of Labour agreed to Odhams's vision for the newspaper, and accepted the arrangement whereby the political and industrial coverage of the *Daily Herald* would continue.¹²¹ All of the movement took part in a campaign before the launch of the new version on 17 March 1930, and in the first week it reached a circulation of 1 million copies or four times the previous circulation. A debate then ensued about whether to ask the new readers to join Labour immediately or wait until they had got used to the newspaper.¹²² The party organizers thought it would be best to press ahead, manifested in the slogan "Every member a *Herald* reader and every *Herald* reader a member."¹²³ Circulation remained at that level for some time, later in 1931 it reached about 1.25 million copies.¹²⁴ From at least the beginning of the year, a campaign was in place to raise the circulation to 2 million by the anniversary of the new version.¹²⁵ This level would eventually be reached, but not during the 1931 election.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

¹²¹ Labour Party, *Annual Reports of Conferences. Thirtieth Report* (London, Labour, 1930), p. 60.

¹²² *Labour Organiser* X (April 1930), p. 71.

¹²³ *Labour Organiser* X (May 1930), p. 77.

¹²⁴ Labour Party Annual report 1931, p. 61.

¹²⁵ Minutes of the NEC 28 January 1931

Electoral preparations

Preparations for the election were a hasty and improvised affair, but a series of moves were taken before the party conference at Scarborough at the beginning of October. It was decided then that the conference should be terminated two days early on Wednesday 7 October in the event of the announcement of a general election while it was going on.¹²⁶ In a small way this is testimony to the powerlessness with which Labour faced the situation. It had had some degree of control while in government, but owing to the sea change that had taken place in Parliament it was now at the mercy of its opponents. Still, it had not been defeated quite yet. Rose Rosenberg, MacDonald's secretary, wrote to him that she had had lunch with Sir Patrick Gower, a senior civil servant, and the latter felt an election was imperative.¹²⁷ In four to six months' time Labour would be sure to be returned, in Gower's opinion. The announcement of a general election did indeed come on 6 October, and conference had to end early.¹²⁸ In closing it Henderson revealed that with limited resources, Labour would have to concentrate on marginal constituencies.¹²⁹ He completely understood why some delegates wanted to focus more on rural constituencies, and he drew attention to the number of agricultural conferences that had been held since the previous year (35) and that, on many occasions, Labour propagandists had been working in purely rural areas. At the conclusion of the previous election campaign, the party had reasoned that the key to a majority lay in agricultural constituencies.¹³⁰ Now it had set up a "majority fund", but reluctantly had to postpone its efforts to gain those seats for the party. For all its talk of being "confident of victory" in the manifesto, Labour knew it was engaged in a damage-limitation exercise.¹³¹ When Henderson on the eve of polling said Labour could not be destroyed because it was entrenched in the heart of the masses, it was a tacit admission that the party could not win.¹³²

¹²⁶ Minutes of the NEC 2 October 1931.

¹²⁷ The National Archives, PRO 30/69/388 Political General Election October 1931. Letter from R.R. to the Prime Minister 29 September 1931. Cf. PRO 30/69/1320 Pol. Party General Election Correspondence & Cuttings. Letter from R. R. to the Prime Minister 29 September 1931.

¹²⁸ Labour Party Annual report 1931, p. 202.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 227.

¹³⁰ *Daily Herald* 4 June 1929, p. 4.

¹³¹ Cf. *Daily Herald* 10 October 1931, p. 1.

¹³² Andrew Thorpe, 'Arthur Henderson and the British Political Crisis of 1931', *Historical Journal* 31:1 (1988), p. 137.

Agriculture was an important matter for Labour, based both on its lessons from last time and a long-standing desire to do well in the countryside.¹³³ But for all its emphasis on the issue, the many leaflets and pamphlets published and the schemes designed to make a breakthrough, the obstacles loomed large. Dr Christopher Addison, who was Minister of Agriculture in the Labour Government, was anxious to get the rural campaign underway in November 1930, but no money for special propaganda was available from the General Fund.¹³⁴ There would have to be a Special Fund along the model of Philip Noel-Buxton's earlier campaigns. (Noel-Buxton had been Minister of Agriculture in the 1924 Labour Government.) Three months later the NEC received a delegation from the National Union of Agricultural Workers. The latter group had circulated a memorandum in advance dealing with the Government and farm workers.¹³⁵ Branches of Labour and the NUAW had also sent resolutions complaining about the absence of an agricultural bill in Parliament to push unemployment insurance through for rural workers. It was by far their greatest grievance, and the memorandum came with a note giving the history of this vexed question. Accordingly it was the first demand of the delegation, along with the abolition of the tied cottage and a strengthening of the Central Wages Board— all Labour policies. But Will Holmes, the leader of the delegation, said bitterness was spreading in the countryside due to the assurances received from the annual conferences of Labour not being followed up. He put it that the agricultural labourer was getting tired of the Party.

Unfortunate though the upshot of all this was, as Henderson reminded the conference, Labour was doing something to have success in rural areas. Under the auspices of the Agricultural Campaign Committee conferences on this topic were being held across the land.¹³⁶ They were well attended, and offered a speaker the chance to deal with rural issues at length. The meetings, which had the assistance of the National Agent's and Press and Publicity Departments, also put representatives of the rural constituency parties in touch with the speaker.

¹³³ Cf. for instance Philip Snowden, *If Labour Rules* (London, Labour Publishing Company, 1923), pp. 44–45.

¹³⁴ Minutes of the NEC 25 November 1930.

¹³⁵ Minutes of the NEC 24 February 1931.

¹³⁶ Labour Party Annual report 1931, p. 9.

The pre-election

Just as in 1929 the election campaign in reality began long before the dissolution of Parliament. It was vitally important to Labour that it had clear proposals for dealing with what it agreed was a financial crisis. Thus when the NEC, General Council of the TUC and the Consultative Committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party met on 27 August, they drew up and issued a “manifesto” or alternative crisis plan. The statement argued that the new coalition government was determined to attack the standard of living of the workers to deal with a difficult situation caused by private, unaccountable banking interests.¹³⁷ The salient points were reproduced in the *Daily Herald* the next day. The proposals included mobilization of the country’s foreign investments, a temporary suspension of the Sinking Fund which repaid the National Debt, taxing fixed-interest bearing securities and other unearned income and reducing the burden of war debt.¹³⁸ These policies would be credible enough if Labour achieved a majority at the election. This was what Labour claimed to be fighting for, but up against nearly all its opponents united under its former leader, and not even having been successful in government, its chances were non-existent.

It is a measure of the upheaval caused by the political crisis that in the 1931 election Lloyd George, who had been repeatedly ridiculed and had his motives questioned by Labour in 1929, should become somewhat of an ally, while Philip Snowden, one of Labour’s leaders in 1929, should provide the most devastating attack on the party. The rapprochement of Lloyd George and Labour began at the beginning of October, when the Liberal MPs who were serving in the National Government agreed to a general election.¹³⁹ This was highly controversial. The declared aims of the National Government had been to act as a temporary caretaker during the financial crisis, and its leading participants had specifically assured the public that the next general election would be fought on party lines. Remaining a free trader, Lloyd George’s response was to tell Liberal voters in a broadcast that they could opt for Labour if no Liberal pledged absolutely to free trade was standing in their constituency.¹⁴⁰ A great many Labour candidates printed Lloyd George’s statement in

¹³⁷ Appendix to minutes of a meeting of the Three National Committees 27 August 1931.

¹³⁸ R. Bassett, *Nineteen Thirty-one. Political Crisis* (London, Macmillan, 1958), p. 185.

¹³⁹ Cf. *Daily Herald* 2 October 1931, p. 1.

¹⁴⁰ *Daily Herald* 10 October 1931, p. 1. Although bed-ridden, Lloyd George played some part in the drama by correspondence. Cf. e.g. National Archives, PRO 30/69/388 Political General Election October 1931. J. Ramsay MacDonald to Lloyd George 30 September 1931.

their election addresses, and Labour decided not to oppose the “Welsh wizard” and his son and daughter who were standing as Liberals. In this way the party could make free trade vs. protection a rallying issue during the campaign.

The election

In 1931 Labour’s official campaign opening can be said to have been 8 October. That was the day after the dissolution of Parliament and the day of Arthur Henderson’s return from Scarborough with his principal officers. It was reported that the Labour electoral machine would now “begin work at the fullest possible pressure.”¹⁴¹ Labour hoped to nominate 500 candidates, and although this was significantly fewer than last time, it might be enough to do well. Constituency parties were urged to bring candidates into the field even if it was late, and were told that emergency procedures meant that Head Office might rubber stamp their nomination.¹⁴² An official at Transport House claimed there were signs of great Labour enthusiasm across the country.¹⁴³ Henderson left Scarborough with £ 10, 500 in his pocket towards the election fund.

Table 1.7 Funding received at Scarborough conference 1931.

Union	Amount
Transport and General Workers	£ 2, 500
General and Municipal Workers	£ 5, 000
National Union of Railwaymen	£ 2, 000
Railway Clerks’ Association	£ 500
Distributive and Allied Workers	£ 500
Total	£ 10, 500

(Source: *Daily Herald* 8 October 1931, p. 11.)

¹⁴¹ *Daily Herald* 8 October 1931, p. 3.

¹⁴² *Labour Organiser* XI (September 1931), p. 164.

¹⁴³ This was because many Labourites had been unhappy with their government’s performance. “The Labour Movement [...] saw its Government go out of office with a sigh of relief— certainly with ill-concealed satisfaction.” *Labour Organiser* XI (November 1931), p. 202.

A report to the NEC gives some salient facts about how Labour experienced the election and what resources it was able to mobilize. As for candidates, Labour managed to nominate 490, just short of its target. There were four main reasons why it did not meet it.¹⁴⁴ Difficult constituencies experienced a dearth of suitable candidates, and then there were financial problems. In addition, the ILP or constituency parties sponsored by the ILP put forward 22 candidates who were not endorsed by the NEC. Lastly, there were problems finding candidates to run against the MacDonaldites in constituencies where it had been assumed the sitting MP would be running for Labour. It was moreover the deliberate policy of the Central Party this time not to encourage backward constituencies to put a candidate into the fray.

There were also difficulties in printing election materials at relatively short notice. As a result there was no Speaker's Handbook this year, but notes for speakers were circulated on cards of which 123, 610 were issued.¹⁴⁵ There were 5.3 million copies of the election manifesto¹⁴⁶ and 21 million other leaflets, representing 32 different types in circulation. 6.6 million leaflets representing seven different kinds were sent free to the constituency parties. As for posters there were seven types of which 80, 800 were dispatched.¹⁴⁷ Three different pamphlets were sold to the constituency parties, which ordered 15, 000 copies.¹⁴⁸ Lastly, 75, 000 copies of *The Labour Elector* were distributed.¹⁴⁹ There are some noteworthy differences here between the annual report and the report to the NEC. The latter described the materials more fully since it mentioned the "Mauve Book" of which 19, 000 were sent out. It contained 100 election points, many facts, figures and arguments to use while speaking or canvassing.¹⁵⁰

Equally interesting is the timeline for the distribution of election materials. The election manifesto was sent to the branches no later than two days after the close of the party conference.¹⁵¹ Then everything but the "Mauve Book" was put in circulation for

¹⁴⁴ Report on the General Election to the National Executive Committee dated 10 November 1931.

¹⁴⁵ Labour Party Annual report 1932, p. 63.

¹⁴⁶ Or 5.5 million according to the report to the NEC.

¹⁴⁷ Or eight according to the report to the NEC.

¹⁴⁸ Or five pamphlets of which sales were 18, 300 according to the above.

¹⁴⁹ Or 77, 000 copies according to the report to the NEC.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. *Daily Herald* 16 October 1931, p. 11.

¹⁵¹ Report on the General Election to the National Executive Committee dated 10 November 1931.

Monday 12 October, and most of it had been sent out by Saturday 17 October. It will be seen that there was less written propaganda than in 1929, and the party centrally spent only half the amount it did on that occasion. The election fund reached the total of £ 30, 350 by the end of the campaign, including interest earned.¹⁵² Labour spent £ 19, 340 on grants to candidates, speakers' expenses, printing the election literature and advertising. In other words, it could have spent more if it had felt the need. The 490 candidates spent a total of £ 179, 265.¹⁵³ Adding this to central expenditure and subtracting grants to candidates (£11, 872) the total sum arrived at is £ 186, 733. This is a fair amount below what was spent in 1929. Expenditure per candidate was lower, and there were fewer of them. The figures are hardly surprising given the relatively short campaign and Labour's rearguard action to avoid annihilation rather than genuinely trying to win as it did in 1929.¹⁵⁴

Henderson began his campaigning tour in his own constituency of Burnley, Lancashire on 13 October and from there travelled to Bolton, Leeds, Coventry, Birmingham and West Bromwich.¹⁵⁵ This was nowhere near as extensive as MacDonald's tour of 1929. The itineraries of other senior figures in the Party were not mentioned. At his adoption meeting Henderson came close to describing the former leader as a traitor. He said MacDonald was allowing himself to be used by his life-long opponents against his life-long political friends who had faithfully served him.¹⁵⁶ Moreover, it was the case that MacDonald had been brooding on serving in a national government for several months.¹⁵⁷ The damage that the MacDonaldites did to Labour was to a great extent that they made it seem like there was a broad consensus about matters which were in fact controversial. If some form of Conservative and Liberal government had implemented the cuts, it would have seemed like a *political* issue. As the situation stood, it instead seemed that everybody was pulling together, except Labourites who were putting narrow sectional interests above those of the country.

¹⁵² Labour Party Annual report 1932, p. 58.

¹⁵³ Thorpe, *The British General Election of 1931* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 185.

¹⁵⁴ As evidenced by the party referring to "the most vital electoral struggle in the history of our Party." It also said the penalty of losing would be "too awful to look upon twice." *Labour Organiser* XI (September 1931), p. 161.

¹⁵⁵ *Daily Herald* 13 October 1931, p. 2.

¹⁵⁶ *Daily Herald* 14 October 1931, p. 1.

¹⁵⁷ This is borne out by the sources. Cf. e.g. John D. Fair, 'The Conservative Basis for the Formation of the National Government of 1931', *Journal of British Studies* 19:2 (1980), p. 146.

In some cases the havoc caused to Labour by its former politicians was entirely intentional. The most vitriolic speech of the campaign was given by Snowden on the wireless on 17 October when he described his former party's policies in the following terms: "I hope you have read the election programme of the Labour Party. It is the most fantastic and impracticable document ever put before the electors [...] It is Bolshevism run mad."¹⁵⁸ This may have been the first ever "negative" political broadcast in Britain.¹⁵⁹

In contrast Lloyd George virtually endorsed Labour in the campaign. Towards the end of it the *Herald* resuscitated the story by sending a special correspondent to visit him. The resulting headlines described his statements as an "election bomb", and that he was telling Liberals to vote for Labour free traders.¹⁶⁰ He had already done so once, but perhaps he made the point more explicitly when he confirmed he would vote Labour if there was no genuine free trade Liberal standing. Naturally the story was run at the end of the campaign for maximum effect. The editorial in the eve-of-poll issue contained some very interesting points. It could be described as scaremongering, but it alleged that admiration for Fascism had been in the background of the National campaign.¹⁶¹ It claimed that MacDonald was thinking in terms of dictatorship with himself as dictator and Parliament transformed into a "Council of State" along Fascist lines. MacDonald's Conservative supporters were even more comfortable with the idea. If the Government were allowed to remain in power, it would attempt the setting up of a dictatorship under a parliamentary guise. The very existence of democracy was at stake, and already the labour movement and the TUC were being seen as dangerous threats to the state.¹⁶²

London

In London the local Labour party had had a setback with the L. C. C. elections earlier in the year.¹⁶³ Its conclusion was that the organization must be improved, as it was not thought the bad results had anything to do with Labour policy on the L. C. C. Whatever

¹⁵⁸ A. D. Edwards, *1931: The Fall of the Labour Government* (London, Edward Arnold, 1975), pp. 55-56.

¹⁵⁹ Dominic Wring, *The Politics of Marketing the Labour Party* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 23.

¹⁶⁰ *Daily Herald* 24 October 1931, p. 1.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁶² This exactly foreshadowed the rhetoric of the Norwegian party in 1933.

¹⁶³ *The London News*, April 1931, p. 1.

the reason, the London party was in any case due to fight local elections in the boroughs on 2 November, so preparations for the general election could be combined with the pre-planned campaign.¹⁶⁴ Of course, even after the Labour government had fallen it was not clear exactly when an election would take place. Thus it was decided to hold a conference of Labour MPs, candidates, representatives from Borough and Divisional parties in London, and also some from Surrey, on 17 October, just ten days before what would be polling day.¹⁶⁵ And although London Labour was fighting an election anyway, its resources were not tremendous, as can be seen from its decision not to engage in a 16-sheet poster campaign owing to lack of funds.¹⁶⁶ The Committee did, however, authorize the sale of leaflets which could be bought by local branches.

Once again it is difficult to determine how much London Labour spent on the two elections. The figures available stretch no further than September when there was £ 560 in the Election Fund and £ 540 in the General Fund.¹⁶⁷ At the end of the campaign there was £95 left in the Election Fund, and an anonymous gift of £ 100 was received for distribution among branches to cover their expenses in putting forward a parliamentary candidate.¹⁶⁸ At the same time, but in fact probably earlier due to printing deadlines, the Fund showed a total of £ 150, all of which was from new donations.¹⁶⁹ This may suggest that all of the funds were used up sometime in October. The month before, from 5 to 19 September, there was a big membership campaign in London, planned in advance but with fortuitous timing, given the rolling-up-of-sleeves atmosphere engendered by the fall of the Labour government.¹⁷⁰

There is very little about the political crisis in the papers of London Labour, mostly because it happened suddenly and taking into account the delays of printing. Moreover, it was a crisis on the national level which in an immediate sense did not bother the workings

¹⁶⁴ Though it was warned against the practice whereby a meeting jointly covered the parliamentary and municipal elections. The reason for this was probably that it could lead to accounting difficulties, and electoral expenses had to be declared. *Labour Organiser* XI (October 1931), p. 190.

¹⁶⁵ LMA. Acc 2417/A/2. Minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee of the London Labour Party 17 September 1931. This again illustrates the difficulty of not knowing the election date in advance.

¹⁶⁶ *Loc. cit.* Minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee of the London Labour Party 9 July 1931.

¹⁶⁷ *The London News*, September 1931, p. 4.

¹⁶⁸ LMA. Acc 2417/A/2. Minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee of the London Labour Party 12 November 1931.

¹⁶⁹ *The London News*, November 1931, p. 4.

¹⁷⁰ *The London News*, September 1931, p. 1.

of London Labour. Its net effect was simply that it lost the election and that Herbert Morrison could rejoin the Executive Committee as secretary, having ceased to be a minister.¹⁷¹ Morrison's was the main voice to explain to ordinary members in London what had happened to their government. He spoke at South Hackney on 7 September, and his speech was reproduced in written form.¹⁷² What he said gave canvassers and other party activists the arguments they needed for the campaign. The financial crisis had come about through what Morrison called "anti-British propaganda" because it lowered not only the prestige of the Labour government, but the reputation of the nation as financially responsible. Foreign financiers as well as domestic investors had believed absurd stories about the policies of the government, had moved out of Sterling and precipitated an economic crisis which could not just be ignored. But the lesson was that Labour must become truly Socialist again. Merely redistributing wealth in "a nationalized charity organization society" would not lead to Socialism. As members returned to party work to face an impending general election, however, they should remember that Labour had in the two and a quarter years of its government made significant progress in foreign and domestic affairs.¹⁷³ A pamphlet called "The Work of the Labour Government", published by Head Office, bore witness to that fact.

This was essentially how Labour presented its case nationally. Its government had done reasonably well, but it lacked a majority. In order to implement its policies fully it needed the House of Commons behind it. That was what it sought to achieve. The MacDonaldites, now calling themselves National Labour, had betrayed the party and had no right to the Labour name in any form. Labour had, moreover, stuck to its principles by refusing to make cuts, which showed it remained uncorrupted. As such it was absolutely essential to deny the story put about by opponents that the Labour ministers had agreed to most of the cuts anyway. Henderson had not committed himself to a single proposal until all the options were laid on the table, it was underlined.¹⁷⁴ He and his colleagues had not

¹⁷¹ It was largely due to Morrison that London Labour was probably the strongest local party. Stefan Berger "'Organising Talent and Disciplined Steadiness': The German SPD as a Model for the British Labour Party in the 1920s?", *Contemporary European History* 5:2 (1996), pp. 172-173.

¹⁷² *The London News*, October 1931, p. 3.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p.5.

¹⁷⁴ *Daily Herald* 9 October 1931, p. 6.

seen the complete scheme, as they had resigned when told the bankers were insisting on cuts in unemployment benefit.

As a last word on the campaign in London, the manifesto of the London Labour Party for the borough elections will be considered briefly. The rationale is that since those elections followed the general election in quick succession (five days), London issues may potentially have had an impact on the national contest (though more obviously the other way around). The manifesto said the economic crisis had given Conservative local authorities the perfect excuse to cut essential health and social services.¹⁷⁵ The only reason was to save money for wealthy rate-payers, because the Government had not instructed them to do so. The opposite of this approach was the Labour authorities, which had been lauded for their public health work such as providing better sanitation, saving or improving the lives of many mothers and children, combating the adulteration of food and lifting public health administration to a “high standard of efficiency.” Sixteen boroughs had Municipal Electricity undertakings, and the practice of Labour boroughs showed that its policy was to make tariffs low, to make electricity more widely available through pre-payment meters and also to provide cheap electricity for industry. These bread and butter issues may have been part of the reason why a great many voters stuck with Labour, despite the extraordinary conditions under which the election was fought.

The end of the election

On polling day the front page of the *Daily Herald* brought three important headlines. The first was simply the request to vote early and to encourage friends, family and colleagues to do the same.¹⁷⁶ The second was the disclosure that Baldwin in 1923 had begun the practice of lending Post Office Savings Bank deposits to the Unemployment Insurance Fund. This mattered because the National Government was pretending that not cutting unemployment benefit would have meant losing customers’ savings in the post office. And Labour had a scare story of its own, but of undoubted veracity. If the National Government won the humiliating and inquisitive means test would come into force for “hundreds of thousands of unemployed men and women.” Also important to Labour’s pitch

¹⁷⁵ *The London News*, October 1931, p. 8.

¹⁷⁶ *Daily Herald* 27 October 1931, p. 1.

was the reminder that it was the only such party.¹⁷⁷ The “National Labour Party” was in fact an anti-Labour group, a name chosen by MacDonald, Baldwin and other coalition leaders to confuse the electorate. This argument was a necessary one, because some loyalists may have felt they were continuing to support Labour by voting for candidates who had their political background in the party. And Labour-sympathizing Nationalist voters may have rationalized their choice by arguing to themselves there was a “Labour component” to the new Government. Whatever the discourse it was ultimately a near-impossible task in which Labour was engaged.

1931 marked the greatest setback Labour had experienced in its history. The “Forward march of Labour” had at the very least been decidedly halted. The results were as follows:

Table 1.8 The general election 1931.

Party	Votes (change from 1929)	Seats (change from 1929)
Conservatives and National	60.5%	521
Labour	30.6% (-6.5 %)	52 (-235)
Samuelite Liberals	6.5%	33

All of Labour’s senior figures with Cabinet experience were defeated, except George Lansbury, who duly became the new leader of the Parliamentary Party.¹⁷⁸ Henderson lost so badly at Burnley that he abandoned domestic politics until 1933.¹⁷⁹ There is evidence that in some places Labour’s defeat came as a surprise to its activists. In more than a 100 constituencies which were lost the confidence of candidate and agent were not shaken till polling day.¹⁸⁰ The activists had thought Labour “could not be beaten.” The new coalition had penetrated into the heartlands of Labour. Only two consoling facts were apparent to the party. In terms of votes it lost less than seven percentage points, and the scale of the defeat would at least provide a fresh start. “We are not broken,” declared Henderson the day after the election “The Labour movement [...] will rise again stronger and more vigorous than

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁷⁸ Paul Adelman, *The Rise of the Labour Party 1880-1945* (London, Longman, 1972), p. 72.

¹⁷⁹ Thorpe, *The British General Election of 1931*, p. 128.

¹⁸⁰ *Labour Organiser XI* (November 1931), p. 203.

ever.”¹⁸¹ There were also complaints that under the voting system. Labour had suffered disproportionately and its real strength was greater. The results of the preceding political crisis also provided a wake-up call to those in the industrial wing of the movement who had slackened their efforts, because they thought happy times were ahead with a Labour government.¹⁸²

Conclusion: The 1931 election

Labour fought the campaign on a business-as-usual basis despite its former leader acting at the head of the opposing bloc. In reality, it knew it could not win as it did not run candidates in difficult constituencies this time, and gaining more of those was a precondition for a majority. Moreover, it faced an unprecedented number of two-way contests against a National candidate. There were 434 such contests in 1931, a fourfold increase over 1929.¹⁸³ This was a disaster for Labour as the National candidates could generally rely on both Conservative and Liberal votes.

Major differences did not exist between how electioneering was conducted in 1931 and 1929. Of course the former campaign was prepared at much shorter notice, and there may have been some disparities in the constituencies. The *Daily Herald* did not publish information about the divisional parties this year, so no comparison may be made. Less money was spent, fewer candidates were put forward and less propaganda was produced. The leader's tour was significantly shorter than in 1929. The sources do not allow much to be said about central control this time. The impression given is that the divisional parties were given grants, sold propaganda or in some cases given it for free, and told to get on with the job. Not every constituency party received a handout, and Central Office tried to even out resources by urging the wealthier divisions to support the poorer ones financially.¹⁸⁴ In the capital more money was available from the London Labour Party. The amount of central control would almost certainly have been greater if there had been more time to prepare.

¹⁸¹ *Daily Herald* 29 October 1931, p. 1.

¹⁸² London Metropolitan University. Trades Union Collection. Box local Labour parties. London Trades Council. Seventy-second Annual Report (1931) and Statements of Accounts (marked JN 1129L), p. 3.

¹⁸³ Nick Smart 'Constituency Politics and the 1931 Election', *Southern History* 16 (1994), p. 126.

¹⁸⁴ *Labour Organiser* XI (September 1931), p. 163.

To compound Labour's misery its internal coalition began to be put under pressure in 1931. There was disagreement with the ILP about the nomination of candidates under its own auspices and financial responsibility. The dispute was not settled within the time that was available until the election, leading to the return of six ILP candidates to Westminster without endorsement by Labour. The scene had been set for the ILP's disaffiliation from Labour in 1932. There was also the beginning of a long-running dispute with the Co-operatives relating to the control of constituencies where the candidate was from that party. This was, however, to have a greater effect before the election of 1935. Fundamentally these disputes related to how much autonomy the parties affiliated to Labour were to have. Labour preferred these in a subordinate capacity and probably eventually wanted these to dissolve within it. The same fear of independence for component parts could be seen in Labour's treatment of its League of Youth. In practice it meant that it lost MPs who would otherwise have taken its whip. But Labour's standing in Parliament after the 1931 election was so disastrous anyway that this problem did not amount to much.

Background to the election of 1935

The general election of 1935 can be said to have brought politics back to normality. Labour's opponents were still the National Government, but since the Samuelite Liberals had left it in 1932 it had taken on more of a Conservative shade. Stanley Baldwin took over from MacDonald as prime minister in 1935. The crisis atmosphere was at an end, but Labour was dissatisfied with the timing of the campaign because it occurred at a time of heightened international tension following Italy's invasion of Abyssinia. This was thought to work to the Government's advantage. On the other hand, Labour's message was one of principle and the invasion showed up the kind of anarchic world order the party wished to transform through the League of Nations. It went into the election to recover its position in Parliament. Labour's programme *For Socialism and Peace* had been published the preceding year. It also had a new leader in Clement Attlee after George Lansbury stood down on a point of principle regarding disarmament.¹⁸⁵ Arthur Henderson died in a nursing home during the campaign.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ *Daily Herald* 9 October 1935, p. 1.

¹⁸⁶ *Daily Herald* 21 October 1935, p. 1.

There were many other changes since the last time. The ILP finally disaffiliated from Labour in 1932. A conflict with the Co-operative Party came to a head in 1934. A report was written by the NEC just over a year before the election, which outlined Labour's version of the problems between it and the Co-op.¹⁸⁷ At the National Joint Committee the Labour representatives had suggested a new agreement to replace that of 1927. The Co-operative Party did not, however, want a change of terms and conditions. It had begun by sidelining the Labour organization in seats where the candidate was a Co-operator. Some agents had become dependent on the Co-operative Party for their salaries. There had been cases of trade unions and other affiliated bodies paying grants directly to the agent instead of to the constituency Labour party. So the NEC ordered that local agreements should not establish joint parliamentary committees, but leave control of electoral activity to Labour. No agreement should be made outside the auspices of the NEC. Relations between the two parties had been a cause of concern for some time,¹⁸⁸ and the issue did not reach a conclusion until the following year.

Only some months into 1935 was a *modus vivendi* reached, taking into account both points of view. At a summit in March Herbert Morrison explained that the 1927 Agreement had always been seen as provisional in the Labour Party until full affiliation could be arranged.¹⁸⁹ It was imperative that Co-operative candidates sign the standing orders of the Parliamentary Party, otherwise a situation could arise in which a future Labour government was held to ransom by 20 or 30 Co-operators in the House. Agents should be responsible to the local party, never to a section which might not even be affiliated. On the part of the Co-operative Party its leader Alfred Barnes explained that the seriousness of these matters was fully appreciated. Until something like two years before his party had believed it was up to them to decide the degree of joint work undertaken. He believed that the two parties had worked harmoniously together in the constituencies, in Parliament and in government. The main problem from his side was that Labour should not dictate policy to his party. Following this meeting a letter was sent to the Co-operative Party requesting that its circular advising its candidates not to sign the standing orders be withdrawn. There would

¹⁸⁷ NEC memorandum "Relations with the Co-operative Party" dated 30 August 1934.

¹⁸⁸ It was no coincidence that Labour wanted to revise the agreement of 1927, as outlined in the National Joint Committee meeting 11 May 1934.

¹⁸⁹ Minutes of the NEC 8 March 1935. A delegation from the Executive Committee of the Co-operative Party was received at this meeting.

be proper mechanisms in place to ensure that a joint understanding on all questions concerning the Co-operative movement would be reached. As for agents, in future none would be appointed answering solely to the Co-operative Party. Further details would be negotiated later. Similarly no new parliamentary joint committees would be set up, except with the consent of the National Joint Committee. These terms were suitably framed to allow continued joint efforts, and two Co-operative candidates were endorsed by the NEC later the same month, having signed the standing orders.¹⁹⁰

State of the party and movement

After the débâcle of 1931 some interest may attach to the state of the party four years later. This may be summarized in the following table:

Table 1.9 The Labour Party in 1935.

Constituency parties	Male individual members	Female individual members	Affiliated trade unionists	Affiliated Socialists and Co-ops
614	246, 401	172, 910	1, 912, 924	45, 280

(Source: Labour Party Annual report 1936, p. 59.)

A total individual membership of 419, 311 compares with 297, 003 in 1931. The number of affiliated trade unionists had continued to fall, however, although 1934 had been a turning point, and the increment was now positive. The number of affiliated Socialist and Co-operative members had risen from the year before, and was higher than in 1931. As an indication of the strength of the entire labour movement, the TUC had a total membership of 3, 388, 810, an increase of 94, 229 over 1934.¹⁹¹ The *Daily Herald*, still the responsibility of the TUC though run in partnership with Odhams Press, was achieving rare distinction. Its circulation was well over 2 million copies a day, making it the biggest newspaper in the world.¹⁹² It owed this position to efforts within the movement to increase

¹⁹⁰ Minutes of the NEC 27 March 1935.

¹⁹¹ Sir Walter Citrine (ed.), *Reports of Proceedings at the 67th Annual Trades Union Congress* (London, Co-operative Printing Society, n. d.), p. 83.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 200.

circulation. Flyers often bore a recommendation to begin reading the *Herald*, and both Labour and the TUC campaigned internally for it as well. In recognition of this work the board of directors of the *Herald* lent the two organizations a film motor van to be used in the backward areas.¹⁹³ It also financed the services of a propagandist for a year. A list of Labour and Socialist papers does not exist for 1935, though from other sources it seems there were 1 daily, 12 weeklies, 25 monthlies, 1 quarterly and 11 irregulars.¹⁹⁴ If this is correct, there had been the loss of four weeklies since 1931 and a very large number of monthlies.

The organization of women and the young remained important to broaden the appeal of the party beyond male trade unionists. It is undeniable that Labour sought to extend these sections, and yet small indications suggest they were not given the very highest priority. The lack of reliable statistics kept is one such indication. The party did not afford the League of Youth much independence because it feared that the League could become a centre of opposition to the leadership. As a result it was doomed to impotence as a social club. The sections were forever in a state of development, but never seemed to make an impact. For what it is worth, from the autumn of 1934 to the autumn of 1935, 110 new branches of the League of Youth were set up.¹⁹⁵ 526 branches of the League existed at about the time when the 1935 election was fought, and all of these were active. There were about 1, 600 women's sections.¹⁹⁶ There had been no significant change of numbers over the previous year. The *Labour Woman* was still up and running and making a profit.¹⁹⁷ During 1935 its average circulation was 14, 612.¹⁹⁸

By 1935 there was also a genuine National Workers' Sports Association in existence. It received a constitution in 1930, but although recognized by the NEC and the General Council of the TUC, it remained in an incipient state of being.¹⁹⁹ Both of these bodies believed it would play an important part in strengthening the whole movement. In 1932 it had 5, 000 members in 18 affiliated sports bodies and associations (of which nine

¹⁹³ Labour Party, *Annual Reports of Conferences. Thirty-third Report* (London, Labour, 1933), p. 55.

¹⁹⁴ Calculated from Royden Harrison et al., *The Warwick Guide to British Labour Periodicals 1790-1970. A Check List* (Hassocks, Harvester Press, 1977). The titles are reproduced as appendix 2.

¹⁹⁵ Labour Party, *Annual Reports of Conferences. Thirty-fifth Report* (London, Labour, 1935), p. 35.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹⁹⁸ Statement of Accounts for the Year Ending December 31st 1935. Minutes of the NEC 25 March 1936.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. Labour Party Annual report 1931, p. 60.

were district committees).²⁰⁰ In 1934 it had 8, 000 members in 250 affiliated associations or bodies.²⁰¹ Half the members and just over half the sections were involved in cycling, organized by the National Clarion Cycling Club. In 1935, lastly, it boasted 9, 000 members, still in 250 sub-organizations.²⁰² Tennis, cycling, swimming and athletic championships had been held in the past year, showing that the Sports Association had reached a noticeable level of development. This is in keeping with the idea that Socialist parties were movements and not just concerned with politics.

Victory for Socialism

Since Labour was not unwillingly thrown into an unexpected election this time, it could spend longer on thinking through its plans. Immediately after the meltdown of 1931 the NEC set to work rebuilding the party. It instituted membership, constituency and youth campaigns as well as educational conferences.²⁰³ Faced with a National Government majority of more than 500, the official Opposition could afford to think seriously about the long term. The fruits of this included the Victory for Socialism campaign, set up in October 1933. The idea behind it was that 15 million votes were needed to establish “The Socialist Commonwealth” (or 400 Labour MPs and more than 13 million votes next time).²⁰⁴ Not only would Labour present itself openly as a Socialist party at elections, but it must work all the year round to make Socialists. The activities of the campaign were the usual tasks of holding meetings, demonstrations and rallies as well as the distribution of literature. In this instance the aim was to give every home in the land a monthly Socialist newsletter. “Victory for Socialism” is not directly relevant to the election, because in June 1935 it was decided to merge its fund with that set up to fight the election.²⁰⁵ That spelled the end of this phase in Labour’s retrenchment. However, it is worth bearing in mind that once “Victory for Socialism” got underway in 1934, Labour was more or less permanently electioneering. It had been decided that £ 5, 000 was needed to get the campaign going.²⁰⁶ This level was attained in March 1934, triggering the onset of activities other than

²⁰⁰ Labour Party Annual report 1932, p. 70.

²⁰¹ Labour Party Annual report 1934, p. 21.

²⁰² Labour Party Annual report 1935, p. 56.

²⁰³ “Victory for Socialism” letter dated 3 October 1933.

²⁰⁴ *Victory for Socialism* (London, Labour, 1935), p. 14; “Victory for Socialism” letter dated 3 October 1933.

²⁰⁵ Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee 21 June 1935.

²⁰⁶ Minutes of the NEC 1 March 1934.

fundraising.²⁰⁷ The mass conferences in particular, would be directed at the eight million workers' homes containing 18 million electors.²⁰⁸

Electoral preparations

The first evidence of real planning for actual electioneering in competition with the other parties stems from the end of 1934.²⁰⁹ This memorandum worked on the assumption that the party must be ready to fight an election in the autumn of 1935. Preparations should therefore be in an advanced state the following July. In the first month of 1935 it was possible to see steady progress with regard to Labour's plans. A Victory for Socialism campaign handbook was now available, and discussions continued on how to turn the general election literature out.²¹⁰ It was understood, however, that only materials of a general kind, criticizing the National Government and stressing Labour's main policies, could be taken in hand at once. Special election literature could not be produced until guidance was forthcoming on what Labour's priorities would be. A meeting was going to take place with the trade unionist directors of the *Herald* about possible assistance with regard to posters and literature. A few days later the NEC confirmed that 27 February had been chosen as the date for a pre-election meeting with the General Council of the TUC.²¹¹

The primary result of this meeting was to be found in the circular issued by the National Council of Labour, representing the TUC, the Labour Party and the Parliamentary Labour Party.²¹² Once again, there would be a drive to increase the circulation of the *Daily Herald*, as it was recognized to be one of the most effective ways of reaching 2 million households every day. (The very best method of disseminating a message was by a broadcast on the wireless, but it was assumed that the BBC would accord the National Government the lion's share of time on the basis of its representing several parties.) The idea therefore was that every new member of a trade union or the party should receive complimentary copies of the *Herald*. It was hoped to publicize the scheme in trade union

²⁰⁷ Minutes of the NEC 27 March 1934.

²⁰⁸ Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee 14 May 1934.

²⁰⁹ Research and Publicity Committee, Memorandum on General Election Literature Preparations marked 21 November 1934.

²¹⁰ Minutes of the Research and Publicity Committee 17 January 1935.

²¹¹ Minutes of the NEC 23 January 1935.

²¹² 'The General Election and the *Daily Herald*', February 1935.

journals, and general secretaries of unions were to request the assistance of branch officers and committees in bringing about the desired outcome.

Later preparations

Once the general election was closer at hand, it became possible to issue some specific and less overarching plans for how to fight it. In June it was decided that six basic leaflets, four pictorial posters, one placard type poster, a canvasser's handbook and 12 pamphlets should be sold at once as election propaganda.²¹³ Although these were to be sold at an inexpensive price, it was expected that they would be self-financing for the central party. At this stage the local parties were told to put their electoral machines in readiness.²¹⁴ It was suggested they might like to hold divisional conferences on how to campaign. Even closer to the beginning of the actual campaign an approach from the Communists for an electoral agreement was rebuffed.²¹⁵ This was hardly a surprise given the continual rejections of the CPGB's offers of a united front and its affiliation to Labour.

The next development of any interest occurred in October 1935. The month before it had become clear that the Victory for Socialism Fund had been exhausted, and the cash balance on 27 September 1935 was only £ 180.²¹⁶ As a result of the precarious state of the Fund, it was decided that recent spending on the campaign of £ 1, 785 must be borne by the Election Fund.²¹⁷ This was in accordance anyway with the plan to merge the two funds, but it was not intended that expenses should fall on the Election Fund until the official campaign had got underway, and it had not in early October. In recompense £ 900 received primarily from the sale of literature was put towards the Election Fund. At this stage its balance was £ 8, 000. The difficulty for the Party was that it could not keep running down its Election Fund by issuing leaflets and paying propagandists, if the poll was not held for some months. No real decision was reached about what to do, but it was noted that losses on literature averaged only £ 100 a month and that £ 834 had hitherto been spent on propagandists in 1935.

²¹³ Minutes of the Research and Publicity Committee 18 June 1935.

²¹⁴ *Labour Organiser* XV (June 1935), p. 101.

²¹⁵ Minutes of the NEC 19 September 1935.

²¹⁶ Appendix to meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee 2 October 1935.

²¹⁷ Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee 2 October 1935.

Fortunately for Labour the official election campaign did start in October. A fortnight after the above meeting the first inkling of a 14 November poll was registered.²¹⁸ It was therefore possible to begin work on the manifesto, and it was agreed that it should be of a somewhat different format from previous years. It should be shorter and not merely consist of a list of policies. The drafting of it was entrusted to Arthur Greenwood. On broadcasting facilities it was noted that Greenwood and Attlee had been in touch with Prime Minister Baldwin on the time to be afforded the political parties by the BBC. Less than a week later Attlee could report that Labour would be given four speaking slots to the Government's five, with the Liberals being granted two or three slots.²¹⁹ Discussion henceforth moved on to who those four speakers should be. Attlee had wanted the recently replaced leader George Lansbury to be one of the four if he was willing, but the meeting decided on Attlee, Greenwood, J. R. Clynes and Herbert Morrison. Also at this meeting was Greenwood's draft manifesto first considered, and a sub-committee appointed to amend it. The next day the amended manifesto was accepted by the NEC.²²⁰

The NEC bore ultimate responsibility for Labour's electioneering, but the day-to-day running of it was left to Head Office. On 14 October 1935 a meeting was held at Transport House involving the chiefs of various departments.²²¹ The purpose was to report on preparations for the election. The Co-operative Wholesale Society Savings Bank had agreed to allow Labour candidates overdrafts for electoral purposes. Meanwhile the selection of candidates for hitherto vacant seats was continuing. Some election agents were also being appointed in constituencies which lacked them. The role of agent involved various electoral duties, and these tasks were made explicit by Head Office. New agents were issued with these guidelines as soon as they were appointed, while the established ones had been sent information about their tasks during the summer. All candidates had also received this information, and there would be further reminders as the campaign progressed. This was one of the methods whereby the central party could influence the running of electioneering in the constituencies. Another way of influencing local campaigning was through grants for candidates. Information about the electioneering would

²¹⁸ Minutes of the Election Sub-Committee 16 October 1935.

²¹⁹ Minutes of the NEC 22 October 1935.

²²⁰ Minutes of the NEC 23 October 1935.

²²¹ Memorandum marked "General Election 1935" dated October 1935.

be asked from the constituency party making the application, and cheques could be sent immediately to a maximum of £ 40 for borough parties and £ 60 for county parties. This principle had been the same for the other elections, though the sums may have varied.

Finance and the materials

The Election Fund eventually amounted to £21, 830.²²² Surprisingly, given the thoroughness of the preparations this time, the figure was £ 8, 000 less than was available in 1931 and £ 27, 000 less than in 1929. The reason seems to lie in the £ 11, 000 “loan” to the General Fund which was never repaid.²²³ In other words, the economy of the party did not permit a central campaign as great in scope as on the two previous occasions. Labour received £ 12, 600 from trade unions, the lion’s share put forward by the National Union of Railwaymen (£ 4,000), the National Union of General and Municipal Workers (£ 2, 500) and the Transport and General Workers’ Union (£ 2, 000).²²⁴ A total of £ 8, 571 was received from individuals and £ 558 from local parties and women’s sections. Out of the money contributed by individuals, £ 2, 605 came from the “Shilling Fund”, an appeal for money run in conjunction with the *Herald*.²²⁵ Expenditure is given in the following table:

Table 1.10 Labour central expenditure in 1935.

Grants to candidates	£ 15, 840
Leaflets, pamphlets and posters	£ 2, 649
Speaking, printing and postage	£ 3, 731
Total	£ 22, 220

(Source: Labour Party Annual report 1936, pp. 98-99.)

The grants to candidates were higher than in 1929 and 1931, everything else was on a smaller scale.²²⁶ Labour spent an average of £ 365 per nominated candidate and there were

²²² Labour Party, *Annual Reports of Conferences. Thirty-sixth Report* (London, Labour, 1936), p. 52.

²²³ Labour Party Balance sheet 21 December 1934.

²²⁴ Labour Party Annual report 1936, p. 53.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

²²⁶ It was thus suspected that 1935 was Labour’s cheapest interwar election per candidate. This was not the case as 1931 was less costly even by this measure. But that did not stop *The Labour Organiser* complaining about unpreparedness. *Labour Organiser* XV (December 1935), p. 227.

552 of them.²²⁷ This makes for a total expenditure in the constituencies of £ 201, 480. Adding central expenditure minus the grants to candidates a grand total of £ 207, 860 is arrived at as Labour's spending on the election of 1935.

The materials produced consisted of 23 types of leaflets, 36 kinds of pamphlets, five pictorial posters, 23 letterpress posters, an illustrated broadsheet (election newspaper), notes for speakers and articles that appeared in the press.²²⁸ A memorable feature of the campaign were the two booklets "Fifty Reasons Against the 'National' Government" (175, 000 copies) and "Fifty Reasons Why You Should Vote Labour" (50, 000 copies). On this occasion there were a total of 5, 501, 000 manifestos, 15, 491, 750 leaflets, 150, 635 pamphlets, 135, 000 pictorial posters, 100, 000 letterpress posters, 350, 000 electoral newspapers and 127, 500 notes for speakers on cards. The *Labour Organiser* thought the newspapers would be particularly useful, especially where there was no monthly periodical.²²⁹ Head Office made a profit on the manifestos, leaflets and pamphlets, but the posters, broadsheets and speaker's notes sustained a loss, so there was a net outlay on the materials. Towards the end of the campaign free materials were dispatched to all the Labour candidates, but it should be noted that except for the letterpress posters, this only amounted to a small fraction of the total print. Thus, unsurprisingly, the more affluent divisional parties had a great advantage over the less well-funded ones when it came to the quantity of propaganda.

The election

Labour's pre-election autumn campaign "To Win Power" began the weekend of 14-15 September.²³⁰ The plan was to hold 200 big meetings a month until the beginning of the election. Regional rallies would be staged in 40 key centres of the country. Hull and York had been chosen for the first two, while Leicester, Huddersfield and Nottingham were to follow the next weekend. Leading figures within the Party such as Lansbury, Attlee, Morrison, Greenwood and Harold Laski would take part. Thus from late September until polling day on 14 November, Labour was in permanent electioneering mode. It is therefore

²²⁷ Butler and Butler, *Twentieth-Century British Political Facts 1900-2000*, p. 260.

²²⁸ General Election Literature Preliminary Report.

²²⁹ *Labour Organiser* XV (August 1935), p. 142.

²³⁰ *Daily Herald* 14 September 1935, p. 11.

not exactly clear when it may be deemed to have started its official campaign, but 26 October with the publication of the manifesto is a convenient landmark. Also the *Herald* announced on 23 October that Labour would take three more days to plan before the “great drive will start.”²³¹ Notable highlights of the election included the four radio broadcasts made by its leaders and Attlee’s tour of Britain, which probably exceeded anything before attempted by the party for range or number of meetings.²³² His itinerary began at Southampton on 30 October, followed by South Norfolk and Norwich.²³³ He would then travel home to London, before visiting Stoke and Crewe the day after. Without taking a day off, he would go on to address a meeting in each of Warrington, St. Helens, Liverpool, Birkenhead, Bolton, Oldham, Manchester and Salford. Still not taking a break, he visited Birmingham, Gloucester, Cardiff, Newport, Limehouse, Frome, York, Stockton, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Gateshead, various towns in Yorkshire and Derbyshire followed by Nottingham. Only then would he return to his own constituency of Limehouse for a great eve-of-poll demonstration. In the usual absence of details about where the other senior Labour figures spoke, it may at least be noted that the leader travelled more widely and intensively than MacDonald had done in 1929.

On 28 October Attlee spoke to the nation by wireless in the first of Labour’s four broadcasts. He chose to concentrate on issues of principle like peace and security.²³⁴ This was a crucial, and sometimes controversial, part of the party’s pitch. One of its posters bore the message “Election Crosses or Wooden Crosses” and another featured a baby wearing a gas mask.²³⁵ Without disarmament and international agreements between states, the ordinary family listening to the broadcast was at risk of being wiped out by bombs dropped from an aeroplane. To really bring the issue home, he said “People are being killed as you listen to me.” The Labour Party wanted the world to be like a well-governed city in which no nation had precedence. Switching his concern to domestic affairs, he brought up the issue of the iniquitous means test, which he said was responsible for the break up of families. It would be abolished under a Labour government, which would improve social

²³¹ *Daily Herald* 23 October 1935, p. 3.

²³² By 1935 “broadcasting had become the most important agency of political communication.” John Antcliffe ‘Politics of the Airwaves: Party Political Broadcasts in the 1920s and 30s’, *History Today* 34 (March 1984), p. 10..

²³³ *Daily Herald* 29 October 1935, p. 13.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

²³⁵ Wring, *The Politics of Marketing the Labour Party*, p. 33.

services and pensions. Ironically the next speaker on the BBC national programme was Snowden, now a viscount and a Liberal, who on this occasion urged voters to back Labour where no opposition Liberal was standing.²³⁶ This was advice repeated from his speech to the National Liberal Club earlier in the month, and he said calling the election was “a mean and partisan act.”²³⁷ Voters should not be deceived by a “spurious appeal to patriotism” and the Conservatives would lose 200 seats, in his opinion. He thought the Opposition would pursue a better course in foreign policy, and lambasted the Government for its complacency over unemployment. Thus he was either very much in line with Labour thinking again, or the *Herald* emphasized those parts of his speech which approximated to the party’s message.

J. R. Clynes dealt with the same issues upon which Attlee had concentrated when time came for him to broadcast.²³⁸ Arthur Greenwood’s speech on the radio on 4 November confined itself to domestic bread and butter issues in keeping with the non-ideological side of Labour’s pitch. He said the unemployed were suffering from a hold-up of work schemes, and naturally criticized the means test.²³⁹ He went on to deliver a litany of complaints against the National Government, using language that emphasized its servitude to privilege and its meanness to the poor. Through its tariffs and subsidies to landlords, industrialists and ship owners it had created worse conditions for consumers. Greenwood said he had left behind him at the Ministry of Health a scheme for building 40, 000 cottages in the countryside, but it had been “ruthlessly scrapped” and fewer than 2, 000 homes had been built under the present Government. If Labour won it would successfully apply the principles it had learnt in local government to the national level. And there was nothing to be afraid of. Probably “the happiest and most prosperous countries in Europe today” were Denmark, Norway and Sweden, which all had Labour governments. The final Labour broadcast was delivered by Herbert Morrison, and has been judged the most effective.²⁴⁰ His approach was to highlight Labour’s foreign policy achievements, damn the National Government and question whether Baldwin really was in charge of the Conservatives. He

²³⁶ *Daily Herald* 30 October 1935, p. 1.

²³⁷ *Daily Herald* 17 October 1935, p. 1.

²³⁸ Tom Stannage, *Baldwin Thwarts the Opposition. The British General Election of 1935* (London, Croom Helm, 1980), p. 180.

²³⁹ *Daily Herald* 5 September 1935, p. 4.

²⁴⁰ Stannage, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

seemed moderate enough on defence matters, but could his colleagues be trusted? This was an important issue, and historians differ on whether the election was called to give the Government a mandate for rearmaments.²⁴¹ Morrison admitted unemployment had fallen, but put this down to an improvement in the world economy.

As before the *Herald* carried news, articles and points of view designed to further the Socialist cause. It published its own "Everybody's Book of Politics", a companion to the 1935 election, which contained many articles about the daily issues likely to affect most people. At 2s. 10d. it promised to enable readers to discuss these topics intelligently, and was therefore a useful tool for formal or informal canvassing.²⁴² Its services continued right until the last moment with exhortations to lend automobiles to the party on polling day.²⁴³ Polling day arrangements were particularly important to the outcome of the campaign. It was claimed successful electioneering in a division could be nullified by bad organization when it mattered. Even a losing fight apparently could be turned around by "first rate polling day work."²⁴⁴ The value to Labour of the *Daily Herald* cannot properly be quantified, but propaganda and appeals clearly mattered enormously. For the 1924, 1929, 1931 and 1935 elections it is a fact that Labour improved its position whenever there was no last minute scare story.

London

The campaign on the part of the London Labour Party seems on this occasion to have been a short one. It was exactly a week before polling day that its manifesto, penned by Herbert Morrison, was debated and approved with modifications.²⁴⁵ At the same time it was agreed that an advertisement should be taken out in the Liberal *Star* newspaper for the evening of 13 November, at a cost of £ 36. Officers were granted the right to approve expenditure from the Election Fund to be given to local parties and for posters as part of the scheme for central billposting. As usual an election special of *The London News* had been edited, and it was available to branches at 2s. 6d. per thousand for the first 10, 000 and

²⁴¹ James C. Robinson 'The British General Election of 1935', *Journal of Contemporary History* 9:1 (1974), p. 149.

²⁴² *Daily Herald* 30 October 1935, p. 13.

²⁴³ *Daily Herald* 9 November 1935, p. 2.

²⁴⁴ *Labour Organiser* XV (October 1935), p. 196.

²⁴⁵ LMA. Acc 2417/A/2. Minutes of meeting of the Executive Committee of the London Labour Party 7 November 1935.

thereafter at 5s. The front page carried an article by Morrison, which laid down the aims of London Labour and its take on what was happening. The headline claimed Labour was out for a parliamentary majority in order to form a new government, but as London Labour could not capture the country, its self-appointed task was to become predominant in the capital.²⁴⁶ Jackets off, was the message, to fight this “trick election” coming at a time of international crisis, but be sure not to complain too much about its timing. London Labour felt it was in a position to do well. The previous year it had secured control of the L. C. C. and a majority of the metropolitan Borough Councils.

The same page of the issue carried an appeal for funds from the Executive Committee of London Labour to fight the forthcoming election.²⁴⁷ It was perhaps hampered by being written before an election was announced. Seeking to get around this problem, it argued that an election could not be put off for much longer, but in actuality the Government could have waited until October 1936. It is difficult to say exactly how much money was available. The total on the Election Fund till 30 September was £ 470 with another £ 440 on the General Fund coming from annual subscribers.²⁴⁸ By 23 November, a week and a half after polling, the Election Fund contained £ 800.²⁴⁹ Naturally London Labour may have continued to spend, through reimbursing branches for outlays during the campaign. It is fair to assume that it at least expended the £ 470 received before November, as the £ 800 mentioned in the next issue was all new money.

Examples from the constituencies

In 1935 the *Herald* began reporting from individual contests again. One of the themes was the same as in 1929: how previously “difficult” constituencies were becoming more congenial to Labour. In at least one case the trend had continued since 1929. In Wimbledon most new voters came from housing estates in the St. Helier, Merton Park and Cottenham Park districts.²⁵⁰ Especially the first of these had a great number of Labour supporters. There was also new industry in the constituency employing between 10, 000 and 20, 000 people. On the basis of these changes, Labour was hoping to treble its vote. If

²⁴⁶ *The London News* November 1935, p. 1.

²⁴⁷ *Loc. cit.*

²⁴⁸ *The London News* November 1935, p. 9.

²⁴⁹ *The London News* December 1935, p. 2.

²⁵⁰ *Daily Herald* 7 November 1935, p. 7.

the party hoped to progress in Wimbledon due to more working-class voters living there, in another “difficult” constituency, Chelsea, it was hoped to create a cross-class alliance. Thus it was reported that both manual and non-manual workers were in action for the candidate, Mr G. S. Sandilands.²⁵¹ His nomination papers had been signed by Dame Sybil Thorndike, Lewis Casson and Vera Brittain. The basis of the appeal to workers was that their dwellings were being pulled down in order to make space for luxury flats. The candidate was vice-president of the League of Nations Union and it was instrumental in helping his campaign. In view of the uncertainty about the strength of the League of Youth, it is interesting to have a report that the organization was assisting the Labour candidate in Stoke Newington.²⁵² Housing was an issue there as well, but from the reverse angle: the Conservatives objected to the erection of working-class housing.

But if there was a new theme for 1935, it was how Labour was replacing the Liberals at a local level. In Saffron Walden prominent Liberals were working on behalf of Labour’s candidate Clara Rackham.²⁵³ They included Alderman E. W. Turner, who had fought the seat for his own party more than once. Again housing was a major issue, and Labour’s peace and agricultural policies were highlighted too. In North Bucks, Labour’s candidate Mr J. A. Sparks also had the support of influential Liberals, who had signed his nomination papers. The Liberal Party was still “very strong” in the division, but Sparks had been endorsed by Lloyd George’s Council of Action.²⁵⁴ In Acton Labour’s candidate won the endorsement of the local Liberal Association after triumphing over his Conservative opponent in a debate. It had been convened by the Liberals to decide which way their members should vote.

The end of the election

Labour’s electoral effort of 1935 ended the night before polling day with a series of demonstrations and meetings across the country, taking in almost every city, town and village.²⁵⁵ Clement Attlee wrapped up his campaign in Whitechapel and Mile End before returning to his own constituents in Limehouse. In the event, he spoke challengingly about

²⁵¹ *Loc. cit.*

²⁵² *Daily Herald* 5 November 1935, p. 13.

²⁵³ *Daily Herald* 7 November 1935, p. 15.

²⁵⁴ *Daily Herald* 5 November 1935, p. 13.

²⁵⁵ *Daily Herald* 13 November 1935, p. 2.

the state of the world. “What we are witnessing today is the breakdown of the capitalist and imperialist system, and the question is whether, in this country, we can lead the world away from disaster.”²⁵⁶ He claimed victory was theirs for the taking, if only everyone did their best to get Labour supporters to the polls. By addressing audiences at several meetings in the East End, he notched up a personal total of 50 speeches given in a fortnight. When the results came out Attlee’s reaction was that the tide of the Party was turning.²⁵⁷ The main parties fared as follows:

Table 1.11 The general election 1935.

Party	Votes (change from 1931)	Seats (change from 1931)
Conservatives	53.7%	432
Labour	37.9% (+7.3 %)	154 (+102)
Liberals	6.4%	20

Attlee expressed disappointment at the number of seats gained, although Labour advanced by more than a hundred, making the party’s presence in Parliament substantial again. 24 former ministers who lost their seats in 1931 were returned.²⁵⁸ He was more satisfied with the total number of votes cast for Labour, which constituted a higher percentage than ever. This showed how widespread was support for the policies of Socialism and peace. The editorial in that day’s *Herald* was clear-sighted in view of what would happen subsequently. It summed up the feelings of the Party by saying the result was not as good as had been hoped, but better than it at first appeared.²⁵⁹ It noted that the idea of overturning such a massive Government majority was probably illusory in the first place. But the future was between Tory and Labour, as the Liberals had effectively been eliminated. The Simonites would be incorporated in the Conservative Party as had the

²⁵⁶ *Daily Herald* 14 November 1935, p. 2.

²⁵⁷ *Daily Herald* 16 November 1935, p. 1.

²⁵⁸ Keith Middlemas, *Politics in Industrial Society. The Experience of the British System since 1911* (London, André Deutsch, 1980), p. 229.

²⁵⁹ *Daily Herald* 16 November 1935, p. 6.

Liberal Unionists before them. And Labour's basis in terms of both policies and support was "sounder than ever before." Its vote was more evenly dispersed around the country.²⁶⁰

Conclusion

Due to "Victory for Socialism" and the pre-election campaign "To Win Power" Labour's electioneering in practice started very early for the 1935 election. From March 1934 it conducted a lot of the kinds of activities that were associated with elections. This was a reaction to the party's disastrous performance in the 1931 election. The campaign of 1935 was fought along the lines of 1929 and 1931, except that there were a few alterations in 1931 owing to unpreparedness. Plans for how to campaign were drawn up by the NEC and its subcommittees from the autumn of 1934. The final shape of the electoral efforts was decided at a meeting on 14 October involving the various heads of departments. A modicum of central control was ensured by Head Office's asking the divisional parties on what they would be spending any money for which they applied. All agents, old and new, were sent guidelines from the central party about their electoral duties. Candidates also were primed about what to do. The production and distribution of propaganda and the running of the national campaign were the other tasks of the central party. Its control over what the divisional parties were doing was very slight.

Before the 1935 election some of the disadvantages associated with having whole parties affiliated to Labour were shown up. The ILP left the Party three years previous to the election, but the Co-operatives caused serious difficulties with their actual takeovers of some constituencies. Correcting this was cumbersome and time-consuming for Labour, which wanted them to have less autonomy not more. This was not a sign that central control was particularly intense. It was rather that Labour risked having to abandon some of its core areas if its influence was not reinforced. And as was said, a future Labour government could find itself at the mercy of 20-30 Cooperative MPs in the Commons. In 1935 the sources do not show it as clearly, but there were advantages to be gained from such alliances as well. The Co-operative Party produced its own propaganda and greatly strengthened Labour's electoral machine in areas where co-operation was prevalent.

²⁶⁰ John Swift, *Labour in Crisis. Clement Attlee and the Labour Party in Opposition, 1931-40* (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2001), p. 95.

Labour's spending on the election was somewhat higher than in 1931, but substantially below 1929, which produced its until then best results. In 1935 it was forced to transfer some of the funds meant for electioneering to the maintenance of ordinary day-to-day activity. The volume of propaganda was somewhat lower than it had been in 1931, but grants to candidates were higher than in either 1929 or 1931. Like for the other years, it has not been possible to establish how much was spent in London. The campaign directed by the London Labour Party was in any case a short one. Its main feature was the production of the usual election issue of its newspaper *The London News*, and additionally it included the placing of an advertisement outside the Labour press and extra grants for candidates.

Turning to the three elections as a whole, more interesting features may be brought out. 1929, 1931 and 1935 were crucial for the resolution of political instability existing in the interwar period. They confirmed what seemed to be indicated after the Great War that the Liberals could only play a part in government in coalition with the Conservatives. Labour started as outsiders in 1918, but had moved to become one of the two parties of government in 1935. That was not least because of its two periods in office, but it was only able to govern when the Liberals and Conservatives did not want to co-operate with each other. The matter lay not in Labour's hands. Labour fought the elections of 1929, 1931 and 1935 under three different leaders, but the continuity of policy and general thrust is noticeable. At the 1931 conference delegates rejected a motion that Labour should not form another minority government, though the political crisis caused *inter alia* by having Parliament against it was the topic uppermost in everyone's mind.²⁶¹

In these three elections Labour continued its task of becoming a truly national party. It tried to stand in as many constituencies as possible, whatever their social composition or type of local economy. It was especially hopeful of overturning the support of the capitalist parties in the rural areas. Even where it could not win immediately it wanted to announce its presence. For similar reasons it accepted governmental responsibility in 1929 as another trial run for when it would have a majority. Unlike in 1924 at least Labour would be the largest party in the Commons. The party's strategy for gaining power was entirely

²⁶¹ *Daily Herald* 9 October 1931, p. 4.

constitutional and while criticizing social conditions and British foreign policy, it strove to appear as respectable as possible.

It may be concluded that co-ordination rather than control was the order of the day in Labour's last campaign of the 1920s and those in the 1930s. The central party produced propaganda, sent it to divisional parties, often gave grants and carried out the advance planning required. It ran the national campaign each time including broadcasts, speaking tours and occasional rallies, but everything else was delegated to the branches. Usually the endorsement of the candidates chosen by the local parties was a formality, but in 1931 the National Agent's Department refused to give the go-ahead to the candidates belonging to the affiliate parties, which it feared could become too independent. 1931 was a year of crisis and, after the election, of soul-searching. A renewed emphasis on Socialism was Labour's defiant answer to the charge that it had been stopped permanently in its tracks by the events of 1931. Hence the "Victory for Socialism" campaign set up in October 1933, which in practice prolonged Labour's electoral efforts by more than a year. In 1935 Labour won back nearly all the support it had lost in 1931, and its forward march can be said to have resumed.

Chapter 2. The Campaigning of the Norwegian Labour Party in the Elections of 1930, 1933 and 1936.

Introduction

The intention in the following is to survey how DNA fought the crucial elections of 1930, 1933 and 1936 and what resources were available to it in doing so. Like chapter 1 it provides data on crucial indicators of success like the state of the labour movement in each election, which will then be compared in chapter 5. The questions looked at include how planning was conducted, the level of central control, how much money was spent, how much propaganda was available and how it was distributed and what the role of the leading daily *Arbeiderbladet* was. There is also a significant amount about electioneering “on the ground.” Details of the last point will come almost exclusively from Oslo, a consequence of the imbalance of sources. Even so a justification for including the Oslo Labour Party, but not the other regional associations, would lie in the recognized importance of the city for the labour movement.¹ As an example of this, take the extended finance committee set up to lead the 1933 campaign. The only geographical contingent represented, apart from the party centrally, was Oslo and its environs.² This was replicated for the local elections of 1934 which will play no further part here.³ Again in 1936 the committee leading the election campaign consisted of local party officials and trade unionists from Oslo, but not from anywhere else.⁴ This indicates the dominant position of the branch, and justifies its inclusion where others have been neglected. Also, since *Arbeiderbladet* was an Oslo paper the campaign fought locally is well described therein. In a very real sense what occurred in the capital constituted the national campaign, as opposed to minor events across the country

¹ According to one writer it was DNA's strong position in the capital which allowed it to survive during the years of being split. Aksel Zachariassen, *Fra Marcus Thrane til Martin Tranmæl. Det norske Arbeiderparti fram til 1945* (Oslo, Tiden, 1977), p. 254.

² Arbeiderbevegelsens Arkiv og Bibliotek (AAB), Oslo: Minutes of meeting of the Joint Committee 13 July 1933 in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge; LOs saksarkiv 1934, sak nr. 2-34, Da 0140, folder marked Finanskomiteen sak 525 1933 9 1934.

³ AAB: Letter from OT (Oscar Torp) to Norsk Murerforbund 21 September 1934 in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge; LOs saksarkiv 1934, sak nr. 574-835, Da 0150, folder marked Kommunevalget sak nr. 601 1934.

⁴ AAB: Minutes of a meeting of the AFL Representative Committee 28 February 1936 in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge; LOs saksarkiv 1936, sak nr. 132-275, Da 0166, folder marked Representantskapet sak nr. 244 1936.

and in the smaller cities. The other reason for the extensive focus on Oslo is that the records of the national party are sketchy and often missing. To describe the electioneering adequately it is thus necessary to concentrate on one area, and naturally the capital with environs is the best choice.

This explains why *Arbeiderbladet* is a much-used source in this chapter, and the others are the archival materials of DNA and, more commonly, the Trade Union Confederation AFL (*Arbeidernes Faglige Landsorganisasjon*), the printed and published sources of these two organizations and Oslo DNA, as well as the sections of the labour movement aligned to Labour such as the youth organization AUF (*Arbeidernes Ungdomsfylking*), the Workers' Educational Association AOF (*Arbeidernes Opplysningsforbund*) and the Workers' Sports Association AIF (*Arbeidernes Idrettsforbund*). DNA itself operated with a hierarchy of the central party as the highest authority with parties organized at county or city level answerable to it. These would in turn have local chapters which were either geographical divisions or trade unions. A joint committee (*samarbeidskomité*) existed to coordinate the affairs of DNA and AFL in tandem and was in the first instance responsible for the election campaigns, though as will be seen it delegated that authority to a wider body. Membership of the above-mentioned organizations was separate but overlapping, in particular in the case of DNA and AFL. Belonging to a trade union affiliated to AFL conferred collective membership in DNA, but only individual members of the latter were considered to be officially in the party. It will be seen presently that Communists and non-aligned workers bitterly resented paying money indirectly to DNA through the AFL.

It is proposed to cover the propaganda routine of the party chronologically, that is, election by election. This chapter will later be complemented by an account of which groups DNA addressed itself to in these elections. At the outset, however, it is possible to state that each campaign was conducted in very much the same way, though with greater and greater resources. The general plan remained more or less identical.

Background to the campaign of 1930

The 1930 election is less fully described in the archives than those of 1933 and 1936. Partly this is because DNA was on an upward curve in the 1930s, devoting greater

efforts and achieving more support with each election. That is not to say that DNA neglected its preparations for the 1930 election. On the contrary, it was claimed that the electioneering had been better than ever before, that more meetings had been held and that a greater number of people had taken part in them than previously.⁵ There may have been an element of election day rhetoric about this, but the evidence suggests it may well be true,⁶ and if so it is significant, because the previous parliamentary election in 1927 had represented DNA's great breakthrough. That was the year it became the largest party, enabling the formation of a Labour government in 1928, although it only lasted two weeks, and seriously disturbing the supporters of the capitalist parties. Another reason why it might be less well documented is to be found in the correspondence of AFL with the party. The Trade Union Confederation agreed to provide DNA with a sum of 75, 000 kroner (£ 4, 120), but the letter announcing this good news for the party specifically stated that this must not be publicized.⁷ In 1933 and 1936 AFL's contributions to DNA's campaign were of a completely different magnitude.

In what sort of shape was DNA in 1930 when it was called upon to fight the first of these elections? It may have felt it had momentum behind it as the victor of the previous parliamentary election in 1927, when it had gained nearly 37% of the vote. On the other hand, it was undecided on the question of how important elections were, apart from as a show of strength and a means of testing its support among the public.⁸ DNA had been a member of the Comintern 1919-1923 and continued to be more radical than the members of the Socialist International. An editorial in *Arbeiderbladet* ten days after the election, explained the position of the party: "We are passionately interested in ascertaining how many there are who support the policies of the party. It is in itself a strength that as many as possible vote for the party [...] providing it with greater representation[...]"⁹ Above it added "that is why we so forcefully contest the elections." However, the mere fact that it should

⁵ Editorial in *Arbeiderbladet* 20 October 1930, p. 3

⁶ More speeches were made in 1930 than in 1927 and canvassing was taken up in a major way in 1930.

⁷ AAB: Letter from AFL to DNA 6 September 1930 in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1930, sak nr. 34-128, Da 0113, folder marked DNA-Arbeiderbladet sak nr. 77 1930.

⁸ A recurring theme during DNA's radical period was uncertainty about how much attention to devote to Parliament. It was generally considered, however, that Parliament was useful to the movement as a platform for agitation and provided an opportunity to show up the other parties. Cf. Per Maurseth, *Gjennom kriser til makt (1920-1935). Arbeiderbevegelsens historie i Norge 3* (Oslo, Tiden, 1987), p. 254.

be necessary to state this underlines the point that DNA was still unsure about parliamentary democracy. And speaking earlier in the year the vice-chairman of DNA, Professor Edvard Bull, declared that it was not so much winning elections in the conventional sense which was important. He opined that attaining a majority in an election was by no means inconceivable. Such a victory would be hollow, though, for as he famously said, "So-called democracy is no more than an old superstitious phrase from the nineteenth century."¹⁰ What was of value was building a coherent and united organization of people belonging to the movement whichever way the electoral tide flowed. In line with this, conference approved a resolution by the National Executive that DNA had no interest in forming a government so weak that it must rely on certain capitalist sections to implement reformist policies.¹¹ It also amended the programme of principles. In 1927 it had said it wished to organize the entire working people, which was the majority of the population. Now the clarification that the working people were in a majority was taken out.¹² While DNA was hoping for further progress in 1930, the tenor of what has been stated and other comments made at the conference suggest the party did not expect an outright victory. So why bother about the election? The answer lies both in Bull's vision and in the editorial. DNA wanted to increase its support (especially among workers) preparatory to winning a majority in Parliament later. Or if it envisaged coming to power by other means, that was all the more reason for gaining the adherence of as many as possible.

State of the Party and movement

Indeed elections were usually good times to effect an expansion of the membership. During 1930 a total of 104 party branches and 15 trade unions were set up as constituent parts of DNA.¹³ By the end of the year, according to admittedly less than perfect statistics, the state of the labour movement was as follows:

⁹ *Arbeiderbladet* 30 October 1930, p. 3

¹⁰ AAB: *Protokoll av forhandlingene på Det norske Arbeiderpartis 28. ordinære landsmøte i Oslo 14-16 mars 1930* marked 329 (481) 15 N82 La/1930, p. 45

¹¹ AAB: Conference report 1930, p. 124.

¹² See chapter 4, p. 201.

¹³ AAB: 'Det norske Arbeiderparti. Beretning 1930' in *Det norske Arbeiderparti. Beretning 1930-33* marked 328(481)15 N81 br, p. 11.

Table 2.1 Membership of labour organizations 1930.

Organization	Membership	Branches
DNA	80, 177	1, 713
AFL	139, 591	1, 861
AUF	14, 000	275

(Sources: DNA Annual Report 1930, p. 11 and p. 44. Arbeidernes Faglige Landsorganisasjon. *Beretning 1930. For sekretariatet ved Halvard Olsen og Alfred Madsen* (Oslo 1932), pp. 104-105.)

Perhaps more important than these figures in absolute terms was the perception that Labour was advancing. AFL's delegate to DNA's conference in March 1930 said his organization boasted roughly 130, 000 members, a figure rising on a daily basis.¹⁴ This was true as AFL had only 127, 017 members when the year started.¹⁵

At the end of the year DNA had a portfolio of 45 newspapers of which 20 were dailies, one was published four times a week, two were weeklies and the remaining 22 were published two or three times a week.¹⁶ Since 1915 the party had devoted part of its members' dues to the newspapers and in 1929 AFL also started giving financial support. After 1930 many became self-supporting, but note the contributions paid to labour newspapers in 1933 and 1936 given in appendix 3.¹⁷ There was also a 16-page magazine for women, *Arbeiderkvinnen*, published once a month and regularly selling 20, 000 copies.¹⁸ Lastly, *Arbeiderungdommen*, the youth magazine, was published twice a month and *Barnebladet*, for children, monthly.¹⁹

The location of the 21 papers published four times a week or more may be thought to shed some light on which were DNA's strongest areas.²⁰ Unsurprisingly, the larger cities

¹⁴ AAB: Conference report 1930, p. 11.

¹⁵ AAB: AFL Annual report 1930, p. 105.

¹⁶ AAB: DNA Annual report 1930, p. 51.

¹⁷ Zachariassen, *Fra Marcus Thrane til Martin Tranmæl*, p. 213. p. 315.

¹⁸ DNA Annual report 1930, p. 42.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

²⁰ And one comparative historian explains the large number of labour newspapers in Norway on the decentralized structure of the party. Nils Elvander, *Skandinavisk arbetarrörelse* (Stockholm, Liber Förlag, 1980), p. 83.

were well represented among the 21: Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim, Drammen, Stavanger and Tromsø (see map at the end of the thesis) each having one of the main papers. The remainder tended to be clustered in DNA's strongholds in the east of the country, but surprisingly the small county of Vestfold, where DNA was weak, had two of the dailies. Furthermore, the south, where the lay-Christian movement was highly influential, had another two DNA dailies, but these were in the towns of Kristiansand and Arendal. Even in problematic areas for DNA, the urban environment was conducive to creating class consciousness and hence DNA support.

Finance

Of course the printed media network did not run itself. It required significant support from DNA and AFL. During 1929 the former transferred 236, 000 kroner to its press outside Oslo.²¹ More than half of this amount, 131, 000 kroner, went to the Labour newspapers of Bergen, Trondheim, Stavanger and Skien. DNA chairman Oscar Torp was of the opinion that financial support for the regional press was the best way to apply resources in the electoral campaign.²² The central party left the district organizations of Labour to operate rather freely within broad parameters, but support for the newspapers was intended to make sure DNA continued to grow.²³

The question of finance may be seen as crucial because the vastly greater sums expended by DNA in 1933 and 1936 were surely contributory to the great increment of support received in those years over 1930. As has already been mentioned, AFL contributed 75, 000 kroner to DNA's campaigning in 1930. This had to be done in secret because non-aligned workers and Communists resented paying for DNA propaganda. On 3 March 1930 a circular from the AFL was sent to all federations calling for extra dues to be levied on individual trade unionists to the tune of 0.50 kroner for fully paid-up members and 0.25 kroner for those paying half the standard rate for 20 weeks from that date.²⁴ The ostensible justification for the extra dues was the need for AFL to pay off debts. A number

²¹ AAB: Memorandum by Oscar Torp dated 18 January 1930 in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1930, sak nr. 34-128, Da 0113, folder marked DNA-Arbeiderbladet sak nr. 77 1930, p. 1

²² *Loc. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

²³ Interview with Haakon Lie 26 June 2006.

²⁴ AAB: Circular no. 3 from the Secretariat of AFL signed by Halvard Olsen in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1930, sak nr. 134-196, Da 0114, folder marked Ekstrakontigenten, sak nr. 139 1930.

of unions saw straight through this subterfuge, and registered their protests.

A letter from Svean Working Man's Union (*Svean Arbeidsmandsforening*) in Sør Trøndelag stated that the extra dues had created a flood of rancour. Not only would the union lose some of its members if the decision were enforced, but the bitterness was all the greater because the dues were political and intended for "reactionary Social Democracy."²⁵ A number of protests from various unions were received by AFL, two such letters of interest stem from the Federation of Norwegian Working Men (*Norsk Arbeidsmandsforbund*) dated 12 March and 1 April 1930.²⁶ Both of these mentioned five unions which had written to the Federation protesting against the extra dues. And there is evidence that previous attempts to raise money for DNA, surreptitiously or otherwise, were also resisted. The West Country Railway Trade Union Executive (*Vestlandsbanenes stedlige styre*) not only protested against proposed extra dues from 1 January 1930, but demanded that DNA repay AFL all the money the latter had granted the party.²⁷ Making a clean breast of its revolutionary sympathies, Skien Mill Workers' Union (*Skien møllearbeiderforening*) protested against AFL's financial support for DNA, and thus the proposed extra dues in a letter of 29 January 1930.²⁸ Many more examples could be adduced.

A reply from AFL to the Federation of Locomotive Drivers (*Norsk Lokomotivmandsforbund*) on this issue is revealing. Their chapter in Trondheim had written to the Federation agreeing to pay the extra dues on the strict condition that none of the money thus raised should be used for political agitation. AFL responded that, "It seems to us somewhat peculiar that an organization of public servants which wholly stands to gain from the working class being represented to the greatest possible extent in Parliament makes such a resolution."²⁹ It then went on to repeat that the extra dues were to be used for repaying debt to various local working-class organizations.

For all the controversy over AFL and trade union support for DNA, extra dues during the year 1930 raised a sum from the federations of 848, 000 kroner (c. £ 46, 600), or

²⁵ Letter from Svean Arbeidsmandsforening to AFL and Norsk Arbeidsmandsforbund dated 5 April 1930 in

²⁶ Signed by Ødegård and Henriksen respectively in *loc. cit.*

²⁷ Dated 3 December 1929 signed Martin Dyrseth in *loc. cit.*

²⁸ Signed G. Lunden and Bj. Andersen in *loc. cit.*

²⁹ AFL to Norsk Lokomotivmandsforbund, Oslo dated 15 August 1930. *Loc. cit.*

almost as much as the receipt of the regular dues of 874, 000 kroner (c. £ 48, 000).³⁰ The former sum was vastly greater than the 75, 000 kroner contribution to DNA's election campaign, but AFL's finances were so entwined with DNA's anyway, that whether any of the extra dues levied were intended specifically for the election is largely irrelevant. AFL supported the Labour press and paid a total of 112, 500 kroner (c. £ 6, 200) to joint regional trade union organizations (*samorganisasjoner*) during 1930, organizations which often campaigned for DNA during elections.³¹ The Oslo chapter of DNA reported electoral contributions from trade unions of 30, 680 kroner (£ 1, 685).³²

The bourgeois resistance

An equally important influence on the campaign was the intense pressure the party came under from its capitalist rivals. The reactionary bourgeois pressure group the Fatherland Association (*Fedrelandslaget*), which in 1925 had proposed proscribing DNA and the Communists, declared a 1, 000 day campaign against the former after it emerged as the victor of the 1927 contest and shocked the political right.³³ In his party's press the Liberal Prime Minister Johan Ludwig Mowinckel had announced that the struggle against the "revolutionary Labour Party" would be the prime concern in the coming election.³⁴ During the campaign on 3 October, right-wing newspapers brought reports that a General Gulbrandson had declared that Socialists and Communists in major towns had formed secret companies armed to the teeth with flamethrowers and machine guns.³⁵ Nearly two weeks later the chief customs official in the town of Vadsø in Finnmark stated that there was widespread smuggling of shotguns, revolvers, machine guns and ammunition to the

³⁰ AAB: AFL Annual report 1930, p. 12.

³¹ And AFL supported individual chapters of DNA with election expenses too. See AAB: Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1930, sak nr. 376-461, Da 0116, folder marked Bergens forenede Arbeiderparti for one such example.

³² *Oslo Arbeiderparti. Beretning og regnskap 1930* (Oslo, DNA, 1931), p. 16. See the specification pp. 49-51.

³³ Knut Kjeldstadli, *Et splittet samfunn 1905-35. Aschehougs Norgeshistorie* 10 (Oslo, Aschehoug, 1994), pp. 208-209. The Association existed to promote capitalist unity against Socialism and wanted a strong government independent of Parliament.

³⁴ Hans Fredrik Dahl, *Fra klassekamp til nasjonal samling. Arbeiderpartiet og det nasjonale spørsmål i 30-årene* (Oslo, Pax, 1969), p. 46. Also see *Arbeiderbladet* 8 October 1930, p. 3.

³⁵ *Arbeiderbladet* 4 October 1930, p. 1. It tried to parry the blow showing that the state authorities had no such information.

Socialists in Trøndelag, presumably from nearby Communist Russia.³⁶ These allegations were potentially devastating because they seemed to come from respected people “in the know.” The most persistent argument against DNA used by its opponents was that it would abolish Christianity, to which DNA replied that it was unfortunate both Mowinckel and Conservative leader Carl Joachim Hambro were confirmed freethinkers.³⁷ While there was no truth in these allegations, it is somehow understandable that DNA’s democratic credentials should be doubted given that it had in principle believed in the dictatorship of the proletariat until reunification with the Social Democrats just three years previously.³⁸ And Hambro contrasted DNA in a speech with British Labour and the other Scandinavian Social Democrats. Those parties had the country’s welfare at heart, he said, while DNA continued to be guided by principles learnt in Moscow.³⁹

Preparations and the election

It is not difficult to summarize DNA's campaign in a few facts and figures. The plans for the campaign were agreed in May and were presented to the National Executive on 21 July, in preparation for the election on 20 October.⁴⁰ (Norway had fixed-term parliaments of three years so the date was known in advance.) These included tours of the country by party veterans from mid-August onwards lasting from one to five weeks. A total of 840 speeches were made during these, 550 speeches were made in the last two weekends before the poll and another 3, 000 during the rest of the campaign. During the whole year a total of 4, 455 speeches was given, compared to 4, 176 in the election year of 1927.⁴¹ This indicates that the preparations for the 1930 election were at least as good as in 1927. As for the written literature 300, 000 copies of the programme were printed, 100, 000 copies of the manifesto were distributed and there was a statement to women of which 50, 000 copies were printed.⁴² An election newspaper was sent to the local branches with a total print of 150, 000 copies. The figure is the same as for the brochures, the individual titles being "The

³⁶ *Arbeiderbladet* 15 October 1930, p. 11.

³⁷ *Arbeiderbladet* 6 October 1930, p. 9; *Arbeiderbladet* 15 October 1930, p. 2.

³⁸ Walter Galenson, *Labor in Norway* (Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1949), p. 68.

³⁹ Hans Fredrik Dahl 'Fra nød til sejr' in Knut Kjeldstadli and Vidar Keul (eds.), *DNA-fra folkevegelse til statsstøtte* (Oslo, Pax, 1973), p. 141.

⁴⁰ AAB: DNA Annual report 1930, p. 71.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

Countryside and the Election" (35, 000 copies), "Forward to Disarmament" (30, 000 copies), "The Conservatives and the Fatherland" (30, 000 copies), "The Soil and the Peasants" (20, 000 copies), "Unemployment and Rationalization" (20, 000 copies) and "The Fishermen and the Election" (15, 000 copies). The last-mentioned title was available free of charge to the branches, the remainder cost 10 kroner for a hundred. Together they provide a good picture of DNA's concerns and priorities. Among the other electoral materials four films were used during the campaign. Two were made by DNA: the silent "Forward to Victory" and one relating to a conference of agricultural workers in Trondheim. It is interesting that the topic of the second should be what it was, as DNA had not yet begun seriously concentrating on farm labourers. There was also one about "Red Vienna" and lastly the German anti-war film "Poison Gas". The latter was first shown to a specially invited audience on 24 September.⁴³ It was a polemic against war which linked with DNA's pacifism.

Because of the paucity of information available on DNA's campaigning across the nation, what is on record is set out in table 2.2 below (and see map). This will allow increased concentration on the capital thereafter.

Table 2.2 Campaigning during August, September and October 1930.

Agitator	Area	Dates	No. of speeches	Notes
Aldor Ingebrigtsen	Troms and Nordland	Sept-Oct	70	
Olav Oksvik	Sogn og Fjordane	September	c. 10	Estimated from convoluted details of three tours in June, September and October.
Olav Oksvik	Møre	October	41	
Olav Oksvik	Hordaland	September	18	
Thina Thorleifsen	Aust-Agder	September	16	

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 72.

⁴³ *Arbeiderbladet* 25 September 1930, p. 1.

Agitator	Area	Dates	No. of speeches	Notes
Olav Steinnes	Telemark	October	15	
Helga Karlsen	South and West Country	1-14 September	16	
Johan Nygaardsvold	Trøndelag	22 Sept-9 Oct	21	A future PM
Johan Wiik	Nord Trøndelag	October	22	
Anders Lothe	Sogn og Fjordane	Sept-Oct	57	
Olaf Johansen	Nordland	18 Sept-10 Oct	30	
Olav Versto	Telemark	Sept-Oct	14	
Johannes Bøe	Sogn og Fjordane	September	22	
Kristian Berg	Finnmark	20 Sept-19 Oct	27	
Andreas Moan	Nordland	Sept-Oct	35	
Meyer Foshaug	Troms	28 Sept- 19 Oct	50	
Fredrik Monsen	Trøndelag and West Country	October	20	
Cornelius Enge	Nordland	Not stated	23	"During election campaign."
Sverre Støstad	North Møre	25 Sept-10 Oct	23	
Johan Falkberget	Sør Trøndelag	Sept-Oct	27	A famous writer
Olav Scheflo	Rogaland	21 Sept-6 Oct	17	
Harald Langhelle	Trøndelag	October	10	
Kornelius Bergsvik	Hordaland	Sept-Oct	35	
Anders Buen	Møre	19 Sept-7 Oct	23	
Olav Scheflo	Trøndelag	October	15	
Lars Moen	Oppland	4-13 October	13	
Rolf Gerhardsen	Trøndelag and Hedmark	September	13	For AUF
Albert Moen	Nord Trøndelag	4-8 October	8	
Johan Jensen	Buskerud	October	26	
Nils Steen	Buskerud	Not stated	30	"During election campaign."
Olav Sæter	Hedmark	27 Sept-5 Oct	15	

Agitator	Area	Dates	No. of speeches	Notes
Paul Dahlø	Trøndelag	October	23	
Kristian Rothaug	Sør Trøndelag	11-19 October	10	
Alfred Madsen	North Norway	28 Sept-6 Oct	12	
Johan Schvingel	East and Northwestern country	Not stated	12	Assuming there was one in each town. The film "Poison Gas" was shown at the meetings, which 3,000 people attended.
Kristian Kristensen	South and Southwest Country	Not stated	13	Same as above, but 5,500 people attended.

(Source: DNA Annual Report 1930, pp. 12-18.)

These tours were planned by central office and do not represent the entirety of meetings held in any particular place, as more campaigning was conducted by the relevant district party or local chapter as well. More than a third of the speeches made during the tours took place in "problem areas" for DNA, that is to say the South and West Country, counter-cultural regions where evangelical or pietistic Christianity was strong.⁴⁴ This was a particular hindrance to DNA in the 1930 election in which the capitalist parties, as mentioned, succeeded in making religion an issue. Because Socialism challenged the established order which had a Christian component to it, there was antagonism of ideas between these two faiths. An editorial in *Arbeiderbladet*, though, relating to an article in the Agrarian-supporting *Nationen*, claimed that while the capitalist parties preached Christianity, the workers' parties practised it, i.e. its tenets of pacifism and helping the

⁴⁴ Apart from the strong influence of low-church Christianity, *counter-cultural* areas were often also marked by large numbers of *nynorsk* speakers. There were few social divisions in these areas, in contrast to the *hierarchical* areas where class was important. Cf. Vilhelm Aubert 'Sosiale klasser og lag' in Natalie Rogoff Ramsøy and Mariken Vaa, *Det norske samfunn. Bind 1* (Oslo, Gyldendal, 1975), pp. 152-153.

poor.⁴⁵ For unconnected reasons DNA did not do well in the county of Nordland in the interwar period, though it greatly resembled the two other counties constituted as Northern Norway. Nordland was not counter-cultural, and like the areas where DNA prospered it was ridden by class divisions.⁴⁶ It took DNA three years to mobilize the fishermen of Troms, but more than thirty to achieve the same in Nordland. A possible reason is that the latter had more industry than the former, and the party accordingly appealed more to factory workers than fishermen.⁴⁷ If Nordland is counted with the other backward areas for DNA, a little more than half of the centrally directed speeches were made where the party was weak. This may have been to counteract the more limited ability of the district parties there to campaign successfully. It is not known whether this was true also in 1930, but in the two later elections the backward areas were overfunded by the centre compared to the heartlands. From the skimpy evidence available it seems that DNA's tactics involved a conscious attempt to tackle the areas of greatest difficulty.

Oslo

The capital had a structure and a culture much more congenial to DNA than the areas which were mentioned above. Class conflict was not necessarily more prevalent here than in other hierarchical areas, but social differences were very visible. The western parts of the city were dominated by black-coated workers and professionals, while the East End mostly contained manual workers. Mirroring this segregation, the Conservatives and Labour were the only major parties with the Liberals running in a very poor third place. Naturally as an urban centre there was a much larger tertiary sector, and DNA thus had to attract a wider base of people if it was to become pre-eminent. As a result some efforts were made to appeal to white-collar workers as early as 1930, which was at odds with the central campaign. Due to the local nature of the appeal and to keep the treatment of the capital's elections in one place, it is proposed to discuss the issue here rather than in chapter

⁴⁵ *Arbeiderbladet* 25 September 1930, p. 3.

⁴⁶ A study of why DNA's breakthrough in Nordland was retarded is Svein Lundestad, *Arbeiderbevegelsens politiske gjennombrudd i Nordland og Troms* (Bodø, Høgskolesenteret i Nordland, 1988). One of his explanations, not mentioned elsewhere, is simply that party organization in Nordland was rudimentary. There was little continuity of leadership, the county party was poor at recruiting and a lot of time was spent on keeping the apparatus and its newspaper alive (p. 100).

⁴⁷ Øyvind Bjørnson, *På klassekampens grunn (1900-1920). Arbeiderbevegelsens historie i Norge 2* (Oslo, Tiden, 1990), p.222.

4.

The Oslo chapter of DNA took Sunday 28 September 1930 as the fully-fledged starting date of its campaign. From that date onwards until polling day on 20 October, with the exception of two Saturdays (4 and 11 October), there were meetings with invited speakers across the capital every day.⁴⁸ The resources available to the party included 4,000 posters, a copy of the film "Poison Gas" and two of "Forward to Victory".⁴⁹ Most indoor meetings had a film showing, thus "Poison Gas" was shown seven times and "Forward to Victory" 40 times. The former was billed as the great attraction at the huge meeting marking the opening of the campaign, in a session that included speeches by Alfred Madsen, Magnus Nilssen, as well as party chairman Oscar Torp.⁵⁰ Madsen and Nilssen were respectively candidate no. 1 and 2 on DNA's list for Oslo.

Oslo DNA spent 36,380 kroner (£2,000) during the campaign.⁵¹ 2,590 kroner were spent on transporting materials and hiring automobiles. Cars were used for bringing people to polling stations, and on 12 October ten trucks decorated with red flags and posters drove in a procession through the town.⁵² This joint action with AUF featured Labour youth agitating through loudspeakers and a brass band on two of the trucks. It was part of DNA's plan to be entertaining as well as informative when campaigning. Mobilization through creating a spectacle can be seen from the action whereby two cars decorated with posters drove through the districts where most of the workers lived playing music on the Saturday and Sunday before polling day. An advert was placed in *Arbeiderbladet* urging party members who owned automobiles to make these available on election day, and some were hired out of the funds of the chapter.

Although entertainment designed to draw the masses to DNA played a vital part in electioneering, it was frequently stated that nothing could beat contact with individual electors. Canvassing began on 6 October and lasted for a fortnight.⁵³ Distributing *Arbeiderbladet* was among the most pressing tasks of the canvassers, and a total of 264,000 copies were in fact given away. This was a relatively new method of electioneering,

⁴⁸ Cf. Oslo DNA Annual report 1930, pp. 34-37.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁵⁰ *Arbeiderbladet* 27 September 1930, p. 4.

⁵¹ Oslo DNA Annual report 1930, p. 47.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 34.

and was significantly expanded in 1930 over what had taken place in 1927. There were 11 electoral offices spread around the capital, divided about equally between the strong Labour areas in the east of the city and the west where the party was weaker. This electoral decision replicated the agitation tours across the country, with significant emphasis on the counties where DNA had hitherto done poorly. The first report of the canvassing did, however, point out that attendance was particularly buoyant at the offices in the eastern half of the city, while not so good in the western.⁵⁴ It therefore asked new canvassers primarily to report to the latter districts.⁵⁵

Electoral appeal in Oslo

By far the majority of DNA's propaganda was directed at "the little people" (*småkårsfolket*) of town and countryside. Oslo did not represent an exception to this rule, since there as elsewhere DNA existed to serve the interests of the workers. But towns were the bastions of the Norwegian middle classes, engaged in services and trade, and Labour could not completely ignore these people. They were outnumbered by workers in the population, but in Oslo the middle classes were relatively more numerous than in the country at large. Intellectuals had long played an important role in DNA, furnishing it with chairmen like Ludvig Meyer (1897-1900) and Kyrre Grepp (1918-1922).⁵⁶

It will presently be seen what Oslo DNA's reaction to this state of affairs was, but directly linked to the question of appeal, the Party held special meetings for women, maids, teetotallers, commercial clerks, civil servants and those employed by local government.⁵⁷ Commercial clerks, civil servants and local government officials may be subsumed under the category of white-collar workers. They were DNA's bridgehead into the middle classes to the extent that the party wanted to gain support in this section of society. In 1929 the Association of Commercial Clerks (*Norges handels- og kontorfunksjonærerers forbund*) had joined the AFL, and this meant it was partisan in favour of DNA during the election.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁵⁴ *Arbeiderbladet* 8 October 1930, p. 1.

⁵⁵ Herbert Tingsten has proved that workers living in middle-class districts are less likely to vote than those who live in working-class areas. Quoted in Gabriel Øidne 'Sosial og politisk struktur i Oslo. Del I: 1906-1937', *Tidsskrift for samfunnsforskning* 11 (1970), p. 151.

⁵⁶ Cf. Edvard Bull sr. 'Arbeiderbevægelsens stilling i de tre nordiske land 1914-1920', *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens historie* 1976/1, p. 23.

Labour had something to offer white-collar workers, and it was in Oslo that the relevant arguments emerged. At a cross-party meeting for commercial clerks held in Agrarian House, the trade unionist Alfred Madsen represented DNA and spoke about the party's policy in relation to a law on apprenticeship.⁵⁸ The apprenticeship law would prevent the overproduction of clerks. The Conservatives were against a bill and possibly for this reason, or because of the Association of Commercial Clerks' newly established ties with AFL, the meeting decided by 350 to four votes that office workers should vote DNA.⁵⁹ The justification given in the resolution was that white-collar workers were wage earners and thus had their interests represented by DNA.

DNA had previously shown some concern for civil servants. This was predicated on their conflict with their employer the state over unionization and terms and conditions. Civil servants had faced salary cuts, and the state had refused to implement a court judgment ordering it to raise salaries in line with agreements made and recognize the union. As a consequence the short-lived Labour government of 1928 promised to put relations between civil servants and the state on a new footing. Thus it did not come as a bolt from the blue that DNA in 1930 argued that civil servants should support it. In a meeting for them also held in Agrarian House but under Labour auspices, DNA's representative said that the capitalist parties had roughly the same view of civil servants.⁶⁰ They were contemplating abolishing the civil service laws which would weaken job security and worsen other conditions of employment.

A comprehensive overview of these points was provided by Omar Gjestebj of the Association of Commercial Clerks. He wrote that the occupation was often regarded as a half-way house between the classes.⁶¹ In bygone days it was seen as a stepping stone to becoming self-employed. Most young people entering the occupation harboured such hopes. Unfortunately, without "wealthy parents or kind uncles" the chances were slim, and most clerks must expect to remain wage earners all their lives. So white-collar workers were no longer in a position of superiority, indeed most manual workers had caught up with

⁵⁷ AAB: 'Oslo Arbeiderparti Beretning og regnskap 1931' in *Oslo Arbeiderparti Beretning 1931-35*, p. 35.

⁵⁸ *Arbeiderbladet* 17 October 1930, p. 1.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁶⁰ *Arbeiderbladet* 16 October 1930, p. 13.

⁶¹ *Arbeiderbladet* 15 October 1930, p. 8.

them owing to their greater understanding of the solidarity and organizational principles. Manual and office workers were equally exploited and must consequently make common cause in the search for better living standards.

One may wonder if it was not counter-productive to stress the similarities between manual workers and clerks, because if the latter voted for the capitalist parties it can be assumed one of the reasons was to affirm their superiority over other workers. Another way of looking at this would be to stress the cultural similarities between white-collar workers and the wealthy, who derived benefit from the rule of the capitalist parties. They dressed the same way and spoke standard Norwegian, whereas workers and peasants used their dialects or sociolects. DNA was evidently hoping that in a time of great need true classes based on economic interests, rather than status groups based on style of life, would reassert themselves. The arguments retailed did not pre-suppose extensive interaction between white- and blue-collar workers, and each had their own trade unions. The message was that they had common interests, however, as wage earners whose recognized party Labour was. By its support for the apprenticeship law DNA sought in fact to enhance the status of clerks by providing them with better education and restricting entry into the occupation, which would have social as well as economic consequences. In this way the circle could be squared. Clerks had their interests looked after by DNA, but could continue to think of themselves as somewhat different from other workers.

The national campaign

The only source for a regional campaign which is readily available is an interview with the leader of DNA in the county of Akershus, which surrounds Oslo. Trygve Lie was later to be a person of considerable influence within the party, and he was described as the *deus ex machina* of the campaign in his county.⁶² He stated that the party's electoral newspaper would be distributed to the villages during that week, and that there would be a local version of it covering Akershus issues. These two would continue to be spread across the county to "the home of every worker and smallholder." The local branches were responsible for the canvassing, and had been instructed to identify how many copies they needed of the newspapers. In the parts closest to Oslo *Arbeiderbladet* was also handed out,

⁶² *Arbeiderbladet* 20 October 1930, p. 11.

as were everywhere the brochures produced by the party centrally. In direct contradiction of the idea that he was running the campaign, Lie claimed that the local branches had great autonomy and campaigned as they saw fit. His role, then, must have been more as a surveyor of what was going on than its initiator.

A second interview printed in DNA's main daily may cast some more light on how the campaign was run. It was with chairman of the party Oscar Torp, who assumed continued progress and greater representation in Parliament.⁶³ The journalist painted a picture of a bustling atmosphere in headquarters, newspapers arriving one moment and being expedited the next. The party publishers dealt with orders from out of town continuously, and sent materials away by post and rail. Torp claimed that the campaigning was proceeding very well. Plans for it had been laid at the National Executive's meeting during the summer and those plans had been adhered to. The real starting point, he said, had been the conference of agricultural workers, about which a film had been recorded. Apart from the campaigning tours listed previously, there had been "weekend trips" by speakers starting in or based in Oslo. But only one strand of the campaign was directed from the centre, as Torp had no plan of the meetings arranged by the local branches or the county parties. As for the speeches, throughout the nation interest had everywhere been as great as in 1927, and in some places attendance had increased considerably.

DNA did in fact receive more votes than in 1927, so it is not surprising that the atmosphere was thought to be good and spirits high beforehand. The capitalist parties, however, were increasing the temperature of the contest, and, judging by the result, probably having not a little success at their own meetings. DNA felt that it had rebutted the scare stories about secret weapon deposits, unconstitutionality and the abolition of Christianity spread by the likes of General Gulbrandson and Captain Riiser-Larsen, but evidently the mud stuck. While DNA's campaign was highly professional, well-organized and to the point, the agenda was being set by its opponents, who had apparently principled questions to put to the voters. Moreover, there had been a relative economic upturn between 1927 and 1930, although unemployment began rising again in 1929. (Thus DNA in retrospect blamed its defeat on the depression giving the forces of reaction easier

⁶³ *Arbeiderbladet* 11 October 1930, p. 1.

conditions.⁶⁴) The 1930 election was characterized by class action on both sides. DNA insisted it was a party of working-class struggle by removing the reference in its programme of principles to wishing to gain the majority of the population behind it. The capitalist parties, meanwhile, tried to unite all those who had even the slightest stake in the nation through its rhetoric, serving to distinguish “us”, the decent people, against “them”, the atheistic revolutionaries.

The success of its opponents takes nothing away from the skill and careful planning that went into DNA's campaign, evident also in its conclusion. Sunday 19 October represented a real climax with more meetings than ever before and several noteworthy features. One was a torchlit parade from Birkelunden Park to Young's Square (the main assembly point for the labour movement) arranged in conjunction with AUF.⁶⁵ The purpose of this was to act as a magnet on the workers who lived along the route. 3, 000 "young workers" took part in the parade to merge with large crowds in the Square and the adjoining streets. *Arbeiderbladet* estimated that 40, 000 people took part in the subsequent rally. Finn Moe, the intellectual, Oslo DNA's secretary Einar Gerhardsen and Alfred Madsen gave short speeches. Madsen was wildly applauded for his "long live Oslo run by the workers, Socialism and the emancipation of the working class."⁶⁶ The Internationale was sung followed by entertainment relayed by loudspeakers. That was not quite the end of DNA's preparations for the election. On polling day an editorial in *Arbeiderbladet* was addressed to women, the party clearly fearing many would abstain.⁶⁷

The result of the election was a triumph for the capitalist parties, each of which got a larger share of the vote than in 1927.

⁶⁴ AAB: DNA Annual report 1930, p. 5.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁶⁶ *Arbeiderbladet* 20 October 1930, p. 1.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

Table 2.3 The parliamentary election 1930.

Party	Share of the vote (change from 1927)	Parliamentary seats (change from 1927)
Liberals	21% (+2.3%)	34 (+3)
Conservatives	30% (+4.5%)	44 (+13)
Agrarians	15.9% (+1.0%)	25 (-1)
DNA	31.4% (-5.4%)	47 (-12)
Communists	1.7% (-2.3%)	0 (-3)

(Source: Berge Furre, *Norsk historie 1905-1940* (Oslo, Det norske samlaget, 1971), p. 320.)

The first headline in *Arbeiderbladet* stated that DNA had held on to its votes from last time. In fact, there had been an increase of 16, 000 in the counties, though balanced by a decrease of 4, 000 in the towns.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, 12 seats in Parliament were lost. What had happened was that the capitalist parties had successfully mobilized their reserves against Socialism. The turnout had risen by 4.5 percentage points to 77.6 %.

DNA's initial reaction to the result was to affirm it was not really a defeat, though it conceded the capitalist parties had scored a victory.⁶⁹ The party had advanced the most in those parts of the countryside where the class struggle was most pronounced. This led to a high level of politicization and was beneficial to Labour, but in the egalitarian and counter-cultural West political consciousness was low and support for the party weaker.⁷⁰ In the towns the sway of the non-socialist press was greater, and it had frightened those who were middle-of-the-road. It also sought to deprecate the capitalist triumph, noting that the election was fought in a panic-like state and that fear had prevailed. But it admitted DNA may have lost some votes on the back of the change in the programme. The historiography sees 1930 as a great defeat and explains it by DNA's renewed radicalization. For instance, it is claimed that "workers turned their backs to a revolutionary programme formulated in the internal party dispute," but this ignores that the party *gained* votes.⁷¹

⁶⁸ *Arbeiderbladet* 22 October 1930, p. 1.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁷⁰ Stein Rokkan 'Electoral Mobilization, Party Competition and National Integration' in Joseph La Palombara and Myron Weiner (eds.), *Political Parties and Political Development* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1966), pp. 251-252.

⁷¹ Hans Fredrik Dahl 'Arbeiderbevegelsen og offentligheten', *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens historie*

Eight days later *Arbeiderbladet* grappled with this question of whether it had been right to remove the reference to "the majority of the people" in the programme of principles.⁷² It now argued that whether the words were there or not, implicitly DNA sought to win all the people for its Socialist and revolutionary ideas. It repeated the thinking behind the elimination of the words: winning a parliamentary majority would be illusory if not based on real organs of power, i.e. the workers' organizations. The development came in conceding and repeating that it had lost some votes on this occasion due to conference's decision to remove the reference to the "majority of the people." Even more revealing was that it cared, the logic behind the change being that votes did not matter so much. The newspaper reintroduced DNA's new preferred version of "the working people", which the party would seek to win. It added that in the recent election it had laid the groundwork for that task.

Conclusion: The 1930 election

1927 was more vital to the future of Labour than 1930.⁷³ Owing to the reunification with the Social Democrats the former election was the first since 1918 when it had been able to appeal on the basis of class rather than ideology. From 1930 onwards DNA's electoral campaigns became more extensive each time. The plan for how they were fought remained the same, however, as will be seen in the remainder of the chapter. The country-wide effort was drawn up during the summer of 1930 by the National Executive. It included tours to all parts of the country by veteran speakers and a date for the start of the election (28 September). The documents are not extant, but one would expect that they will have included funding for county parties and possibly for newspapers from Head Office. (The newspapers may have been funded at other times with a view to the campaign.) Apart from that, county parties were left to their own devices and could electioneer as they pleased within broad parameters laid down by the party's bodies and conference. The county parties bought electoral materials from DNA centrally and were also given some free of charge.

1979/1, p. 7.

⁷² *Arbeiderbladet* 30 October 1930, p. 3.

⁷³ Linked to the question of how radical DNA actually was 1918-1933, a debate has been raging about whether the moderation of the programme in 1927 or the renewed radicalism of 1930 was more typical of DNA's course in the interwar period. Cf. Knut Martin Heidar 'The Deradicalisation of Working Class Parties: A Study of Three Labour Branches in Norway', Ph. D. thesis, University of London 1980, p. 35.

The main events in Oslo such as the official opening and the final rally were outlined or planned by the central party as showcases of the national campaign. Oslo DNA was in any case very closely linked with the central party as their offices were in the same place. Sectional organizations in the labour movement like AUF and the Workers' Sports Association (AIF) took part in electioneering according to their own resolutions. Members of these were of course free to participate in the campaign as individuals. Trade unions put on events for their members with the purpose of making them vote Labour. AFL acted as paymaster channelling 75, 000 kroner to DNA centrally and more to the local parties. The social breadth of the appeal will be treated later, but DNA spent significant resources in geographical areas where it had hitherto done poorly (Nordland, the South and West of Norway and, locally, the West End of Oslo). In all of these areas it sought the support of ordinary workers and peasants, not the groups who were ideologically opposed to Socialism.

Background to the 1933 election

The most noticeable difference between the campaigns of 1930 and 1933 was the vastly greater resources available in the latter, owing to AFL playing a leading role. The preparations for the campaign were drawn up by an Extended Finance Committee appointed by the Joint Committee of AFL and DNA. During its meeting on 21 September 1933 it was stated that 409, 900 kroner had been received by the election fund, and that 262, 100 kroner had been paid out already.⁷⁴ In retrospect the accounting shows that 551, 400 kroner (c. £ 28, 000) was spent by DNA centrally during the election.⁷⁵ This compares with a sum in the region of 75, 000 kroner in 1930. It is somewhat easier to describe the 1933 election because more papers are in existence.

For the 1933 election the AFL agreed to levy dues on the union federations equivalent to a daily wage for every employed member.⁷⁶ There was no subterfuge this

⁷⁴ AAB: Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge., LOs saksarkiv 1934, sak nr. 2-34, Da 0140, folder marked Finanskomiteen sak 525 1933 9 1934.

⁷⁵ AAB: Summary of expenses in connection with the electoral work autumn 1933 in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1933, sak nr. 553-754, Da 0139, folder marked Stortingsvalget Sak nr. 601 1933.

⁷⁶ Decided in AFL-DNA Joint Committee 13 July 1933. See AAB: Archive:Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1934, sak nr. 2-34, Da 0140, folder marked Finanskomiteen sak 525 1933 9 1934.

time. The justification for AFL directly taking part in the election was the number of anti-union measures introduced by the governments of the capitalist parties. A memorandum, unfortunately neither dated nor signed, in the AFL files for 1933 shows the thinking behind trade union intervention. There had been a meeting composed of the Secretariat of AFL, the Central Committee of DNA, the executives of AUF and AIF, DNA's parliamentary group and the executives of the regional joint trade organization for Oslo and Oslo DNA to discuss how to combat the new employment law relating to boycotts.⁷⁷ The law forbade the blockade of enterprises with fewer than ten employees which refused to grant wage agreements, or where only a minority of the workers demanded an agreement.⁷⁸ Originally the Agrarian government had wanted to outlaw all blockades, but the law was moderated by a new Liberal government in 1933. There were also serious plans for state adjudication of ballots on wage agreements. Bad enough in themselves, these regulations were seen by many in the movement as the thin edge of the wedge in defeating trade unionism, and thus laying the groundwork for the introduction of fascism in Norway.

DNA's *éminence grise* Martin Tranmæl put it like this at the 1933 conference: "The reaction that is most dangerous is not the fascist monkeys. They are easily seen through. The reactionary capitalist parties are much more dangerous in their attempts to create a Norwegian form of fascism."⁷⁹ And he added that the coming election would be crucial because if DNA did not advance significantly, it would be grist to the mill of its opponents and the result would be a reactionary or fascist period.⁸⁰ Only if the party seriously sought power and made its demands understandable, could that be avoided. Those demands were summed up in the slogan "all the people in work", and AFL naturally agreed and could play a full role in the mobilization for victory.

State of the labour movement

DNA had wind in its sails going into the 1933 election. At the end of 1932 the party

⁷⁷ AAB: Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1933, sak nr. 201-290, Da 0136, folder marked Samarbeidskomiteen sak nr. 235 1933.

⁷⁸ Berge Furre, *Norsk historie 1905-1940*, p. 203.

⁷⁹ *Protokoll over forhandlingene på Det norske Arbeiderpartis 29. ordinære landsmøte i Oslo 26-28 mai 1933* (Oslo 1934), p. 39.

⁸⁰ DNA Conference report 1933, pp. 43-44.

had 1, 879 chapters rising by 246 during 1933.⁸¹ In 1932 it had 87, 315 members, but there were 95, 327 by the end of 1933. Apart from reunification with the Social Democrats in 1927, there had not been such an expansion of the organization since 1918. In 1932 a new section of the labour movement had come into existence: the Workers' Educational Association, *Arbeidernes Opplysningsforbund* (AOF). (Previously the educational work had been coordinated by a board with members from the party and AFL.⁸²) AOF felt it played some part in the election of 1933 and was contributory to the resulting victory.⁸³ It encouraged labour organizations to run election instruction courses, sending materials for those attending free of charge from its offices.⁸⁴ 75 such meetings were held across the country with a total of 2, 416 course participants. During the campaign itself, AOF distributed the party election film entitled "All the People in Work" to about 70 chapters.⁸⁵

Party chairman Oscar Torp reviewed the progress since 1930 in his speech to conference. In that year, he emphasized, DNA had repeated its strong showing of 1927, and in the last three years AFL had grown by 26, 000 members and the party by 11, 000 members.⁸⁶ By the end of 1933, a month and a half after the election, AFL had a membership of 157, 524 (up from 153, 374 on 31 December 1932).⁸⁷ At the same time AUF had 21, 000 adherents in 410 chapters, which meant that 85 chapters were founded during 1933.⁸⁸ It continued expanding in conjunction with the election campaign when AUF organized its own tours around the nation, giving a total of 296 speeches. Its magazine *Arbeiderungdommen* was released in a new and improved format.

Of all these indicators for how the labour movement was progressing, the most crucial were the figures for AFL. This was not just because of the funding it made possible, but its financial outlays and growing membership proved that it was recovering from the great lockout of 1931, which had ended in a draw. That conflict had had the potential to

⁸¹ AAB: 'Det norske Arbeiderparti. Beretning 1933' in Det norske Arbeiderparti. Beretning 1930-33 marked 328(481)15 N81 be, p. 8.

⁸² DNA Conference report 1933, p. 11.

⁸³ AAB: 'Arbeidernes Opplysningsforbund 1933. Beretning for det første arbeidsåret' in Arbeidernes Opplysningsforbund beretning 1932-38 marked 374.2(481)Ar 15b, p. 3.

⁸⁴ AAB: AOF Annual report 1933, p. 32.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.

⁸⁶ DNA Conference report 1933, p. 7.

⁸⁷ Arbeidernes Faglige Landsorganisasjon. Beretning 1933. For sekretariatet ved Halvard Olsen, Alfred Madsen og Elias Volan (Oslo 1934), p. 137.

drain the coffers and scupper the organization of AFL since it lasted from February to August 1931, involving 60, 000 workers and resulting in a loss of 7.5 million working days.⁸⁹ (Another 26, 000 workers had been locked out for part of this period.⁹⁰) In contrast AFL was floored by the Great Strike of 1921, when it eventually had to accept cuts in wages of 17%, and in the aftermath of which it lost 50, 000 members or more than a third of its pre-conflict total.⁹¹ The lockout of 1931 had been part of employers' and their allies' attacks on the labour movement, which provided the impetus for AFL's participation in the 1933 election. Perhaps it was the most serious measure, as the Boycott Law ended up by being less inimical to labour than the "Workhouse Laws" of 1927, which specified the workhouse as punishment for whoever persecuted strikebreakers.

The influence of the press is harder to quantify than that of the trade unions, since it did not contribute financially but only ideologically to the campaign.⁹² It presents a mixed picture because on the one hand *Arbeiderbladet* increased its sales and subscriptions, particularly in the last six months of the year, but on the other DNA had two newspapers fewer in 1933 than three years before.⁹³ Out of its remaining 43 newspapers, 21 were dailies, one was published four times a week, 12 were published three times a week, eight were published twice a week and one was a weekly.⁹⁴ Since 1930 plans for a nationwide version of *Arbeiderbladet* had been realized, and *Fram* as it was called was distributed to 65, 000 households for some considerable time prior to the election.⁹⁵ In addition, DNA's magazine *The 20th Century (Det 20. Århundrede)* was issued ten times during the year,⁹⁶ *The Woman Worker (Arbeiderkvinnen)* 12 times a year, *The Labour Youth (Arbeiderungdommen)* every fortnight and *The Children's Magazine (Barnebladet)* once a month. The party press had a direct role to play in the election campaign. With funding from AFL, a bureau was set up to channel standardized written propaganda and pictures to

⁸⁸ DNA Annual report 1933, p. 48.

⁸⁹ Kjeldstadli, *Et splittet samfunn 1905-35*, p. 184.

⁹⁰ Furre, *Norsk historie 1905-1940*, p. 196.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

⁹² For labour press circulation see chapter 5, p. 254.

⁹³ DNA Annual report 1933, p. 50, p. 51.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁹⁶ The magazine's title was highly topical when it was first published in 1901 by the Oslo youth organization. It was later taken over by Oslo DNA and then by DNA centrally. Zachariassen, *Fra Marcus Thrane til Martin Tranmæl*, p. 136.

the press.⁹⁷

Planning the campaign

The funding from AFL enabled a very wide range of activities and sub-organizations to have money channelled towards them. Table 2.4 shows how the money was spent.⁹⁸

Table 2.4 DNA central expenditure 1933.

Item	Grant (kroner)
County- and district parties	126, 082. 55
The Party press	107, 769. 60
<i>Fram</i> (national version of <i>Arbeiderbladet</i>)	73, 088. 29
Electoral newspapers	19, 499. 73
Workers' Sports Association (AIF)	9, 125. 00
Labour Youth (AUF)	12, 950. 00
Women's sections	4, 687. 05
Workers' Educational Association (AOF)	10, 000.00
Brochures and flyers	81, 648. 70
The election film	28, 904. 50
Posters	6, 135. 26
Canvassing and meetings	47, 708. 12
Miscellaneous inc. grant to Forestry and Agricultural Workers' Union	23, 778. 48
Grand total	551, 377. 28

(Source: AAB: Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1933, sak nr. 553-754, Da 0139, folder marked Stortingsvalget Sak nr. 601 1933.)

⁹⁷ DNA Annual report 1933, p. 51.

⁹⁸ DNA's total expenditure was 551, 423. 45 kroner according to the most complete record in the archival source above, but the table has been quoted verbatim.

The reasoning behind the grant to the Forestry and Agricultural Workers' Union was that agitation in the countryside was particularly important to counteract the possible rise of fascism, to which DNA imagined peasants were especially susceptible.

Trade union involvement in the campaign was more extensive than in 1930. The day-to-day running of the campaign was in the hands of the central party and the county and local parties (especially Oslo DNA which was responsible for the most visible part of the national campaign). But the lines along which they worked had been drawn up by the Joint Committee of AFL and DNA, the Extended Finance Committee which supplanted the Joint Committee, along with the working executive of it. The Extended Finance Committee that was set up consisted of two representatives from the regional joint trade organization for Oslo and its environs, two from AFL's Secretariat, two from Oslo DNA, two from AIF, two from AUF, in addition to the Joint Committee itself.⁹⁹ The composition of the Extended Finance Committee was unanimously approved by the deciding body of AFL's Secretariat on 14 July 1933.¹⁰⁰ This meeting also agreed the financial arrangement for the funding of the election campaign, i.e. extra dues amounting to a daily wage for an employee, incumbent on every federation and to be paid to AFL as soon as possible. The formal justification for this— given in the undated, unsigned memorandum— had been stated in its earlier meeting of 3 July.¹⁰¹ The Boycott Law would put great difficulties in the way of trade union organization. The Secretariat wished to discuss the appropriate response of the organized working class, and it was agreed that all means should be utilized in the election campaign and to extend the workers' political and trade organizations.

Because DNA saw itself as a movement rather than just another party, there was no definitive point when ordinary activity ceased and electioneering started. Taking the long view, the annual report states that preparations for the election got underway as early as October 1932.¹⁰² In that month nationwide agitation was started to put the organization on a good footing in advance of the election year 1933. The momentum behind this carried through to January and February, which normally were dull months for the party. Enlisting

⁹⁹ Minutes of meeting of the Joint Committee 13 July 1933 in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1934, sak nr. 2-34, Da 0140, folder marked Finanskomiteen sak 525 1933 9 1934.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. AAB: Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, Protokoller 1933-1934, Ac 0009, AFL Forhandlingsprotokoll 1 Januar-31 Desember 1933, pp. 158-161.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 135-137.

new members and trying to expand the organization continued after the conference of May 1933 with notable meetings held during the summer. Even so, August 1933 marked the conscious start to the campaign with tours of the country.¹⁰³ The first wave of these tours was completed in the middle of September, according to party secretary Hjalmar Dyrendahl. After that campaigning would intensify with more tours, more stand-alone speeches and work done by the local parties.

The 1933 campaign was fought with seriousness and efficiency. The brochures for the election were to be printed in a million copies in total, the programme in half a million. There would be a special manifesto to women in addition to 200, 000 copies of "Women's Electoral News". Both the Labour Youth (AUF) and the Workers' Sports Association (AOF) were coming out with their own leaflets. In the countryside the party would send an election newspaper to every household, as would the party press in the towns. The central party had sent questionnaires to local branches to find out which households did not subscribe to a Labour newspaper. As evidence of the smooth running of the party machine, Dyrendahl mentioned that they received information about subscriptions in every local authority in Sogn og Fjordane in the West Country, which he adduced as an example of where DNA was weak. The trade union movement would print their own brochures, and every federation's magazine would have an election special.

The election

It was previously suggested that the number of speeches held in an election year acts as an index of how much effort was put into the election. This is despite many of those taking place long before the campaign. It is not an election statistic, therefore, but a total of 5, 578 speeches were given during 1933, compared with 4, 455 in 1930.¹⁰⁴ In reality the figure would be higher since not everything was reported, but that was also the case in 1930.¹⁰⁵ Most agitation took place from the middle of August and lasted until polling day on 16 October. In table 2.5 only the tours related to the campaign are included. The purpose

¹⁰² DNA Annual report 1933, p. 73.

¹⁰³ *Arbeiderbladet* 12 September 1933, p. 9.

¹⁰⁴ AAB: DNA Annual report 1933, p. 10.

¹⁰⁵ In the small county of Vestfold more than 100 speeches were given, but probably including some of those tabulated below. Sverre Hjertholm, *Arbeiderbevegelsen i Vestfold. Trekk fra den politiske og faglige arbeiderbevegelse 1906-1956* (Drammen, Vestfold DNA, 1956), pp. 217-218.

is again to present a country-wide overview to provide a balance to the main focus on Oslo and its environs. It is also useful to investigate whether there was a pattern to the areas chosen.

Table 2.5 Campaigning during August, September and October 1933.

Agitator	Area	Dates	No. of speeches	Notes
Oscar Nilssen	Hedmark	Sept-Oct	41	"Last month before election."
Thina Thorleifsen	Hedmark	October	7	
Johannes Bøe	Oppland	Sept-Oct	82	"Last month before election."
Lars Moen	Oppland	23 Sept-15 Oct	27	
Martin Smeby	Oppland	23 Sept-15 Oct	29	
Bjarne Borgan	Oppland	October	17	
Olav Steinnes	Telemark	21 Sept-15 Oct	32	
Alfred Udland	Vest-Agder	Sept-Oct	45	
Aasmund Kulien	Vest-Agder	October	10	
Torvald Haavardstad	Vest-Agder	Sept-Oct	19	
Torvald Haavardstad	Aust-Agder	Sept-Oct	30	
Torbjørn Henriksen	West and South Country	September	22	
Thina Thorleifsen	Rogaland	September	16	
I.K. Hognestad	Rogaland	17 Sept-15 Oct	41	
Johannes Bøe	Rogaland	Early September	19	
Gerhard Tothammer	Rogaland	Not stated	36	"Before the election."
Lars Moen	Buskerud	August	15	
Kornelius Bergsvik	Hordaland	21 Sept-15 Oct	37	
Knut Opdal	Sogn og Fjordane	October	29	
Trygve Lie	West and South Country	October	12	

Agitator	Area	Dates	No. of speeches	Notes
Halvard Olsen	West and South Country	October	9	
Halvor Storhaug	West Country	1 Sept-15 Oct	52	
Olav Steinnes	Sogn og Fjordane	17 Sept-1 Oct	20	
Olav Oksvik	Sogn og Fjordane	September	11	
Anders Lothe	Sogn og Fjordane	Sept-Oct	56	
P. Thorvik	Møre, Sogn og Fjordane	26 Aug-7 Sept	15	
Olav Sæter	Møre	September	23	
Peder Alsvik	North Møre	Not stated	27	"During election campaign."
N. P. Skrede	Romsdal	5 Sept-15 Oct	20	
Hans Ystgaard	North Møre	October	15	
Thina Thorleifsen	Sør Trøndelag	October	5	
Johan Nygaardsvold	Sør Trøndelag	Sept-Oct	25	Became PM in 1935.
Adolf Salbubæk	Sør Trøndelag	September	31	
Johan Wiik	Nord Trøndelag	20 Sept-15 Oct	32	
Andreas Graven	Nord Trøndelag	October	15	
Sverre Støstad	Nord Trøndelag	September	20	
Kristian Rothaug	Nord Trøndelag	September	15	
Bjarne Borgan	Nord Trøndelag	13 Aug-17 Sept	39	
Sigrid Syvertsen	Nordland and Nord Trøndelag	26 Aug-13 Sept	22	
Johan Nygaardsvold	North Norway	19 Aug-5 Sept	26	See above.
Johan Wiik	Nordland	September	34	
Andreas Moan	Nordland	13 Sept-15 Oct	39	
Olaf Johansen	Nordland	25 Aug-27 Sept	45	
Gitta Jønsson	Finmark	October	18	
Peder Holt	Finmark	October	8	
Kristian Berg	Finmark	20 Aug-16 Oct	79	
Fredrik Monsen	Finmark and Troms	5 Aug-12 Sept	52	

(Source: DNA Annual report 1933, pp. 10-18.)

In its annual report for 1933, unlike in 1930, DNA ordered its agitational tours by county, and table 2.5 proves that the party took the whole country in its stride. More than two-fifths of the party's campaigning took place in the counter-cultural and consequently difficult areas of the South and West Country, such as Agder, Rogaland, Hordaland, Sogn og Fjordane and Møre og Romsdal. In the north of the country, DNA's local weak spot Nordland received much more attention than Troms where the party was strong. Relatively little attention was paid to good counties for DNA like Buskerud and Telemark in the east of the country. They were visited by only one speaker each. There is no consistent pattern that the best counties were neglected. Nord Trøndelag was visited by six speakers during the election.

DNA saw itself as fighting fascism and reaction at the same time. Its crisis policies geared towards full employment and its organizational extension sought to undermine the appeal of fascism to ordinary people, and by combating the capitalist parties, it tried to stop the imposition of reactionary measures from above.¹⁰⁶ DNA's policy here, repeated from one of the closing statements of the 1930 campaign, was no mere trick to fool the voters. It genuinely believed in its own rhetoric about the danger posed by fascists and reactionaries, as evidenced by its calling for a Scandinavian conference of labour movements to discuss how to fight against fascism.¹⁰⁷ The perceived danger also provided the impetus behind DNA's own reconciliation with democracy. Until reunification with the Social Democrats in 1927, it had in principle believed in the dictatorship of the proletariat. Scepticism about bourgeois democracy had not entirely receded even in 1933, but as Tranmæl said at the conference referring to dictatorship, "In times like these we must not play with fire."¹⁰⁸ The new tactic was to blame the capitalist parties for being anti-democratic because they had taken away the right of those on the dole to be councillors, and DNA opined that their voting rights might be next.

¹⁰⁶ For a scholarly view identical to DNA's see Einhart Lorenz, *Arbeiderbevegelsens historie. En innføring. Norsk sosialisme i internasjonalt perspektiv. 2. del. 1930-1973* (Oslo, Pax, 1974), p. 18. He argues that fascism and reaction were not just represented by Quisling's National Socialists but by the other capitalist parties. Their "continual attacks on elementary civil rights" turned the labour movement into the protectors of democracy.

¹⁰⁷ Minutes of Joint Committee 16 November 1933 in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1933, sak nr. 201-290, Da 0136, folder marked Samarbeidskomiteen sak nr. 235 1933.

In its dealings with the public DNA began positing democracy as a laudable institution. One of its brochures was simply called "Democracy" and treated the subject in a complimentary manner as did "Society—The Voter's Reference Guide", which explained the political system. Rule by the people was set up against dictatorship, a state of affairs which should be avoided. Another brochure was called "Norway under the Greenland Dictatorship", which referred to privately funded Norwegian imperialism on Greenland. The title was a misnomer, but clearly signified that DNA did not agree with such adventurism. If democracy was no longer spurned, the explanation was that the party felt it could achieve something through parliamentary means.¹⁰⁹ This came out in other brochures produced for the election like "All the People in Work", "All the People's Struggle against Crisis and Need" and "The Road is Clear". With three remaining brochures "A Saturday Shopping Trip", "Out of the Speculators' Nets" and "The Farmer and the Election", these were printed in 960, 000 copies.¹¹⁰ Two resolutions from the conference on respectively the crisis in the countryside and fascism were printed in 200, 000 copies each. While 400, 000 copies of the programme were printed in the main Norwegian language, for the first time, another 70, 000 copies were made for *nynorsk* speakers. This was calculated to boost DNA's chances in the counter-cultural areas where the minority language *nynorsk* was often spoken. A booklet containing the programme of principles, working programme and manifesto were distributed in 5, 000 copies. There were thus vastly more electoral materials than three years before, but the above did not represent the totality of DNA's production. An election newspaper called "The People in Work" was sent to every household in the countryside, a total of 370, 000 copies.¹¹¹ In the towns grants from the election fund allowed Labour newspapers to be given away free to potential voters over a lengthy period.¹¹² 150, 000 copies of the women's newspaper were printed. AUF and AIF mass distributed election specials of their newspapers. In keeping with the desire to have a visible presence across the country, 150, 000 pins of red flags were distributed and three

¹⁰⁸ DNA Conference report 1933, p. 41.

¹⁰⁹ Or according to a different explanation, the labour movement found itself under such pressure due to the offensive of employers and their political allies that it was forced to accept democracy as a means of reducing, not abolishing, exploitation. Vidar Keul and Knut Kjeldstadli 'DNA— fra folkelig bevegelse til herskerapparat' in Kjeldstadli and Keul (eds.), *DNA—fra folkebevegelse til statsstøtte*, pp. 104-105.

¹¹⁰ DNA Annual report 1933, p. 74.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 74-75.

posters received a printing run of 60, 000. A total of 12 copies of the election film "All the People in Work" existed, of which five had sound, and 100, 000 copies of the election song were spread.

Finance

It was openly acknowledged that it was the generous financial support of AFL which made all of the above possible. But AFL not only funded the party centrally, it also gave direct aid to local branches and other groups with a stake in the outcome. At the height of the election campaign the Secretariat of AFL announced to the Extended Finance Committee that it had granted 10, 000 kroner to regional trade organizations for agitation.¹¹³ In the same meeting of the Committee a further 5, 500 kroner was granted to nine different regional joint trade union organizations (*samorganisasjoner*) for agitation during the election. *Bergen Arbeiderblad* received another 1, 000 kroner to "deliver special trade union notices for the election campaign," probably collating and printing this information in the newspaper. Many such grants could be adduced. These sums were specifically for electioneering, but more money was forthcoming as straight grants and may, or may not, have been spent on promoting DNA during the campaign.

With independent organizations receiving grants and having their own remits it was impossible to keep track of just what they did and how the money was spent. But AFL did try to keep some control of what was happening. AUF asked for 7, 950 kroner on top of the 5, 000 kroner which the Extended Finance Committee had budgeted for its use, and this was in fact granted.¹¹⁴ Before that, however, the chairmen (Alfred Madsen, here representing AFL, and Oscar Torp) were asked to look more closely at how the money had been spent. Thus a letter was written by Madsen to AUF on 27 September asking for further details, and AUF's answer provides real insight into how it ran its campaign.¹¹⁵

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 75.

¹¹³ Minutes of meeting of the working executive of the Extended Finance Committee 21 September 1933 in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1934, sak nr. 2-34, Da 0140, folder marked Finanskomitten sak 525 1933 9 1934.

¹¹⁴ Minutes of the working executive of the Extended Finance Committee 21 September 1933 in folder marked Finanskomiteen sak 525 1933 9 1934 in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1934, sak nr. 2-34, Da 0140.

¹¹⁵ Folder marked AUF agitasjon 1932-1933 in Archive: Arbeidernes Ungdomsfylking, Korrespondanse A-B, 1932-1956, Da 0002.

There were four elements to the organization's exertions: 1. tours in every region, 2. the printing of a separate poster, 3. a brochure containing its National Executive's address to the youth of the nation, and 4. the election issue of *Arbeiderungdommen*.¹¹⁶ As for the other components 5, 000 copies were printed of the poster and 80, 000 of the address to youth, though unlike the poster it had not yet been distributed to the chapters.¹¹⁷ The election issue of *Arbeiderungdommen* had been printed in 30, 000 copies, and was being sent out to the chapters.

Oslo

The nature of the sources again ensures that Oslo provides a lot of the details to complete the picture of the election of 1933. By the end of that year Oslo DNA had 129 chapters (up from 125 the year before) and 38, 004 members (up from 36, 501 in 1932).¹¹⁸ In addition AUF had ten chapters in the city.¹¹⁹ Like elsewhere the trade unions played a more active part in this election than in any preceding it.¹²⁰

It is possible to quantify the difference AFL made to the campaign in Oslo because the local party had originally budgeted for an expenditure of 50, 000 kroner in total.¹²¹ That was how much the party thought it would receive from individual trade unions, party members and the central party. When in fact the AFL levied extra dues amounting to 6 kroner for members in full-time employment and 3 kroner for part-time workers (equivalent to a daily wage), 40, 000 kroner (£ 2, 030) made its way to Oslo DNA from this source. Since most of the funds provided by AFL were spent where DNA's organizational structure was weak, this was a welcome contribution. With extra dues being levied, individual trade unions had less money with which to fund local electioneering, but even so Oslo DNA received 29, 890 kroner from this source. The money was either collected from members on a voluntary basis, granted by the trade union from its funds or, in one case, was the result of

¹¹⁶ *Loc. cit.*

¹¹⁷ One writer operates with the figure of 10, 000 posters, but the archival source suggests otherwise. Terje Halvorsen, *Partiets salt. AUFs historie* (Oslo, Pax, 2003), p. 175.

¹¹⁸ *Oslo Arbeiderparti. Beretning og regnskap 1933* (Oslo, DNA, 1931), p. 4.

¹¹⁹ Oslo DNA Annual report 1933, p. 35.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹²¹ Oslo DNA Annual report 1933, p. 22.

a levy on the trade union's members for yet more dues.¹²² Oslo DNA's expenses in this election amounted to 65, 210 kroner (£ 3, 310).¹²³

The electioneering in the nearby county of Akershus was in many respects as impressive as that in Oslo. Coordinated by a different local party it nevertheless managed to hold 18 large open-air meetings during the summer even in smaller towns.¹²⁴ Its canvassers also enrolled in a preparatory course before beginning the task, and were in action earlier than in Oslo. 50, 000 brochures had at an early stage been distributed to the local branches in minor towns along with extra copies of the local press. The number of meetings with speeches would grow in the run-up to polling day. About 60 meetings would take place in Aker alone during the election campaign (the town closest to Oslo, and actually part of its conurbation). Both local party members and well-known DNA figures like Oscar Torp and Martin Tranmæl would be speaking at meetings in the county.

In Oslo after the official opening of electioneering on Sunday 24 September there were public meetings every day until the election on 16 October, with the exception of Saturday 30 September and Saturday 14 October.¹²⁵ There was an increase of the level of activity with regard to meetings over 1930, but in that year also a very full list of meetings had been held. In 1933 the party held 121 meetings under its own auspices in Oslo with a total of 188 speeches.¹²⁶ This compares to 91 meetings with 148 speeches in 1930.¹²⁷ The main reason for the rise in the numbers is because the campaign started earlier with more events leading up to the formal opening of the election. Both the earlier open-air meetings and the indoor election meetings were very well attended. Oslo DNA estimated that 50, 000 people had been to those held outdoors and 52, 000 to the indoor meetings. The tally does not include attendance at the final open-air meeting on 17 September (28, 000 people), or the 45, 000 who turned up to the end of campaign rally on 15 October.¹²⁸ With a few exceptions all the official campaign meetings were full, and in most cases some people had

¹²² Cf. Oslo DNA Annual report 1933, pp. 57-58.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

¹²⁴ Interview with Akershus DNA election secretary Thor Høiland, *Arbeiderbladet* 29 September 1933, p. 10.

¹²⁵ Oslo DNA Annual report 1933, pp. 19-21.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

¹²⁷ Oslo DNA Annual report 1930., p. 35.

¹²⁸ Oslo DNA Annual report 1933, p. 19.

to be turned away.¹²⁹

The theatrical aspect of the campaign probably had some bearing on the outcome. The newly started Workers' Motor Club (*Arbeidernes Motorklubb*) arranged a procession of motorcycles through the town displaying the party's posters.¹³⁰ The day before the election 13, 200 small red flags were given to the children who attended meetings. 85, 000 copies of the election song were allotted in Oslo as a flyer. All the open-air meetings included torch-bearing boy scouts allied to the labour movement, also carrying red flags. Sunday 17 September marked the end of the first phase of the campaign. A mass party was held then at Young's Square featuring a speech by Magnus Nilssen, the parliamentarian.¹³¹ The climax of the campaign in Oslo, and a great show of strength by DNA to the country at large, was the final mass rally also at Young's Square on Sunday 15 October, the day before the election. 45, 000 people took part according to Oslo DNA's retrospective estimate.¹³² The adjoining streets were also crowded. Among other meetings one in Circus World Theatre had to close its doors an hour before the meeting was due to begin on account of every seat being taken. Several thousand people nevertheless stayed outdoors in the rain to hear the speeches and entertainment relayed from the theatre through loudspeakers.¹³³ The rally closely followed the precedent of 1930 with a torchlit parade, singing of the Internationale, etc. It certainly created a favourable impression, because the next time the Conservatives took a leaf out of DNA's book and held a rally themselves.¹³⁴

Electoral appeal in Oslo

As in 1930, there were events for special interest groups. There were 78 meetings for members of particular trade unions, not counted as Labour meetings although the local party did provide the speakers.¹³⁵ Included in this tally were three meetings for commercial

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

¹³⁰ Oslo DNA Annual report 1933, p. 22.

¹³¹ *Arbeiderbladet* 18 September 1933, p. 1.

¹³² Oslo DNA Annual report 1933, p. 19.

¹³³ And hundreds braved the rain in the small town of Rjukan, Telemark to hear the speeches in an equivalent rally. At Rjukan 500 youths took part in the torchlit parade, and entertainment was provided by the party's "Election Cabaret". Heidar 'The Deradicalisation of Working Class Parties', Ph. D. thesis, University of London 1980, p. 320. It would have been interesting to have more instances of final rallies across the nation.

¹³⁴ Rolf Danielsen, *Borgerlig oppdemningspolitikk 1918-1940. Høyres historie 2* (Oslo, Cappelen, 1984), pp. 294-295.

¹³⁵ Oslo DNA Annual report 1933, p. 18.

clerks in association with the local chapters of their union and one for railway clerks (civil servants). In addition, there were meetings for women, convened with the women's section, youth, young sportsmen, a meeting for students with the student section of DNA, two parties for maids and five parties for the elderly (organized in tandem with the women's section). A novelty was meetings held in cinemas with a speaker and a free showing of the election film.¹³⁶ One trade union meeting attested to the unprecedented interest with which this election was followed, namely that for workers in hotels and restaurants, which was held at night.¹³⁷ Invitations to the parties for maids were circulated to 10, 300 addresses along with a ballot paper and letter.¹³⁸ Another 14, 000 letters were sent to the elderly with a ballot paper, and 11, 000 youths who were voting for the first time received a letter containing a brochure written by AUF.

As the main party newspaper, naturally *Arbeiderbladet* was utilized to gain votes for DNA. There were occasional notices seeking to gain support from white-collar workers like in 1930.¹³⁹ These attempted to show real economic advantages accruing from increased support for DNA, counteracting perceived status considerations which might make them vote for a capitalist party. There were also the beginnings of concern about agricultural workers. Their bad living conditions were brought up including low wages, long working hours and poor housing.¹⁴⁰ What is interesting about the electoral appeals in Oslo is that they provided a trial run for the national campaign three years later. Apart from women and the young no attention was paid in the written propaganda to the other categories of people. That all changed in 1936 when maids, hotel and restaurant staff, the elderly, clerks and agricultural workers each received a brochure to themselves.

The end of election

On this occasion DNA was rewarded for its efforts. The outcome of the election was the opposite of 1930 with every capitalist party stumbling, DNA advancing greatly and even the Communists improving their performance a little.

¹³⁶ *Arbeiderbladet* 9 October 1933, p. 16.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹³⁸ Oslo DNA Annual report 1933, p. 22.

¹³⁹ E.g. 5 September, p. 12; 12 October, p. 6.

¹⁴⁰ *Arbeiderbladet* 13 October 1933, p. 10.

Table 2.6 The parliamentary election 1933.

Party	Percentage of votes (change from 1930)	Parliamentary seats (change from 1930)
Liberals	17.6% (-3.4%)	25 (-9)
Conservatives	21.8% (-8.2%)	31 (-13)
Agrarians	13.9% (-2.0%)	23 (-2)
DNA	40.1% (+8.7%)	69 (+22)
Communists	1.8% (+0.1%)	0 (0)

(Source: Berge Furre, *Norsk historie 1905-1940*, p. 320)

With 69 out of 150 seats, DNA was getting close to a majority in Parliament. Its interpretation was that town and country had given it a clear vote of confidence and that the election had been a damning indictment of reaction.¹⁴¹ It particularly thanked women and the young for what they had done during the campaign and for their votes.¹⁴² Although it did not receive a majority, three days after the election DNA's Central Committee agreed that the party should ask for power. A letter was sent to the Liberal Government of Johan Ludwig Mowinckel requesting its immediate resignation, but he refused, claiming that Parliament must decide the issue when it was summoned in due course. In the end parliamentary guile had to be utilized by DNA, and with the break up of the capitalist united front over the crisis in the countryside, Johan Nygaardsvold was asked to form a Labour government in March 1935.

Conclusion: The 1933 election

Because the campaign, particularly in Oslo, had been well run also in 1930, it does not leap to the eye that the contest of 1933 would necessarily improve the fortunes of DNA. But there were some important differences. In 1930 DNA spent 36, 380 kroner on its

¹⁴¹ *Arbeiderbladet* 17 October 1933, p. 1.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 3.

campaign in Oslo, in 1933 the figure was almost twice as high —65, 210 kroner (£ 3, 310).¹⁴³ Election preparations went on for longer, there were more meetings, more publications, more props and a higher numbers of canvassers (showing greater enthusiasm independent of funding since they were not paid). Across the country AFL's intervention and much more generous funding made a profound difference because most of the money was channelled to undeveloped areas for the party. The figures for central party expenditure speak volumes— 551, 400 kroner in 1933, while it had only 75, 000 kroner at its disposal in 1930. The campaign was planned and run initially by the Joint Committee of AFL and DNA, then by the Extended Finance Committee which was its extension. The latter body disproportionately contained people from the capital. With increased AFL involvement came greater central control. In 1930 the local papers were given some money for the election months and told to get on with it. In 1933 they were sent standardized written propaganda and pictures for inclusion in their editions. AUF, and possibly other organizations which went over budget, were asked to state on what the extra money would be spent. On the other hand, when component parts of the labour movement such as a particular joint trade organization asked for funds, they were often given some with no questions asked. Consequently, it cannot be said with certainty that the money was spent on electioneering. Co-operation between local branches and the central party was more about effective campaigning than control. On the basis of returned questionnaires from the districts, DNA could pinpoint who should receive free subscriptions to *Fram*, which was the national edition of *Arbeiderbladet*. The regional parties were still allowed great autonomy to campaign, within broad parameters set by the Extended Finance Committee. Thus in Oslo the local party appealed much more to clerks and non-unionized workers like maids and waiters than was customary nationally. The regional parties paid for electoral materials to DNA centrally, but since they were given grants from the same source, this was just a means of ensuring efficiency.

Psychologically the attitude to electioneering was more positive in 1933 than in 1930. In 1930 DNA wanted to do well, but had seemingly reverted to ideas of extra-parliamentary action as the way forward. In 1933, by contrast, one of its slogans was "The majority and governmental power to Labour", and it felt it had to do well in order to save

¹⁴³ Oslo DNA Annual report 1930, p. 47; Oslo DNA Annual report 1933, p. 55.

itself, the class for which it stood and maybe the petite bourgeoisie of the countryside to which it had devoted so much attention. As DNA and AFL wrote in their joint May Day manifesto: "It cannot be denied that the victory of fascism in Germany casts a shadow over today's demonstration [...] Democracy and the labour movement have thereby suffered a great blow which has put their very existence at stake."¹⁴⁴ Still not fully believing in the concept of democracy, DNA undertook in its own mind to act as its saviour.

Background to the 1936 election

The salient features of the campaign in 1933 had organizationally been the much greater support from AFL and the marshalling of DNA's forces under the theme of "all the people in work", a constantly repeated slogan which was easy to understand. The novelty in 1936 was that the party had been in government since March 1935. A deal with the Agrarians had allowed a Labour government to be formed.¹⁴⁵ It sought to stimulate the economy by fiscal measures and putting people in work. The difficulties of farmers were addressed through a package of subsidies and a measure to increase the demand for butter. But DNA was forced to accept a sales tax, which of course acted against the expansion of the economy. Its long-standing agricultural policy had been to improve conditions for the poorer and middling cultivators, but with the Agrarians setting the terms the richer farmers benefited more.

In any case new tactics were necessary.¹⁴⁶ DNA argued that its counter-crisis policies were working, but that it needed a majority to implement them fully. For instance, it had a poster proclaiming that "80, 000 unemployed demand a Labour majority" (see illustration 6). The capitalist parties would concentrate on hindering DNA gaining that majority. (In fact, especially the Conservatives would once again try to unite the capitalist

¹⁴⁴ DNA Annual report 1933, p. 31.

¹⁴⁵ See Harald Berntsen (ed.), *Johan Nygaardsvold. Dagbøker 1918-48 og utvalgte brev og papirer 1916-52* (Oslo, Aschehoug, 1998). Nygaardsvold's diary entries for the 4th, 10th and 27th March 1935 describe the emerging consensus with the Agrarians (p. 102, p. 105). E.g. 4 March, "I understood these terms to be: high subsidies for corn, butter to cost 3 kroner a kilogram and independence for the milk, pork and egg associations. [...] They will accept somewhat higher expenditure against the crisis, but in return we have to accept a sales tax and everything they demand for agriculture."

¹⁴⁶ Although some were repeated from 1933. Nygaardsvold continued to claim that "the choice is between Socialism and Nazi-ism". The reasoning was that without DNA's crisis policies fascism would triumph and that the capitalist parties were flirting with Nazi-ism. Odd Sverre Norrøne, 'Arbeiderpartiet og Stortingsvalgkampen i 1936', Cand. Philol. thesis, University of Oslo 1978, p. 90.

parties in a scaremongering campaign, but it did not work anymore.¹⁴⁷) This time, probably unlike 1930, DNA welcomed being the centre of attention and wanted the election to be a referendum on its government.¹⁴⁸ The Agrarians had co-operated in the counter-crisis measures, but DNA must point out that they had acted as a brake on these. In 1936, unlike on the two previous occasions, there was complete harmony between electoral appeal in the capital and nationally. Nevertheless, since all the efforts at gaining support from the middle classes described below pertained to Oslo, the information has been placed here rather than in chapter 4.

The campaign was even better funded than in 1933. This was despite DNA being in serious pecuniary difficulties merely a year before the election. On 8 August 1935 Oscar Torp gave an ultimatum to the AFL Secretariat: unless 25, 000 kroner (£ 1, 250) were paid to DNA by 10 o'clock the next day, its activities would cease. He also demanded to know how much AFL had received from its increase of dues for members, and wanted assurances that the money would not be spent on settling AFL debts.¹⁴⁹ No explanation exists for why this problem had arisen. The money was indeed forthcoming, the payment being sanctioned by AFL vice-chairman Konrad Nordahl as there was no time to call a meeting of the Secretariat. And on 20 September 1935 AFL paid another 50, 000 kroner to DNA as a contribution to the latter's press and educational work.¹⁵⁰ Because almost all of the election campaign was paid for by AFL and its federations, however, the actual finances of DNA do not matter much. 1936 proves the limits of money in attaining political objectives. Although DNA made some progress, it did not achieve the majority it wanted despite an unprecedented level of spending. Possible reasons why will be discussed in the conclusion. The above situation also illustrates DNA's total financial dependence on the Trade Union Confederation. Only with serious funding from AFL was it able to establish itself at above 40% of the votes and thus become the governing party. On the other hand, AFL obviously needed DNA to wield influence on political matters so the relationship cut both ways.

¹⁴⁷ Lorenz, *Arbeiderbevegelsens historie. 2. del. 1930-1973*, p. 51.

¹⁴⁸ Brochure by Arbeidernes Opplysningsforbund, p. 1 of third manuscript in folder marked AUF agitasjon 1936-1938 in Archive: Arbeidernes Ungdomsfylking, serie Korrespondanse A-B, 1935-1959, Da 0003.

¹⁴⁹ Letter from I. B. Aase to the AFL Secretariat 13 August 1935 in folder marked Det norske Arbeiderparti Sak nr. 173 1935 106 1936 (304, 1934) in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1935, sak nr. 172-270, Da 0155.

¹⁵⁰ Letter from I. B. Aase to DNA 20. September 1935 in *loc. cit.*

State of the movement

The contest of 1936 exceeded the previous two in scope and dimension. Throughout the year there was an intensive recruiting and training drive, so that 424 new chapters and 20, 783 new members were brought into the party.¹⁵¹ By the end of the year DNA had 3,146 branches and 142, 790 members. The areas organizationally most problematic for the party, i.e. Vest-Agder, Rogaland and Nordland, were worked on from the beginning of the year.¹⁵² The first two were counter-cultural, while Labour support just had not taken off in Nordland. Work was also done in areas where DNA support was high, but the organization not correspondingly strong. That was the case for parts of Østfold and Oppland. AFL was expanding rapidly and was attempting to bring in new groups like fishermen, trappers and maids, spending at least 20, 000 kroner in so doing.¹⁵³ Former domestic servant Thyra Hansen was employed by AFL on 15 September, during the election, to lead the organizing of maids and she travelled on a coastal tour between 26 September and 13 October.¹⁵⁴ By the end of the year 19 chapters of her trade union for maids existed. The whole of AFL grew from 224, 340 members at the end of 1935 to 276, 992 members on 31 December 1936. As for AUF the organization grew to around 32, 000 members during 1936, a total of 122 new chapters were set up, but 23 were forced to close.¹⁵⁵

Contrary to the other indicators, one fewer newspaper existed in 1936 than in 1933.¹⁵⁶ On the other hand, DNA now had 26 dailies as against 21 during the last election. The five new papers were located in Oppland, Østfold, Nordland, and two in Møre og Romsdal.¹⁵⁷ This might indicate that DNA's focus on the counter-cultural areas was paying off, as only the first two were in traditionally good DNA areas. All the special interest publications continued as before, except that The Children's Magazine (*Barnebladet*) had changed its name to *Fram-Kameraten*. For the first time the children's organization,

¹⁵¹ AAB: Det norske Arbeiderparti. *Beretning 1936* marked 329(481)15 N81be, p. 4.

¹⁵² DNA Annual report 1936, p. 8.

¹⁵³ Arbeidernes Faglige Landsorganisasjon. *Beretning 1936. For sekretariatet ved Olav Hindahl og Lars Evensen* (Oslo 1937), p. 4.

¹⁵⁴ AFL Annual report 1936, p. 34.

¹⁵⁵ DNA Annual report 1936, p. 86.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 78; cf. DNA Annual report 1933, p. 51.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. DNA Annual report 1936, pp. 79-80; DNA Annual report 1933, pp. 51-52.

Framfylkingen, played a part in the election as drama groups, choruses, etc. during the entertainment part of the meetings.¹⁵⁸

A summary of the labour movement's better organizational standing can be found in a table reproduced from a booklet by AOF.

Table 2.7 Membership in labour organizations 1933 and 1936.

Organization	1933	1936
DNA	95, 000	122, 000
AFL	157, 000	225, 000
AUF	21, 000	30, 000
AIF	36, 000	62, 000

(Source: Brochure by AOF in folder marked AUF agitasjon 1936-1938 in Archive: Arbeidernes Ungdomsfylking, Korrespondanse A-B, 1935-1959, Da 0003.)

(The figures do not exactly match those given above because it was earlier in the year.) Using the index of the number of speeches given during the year, a measure of the intensity of the campaign, in 1936 there were 8, 197 officially recognized ones compared to 5, 578 in 1933.¹⁵⁹

Financial preparations

On 20 February 1936 a joint meeting of the AFL Secretariat and the DNA Central Committee met to discuss the plans for the election and its financing.¹⁶⁰ As in 1933 it was decided to levy 6 kroner on every AFL member in full-time work and 3 kroner on those in part-time work. This was confirmed in a joint meeting of AFL federations with representatives of DNA present.¹⁶¹ The latter meeting also agreed a budget of 800, 000

¹⁵⁸ DNA Annual report 1936, p. 88.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

¹⁶⁰ Minutes of 20 February 1936 meeting in folder marked Stortingsvalgkampen 1936 sak nr. 301 1936 in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs Saksarkiv 1936, sak nr. 280-482, Da 0167.

¹⁶¹ Minutes of 28 February 1936 meeting in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, Protokoller 1936-37,

kroner (£ 40, 200) with which the trade unions would fund DNA's electoral campaign.¹⁶² AFL would grant 300, 000 kroner directly and the remaining 500, 000 kroner would be paid by the federations, themselves deciding whether to levy extra dues on their members or to pay straight from their funds.

This vast sum did not represent the entirety of AFL's support in the contest. For instance all of the district organizations of AFL were granted sums ranging from 250 kroner (£ 12 6s) in the case of Romsdal to 2, 000 kroner (£ 100) in the case of Bergen and its environs (usually 500 or 1, 000 kroner) for electoral purposes once the contest was underway.¹⁶³ Fairly large sums were directed towards the party press, an average of 2, 640 kroner (c. £ 130) a newspaper included in the funding for DNA.¹⁶⁴

Planning the campaign

Through the Joint Committee AFL played a vital part in the framing of the campaign. Early in the year the draft of a plan went out to all the party's local branches.¹⁶⁵ The plan laid out specific tasks to be performed at various stages of the year. January and February would witness a series of public meetings connected with the Labour Government's budget proposals. Posters would be put up with the slogan "Better conditions through the Labour Government." A short brochure would be published with extracts from the debate following the state opening of Parliament, along with a flyer about taxation on the interest of bank accounts. AOF would be responsible for these. At the same time work would start in the West Country and Nordland on gathering addresses for free subscriptions to *Fram* during the election. These were some of DNA's least successful areas.

March and April were the months for the county parties and local branches to draw up plans for the election based on the main framework. These plans, taking local conditions into account, were to be sent to DNA centrally. The necessary committees were to be set

Sekretariatets protokoll 1936, Ac 0011, pp. 84-85.

¹⁶² The actual grant amounted to 864, 306 kroner. This is the figure upon which the calculation in chapter 5 is based. Cf. Sekretariatets protokoll 1937, p. 24 in *loc. cit.*

¹⁶³ Minutes of meeting of working executive of Extended Finance Committee, 2 September 1936 in folder marked Stortingsvalgkampen 1936 sak nr. 301 1936 in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1936, sak nr. 280-482, Da 0167.

¹⁶⁴ List in *loc. cit.* Reproduced as appendix 3 showing payments in 1933 and 1936.

¹⁶⁵ Folder marked Samarbeidskomiteen in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs Saksarkiv 1936, sak nr. 33-45, Da 0163.

up, the tasks apportioned and co-operation with the trade unions, the youth organization, the sports association and the rest of the labour movement initiated. From 15 to 22 March there would be a nationwide campaign to gain new subscribers to the party press. May Day had to be prepared as an important occasion in "the workers' struggle to win the political power." May was also the time to begin collecting addresses for the free subscriptions to *Fram* in all areas other than the West Country and Nordland. The party conference would be held from 22-24 May and was set to be an integral part of the wider campaign. Organizational and technical questions would be discussed by representatives of the county and local parties invited to the conference.

In June, July and August, and preferably as early as possible, nominations for the party lists for Parliament should be arranged. As in 1933, these summer months would otherwise be dedicated to open-air meetings.¹⁶⁶ September and October were the months of actual electioneering and canvassing. This would follow along the same lines as in 1930 and 1933, except that the indoor meetings would have more theatricals, including performances by the children's organization *Framfylkingen*. The end of the election campaign should be marked by special events, preferably outdoors, across the country (as had been done in Oslo on the previous two occasions).

The quoted document by itself answers the question of how DNA fought the election of 1936. It also lays bare the extent of central control involved. On this occasion, the centre wished to approve the campaigning plans decided upon by the regional parties. In the absence of documents from 1930 and 1933 it cannot be stated with certainty whether this was a new development. There is a good reason for thinking it may be. This time the party had the advantage of knowing exactly what its goal was: to gain seven new parliamentary seats, giving it a majority. According to AOF these seven were most likely to be gained in Oppland, Vestfold, Aust-Agder, Hordaland, Sogn og Fjordane, Møre og Romsdal and Nordland.¹⁶⁷ It followed that the county-wide campaigns in these places were especially important. DNA therefore had to make sure the relevant plans were up to scratch.

¹⁶⁶ These could be spectacular affairs. On 21 June 1936 an outdoor meeting was held at Borrehaugene in Vestfold attracting 10,000 participants. During its 1933 campaign, meanwhile, a similar meeting held on 20 August at Slottsfjellet in the same county numbered 4,500 spectators. Hjertholm, *Arbeiderbevegelsen i Vestfold*, p. 226, p. 224.

¹⁶⁷ Brochure by AOF, p. 1 in folder marked AUF agitasjon 1936-1938. Archive: Arbeidernes Ungdomsfylking, Korrespondanse A-B 1935-1959, Da 0003.

And if parties in other counties where the chances of winning additional seats were lower made too costly plans, DNA could advise that they cut back before awarding them grants. If rightly conceived, this is still not a staggering degree of control from the centre.

By 1936 AOF, the party's educational branch, had come of age and played an important role in the election. Not only did it hold courses on electoral preparations and for canvassers,¹⁶⁸ but it was instrumental in deciding on the means of propaganda to be used. Haakon Lie, later a legendary party secretary, was its leader, and he talked about the issue in a debate at the party conference. He argued that there should be a manifesto, because he thought it essential to crystallize the campaign around simple themes that anyone could understand.¹⁶⁹ He pointed to the success of Lenin's propaganda before the Revolution, and the example of Hitler before the Nazi seizure of power in Germany.¹⁷⁰ DNA had long ago learnt the art of appealing not just to reason but to the feelings through songs, flags, torchlit parades, insignias, etc., but Lie wanted to go even further and tone down the politics in favour of creating an impression.¹⁷¹ He demanded shorter political speeches, but more decorations such as strategically placed red cloths, banners, posters, pictures of labour leaders and flowers, all in good lighting. "Even the frame around the meeting must appeal to the feelings and create the atmosphere which is the first precondition for a successful meeting."¹⁷² There must be music at every meeting, he stated, and more advance publicity.¹⁷³ Basically Lie wanted every meeting, wherever it was held, to be a miniature copy of the rallies of which the party arranged a few during each election. He quoted Finn Moe, a party intellectual and editor of its magazine *The 20th Century (Det 20. Århundrede)*, who had formulated five rules of propaganda: 1. it must be simple and easy to understand, 2. it must make a sympathetic impression, 3. it must not rest, 4. it must be

¹⁶⁸ Arbeidernes Oplysningsforbund 1936. Beretning for det femte arbeidsåret, pp. 16-17 in Arbeidernes Oplysningsforbund. *Beretning 1932-38*.

¹⁶⁹ DNA Conference report 1936, pp. 65-66.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

¹⁷¹ Thus when the party consciously started focusing on the aesthetic side of its message in 1934, it claimed its propaganda was developing rather than changing. The object of the "new" methods was for DNA to extend its appeal among the masses and to create "belief and enthusiasm." Lill-Ann Jensen 'I hammerens tegn. Nye agitasjons- og propagandaformer i norsk arbeiderbevegelse på 1930-tallet', *Arbeiderhistorie* 2002, pp. 103-104.

¹⁷² Brochure by AOF, p. 3 in second manuscript in folder marked AUF agitasjon 1936-1938. Archive: Arbeidernes Ungdomsfylking, Korrespondanse A-B, 1935-1959, Da 0003.

¹⁷³ *Loc. cit.* p. 3, p. 5 of second manuscript.

agile, and 5. it must be positive.¹⁷⁴ More controversially, long after the events described here, Lie explained that he and others had read Hitler's *Mein Kampf* over and over again to gather ideas for the running of the campaign.¹⁷⁵

Because DNA was not just a party but part of a wider movement that represented the working class, it had the ability to create a sense of belonging. The labour movement consisted of people with very similar life experiences, and it could offer social and recreational activities to suit anyone. During elections it sought to draw others in, often by relaxing its self-evident bonds to the working class, talking about "the working people" or "the little people" instead. Of course the policies mattered, and they were to the benefit of these people, but the practical policies had not changed so much since 1918 when the party was less popular electorally. It was by regaining its role as the party of moderate, ordinary workers and small property owners through reunification with the Social Democrats, as well as its impressive campaigning, that it grew. In 1936, incidentally, the Communists fielded candidates in Bergen only because it wanted to enable its supporters elsewhere to vote DNA.¹⁷⁶

AUF also buckled down to a long campaign. Asking for 5, 000 kroner (£ 250) as an initial payment, it outlined its plans to the Joint Committee of AFL and DNA.¹⁷⁷ During spring there would be instructional tours to the local chapters to put them on a footing for the election. Among other things, its newspaper *Arbeiderungdommen* would be issuing a special election edition in at least 100, 000 copies. There would be youth meetings across the country with speeches by AUF, in which participants would be handed a slim brochure containing an appeal to young voters. A standardized programme for these meetings would be worked out by AUF's propaganda section and sent to the organizers. Lastly it intended to

¹⁷⁴ *Loc. cit.* p. 2 of second manuscript.

¹⁷⁵ Norrøne, 'Arbeiderpartiet og Stortingsvalgkampen i 1936', Cand. Philol. thesis, University of Oslo 1978, p. 20.

¹⁷⁶ The Communists attacked DNA in writings like Arvid Hansen, *Arbeiderbevegelsens politiske kurs* (Oslo, Internasjonalt arbeiderforlag, 1936). But their criticism was tempered by actually wanting the Labour Government to continue. After finding faults with its budget, the book declared: "But this does not mean that we attack the Labour Government. We certainly do not want a bourgeois government in the present government's place [...] Compared to previous capitalist governments the current government is in several ways an improvement." (p. 14.) Bergen was a Communist stronghold based on their being the leading Socialist party there for some years after the split from DNA in 1923. Finn Olstad, *Arbeiderklassens vekst og fall. Hovedlinjer i 100 års norsk historie* (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1991), p. 101.

¹⁷⁷ Letter from AUF to Joint Committee 2 March 1936 in folder marked Stortingsvalgkampen 1936 sak nr. 301 1936 in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs aksarkiv 1936 sak nr. 280-482, Da 0167.

try forming more theatre troupes (known as "drama gangs" from a Russian model) for entertainment at the election meetings. Estimated costs for these plans amounted to 15, 500 kroner. The request for money was passed on to the Extended Finance Committee.¹⁷⁸ In the event, all of the ideas mentioned above came to fruition. 290, 000 copies of the brochure for youth were printed, as were 150, 000 copies of *Arbeiderungdommen's* election issue.¹⁷⁹ Additionally, the Oslo and Akershus chapters organized a course for its members on how to fight the election with the help of AOF.

The meeting of the Joint Committee of AFL and DNA on 14 February 1936 was the first discussing the campaign for which records are available. The above-mentioned monthly plan was laid before it, along with the question of funding.¹⁸⁰ The plan was discussed and accepted with some remarks that are not further specified. It was suggested that the election should be led by an Extended Finance Committee as on the two previous occasions.¹⁸¹ The day-to-day running of the campaign would be in the hands of DNA centrally. A meeting on 1 April 1936 suggested that 100, 000 kroner be set aside for the working executive of the Finance Committee for grants to various projects preparatory to the campaign. It may have been from this sum that AUF received what it needed, as both the April meeting and one on 7 March had items on the agenda relating to the organization's application for money.¹⁸² At the second meeting the Workers' Sports Association (AIF) also claimed 5, 000 kroner (£ 250) as an advance on its election time payout. This was in keeping with a plan made up by one of its leaders, Rolf Hofmo, who wanted the campaign to start earlier than in 1933 and for the two youth organizations AUF and AIF to be involved from the start.¹⁸³ Apart from the election the Joint Committee devoted a lot of time to discussing and implementing the unionization of maids, fishermen,

¹⁷⁸ Letter from Joint Committee to AUF 19 March 1936 in *loc. cit.*

¹⁷⁹ DNA Annual report 1936, p. 86.

¹⁸⁰ Minutes of Joint Committee 14 February 1936 in folder marked Samarbeidskomiteen in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1936, sak nr. 33-45, Da 0163.

¹⁸¹ Cf. DNA Annual report 1936, p. 57. There called "Election Committee".

¹⁸² The issue, like the funding, was decided at a meeting of the federations 28 February 1936. Folder marked Representantskapet sak nr. 244 1936 in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1936, sak nr. 132-275, Da 0166.

¹⁸³ Letter from AIF to AFL Secretariat and DNA Central Committee dated 17 December 1935 in folder marked Arbeidernes Idrettsforbund sak nr. 113 1935 in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1935, sak nr. 71-113, Da 0153.

farm workers, smallholders and the unemployed.¹⁸⁴

The Extended Finance Committee was inaugurated on 1 April.¹⁸⁵ Two weeks later it accepted the applications of AUF and AIF for 5, 000 kroner each.¹⁸⁶ It also guaranteed that 100, 000 kroner be put into an account named election fund 1936, in accordance with the Joint Committee's wishes. This money would preferably have been received from the federations, but AFL clearly wanted the funds to be available early on for the pre-election campaign. Five days later it was decided that AFL should open the account with 100, 000 kroner itself, if it was willing.¹⁸⁷ A late meeting also considered whether to produce a giant poster of Nygaardsvold, and this did go ahead.¹⁸⁸ DNA wished to capitalize on the trust and the perceived level-headedness associated with its chief of government.

The election

As before central direction lay behind the scheme of veteran speakers being sent across the country. Although DNA claimed to believe in the concept of a year long campaign, in the table below only those tours forming part of the orthodox electoral contest have been included. In listing them the aim is to present a snapshot of the national campaign.

Table 2.8 Campaigning during August, September and October 1936.

Agitator	Area	Dates	No. of speeches	Notes
Oscar Nilssen	Hedmark	17 Sept-18 Oct	35	
P.E. Vorum	Hedmark	October	12	"Last week before election."

¹⁸⁴ Cf. Minutes 14 February, 1 April (maids), 15 April (fishermen), 28 May (farm workers), 3 July (smallholders), 18 August (maids), 12 October (farm workers), 2 September (the unemployed). Also see 7 November (smallholders, maids) and letter from DNA to the Joint Committee asking it to discuss a plan to organize farm workers, fishermen, farmers and smallholders dated 26 November 1936. Folder marked Samarbeidskomiteen sak nr. 37 1936 in Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1936, sak nr. 33-45, Da 0163.

¹⁸⁵ Minutes of Extended Finance Committee 1 April 1936 in folder marked Stortingsvalgkampen 1936 sak nr. 301 1936, Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1936 nr. 280-482, Da 0167.

¹⁸⁶ Minutes of Extended Finance Committee 15 April 1936. *Loc. cit.*

¹⁸⁷ Minutes of Extended Finance Committee 20 April 1936. *Loc. cit.*

¹⁸⁸ Minutes of Extended Finance Committee 2 September 1936. *Loc. cit.*

Agitator	Area	Dates	No. of speeches	Notes
Martin Smeby	Oppland	October	25	
Olav Meisdalshagen	Oppland	October	11	
Lars Moen	Oppland	September	16	
Lars Moen	Oppland	October	34	
Olaf Johansen	Oppland	October	7	"Last week before election."
Egil Hernes	Oppland	October	15	
Johan Jensen	Oppland	September	9	
Johan Jensen	Buskerud	Sept-Oct	31	
Konrad Knudsen	Buskerud	Not stated	30	"During election campaign."
Nils Steen	Buskerud	Sept-Oct	27	
T. Haavardstad	Telemark	September	20	
Olav Versto	Telemark	Sept-Oct	42	
Olav Oksvik	Aust-Agder	September	16	
T. Haavardstrand	Aust-Agder	October	31	
Nils Hjelmtveit	Aust-Agder	Sept-Oct	16	
Olaf Johansen	Vest-Agder	September	35	
P. Thorvik	South Country	October	12	
Konrad Nordahl	Rogaland, South Country	October	21	
Nils Hjelmtveit	Hordaland, Rogaland	20-27 September	9	
A. G. Tothammer	Rogaland	1 Sept-18 Oct	57	
I. K. Hognestad	Rogaland	15 Sept-18 Oct	40	
Sverre Krogh	Hordaland	October	23	
Neimi Lagerstrøm	Hordaland	September	14	
Olav Vegheim	Buskerud	26 Aug-10 Sept	17	
Isak Flatabø	Hordaland	Not stated	33	"During election campaign."
Bjarne Borgan	Hordaland	Sept-Oct	40	
Alfred Hjeltestad	Hordaland	October	21	

Agitator	Area	Dates	No. of speeches	Notes
Kornelius Bergsvik	Hordaland	October	33	
Ole Jensen Rong	Hordaland	15 Aug-19 Oct	34	"Until the election."
Trygve Bratteli	Sogn og Fjordane	October	20	
Anders Lothe	Sogn og Fjordane	22 Aug-18 Oct	84	
Lars Moen	Sogn og Fjordane	September	15	
Johan Jensen	Sogn og Fjordane	19 Aug-9 Sept	23	
Johannes Bøe	South Møre	September	21	
Oskar Andersen	South Møre	September-October	20	
Oskar Andersen	Romsdal	September-October	15	
Lars Sandnes	South Møre	16-27 Sept	17	
Peder Alsvik	Møre og Romsdal	Not stated	31	"During election campaign."
Johan Wiik	Romsdal	September	17	
N. P. Skrede	Møre og Romsdal	Sept-Oct	31	
Ivar Aarseth	Romsdal	September	20	
Bjarne Borgan	North Møre	August-September	25	
Oscar Nilssen	North Møre	August	13	
A. R. Skarholt	Trøndelag	Sept-Oct	70	
Harald Langhelle	Sør Trøndelag	October	11	
Adolf Salbubæk	Sør Trøndelag	Not stated	54	"During election campaign."
Johan Wiik	Nord Trøndelag	Sept-Oct	24	
Sverre Støstad	Nord Trøndelag	October	15	
E. Åsgard	Nord Trøndelag	Aug-Oct	44	
Gunnar Sand	North Norway	26 July-10 Sept	59	Leader of AUF.
Alfred Madsen	Finnmark, Troms and Nordland	8 Aug-4 Sept	25	
Eivind Reiersen	Nordland	5 July-27 Sept	73	

Agitator	Area	Dates	No. of speeches	Notes
John Kristoffersen	Nordland	October	51	
H. O. Wika	Nordland	Not stated	29	"During election campaign."
Hans Ystgaard	Nordland	August	10	
Alfred Skar	Nordland	October	30	
Jens Steffensen	Nordland	Sept-Oct	34	
Andreas Moan	Nordland	8 Sept-19 Oct	43	
Aldor Ingebrigtsen	Nordland	August	18	
Thina Thorleifsen	Nordland and Troms	September	23	
Sverre Støstad	Nordland	28 Aug-17 Sept	38	
Sverre Støstad	Troms	18 Sept-27 Sept	22	
Halvdan Koht	Troms and Nordland	2 Sept-13 Sept	21	The Foreign Secretary.
Aldor Ingebrigtsen	Troms	6 Sept-18 Oct	60	
Alfons Johansen	Troms	Sept-Oct	39	
Kristian Berg	Troms	September	23	
Kristian Berg	Finnmark	Sept-Oct	56	
A K. Mikola	Finnmark	Sept-Oct	24	
Gitta Jønsson	Finnmark	October	10	
Alfons Johansen	Finnmark	September	20	

(Source: DNA Annual report 1936, pp. 10-23. Undated tours not included.)

In keeping with the intensity of the 1936 campaign this is a much longer list than for the two previous elections. Every single county was covered including Troms in northern Norway, which was somewhat neglected in 1933. Among the electoral materials this time were brochures giving full details of ten areas, which were the counties to which DNA wanted to devote extra attention.¹⁸⁹ The brochures were for Oslo, Oppland, Hedmark, Vest-

¹⁸⁹ *Arbeiderbladet* 1 October 1936, p. 4.

Agder, Rogaland, Hordaland, Møre og Romsdal, Sogn og Fjordane and North Norway (Nordland, Troms and Finnmark).¹⁹⁰ In only five out of seven cases do these match the counties AOF identified as most likely to yield gains. It is likely they were chosen on the basis of diverging somewhat from average Norwegian conditions. Half of these were counter-cultural, Oslo had a much larger tertiary sector than the rest of the country, Oppland and Hedmark were ridden by class conflict to a higher degree than elsewhere and North Norway was a region to itself.

It was previously established that DNA made serious attempts to attract people in the counter-cultural areas and other places where it was weak. This, of course, continued in 1936, which was an election precisely about reaching out to new groups in order for the government to obtain a majority. More than two in five speeches were held in the counter-cultural areas. Around 375 speeches were made in Nordland during those centrally directed tours, which is more than one in five of the total. Throughout the 1930s DNA clearly wanted to be a party for all of Norway. Beyond trying hard to be successful in every region, in 1933 it had a legendary slogan "Town and Country Hand in Hand," which was sometimes used also in 1936. The only slogan DNA had produced which was even more famous was naturally "All the People in Work." And the counter-crisis measures again took centre stage. It was claimed that the Government had created jobs for 70-80, 000 people. Although it was admitted the international economy was moving in the right direction anyway, the interventionist policies of Nygaardsvold's government were much emphasized.¹⁹¹

By 1936 Einar Gerhardsen had regained his old position of secretary of DNA, which he had previously held 1923-1926. In an election interview, he stated that the party's preparations had been ongoing for three years, so that the actual election only represented the final furlong.¹⁹² The materials being distributed across the country, the films being shown, the schedule of theatrical performances had long ago been expedited from the office. The atmosphere was nevertheless hectic in the headquarters of the party due to last-minute adjustments and responding to issues thrown up in the campaign. He said two of the

¹⁹⁰ DNA Annual report 1936, p. 59.

¹⁹¹ Tore Pryser, *Klassen og nasjonen (1935-1946). Arbeiderbevegelsens historie i Norge 4* (Oslo, Tiden, 1988), p. 55.

¹⁹² *Arbeiderbladet* 9 October 1936, p. 1.

brochures, "The Norwegian State" with a print of 290, 000 copies and "Work and Safe Conditions for Everyone", of which 129, 000 were printed, were the main publications.¹⁹³ He also mentioned the brochure "Norway for the People", which had been distributed in 100, 000 copies and for which the central party was still receiving orders. Three posters were part of the arsenal, one of Nygaardsvold (illustration 7), one specifically for the country and one for the towns. These had been sent out in respectively 27, 000, 24, 000 and 12, 000 copies. The giant version of the Nygaardsvold poster was meant to be affixed to Labour headquarters around the nation. As usual party newspapers were distributed as propaganda, with free subscriptions to either *Fram* or the local paper being sent to people nominated by the local branches. In addition, the party owned 47 film projectors able to entertain with either the rural film "Norway for the People" or the urban "Building the Country".¹⁹⁴ Copies of these had also been sent to a number of cinemas. Most of these features were not new in 1936, but AOF played a greater part in this election than in 1933. (It had more experience by then since it was only set up in 1932.) It was the organization responsible for the films, and it also distributed the props for meetings which were so essential according to its leader.¹⁹⁵

The election materials spanned wider than before, though much consisted of the usual publications. The manifesto was printed in a total of 540, 000 copies, counting both the standard Norwegian and the *nynorsk* editions.¹⁹⁶ On top of that came a brochure containing the programme of principles, working programme and manifesto with another 50, 000 copies. A whole book containing Labour's point of view, facts and figures as well as a complete set of materials was printed in 5, 000 copies.¹⁹⁷ The two main brochures and pamphlets for peasants and fishermen were made available in both languages.¹⁹⁸ These were published in 640, 000 copies and were lengthy affairs. 11 smaller brochures were made available in a total print of 1 million. A separate leaflet was designed to counter the appeal of the capitalist Society Party in 20, 000 copies. The Society Party was singled out

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁹⁴ See chapter 4, pp. 230-232.

¹⁹⁵ For the distribution of the film projectors see AOF's proposal in folder marked Stortingsvalgkampen 1936 sak nr. 301 1936, Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs Saksarkiv 1936 sak nr. 280-482, Da 0167.

¹⁹⁶ DNA Annual report 1936, p. 59.

¹⁹⁷ This was Olav Vegheim, *Fra kaos mot plan i Norge. Material samling valget 1936* (Oslo, DNA, 1936).

¹⁹⁸ DNA Annual report 1936, p. 59.

for this treatment because, like DNA, its appeal was based on counter-crisis measures. The brochures devoted to particular counties had a total print of 180, 000. The women's electoral newspaper was distributed in 230, 000 copies. Up to 70, 000 households received free subscriptions to *Fram*, and in the towns plus some semi-rural areas, the local newspaper was given away free in the last few weeks of the election as part of the canvassing. As was earlier noted, DNA's electioneering remained the same in outline, but with greater and greater resources.

Oslo

It remains to look at Oslo and its environs for a complete picture of the last interwar election. Early in the year the plan for the campaign was drawn up.¹⁹⁹ Barring May Day the first major event of the year was a great street party in Young's Square, tied in with the end of the conference on 24 May. Apart from the major figures of Oscar Torp and Martin Tranmæl, speeches were given by guests from the Swedish, Danish and Finnish labour movements.²⁰⁰ This indicated DNA's return to the family of Nordic Social Democratic parties, unlike when it was in its revolutionary phase. There were 15 open-air meetings between 26 August and 20 September throughout the city.²⁰¹ These must be considered parts of the election campaign proper, since they were staged under the two election slogans of "Work and safe conditions for everyone!" and "Norway for the People!", though they were regarded as a preparatory phase to it. Theatrical performances formed part of these meetings, which concluded with a second street party on 20 September.

Oslo DNA received the same sum from the election fund as in 1933: 40, 000 kroner (£ 2, 010).²⁰² Since DNA centrally could draw on greater funds than in 1933, this means that an even larger proportion of the money was spent elsewhere, probably in the countryside. Even so, the Oslo chapter spent more than in the last election: 86, 820 kroner (c. £ 4, 350) compared to 65, 210 three years before.²⁰³ It could afford to do so because more money was forthcoming from individual trade unions: 41, 140 kroner as against 29,

¹⁹⁹ Oslo Arbeiderparti. *Beretning og regnskap 1936* (Oslo 1937), p. 19.

²⁰⁰ Oslo DNA Annual report 1936, p. 20.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 64.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 65; Oslo DNA Annual report 1933, p. 55.

900 in 1933.

A novelty were election theatre performances which became so popular that after some time it had to charge for entry to regulate demand.²⁰⁴ A troupe of professional actors played a live version of the film "Building the Country". The unemployed were admitted on Mondays and Tuesdays, presumably without the 0.5 krone charge. All of the indoor meetings included a showing of the election film. Without exception the meetings featured music, theatrical performances by "drama gangs", entertainment from artists and public singing. This was in complete accordance with the directives laid down by AOF.²⁰⁵ Likewise the meeting places were decorated with flags, banners, napkins on podiums and slogans. The function of the entertainment, and especially the singing, was to engage with the audience and make it feel a sense of belonging. In times of long-standing economic crisis and a high level of conflict within society, this was a considerable point in DNA's favour.

Electoral appeal in Oslo

The brochures and the films that were produced prove DNA's awareness of the need to reach out to centrists and the middle classes if it was to achieve the parliamentary majority it wanted. Hitherto it had confined itself to addressing civil servants and other white-collar workers, and somewhat half-heartedly at that. Thus announcements of interest to the intelligentsia were reported in *Arbeiderbladet*, including invitations to meetings. One such event, for technicians and engineers, took place on 10 September, in which Einar Gerhardsen talked about how the help of these professionals was needed in building the new state.²⁰⁶ While DNA originated among "the little people" it now sought the support of the entire community, he said.²⁰⁷ Among the old and new interest groups for which Labour convened special meetings were: agricultural workers, architects, artists, charladies,

²⁰⁴ Oslo DNA Annual report 1936, p. 23.

²⁰⁵ Brochure by AOF, p. 3 of second manuscript in folder marked AUF agitasjon 1936-1938, Archive: Arbeidernes Ungdomsfylking, Korrespondanse A-B, 1935-1959, Da 0003.

²⁰⁶ *Arbeiderbladet* 11 September 1936, p. 3.

²⁰⁷ This was not the first time such a claim had been made for DNA. After the conference in 1901, *Arbeiderbladet*, then called *Social-Demokraten*, announced: "From being a pronounced class party it is becoming a universal organization, inviting all classes to join and put the religion of justice in pole position.[...] Social Democracy from being a sharply defined worker's party is becoming a people's party." Halvard Lange, *Fra sekt til parti. Det norske Arbeiderpartis organisasjonsmessige og politiske utvikling fra*

hospital staff, hotel and restaurant workers, maids, lawyers, physicians and various kinds of clerks.²⁰⁸ Publicity was given to Labour's insistence that it believed in democracy, such as AFL leader Olav Hindahl's speech on 15 September at Young's Square or Oscar Torp's speech on the wireless on 5 October.²⁰⁹ Hindahl said democracy must be extended also to the social and economic spheres, which was DNA's tactic against anyone reminding it of its revolutionary past. The fact that Torp was able to broadcast a political speech in itself represented a small victory for DNA, whose relationship with the controllers of the radio had previously been strained. The nationalization of broadcasting in 1933 allowed the party line to come more to the fore. This was especially true after 1934, and in return DNA's speakers moderated what they had to say.²¹⁰

Labour did not merely passively seek the votes of the middle classes this time. It attempted to incorporate them into its planned future state. A precedent had been set by the Association of Commercial Clerks joining AFL in 1929. By now support for the party was spreading among white-collar workers. A meeting of the Association's representatives in Oslo on 16 September called on all clerks to vote DNA and to take an active part in the election.²¹¹ Naturally *Arbeiderbladet* was pleased to publicize the appeal. Labour also attempted to attract students and graduates, explaining that it had chapters for various disciplines which formed a joint association led by the barrister Arne Aake Ording.²¹² The socialist work among students was well underway with societies at most higher educational establishments and in many schools.

Scientists and academics had never known a government with such a welcoming attitude to them before, according to Ording in a meeting organized for intellectuals.²¹³ It had even given Parliament its renaissance, making it a bulwark against unpleasant reactionary tendencies. The people were now more conscious of its importance. Thus he presented DNA as the mediator between ordinary folk and the state's political institutions. Assuming those present believed in the system, he implied that the common man now did

1891 til 1902 (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1962), p. 195.

²⁰⁸ Cf. Oslo DNA Annual report 1936, pp. 24-30.

²⁰⁹ *Arbeiderbladet* 16 September 1936, p. 8.; *Arbeiderbladet* 6 October 1936, p. 2.

²¹⁰ Rolf W. Hansen 'Arbeiderbevegelsen og kringkastingen 1925-1940. Fra konflikt til samarbeid', *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens historie* 1979/1, *passim* p. 132, p. 139, p. 150.

²¹¹ *Arbeiderbladet* 17 September 1936, p. 15.

²¹² *Arbeiderbladet* 30 September 1936, p. 3.

so too because of DNA's success. Consequently it was adding legitimacy to parliamentary democracy.

As stated above 1936 was the year in which convergence was established between the countrywide appeals and those in Oslo. DNA in the capital had pioneered some degree of communication with civil servants and clerks owing to their sheer numbers, which meant that they could not be ignored.²¹⁴ But in that year a new local appeal was effected, namely to shopkeepers. A brochure was produced by DNA centrally for this group, but was only for use in Oslo. It was sent by post to all of the 5, 000 shops in the city. This appeal was, however, tempered by shopkeepers being portrayed in an unflattering light in both the election films, including "Building the Country" which was intended for the towns. This dual message probably arose from DNA being uncertain about whether employers were a suitable target group for a workers' party. Previous appeals to other middle-class people had also been hesitant, witness that to white-collar workers in 1930.

The end of the election

The grand finale to what DNA conceived as its year-long campaign was the traditional mass rally at Young's Square the day before the election. It followed the precedents of 1930 and 1933 closely, but there were also some new costly features.²¹⁵ An aeroplane spelled out the message "vote DNA" in the sky. Headlights illuminated the headquarters of the party, while the 40, 000 participants were surrounded by flags, banners and the torches of the youth organization. Einar Gerhardsen gave the first speech expounding how town and country, clerks and workers, men and women, young and old, technicians and intellectuals from every discipline had joined the party to create a better society. In other words, Socialism had become an ideology for everyone. This theme was echoed in the second speech by Martin Tranmæl. "We are living through a sea change of historic proportions," he said. "The death knells are tolling for bourgeois society, tomorrow the Norwegian people will undertake its funeral!" At the end of the meeting the crowd refused to leave, with only a few thousands trickling away. Those who remained were able

²¹³ *Arbeiderbladet* 16 October 1936, p. 2.

²¹⁴ The brochure for Oslo stated that 27% of the workforce there were clerks. Cf. AAB. 'Oslo' in *Brosjyrer utgitt av Det norske Arbeiderparti Stortingsvalget 1936*, p. 5.

²¹⁵ *Arbeiderbladet* 19 October 1936, p. 2; Oslo DNA Annual report 1936, p. 24.

to watch "Building the Country" projected onto the façade of the party headquarters.

In spite of such rousing rhetoric and the unparalleled resources expended on the campaign, DNA did not obtain the majority in Parliament it so earnestly desired. Although advancing to 42.5%, it only picked up one new seat. Most of its 2.4 percentage points increase can be put down to the equivalent 1.5 drop in the support for the Communists, who gave Labour a clear field everywhere except Bergen. This suggested that in the present climate DNA had reached its maximum level of adherence. DNA's own electoral calculations showed that it would have received 79 seats out of 150, and thereby a majority, had it not been for the electoral alliances between the capitalist parties.²¹⁶ A change to the voting system instituted by them in the previous parliamentary period had allowed unused votes for one party to be transferred to another.²¹⁷

Conclusion

The 1936 election was so well funded and fought that if it could not produce a majority for DNA, it is hard to think of a campaign that would. The circumstances were particularly favourable to the government. Unemployment was falling, economic activity was increasing and industrial relations had been put on a much better footing by the Main Agreement of 1935 between AFL and the employers' organization NAF (*Norsk Arbeidsgiverforening*). The Communists gave passive support to the Labour Government and their voters active, though probably temporary, support. Where DNA came unstuck was by not being able to prevent capitalist bartering over votes among themselves. The new amendment to the electoral law worked like the previous, two-round majoritarian system had done before 1920 though not to the same extent. For its part DNA fought the election along the lines of 1930 and 1933, but on a greater scale and with more resources. There was almost certainly a greater degree of central control in 1936, necessitated by targeted campaigning in areas where it thought it could gain new seats. (The caveat has to be made due to more documents on this being extant for 1936 than the other years.) With a modicum of supervision and control, it is still fair to stress the relative autonomy of the regional

²¹⁶ *Arbeiderbladet* 21 October 1936, p. 13. Academic research agrees that DNA would have gained up to nine more seats in 1936 if it had not been for the electoral alliances. Bjørn Kristvik and Stein Rokkan 'Valgordningen' in *Politiske valg i Norge. En artikkelsamling* (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1966), p. 23.

²¹⁷ Cf. DNA Annual report 1936, p. 61 for details of this extensive network of alliances.

parties. And many affiliated organizations like regional groupings of AFL and the joint organizations (*samorganisasjonene*) participated without being under the command of DNA at all. The plans of AUF were scrutinized because it asked for more money, but if the original payment had proved sufficient it would probably have been left to its own devices. The Extended Finance Committee knew that AUF and the Workers' Sports Association (AIF) performed useful campaigning anyway.

1936 witnessed a Labour campaign that was designed to win hearts as well as minds. That is why music, theatricals, films, banners, posters of Nygaardsvold and other props played preponderant parts. It had been much the same in the other two elections described, but 1936 marked the high point of this type of electioneering. It was the first election in which there had been any kind of focus on personality.²¹⁸ DNA had not been fully conversant with this feature of modern campaigning, but Nygaardsvold's attraction lay in his honest working man's persona. He acted as guarantor that if DNA got more powers it would not misuse them. The majority did not materialize, however, and two possible reasons have already been given; the network of capitalist electoral alliances and DNA probably getting close to the ceiling of its maximum possible support. It had not yet acquired the mantle of being the party of the state, which in the post-war period was to give it the increment of another few percentage points and thereby a majority. Perhaps it should have sought to communicate with non-unionized workers earlier than in 1936 to get more of these behind it. But it cannot really be faulted for excellent electioneering in that year. By again polling above 40 % of the votes, DNA put great distance between itself and its opponents. Its nearest rivals were the Conservatives on 22.6 % and the capitalist parties were disunited as ever. The interwar political struggle had been won by DNA, although it had been forced to tone down its Socialism in favour of crisis management as the basis of its appeal.

Looking at the three elections described herein together, it is striking how similarly they were fought. Even in 1930 the campaign was led by an extended finance committee with trade union and party representation, though it was semi-secret due to Communist and non-aligned workers also belonging to AFL. In that year there were also some theatrical

²¹⁸ Lill-Ann Jensen and Svein Damslora, *Bildet som våpen. Norsk arbeiderbevegelses bruk av bildet i kamp og agitasjon* (Oslo, Tiden, 1984), p. 145.

performances as part of the open-air meetings. DNA had a formula for electioneering, and while greater enthusiasm and funding allowed progressively more propaganda, meetings, props, canvassing and entertainment, there were few developments from 1930 to 1936.

Though in 1930 there was some uncertainty over how important elections were, DNA was naturally good at campaigning. This was a consequence of the party culture.

Demonstrations, marching, banners, singing and not least trying to draw others in, were mainstays of the labour movement. The real turning point in DNA's fortunes over this period came in 1933 when AFL decided to throw its full weight behind the party's bid for governmental power. The Trade Union Confederation chose to do this because the capitalist parties were stepping up the legislative pressure on labour. It had great misgivings about the Boycott Law of 1933 and there was talk of state adjudication of wage ballots. In the climate generated by the great lockout of 1931, which AFL had survived, these attempts to curb labour were blown out of proportion. The Boycott Law had been moderated by the incoming Liberal government of 1933, and was in any case no more hostile to the unions than the much-hated "workhouse laws" of 1927, which stimulated no great electoral counterdrive.

The elections of 1930, 1933 and 1936 were run as follows. DNA centrally produced electoral propaganda. It accepted a handout from AFL in addition to the support it received for its newspapers and general activities. It sold this propaganda to the regional parties (and gave some away for free), but these organizations received funding from DNA centrally in conjunction with the election. Preparing for the elections took many months, and long in advance as well as during the campaign, the network of newspapers received money for propagandistic purposes. In 1933 and 1936 they were furnished with stories they should run and pictures they should print. Apart from limited supervision by the Extended Finance Committee, regional parties were left to electioneer in peace according to the general outline drawn up by DNA centrally or the Joint Committee of AFL and DNA.

DNA centrally took a back seat once its preparations had been completed. It followed the campaign and entered debates arising from it, but the most visible part of the national campaign was the responsibility of Oslo DNA. This included large street parties and the final rallies the day before the election. Party conferences were held triennially and always in Oslo during election years. Because the national party and the Oslo chapter had

offices next to each other in the same building and due to the importance of the capital, these two entities in practice often merged. To ensure a full-blown national dimension to electioneering, however, DNA centrally sent veteran speakers on tours of the country. These included persistent focus on the difficult areas for the party, the counter-cultural South and West and the northern county of Nordland.

The entire labour movement took part in campaigning. The youth organization (AUF) and the Workers' Sports Association (AIF) were active along with trade unionists in canvassing. They also produced additional propaganda, especially election editions of their magazines. Regional joint organizations (*samorganisasjoner*) also performed some electioneering. The role of the Workers' Educational Association (AOF), once it had been set up in 1932, was preparatory. It was additionally responsible for the production of the election films. In 1936 the children's organization *Framfylkingen* played an active part. Its members formed "drama gangs" and choruses for theatricals, which were a unique and largely novel contribution to the art of helping voters make up their minds.

Chapter 3. The Electoral Appeals of the British Labour Party in 1929, 1931 and 1935.

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explore which social groups Labour sought to gain for its cause during the elections of 1929, 1931 and 1935. By examining the written propaganda it is hoped to discover of whom Labour sought to create a base, and whether there were any changes in the course of the differing circumstances of each election. The evidence suggests that the party did indeed broaden its appeal in this time span, but in a way which was driven by circumstances. Women were especially a target group in 1929 after those under 30 had received the vote in 1928, less so but still to an important extent in 1931 and 1935. Middle-class people were particularly favoured in 1931 when many of them had received salary cuts. Nevertheless the Labour Party of 1935 was a more wide-ranging body than in 1929, or at least had ambitions to become so.

Appealing beyond the core group of industrial workers is relevant from a comparative point of view, because an ideal type of social democracy lists as a necessary factor in the success of such a party the extent to which it managed to form a broad social coalition.¹ This ideal type is formulated according to the history of all of Europe, but does it apply also in Britain? In the early twentieth century Britain was overwhelmingly a working-class nation.² By design Labour was the party of the trade unions and sought to represent “workers by hand and by brain.” The former alone would be enough to carry Labour to victory on a permanent basis if little more than half of them voted for the party consistently. But although Labour was set up to look after their interests, revisionists emphasize that the proletariat is not necessarily attracted to Labour politics, and claim that working-class demands could be echoed or even initiated

¹ E.g. the hegemonic Swedish Social Democratic Party considered itself a “people’s party” as early as 1900. Before the Great War it had reached out to small farmers and left Liberals, and thus it was a natural progression when it made cross-class appeals in the 1920s and 1930s. Sheri Berman, *The Social Democratic Moment. Ideas and Politics in the Making of Interwar Europe* (Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1998), p. 29. If such an alliance is necessary to govern, it is clear Labour did not come close to achieving a majority between the wars. It apparently did not receive noteworthy support outside the areas where industrial trade unionism was strong (mining, heavy industry, textiles). Gareth Stedman Jones, *Languages of Class. Studies in English Working-Class History 1832-1982* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 244.

² According to Matthew Worley, more than 75% of the population were manual workers throughout the 1930s. *Labour Inside the Gate. A History of the British Labour Party between the Wars* (London, I. B. Tauris, 2005), p. 171.

by the Liberals and Conservatives as well.³ Another reason why Labour would not be assured of a majority on the basis of one section of the population, albeit by far the largest, relates to the dynamics of electoral choice over time. Voting often makes a habit,⁴ and Labour received merely 6.4 % of the popular vote in December 1910, although the franchise was extended after the Great War. Also, a voter might see his or her religion or nationality as more important than class. Consequently a manual worker might easily opt for one of Labour's opponents. It will be seen below that the party spent a lot of resources arguing its case to the disadvantaged, which would not have been necessary if it could be certain of their votes. Thus the question of to whom Labour appealed clearly matters.

Introduction to the 1929 election

There was a lot of material produced for this election. Newspapers, flyers, election statements, pamphlets and coverage in the *Daily Herald* constituted the basis of the appeal. In what follows particular attention has been devoted to the flyers and election statements because they unequivocally belonged to the contest. Unlike the two later occasions, there was a Speaker's Handbook with relevant facts. It was intended to be used for campaigning, but was low on specific targeting of potential voters. It is possible to deduce from the length of coverage, however, that Labour was particularly aiming for the votes of the unemployed, rural workers, trade unionists and pensioners. These may be construed as sub-groups of the working class, which establishes what the Labour base was in 1929.

The unemployed were dealt with firstly by the claim that their numbers had decreased by 185, 626 during Labour's first government in 1924, taking insurance changes into account, and secondly by listing the improvements Labour had made when in power to the scheme of unemployment insurance itself.⁵ Of course any appeal directed at the unemployed on the basis of these claims would also be an appeal to those

³ Mike Savage and Andrew Miles, *The Remaking of the British Working Class, 1840-1940* (London, Routledge, 1994), p. 74. They adduce P. F. Clarke's classic thesis about the "New Liberalism" in Lancashire, an attempt by the Liberals to gain working-class votes between 1900 and 1914. The following is no proof, but based on "not unreasonable estimates" it is claimed the percentage of working-class electors voting Conservative was 37 % in 1922, 33 % in 1923, 47 % in 1924, 31 % in 1929, 56 % in 1931 and 50 % in 1935. Geoffrey K. Fry, 'A Reconsideration of the British General Election of 1935 and the Electoral Revolution of 1945', *History* 76 (1991), p. 54.

⁴ Michael Kinnear, *The British Voter. An Atlas and Survey since 1885* (London, Batsford Academic and Educational, 1981), p. 11.

who thought they might lose their jobs. The strategy with regard to agricultural workers was to show that Labour could raise their wages. The 1924 Labour government had restored Wages Boards in the countryside with the task of setting minimum rates, as it was realized trade unions were too weak in this sector to make a difference.⁶ Next it was pointed out that 150, 000 houses were needed in rural areas, but that the only significant construction of these had taken place as a result of the 1924 Wheatley Act, whereas the Conservative Rural Housing Act of 1926 had only succeeded in reconditioning 343 houses.⁷ The wretchedness of country life for the poor was brought out by a citation of government statistics showing that 19.9% of children there suffered from impaired physique.⁸ The appeal to pensioners did not just mean the elderly, but included widows and orphans who should be secured a better livelihood.⁹ For the trade unionists Labour promised to ratify the Washington Hours Convention of 1919, reducing working hours.¹⁰ There would be trade boards in unorganized industries with powers over hours and wages.¹¹

Judging from the actual propaganda, there were two groups that Labour particularly sought to attract in the 1929 election.¹² They were agricultural workers and women.¹³ In the election Labour produced 66 old or new leaflets of which 14 directly concerned rural voters and nine can be identified as being aimed at women.¹⁴ In addition to the leaflets particularly intended for them, an overwhelming majority of Labour candidates made reference to women in their campaign literature, especially as

⁵ University of Manchester: The Labour History Archive and Study Centre (LHASC), Labour Party Archive, LP/ELEC/1929/1. Labour Speaker's Handbook *passim* p. 3, p. 10.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 78-81.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

¹² According to one writer Labour deliberately sought to broaden its base and extend its electoral appeal before this election. Duncan Tanner 'The Labour Party and Electoral Politics in the Coalfields' in Campbell, Fishman, Howell (eds.), *Miners, Unions and Politics 1910-1947* (Aldershot, Scolar Press, 1996), p. 82.

¹³ After 1925 two of its three special campaigns had been based on winning the support of these. The remaining one consisted of agitation against the Trade Disputes Bill. E. A. Rowe, 'The British General Election of 1929', B. Litt. thesis, Oxford University, 1959, p. 79.

¹⁴ Labour began concentrating on the countryside a few years prior to the election. In Chris Cook's view it is essential to realize how little success the party met with in rural constituencies before that. *The Age of Alignment. Electoral Politics in Britain 1922-1929* (London, Macmillan, 1975), p. 23.

new voters.¹⁵ It was in the context of the “flapper” vote being granted that women took on a special significance to the parties, and not just those below 30 who were enfranchised some months before the election. And if Labour was to continue expanding it must put up candidates in as many rural areas as possible; naturally in order to get anywhere it had to present attractive policies. A little extra effort was needed since Labour’s origins lay in industrial constituencies.¹⁶

The rural classes

The message to agricultural workers was a simple one, and of the hundreds of appeals the formulation of W. H. Marwick, the candidate for Dumfriesshire, may be chosen at random: “The land, as the basis of national life, must be brought under National ownership. [...] Socialism has a real message for the rural worker: it offers him an equality of opportunity which he has never yet enjoyed, in wages, housing, and land settlement.”¹⁷ In one leaflet the party went straight to the point, detailing what it thought agricultural workers demanded.¹⁸ The first two items, namely good wages and a safe job, were not trivial because wages were deplorably low in this sector of the economy, much behind that of industrial workers, and without trade unions to support them the farm hands could be fired at will. The third demand of a “free cottage” related to a crucial aspect of the existence of such workers: just as they could lose their job by getting on the wrong side of the farmer, they lived in “tied cottages” which were let to whomever did their job. Thus losing the job meant having to move out as well, whether or not they had anywhere to go.

Labour pledged to end the system of entailed accommodation, and the leaflet reminded the potential voters that Wages Boards were (re)introduced by Labour’s Minister of Agriculture, Noel Buxton, in 1924. These had been instrumental in raising the threshold of wages from 25s. to 30s. a week, and Labour promised that they would go higher. A very similar leaflet repeated these assurances in a slightly different form.

¹⁵ Only 55% did so according to a study of the electoral addresses of Labour candidates. But almost every male candidate printed an addendum on the address from a female relation and these were meant to highlight women’s issues. See Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

¹⁶ “There is a growing appreciation in the Labour Party of the vital importance of the agricultural problem. At this moment it has committees at work on the rural problem, which are trying to evolve plans for the revival of British agriculture.” Philip Snowden, *If Labour Rules* (London, Labour Publishing Company, 1923), p. 44 in LHASC box 329.12.

¹⁷ LP/ELEC/1929/1. Folder marked 1929 GEN. ELECTION SCOTLAND + WALES BOROUGHES COUNTIES.

¹⁸ LP/ELEC/1929/1. Leaflet 197 in folder marked JN 1055 A6.

This offered more extensive benefits. It again listed the main demands of farm workers as higher wages and freedom from the “tyranny” of the tied cottage, but this time went on to mention payment for overtime, a guaranteed week’s work, a comfortable dwelling, a plot of land of one’s own and the chance of educating one’s children through scholarships and better local schools.¹⁹

So Labour’s message to this group was a threefold one: it promised higher wages, better security and the chance of social mobility. An example of the third motif can be found in a flyer about agricultural education and research. Here the purpose was to tempt rural workers with a good education for their children, and the party explained that necessary motor transport and scholarships were part and parcel of that. It also held out the possibility of personal advancement and a more stimulating job. “Farm workers, farm managers, and agriculturalists in every capacity now require to know far more about their calling than was customary even twenty-five years ago, and the need for training becomes more apparent every year.”²⁰ This implied that agricultural workers would have their job enhanced and be given more responsibility. The flyer went on to claim that there were several instances, especially in Scotland, where former farm workers had become leaders, advisors or authorities in agriculture.

In those leaflets which were aimed at farmers, nationalization of land and greater control of the agricultural economy were put forward as advantages. Labour claimed that the state could act as a better landlord than private individuals. It said that the farmer needed up-to-date equipment, modern barns and cowsheds and other buildings in good repair. Also a well-drained soil, which the state could achieve more efficaciously, and a fair price for his produce were required. This would include stabilizing the price of meat and wheat through import boards (a possible contradiction of Labour’s oft-repeated slogan of free trade and an untaxed breakfast table, for the benefit of the workers), thus giving farmers a more predictable income. “When the farmer sows, he will know what price he will get at the harvest.”²¹ It would encompass cutting out middlemen, who took a significant slice of the farmer’s earnings, which was also the theme of a different flyer. Primarily intended for the farmer, it nevertheless claimed that the farm worker would have his share of the farmer’s higher income when the “useless

¹⁹ Leaflet 185 *loc. cit.*

²⁰ Leaflet 199 *loc. cit.*

²¹ Leaflet 198 *loc. cit.*

profiteering middleman” was dispensed with.²² Labour generally tried to appeal to all sections of the countryside, while reserving the greatest effort for the labourers who were deemed its most likely supporters.²³

One group engaged in the primary sector of the economy was all but neglected. Just one leaflet was addressed to fishermen, and the party’s only promise was to set up an inquiry into the industry.²⁴ Labour had not thought out any policies relevant to them, which was a consequence of the smallness of the occupation and its geographically restricted range. It did make clear that the object was to develop fisheries and improve life for fishermen, but the need for an inquiry and the lack of concrete policies must have given the impression that Labour did not prioritize this group highly.

To combine the two target groups of women and countryside inhabitants, Labour produced a flyer directed at farm workers’ wives.²⁵ To counteract deference, it mentioned that the ballot was secret. It repeated the issue of the Wages Boards that had been set up in 1924, and promised to keep faith also in 1929. It stressed that Labour had always believed in the enfranchisement of women now completed. The message was otherwise the same as those leaflets which were gender-neutral: better housing, greater security and educational opportunities for the children.

Women

The second target group of women was of course a varied one, and Labour needed a strategy for reaching out to them. It was not enough that most candidates stressed how long Labour had been in favour of votes for women. That was a settled issue. William H. Martin, candidate for South Aberdeen, argued, however, that the struggle for women’s emancipation went on.²⁶ He said Labour could secure equal pay for men and women in industry, and mentioned the prevention of maternal mortality as another issue of great importance to the party. Part of the Labour strategy came through in the leaflet “Why *Women* should Vote Labour.”²⁷ Here it based its claim to be the women’s party on being the children’s party and the peace party. Labour thought such

²² Leaflet 186 *loc. cit.*

²³ This could make it more difficult to gain support from farmers, as one of the National Farmers’ Union’s demands was repeal of the Agricultural Wages Act. However, the Conservatives were not going to comply with this either, and seemed to refuse safeguarding and all but temporary and restricted subsidies. Rowe, ‘The British General Election of 1929’, p. 29.

²⁴ LP/ELEC/1929/1. Leaflet 272 in folder marked JN 1055 A6.

²⁵ Leaflet 227 *loc. cit.*

²⁶ Folder marked 1929 GEN. ELECTION SCOTLAND + WALES BOROUGHES COUNTIES.

²⁷ Leaflet 12 in folder marked JN 1055 A6.

policies were especially attractive to female voters. In another flyer Labour appealed to women as mothers. It demanded “better nursing and doctoring care for the mothers, medical and dental advice and treatment throughout pregnancy, open-air nursery schools where wanted from two years of age.”²⁸ It also made more general demands like healthier homes and the supply of milk for mothers and babies.

Some of the most strident rhetoric consisted of juxtaposing women’s justified demands with severe Government cutbacks. As Susan Lawrence MP wrote in the *Daily Herald*: “Mr Chamberlain has told us plainly that he cut down the milk grant for nursing and expectant mothers, ‘in view of the general need for economy.’ The Government had relieved the super taxed, it had to take the money somewhere. So it took a drop of milk from the babies.”²⁹ Not directly aimed at women, but probably intended to help sway the female vote, was a leaflet urging parents to vote Labour for the sake of the children.³⁰ (It has already been shown that Labour based its claim to be the women’s party on the basis of children’s issues.) Tory “economies” had curtailed opportunities in health and education. Implicit in this is that it was talking about less privileged children, but it was precisely the class dimension to the arguments that made the rhetoric so charged. In any case in 1929 Labour seldom appealed to anyone but the less privileged. Believing itself to have the nation’s interest at heart, and able to field candidates from a variety of backgrounds, it nevertheless thought of certain people as “theirs.”³¹ Therefore appeals to women were particularly meant for working-class women.

The appeal to women could be further subdivided into categories based on their practical interests. Hitherto it has been shown how they were appealed to as (new) voters and parents, but Labour had other means of attracting particular groups of women. *The 1929 Elector*, a campaign magazine published for two issues, carried on page 2 of its 15 May edition “The Housewives’ Corner”. It began by stating that bacon had recently increased in price by 4d. a pound. Labour had asked a question in Parliament about this, but was told by the Tory Government that it would not “stop any profiteering

²⁸ Leaflet 203 *loc. cit.*

²⁹ *Daily Herald* Special General Election Edition May 1929, p. 1. *Loc. cit.*

³⁰ Leaflet 218 *loc. cit.*

³¹ In “mixed” or middle-class areas Labour often fielded a professional as its candidate. Stuart Ball, Andrew Thorpe and Matthew Worley ‘Elections, Leaflets and Whist Drives: Constituency Party Members in Britain between the Wars’ in Matthew Worley (ed.), *Labour’s Grass Roots. Essays on the Activities of Local Labour Parties and Members, 1918–45* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005), p. 16.

that might be going on.”³² The term harked back to the Great War, and was meant to imply excessive capitalist greed. Starting with pots and pans it went on to list household items on which the Conservatives had put taxes: buttons, silk and artificial silk stockings, babies’ frocks made from same, lace, matches, cutlery, etc. The report claimed that a Labour government would stop profiteering on such items. The second issue of 22 May is more positive about why housewives should vote Labour: abolition of food taxes, better maternity benefits and nursing, improved school and medical services, more generous pensions for widows, houses for rent and work not doles for the housewife’s husband.³³

For working women Labour produced a leaflet which talked about the waste of unemployment, how young men without incomes could not marry, and how 3,000 mothers (most below 35) died in childbirth every year. Lastly, there was focus on the pension system, how it cost the employed worker a substantial amount and yet did not provide adequate maintenance for widows and orphans. For these reasons “working women will vote Labour.”³⁴ The tenor of this leaflet would suggest it was written for young women, a group that often dropped out of the labour market upon marriage. Cleverly it played upon sympathy for widows, while at the same time voicing dissatisfaction with paying pension contributions as working women.

One group of working women whom the Labour Party prepared a flyer especially for was maids. It may also have been intended for male servants in part, but towards the end of the message it explained that the Conservatives and Liberals managed to exclude household workers when they agreed to votes for women above 30 in 1918. The leaflet urged those in domestic occupations to remember their proletarian origins and not consider how their employers would like them to vote. It instead asked these women to think of their own families and the home “you hope to have some day.”³⁵ Jessie Stephen, the party’s candidate for South Portsmouth and herself a former maid, devoted a great deal of space to this group in her campaign statement.³⁶ She believed that many of these women and girls could not find employment in their own trades. She promised that Labour would bring them within the purview of the Unemployment Insurance Act, which would provide for them when out of work. Like

³² *1929 Elector* 15 May 1929 in folder marked JN 1055 A6.

³³ *1929 Elector* 22 May 1929, p. 2. *Loc. cit.*

³⁴ Leaflet 214 *loc. cit.*

³⁵ Leaflet 195 *loc. cit.*

³⁶ Folder marked 1929 G. ELECTION ENGLISH BOROUGHS.

Labour did when appealing to groups it feared might not vote for it, she stressed that the ballot was secret.

The only aspect of Labour's appeal to women that was universal to the gender was the peace issue. In the second issue of *The 1929 Elector*, Margaret Bondfield MP had an article entitled "Women won't have a War Government."³⁷ The main role in life for women who did not have jobs was traditionally to bring up children, but their sons and, for that matter, their husbands were at serious risk of dying on the battlefield. So it was assumed women were mostly pacifists, and Labour's anti-war stance was the kind of principled issue which made the party attractive beyond its ordinary adherents. The other near-universal part of women's lives Labour could use in its appeal was respect for maternity and the rights of children. Probably all women, regardless of their personal circumstances, would agree that "every mother should without fear have the chance of bringing healthy children into the world."³⁸ That was what Ishbel MacDonald said in the same issue. And these children should be granted at least a good primary and secondary education.

The working class

As explained above Labour had core voters at the heart of its message, and almost all of its rhetoric was directed at these without there being any great need to say often who they were.³⁹ Labour promised to reorganize the mining industry under public ownership in a flyer which also attacked the Tories and Liberals for their failure to carry out the Sankey Report recommendations during the Coalition ministry.⁴⁰ Factory workers were tempted with the pledge of safety legislation which would hopefully prevent the 150, 000 accidents a year leading to death or disablement.⁴¹ Appeals were couched at gender and age groups within the population of industrial workers, namely women and the young, reinforcing the channels of communication between the party and these groups of individuals.

³⁷ *1929 Elector*, 22 May 1929, front page. JN 1055 A6.

³⁸ *Loc. cit.*, p. 4.

³⁹ Out of the three main parties, Labour made the most explicit class appeals. It did not restrict itself to an "ideal type working class," but it did attack a stereotyped ruling class—landowners, big businessmen, profiteers and the rich. William L. Miller, *Electoral Dynamics in Britain since 1918* (London, Macmillan, 1977), p. 37. See for example the section "Poverty and Wealth" in the *Labour Speaker's Handbook 1929*, p. 51.

⁴⁰ LP/ELEC/1929/1. Leaflet 244 in folder marked JN 1055 A6.

⁴¹ Leaflet 257 *loc. cit.*

When Labour talked about youth it was specifically as workers that they were addressed. A flyer about the young was subtitled “Youth and Unemployment”.⁴² It promised to create employment by gaining markets abroad through friendly relations with other powers, useful public works, and taking 400, 000 teenagers out of the labour market by increasing the school leaving age to 15, while also providing maintenance grants for the extra year. While concluding that “Labour offers the young security and a fair chance in life,” it also dealt with the reverse side of the coin briefly, in other words the elderly. And devoting another flyer to them, Labour promised adequate pensions instead of “the present meagre sum and guardian relief” and cottage houses instead of the workhouse.⁴³

The essence of Labour’s policies was to improve the lives of the proletariat on issues like housing, employment, health and education.⁴⁴ It was not the privileged who were at risk of ending up in the workhouse at advanced age, who stood to lose by industrial accidents or who needed an extra year at school. While all of the community might profit if youth unemployment were reduced or if deaths in childbirth declined, it is easy to see that the working class would be the main beneficiaries.⁴⁵ And when Labour addressed the housewife and pointed out that bacon had increased in price by 4d. a pound, it was the *working-class* housewife to whom it was talking. Labour appealed to proletarians covering all life stages, work and family life and future opportunities.⁴⁶

Labour made a joint appeal to working-class consumers, receiving as it did valuable assistance from the co-operative movement.⁴⁷ *The Daily Herald* General Election edition of May had an article in it by Alfred Barnes, the leader of the Co-operative Party, in which he urged co-operators to vote Labour.⁴⁸ The basic ideals of both were identical, he said, in the first election in which the Co-operative and Labour parties had entered into a conscious alliance. Those candidates who represented the Co-

⁴² Leaflet 226 *loc. cit.*

⁴³ Leaflet 221 *loc. cit.*

⁴⁴ Worley, *Labour Inside the Gate*, p. 15.

⁴⁵ Thus whether through class consciousness or the broad image of the party suggesting it would improve a voter’s living standards, Labour usually stood to gain by workers going to the poll. Cf. Duncan Tanner, *Political Change and the Labour Party 1900-1918* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 82.

⁴⁶ Compare this with an approach based on analysis of the electoral results: In 1929 “it was less dependent upon its ‘core’ supporters than ever before. It captured nearly 75 seats for the first time of which many were Tory strongholds. The party’s appeal had somehow expanded.” Duncan Tanner ‘Class Voting and Radical Politics: the Liberal and Labour Parties 1910-1931’ in Jon Lawrence and Miles Taylor (eds.), *Party, State and Society. Electoral Politics in Britain since 1820* (Aldershot, Scolar Press, 1997), p. 120. Note that Tanner considers only industrial and mining seats to be the “core.”

⁴⁷ The movement’s purchase of *Reynolds News* was a boon to Labour, which thus gained a Sunday newspaper sympathetic to it. Rowe, ‘The British General Election of 1929’, p. 80.

operative Party on a Labour ticket explained why their fellow members should support them. W. Hirst in Bradford South, for instance, talked about how trusts and combines were menacing the movement and necessitated co-operators' being directly represented in the House of Commons.⁴⁹ He cited the example of the Conservative Minister of Health who had prevented the co-operatives issuing dividend vouchers on prescriptions, as evidence of how his movement might be disadvantaged in future.

The middle classes

In 1929, for the first time in its manifesto, Labour attacked the Government over policies acting against the interests of someone other than the workers, namely the extra indirect taxation on "wage earners, shopkeepers and lower middle classes."⁵⁰ Considering the last two as one, to what extent was the appeal borne out in the rest of the electoral materials? The Labour Speaker's Handbook had a section about de-rating among coverage of the "Tory budget, 1929-1930."⁵¹ This was a measure cutting the rates on agricultural land and large business premises. Since shops and family businesses did not benefit from this policy, it opened up possible avenues of appeal for Labour. Thus it produced a leaflet, "Tories Hand out Gifts", which showed Baldwin offering a cheque for £ 4, 000, 000 to a tail-coated capitalist with the legend "British Chemicals" on his trousers, while an apron-clad greengrocer looks on enviously as he "had none."⁵² This was aimed at householders and shopkeepers, who were told about reductions to a quarter in the rates for large employers, while "their [own] rates are likely to increase eventually because of the Tory scheme." A. V. Alexander, the Co-operative Party candidate for Sheffield Hillsborough, had printed a personal version of it and used it in his campaign.

Beyond this it would not be true to say that Labour made it a priority to attract lower middle-class support during the 1929 election or from groups above that in society. Apart from the one mentioned, there was a second leaflet on de-rating as

⁴⁸ P. 11 found in folder JN 1055 A6.

⁴⁹ Folder marked 1929 G. ELECTION ENGLISH BOROUGHES.

⁵⁰ Quoted in F. W. S. Craig (ed.), *British General Election Manifestos 1918-1966* (Chichester, Political Reference Publications, 1970), p. 55. Labour did, however, have leaflets for teachers and white-collar workers in the 1923 election. Dominic Wring, *The Politics of Marketing the Labour Party* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 26-27.

⁵¹ LP/ELEC/1929/1. Labour Speaker's Handbook 1929, facing p. 1.

⁵² LP/ELEC/1929/1. Leaflet 223 in folder marked JN 1055 A6. Note that the accompanying text makes it clear that the correct figure is £ 400, 000.

benefiting the rich and working to the detriment of small businesses.⁵³ But Ramsay MacDonald made it clear that changing the De-Rating Act would not be among his top priorities.⁵⁴ Implicitly the petite bourgeoisie was not considered among those sections of society who had anything to lose by Labour rule. The voicing of their concerns in the manifesto is proof of that. Very few candidates attempted to woo any part of the middle classes. William Cormack in the Hillhead constituency of Glasgow mentioned his concern for shopkeepers and householders.⁵⁵ Wilfred Whiteley in Birmingham Ladywood's appeal to the lower middle class was taken straight from the manifesto.⁵⁶ Thus, out of all the available campaign materials for individual candidates, only three made a pitch for petit bourgeois voters in their constituencies. While undoubtedly at least the Labour leadership sought to govern with the interests of the entire nation in mind, apart from their occasional wooing of farmers (which was really part of its rural campaign primarily directed at agricultural workers), those higher up than small property owners were never approached. This only changed when it was realized Socialism provided a way of winning both professional and manual workers.⁵⁷

Conclusion: The 1929 election

Appendix 4 contains a list of topics dealt with in the election statements and, confirming the findings above, it will be seen that 100% of them dealt with unemployment and 94% with pensions. Other notable issues were peace which came across in 97% of these messages, 48% of candidates particularly stressed the topic and half promised disarmament. It has been professed that "Labour tended to appeal to the electorate from a moral perspective that endeavoured, simultaneously, to be relevant to the everyday concerns of its constituents."⁵⁸ This was easy to do since a lot of the moral perspective was that the disadvantaged had the right to a better life. 45% of the statements, according to the list, dealt with agriculture, but this must be understood in the context of the very large number of urban candidates who had nothing to gain by focusing on this. Labour's tactics were called "stratified electioneering". This meant

⁵³ Leaflet 224 in folder marked JN 1055 A6.

⁵⁴ *Daily Herald* 6 May 1929, p. 1.

⁵⁵ Folder marked 1929 GEN. ELECTION SCOTLAND + WALES. BOROUGHES COUNTIES.

⁵⁶ Folder marked 1929 G. ELECTION ENGLISH BOROUGHES.

⁵⁷ And this is why clause 4 was introduced in the first place. Ross McKibbin, *The Evolution of the Labour Party 1910-1924* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 97.

⁵⁸ Ball, Thorpe and Worley 'Elections, Leaflets and Whist Drives' in Worley (ed.), *Labour's Grass Roots*, p. 18.

that each section of the electorate was addressed in language that it found easy to understand, emphasizing points of interest for the section and subordinating matters that were “dull or unpleasant.”⁵⁹

The rural classes, particularly farm workers, and women were especially targeted in 1929. Both groups were necessary for the continued growth of Labour. Besides this the base consisted quite naturally of the working class. These people in their varying guises as the unemployed, pensioners, housewives as well as trade unionists were implicitly at the root of almost every electoral appeal. The lower middle class was also supposed to be a target group in this year. Thus there were two leaflets about de-rating, and the case was made also in the occasional speech as provided for in the Speaker’s Handbook. The appeal was tepid, though. Hardly any candidates bothered to take it up and Labour’s leader essentially made it clear that the petite bourgeoisie were somewhat down the list of priorities. Appeals to other middle-class people did not occur except in the case of farmers. The one exception to this were the “little letters” printed in the *Daily Herald* which were reasoned appeals to teachers, businessmen and shopkeepers. Each of these only appeared once. They were designed to sway people who were deemed to be sceptical about the party or whose support would be especially welcome, and thus included new female voters, Tory working men, domestic servants, fishermen and habitual abstainers.

Summing up, there were few surprises about the 1929 electoral appeals. The most striking feature is the thorough attention paid to the countryside. The number of Labour candidates was, however, rising with each election, from 514 in 1924 to 569 in 1929, and with this trend it was obvious that Labour would have to try its hand in seats where there was no Trades Council and perhaps only a weak constituency Labour party. If the local branches in agricultural districts were small, it made all the more sense for propaganda and attention to be directed from party headquarters.

Introduction to the 1931 election

1931 was the election Labour did not want to fight. It lost its leader and some senior figures in its government due to the political and financial crises, and the literature which had been written for an autumn campaign had to be pulped.⁶⁰ It was to

⁵⁹ *Labour Organiser* XI (August 1931), p. 144. This is an article by Sidney Webb reprinted from November 1922.

⁶⁰ *Labour Party Reports of Annual Conferences. 32nd Report* (London, Labour Party, 1932), p. 63.

have formed the basis for the general election materials, but suddenly became obsolete. The election was fought largely on trust with the National Government asking for a doctor's mandate to take whatever measures it felt the economic situation required. Labour's real plan was to limit the scale of the defeat, and from that it may be expected that it would fall back on its established supporters. This is not exactly what happened as for electoral appeal, though there was some truth in it as for the seats that were contested. But although temporarily withdrawing from many difficult constituencies, Labour continued to frame its appeals widely. From the issues that were mentioned in the statements it can be seen how the party chose to present itself. 93% were in favour of free trade and thus against tariffs, 96% wrote about the cut in unemployment benefit and 75% about the salary cut for civil servants, which Labour opposed.⁶¹ Naturally unemployment continued to be a major issue as 71% of statements mentioned it, while 67% talked about wages or the general standard of living.⁶² A great majority of Labour candidates said they were in favour of the nationalization of the Bank of England (76%) and lesser numbers mentioned other sectors or industries that should be nationalized. In what follows leaflets and candidate's addresses will be used to give further details of Labour's electoral appeal.

The rural classes

As was shown in the 1929 election rural dwellers were much in focus as potential Labour voters. To what extent were they a target group again two years later? During 1930 the party published a total of 20 new leaflets, and of these at least five concerned countryside issues.⁶³ The salient points about these were provided in the Notes for Speakers. They emphasized public land ownership and control, and for agricultural workers the provision of untied cottages, unemployment insurance and a National Wages Board to look into conditions of employment.⁶⁴ The first two points were repeated later in a section especially for farm workers along with the Labour Housing (Agricultural Workers) Act and the 40, 000 houses which should be built. Farmers' concerns would have been described in the leaflets published in 1930, but

⁶¹ Andrew Thorpe, *The British General Election of 1931* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 220.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 221.

⁶³ Despite just 6.1% of the occupied population earning its living from the land. Ross McKibbin, *The Ideologies of Class. Social Relations in Britain 1880-1950* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 279. The explanation of Labour's apparent lack of a sense of proportion was that there were still 86 constituencies with more than 30% agriculturists. Kinnear, *The British Voter*, p. 120.

⁶⁴ LP/ELEC/1931/1. Notes for Speakers, p. 1633 in folder marked SERIALS JN 1055 1931.

which could not be used in the election due to the radically changed circumstance. They were among the people Labour thought of as “useful” in the countryside along with their employees and some professionals, possibly including vets, lawyers, bankers, teachers and parsons.⁶⁵ Although the historical literature tends to portray Labour as opportunistic in its concern for the land and mostly out to win votes,⁶⁶ the party had genuine plans for the country. Since these were analogous to its industrial plans, they were scarcely less important.⁶⁷

As for those materials which made it onto the campaign trail, a noteworthy leaflet is headlined “Tell Them This Story in the Village Inn.” It explained how 150,000 farm workers, tired of their lack of opportunities, had left the land in the previous ten years. When Labour was in office it passed a Land Act allowing farm workers, the unemployed, ex-service men and others to settle on allotments and become smallholders.⁶⁸ Before being driven out Labour provided for 64,000 applicants to settle on the land, and had prepared to place another 120,000 when the National Government took over and ended the policy as an economy measure. This was a well-worded statement because it showed that Labour was leading farm workers to a better life, whereas their successors in government did not have any such measures.

In the flyer “National Government’ Attacks Farm Workers” Labour showed that their opponents were promoting illegality in the country.⁶⁹ Since many employers were not observing Labour’s 1924 Agricultural Wages Act, in October 1929 the new Labour government had appointed a team of special investigators to make enquiries on every farm, visiting each district systematically. The team found that one in five farmers was paying less than the minimum wage. The National Government had dismissed the special investigators, and only Labour could pledge to bring them back and strengthen the Wages Act. A second leaflet also juxtaposed National Government inaction or worse with Labour’s positive policies for the agricultural worker. Appealing to these workers in the boldest way possible, it said that their wages would be cut, working

⁶⁵ *Labour Organiser X* (July 1930), p. 120. Note that the author goes on to question whether all farmers really are needed.

⁶⁶ Nicholas Mansfield, *English Farmworkers and Local Patriotism, 1900-1930* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2001), p. 162, p. 190. Ray Groves, *Sharpen the Sickle! The History of the Farmworkers’ Union* (London, Porcupine Press, 1949), pp. 218-219.

⁶⁷ Nationalize the land, turn farmers into “managers” and raise living standards for agricultural workers. See p. 180.

⁶⁸ LP/ELEC/1931/1. Leaflet 319 in folder marked JN 1055 A6.

⁶⁹ Leaflet 324 *loc. cit.*

hours extended and thus their standard of living lowered.⁷⁰ The justification for this claim was that the National Government had already cut the pay of “tens of thousands” of employees. It also mentioned that unemployment benefit had been reduced, resulting in 800, 000 workers being handed over to the Poor Law. The aim of this flyer was to scare farm workers, working against the general sense of national calamity put about by the National Government. The reverse page listed what Labour would do for agricultural workers. Among the policies listed were abolishing tied cottages, introducing a scheme of unemployment insurance, safeguarding wages and providing allotments and smallholdings.

Agricultural interests, including those of the farmer, often appeared as priorities in each candidate’s statement to the voters.⁷¹ Dan Chater, seeking election in South Hammersmith, quantified Labour’s ambition of land settlement to half a million men more becoming smallholders, thus giving new opportunities for the urban poor.⁷² This would take place within the context of land nationalization. Chater, who was a Co-operative candidate, saw “co-operation, efficiency and scientific marketing” as the key to the goal of greater food production. He mentioned farmers and agricultural workers as the groups he hoped to benefit, although not specifying how. Edward Stocker in East Dorset held up the prospect of a repeal of the Agricultural Wages Act if the National Government was returned, basing his gloom upon the dismissal of the inspectors.⁷³

Based on the demographic make-up of the constituencies, some candidates prioritized farmers in their statements. Saffron Walden’s S. S. Wilson promoted a coherent argument related to the land, talking about what the Labour government had done including land drainage, afforestation and the marketing of agricultural produce.⁷⁴ Given a majority, he said, there would be bulk purchases of commodities and import boards to stop unfair competition. Both farmers and consumers (“the housewife”) would be protected against speculators. In Macclesfield D. Scott Morton mentioned farmers before agricultural labourers; the former must be protected against “the rapacity of the landlords.”⁷⁵ He also wanted to do away with middlemen.

⁷⁰ Leaflet 323 *loc. cit.*

⁷¹ Labour simply assumed it was entitled to represent rural workers and farmers, unlike many European Socialist parties which grudgingly came to the conclusion that they could do so. McKibbin, *The Evolution of the Labour Party 1910-1924*, pp. 150-151.

⁷² LHASC, LP/ELEC/1931/2. Folder marked 1931 GEN. ELECTION LONDON.

⁷³ LP/ELEC/1931/2. Folder marked 1931 GEN. ELECTION ENGLISH COUNTIES.

⁷⁴ *Loc. cit.*

⁷⁵ *Loc. cit.*

The only mention of the fishing industry along with agriculture came from E. J. C. Neep in the Lowestoft division of East Suffolk.⁷⁶ As Lowestoft was an important centre for fishing, there were many electors there who made their living from it. Neep pointed to the special committee set up by Labour on how to improve conditions for fishermen, and promised that Labour would institute a thorough examination of their problems. This was the policy from the last election. E. J. Pay in Rugby mentioned that badly paid agricultural workers were a menace to industrial workers since the countryside was “a hunting ground for cheap labour” for employers in other industries.⁷⁷

On the whole, these comments and concerns may be taken as representative of how Labour appealed to the countryside during the 1931 election. There was real continuity with the preceding election despite the differing circumstances. Farmers received more attention previously, but this can easily be attributed to the loss of literature associated with the secession of the Prime Minister. Agricultural labourers were very much a target group in both elections. In 1931 there were many mentions of import boards to control the prices of agricultural produce.⁷⁸ Although probably intended to work in tandem with land nationalization and associated with emerging Socialism, they did contradict the frequent insistence that Labour was a free trade party, as mentioned by Snowden in his notorious “madcap finance” anti-Labour speech.⁷⁹

Women

Women, who were singled out for special consideration in the previous election campaign, often had appeals addressed to them in 1931 as well. One of these illustrates well that Labour ostensibly ran against protectionism. Entitled “Tariffs and the Housewife” it claimed that the National Government’s desire for a free hand would mean “dearer food and therefore less food.”⁸⁰ Since housewives often managed the budget of a family, this point about tariffs was addressed to them in particular, a standard Labour device. Exactly the same argument was made in the leaflet “This is for

⁷⁶ *Loc. cit.*

⁷⁷ *Loc. cit.*

⁷⁸ Dr Haden-Guest of Wycombe specifically said import boards but not tariffs, which would fail in their object. *Loc. cit.*

⁷⁹ Import and export boards were in the manifesto, but were made little play of by Labour candidates, anxious to present themselves as free traders. Thorpe, *The British General Election of 1931*, p. 248.

⁸⁰ Leaflet 308 in folder marked JN 1055 A6.

you Madam”.⁸¹ Here there was talk of how bread, butter, bacon and cheese would all be more expensive “when the Tories impose food taxes.” The message was to vote Labour to make one’s money go further— an example of what was identified as its typical policy of improving the purchasing power of working people. In a leaflet on the Labour government’s achievements, pensions for women were the first measure described.⁸² Thousands of women, the party claimed, were unjustifiably denied a pension by the Conservatives. Labour’s Pension Act of 1929 would ultimately benefit more than 500,000 widows and old age pensioners, including widows who were left out of the previous Act.

The Notes for Speakers did have a section headed for women campaigners, explaining how they should urge their sex to support Labour.⁸³ The reasons given were not gender specific, though. Labour was a united party with all of the people’s movement behind it— political, industrial and co-operative— with a clear programme. (This was obviously meant to contrast with the National Government’s various component parts and diffuse policies.) Perhaps the aims of that programme were thought to be more to the taste of women: national welfare, family security, international peace and co-operation. In actual fact the real agitation to women is to be found later under the section for housewives.⁸⁴ Here it was claimed that cuts in grants to health and education authorities would deprive necessitous mothers and babies of milk and hungry children of school meals. For housewives the speakers were to use scare tactics. With wage and unemployment benefit cuts compounded by price rises, especially on imported goods after Britain left the gold standard, “the outlook is a terrible one.”⁸⁵

In the personal statements of the candidates, women were much in evidence, and like in 1929 there was usually half a page or so written by the candidate’s wife or female relation (unless the candidate herself was a woman). This presented a kind of family to family appeal, and was probably intended to ensure that everyone in a household voted the same way. These notes were usually of a general nature. In contrast

⁸¹ Leaflet 314 *loc. cit.*

⁸² Leaflet 304 *loc. cit.*

⁸³ Notes for Speakers, p. 1663 in folder marked SERIALS JN 1055 1931.

⁸⁴ The appeal to working women was somewhat compromised by the Labour government’s decision to restrict married women’s eligibility for unemployment benefit. Savage and Miles, *The Remaking of the British Working Class, 1840-1940*, p. 87.

⁸⁵ Notes for Speakers, p. 1665 in folder marked SERIALS JN 1055 1931.

there was W. Barratt's statement for the constituency of Northeast Bethnal Green.⁸⁶ He stressed that he was against cuts in maternity grants, as they would make the women and children of that area suffer. Ben Smith, Labour candidate for Rotherhithe, appealed to women on the basis of resisting cutbacks in public expenditure on health and benefits for mothers and children.⁸⁷ He also promised to make every effort to prevent maternal mortality. Alfreda H. Maynard, the wife of the candidate in East Fulham, Sir John Maynard, mentioned these concerns, and also the 300, 000 widows a year whom Labour had secured pensions.⁸⁸

Overall there was a tendency of appealing to women by name, but not to hold forth policies that were particularly relevant to them as women. As an example take the brochure "To the Womenfolk" by Eva Bowen, wife of the candidate J. W. Bowen in Crewe.⁸⁹ Although beginning by stating that "this is our election" the rationale for voting Labour appeared to be the standard reasons of decent wages, comfortable houses at moderate rents and improved educational facilities. Actually what she was doing was appealing to the working class, which might find all of these policies attractive. But, as discussed before, these appeals tried to put in clear language the experience of proletarian women, and class situation was still more important than gender. Elsie Price, the wife of the candidate in Whitehaven, wrote: "If my husband was unemployed, I, being the mother of children, would vote for a man I considered the correct mouthpiece to voice our interests."⁹⁰ In other words, women should vote according to her husband's interests and those of her family.

Women were still a target group in 1931, as they had been in 1929. Appeals to them were a matter of course. But centrally there is no doubt that women received less attention than in 1929.⁹¹ Out of the 20 leaflets produced by the party in 1930, which were mostly discarded owing to the special circumstances, not one can be attributed as being intended particularly for women from the title. Because there was no stimulus to prioritize women in 1931, as there had been two years before (the "flapper" vote), they were somehow lost from view. There is much to suggest that Labour was driven by

⁸⁶ LP/ELEC/1931/2. Folder marked 1931 GEN. ELECTION LONDON.

⁸⁷ *Loc. cit.*

⁸⁸ *Loc. cit.*

⁸⁹ LP/ELEC/1931/2. Folder marked 1931 GEN. ELECTION ENGLISH COUNTIES.

⁹⁰ *Loc. cit.*

⁹¹ Cf. Pamela Graves, *Labour Women. Women in British Working-Class Politics 1918-1939* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 149.

circumstances in choosing to whom it would make a special effort in addition to the core voters.

The working class

Given the issue on which Labour was forced out of office (cuts in unemployment benefit) and the crisis atmosphere in which the subsequent election was fought, it might have been expected that Labour would fall back upon its most loyal following. This was not exactly what happened; the party continued to reach out to other sections of the electorate. But naturally part of its central campaign was targeted at workers in industry, trade unionists and co-operators.

An uncorrected proof of a leaflet entitled “The Attack on the Wage Earner” rehearsed the main arguments along this line of appeal.⁹² Voting for Labour meant protecting the workers’ standards of living. The National Government, which was nothing but the Tory party under a new name, had already cut the wages in the public sector and had raised contributions for unemployment insurance. A million workers had been thrown onto the Poor Law. The National Government wanted to introduce tariffs, which would make food dearer. Against all these hostile measures, the solution was to “Stand by your Union Leaders. Defend Yourself! Vote Labour.”

A flyer devoted to the issue of coal was intended to extricate Labour from being seen as responsible for the prevailing conditions in the industry.⁹³ It reminded the voters that Labour did not have a majority when it passed the Coal Mines Bill in 1930. Thus it could not implement its policy of nationalization. The bill was heavily modified by the opposition and, moreover, when Labour took over in 1929 coal was in a “state of chaos.” The cotton industry received a similar flyer noting that the industry had experienced a severe depression since 1920.⁹⁴ Here Labour had a lot less to offer, though, describing how in 1929 Labour set up a special commission. Its policy was the centralization of the industry with uneconomic units of production being eliminated. This might have been a sensible policy, but does not sound very attractive.

A much clearer message was provided under the title of “You don’t want Lower Wages!”⁹⁵ Concentrating on identifying MacDonald with Toryism, it stated that the National Government would significantly reduce wages, increase the cost of living by

⁹² Leaflet 310 *loc. cit.*

⁹³ Leaflet 325 *loc. cit.*

⁹⁴ Leaflet 311 *loc. cit.*

tariffs and food taxes and lay new burdens on industry by forcing the pound back to the gold standard. All these policies were designed to increase the incomes of the rich at the expense of the poor, and favouring the rentier over the producer. The same argument but only applied to wages was to be found in a flyer stating Labour's opposition to dictation from the bankers.⁹⁶ It was headed "Wages Must Come Down" and reminded the public that the Conservatives and Liberals were pledged to implement the bankers' policy of cuts.

As an example of what the branches could do, take the plea to trade unionists to support Labour issued by the Paddington Trades Council and Labour Party. It opened dramatically by stating that the National Government had declared war on the workers. It was the cuts in unemployment benefit which qualified for this description, the sheet noting further that on 12 November a total of 352, 000 individuals— "our people"— would be pauperized by subjection to Public Assistance Committees, the means test and Poor Law administration. Of course this was highly frightening also to those workers currently employed as they could be next. There then followed a claim that the policy of the National Government would be that of the employers' organizations, who were preparing the way for "the most tremendous wage-cutting campaign the workers have ever experienced."⁹⁷ In the worker's own interest, therefore, he should vote Labour. The branch then revealed something about how it saw the national party: basically the party of the trade unionists and workers, a people's party.

The co-operators were responsible for their own propaganda. Much of it was distributed through their candidates, but some was in newsletters covering a wider area. The York Equitable Industrial Society published what must be a free election newsletter, although dated November 1931. Here the Labour candidate for York, Fred Burgess, a life-long co-operator, explained that the aims of the Co-operative and Labour parties were identical.⁹⁸ He claimed that Labour had kept its hands clean over the recent events, and said the future of co-operation relied upon the return of a Labour government. If that was an exaggeration at least one important thing was held in the balance for co-operators, namely their dividend. The paper warned that for years the Conservatives had been advocating a tax on co-operative profits, and private traders' organizations had

⁹⁵ Leaflet 318 *loc. cit.*

⁹⁶ Leaflet 312 *loc. cit.*

⁹⁷ LP/ELEC/1931/1 folder marked JN 1055 A6 1931.

⁹⁸ LP/ELEC/1931/1. York Equitable Industrial Society Ltd. Vol. 34-Local, No. 117 November 1931 in folder marked JN 1055 A5 1931.

lobbied governments with this goal in mind. Thus, as the headline put it, "Your Dividend is in Danger! An Urgent Call!"

Both for the trade unions and the co-operators Labour served as a bulwark against undesirable developments. Given the economic crisis, the cuts and the panic atmosphere in which the election was fought, it is perhaps not surprising that the messages were relatively defensive, not providing a wholesale endorsement of Labour's own policies. A further consideration in this regard was that MacDonald's two minority governments had been able to accomplish relatively little. And while in its manifesto Labour assured its followers that it was confident of victory, the party, the trade unions and other sympathizing organizations were in reality fighting a rearguard action to diminish the scale of the defeat. Labour's own Notes for Speakers gives as the reason for the election the Tory wish to kill Labour.⁹⁹ Some pages later it was stated that Labour was too strong in Britain, and bankers and capitalists could not tolerate this in the world financial centre. The election was called in order to destroy the labour movement.

Labour knew well enough that it must curry favour with industrial workers and their families, to whom in one role or another the majority of their propaganda was directed, especially if those of analogous status in other sectors of the economy (like the primary sector) are included. In one leaflet J. R. Clynes, home secretary in the previous Labour government, explained the party's attitude on this well. He said Labour was not the narrow class party which it was often accused of being.¹⁰⁰ On the other hand, the working class was so large a part of the nation as to nearly be the nation itself. Despite the almost automatic concern with workers, a few notable examples of Labour's pitch to them are worth noting.

In Finsbury Tom Williams, rather unusually for Labour candidates, came across as an intensely class conscious worker. He asked who should rule— Parliament or the bankers— then described himself as the son of a miner who had laboured in the trade unions, party and co-operative movement for the improvement of life for the workers. "I am happy in this election to be fighting the battle of the class to which I belong."¹⁰¹ Dave Andrews, candidate for South Poplar, promised to strive for "a full and healthy

⁹⁹ Notes for Speakers, p. 1664 in folder marked SERIALS JN 1055 1931.

¹⁰⁰ LP/ELEC/1931/1. Leaflet 313 in folder marked JN 1055 A6 1931.

¹⁰¹ LP/ELEC/1931/2. Folder marked 1931 GEN. ELECTION LONDON.

life for all members of our class.”¹⁰² Later he underlined that “We working people have the power, would we but learn to use it, to rid our lives of the spectre of want and unemployment.” It was not their opinions which stood out, but their clear identification of themselves as ordinary workers. Most candidates instead strove to appear somewhat elevated by using whatever titles they possessed. They could be deferential too. In 1929, H. B. Lees-Smith, even printed praise from the Conservative Home Secretary Sir William Joynson-Hicks on the first page of his election brochure.¹⁰³ Perhaps respectability was what Labour needed to gain support from more privileged people.

The middle classes

In 1931 the cuts of the National Government gave Labour the opportunity to more truly represent the workers “by hand and by brain”, that is, reaching above the working class into the petite bourgeoisie and propertyless intelligentsia. The previous decade had witnessed efforts to gain the middle classes for the party, including a *Daily Herald* campaign in 1925.¹⁰⁴ In the same year a contributor to the *Labour Organiser* urged increased attention on teachers, who were vulnerable to the right-wing press’s attacks on “progressive education”.¹⁰⁵ Winning over non-traditional Labour voters did not amount to a shift in policy, but it was a shift in practice.

So a flyer describing who a Labour vote would help save put the teachers first.¹⁰⁶ Next followed servicemen, third were the police. The other groups mentioned were, in order, the unemployed, the workers and salaried officials, and lastly, the persons with small or fixed incomes. One may argue about the exact class or status affiliation of these groups, but it is difficult to gainsay that together they spanned beyond the working class. It is worth noting that once the Labour Party began asking for support from these groups, once it had clearly stated that it wished to represent them, then the propaganda against wage cuts and some of the other materials hitherto associated with the working class, may have chimed with the new target audiences as well.

¹⁰² *Loc. cit.*

¹⁰³ He was the candidate for Keighley. LP/ELEC/1929/1 folder marked JN 1055 A6 1929.

¹⁰⁴ Stefan Berger, *The British Labour Party and the German Social Democrats, 1900-1931* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 63.

¹⁰⁵ Dominic Wring ‘Selling Socialism: Marketing the Early Labour Party’, *History Today* 55:5 (2005), p. 42.

¹⁰⁶ LP/ELEC/1931/1. Leaflet 302 in folder marked JN 1055 A6 1931.

Contrary to this, however, the middle classes may not have recognized themselves when the TUC issued its “Call to the Workers” in the run-up to the general election.¹⁰⁷ Signed by Walter Citrine, it lambasted the National Government for the cuts in the salaries of teachers, civil servants and the police. But when it addressed its audience as “fellow workers” and asked it to reinforce its industrial strength by voting Labour, it cannot have intended to persuade the aforementioned groups.

Among the candidates the overwhelming majority pledged to restore the cuts in wages, salaries and benefits of the affected groups. In order to appeal to the division of the workforce called the middle classes, though, it was necessary to mention some occupations associated with them, the more explicitly the better. For instance, Henry Smith of Hampstead pledged to restore the government economies at the expense of public servants, and would work for the progress of the less well paid of them.¹⁰⁸ This was not so clearly aimed at attracting middle-class support because he could be talking about postmen. In contrast, Dr Haden-Guest of Wycombe in Bucks specifically wrote about the middle classes by name when he claimed they were threatened. His constituency was experiencing a rise in the number of such people. He said they must avoid economic entrenchment which had been tried for some years in Germany with disastrous consequences for precisely this group, who had sunk “into the mass of unskilled workers” while the country had been brought to the brink of bankruptcy.¹⁰⁹

There was, however, one group which Labour had claimed to speak for in its 1929 manifesto, but the appeals to which were somewhat stunted, namely the lower middle class. On this occasion it was much more in evidence. Dr Alfred Salter was the candidate for West Bermondsey and the *Bermondsey Labour Magazine* published his comments that Labour was against the economy measures because they laid the burden of meeting the crisis upon the working and lower middle classes.¹¹⁰ In Mile End John Scurr said the National Government’s variation of allowances for income tax had hit the small shopkeeper very hard (and also the professional man).¹¹¹ Arthur Wiltshire of South Dorset was one of many who made the point that shopkeepers suffered when

¹⁰⁷ Folder marked JN 1055 A8 1931.

¹⁰⁸ LP/ELEC/1931/2 Folder marked 1931 GEN. ELECTION LONDON.

¹⁰⁹ Folder marked 1931 GEN. ELECTION ENGLISH COUNTIES.

¹¹⁰ *Bermondsey Labour Magazine*, p. 3 in LP/ELEC/1931/2 folder marked 1931 GEN. ELECTION LONDON.

¹¹¹ *Loc. cit.*

wage earners had less money to spend.¹¹² J. W. Bowen of Crewe claimed the National Government had raised taxes for the lower middle and working classes.¹¹³

The appeals to small property owners were usually based on the damage to their businesses caused by National Government policy.¹¹⁴ A particularly well put appeal was by Fred Longden of Deritend in Birmingham.¹¹⁵ The manufacturer and shopkeeper could expect fewer orders under the National Government, but higher taxes to cover the budget deficit and higher rates to fend for the increased number of destitute. Charles Fox of Gloucester said the small trader must choose between being crushed by the combines or joining with the people's movement.¹¹⁶ J. R. Clynes, who has already been mentioned on this issue, produced a brochure to businesspeople, shopkeepers and tradesmen in the constituency of Platting.¹¹⁷ He urged them to break free from the monopolists and help make them pay more back to the nation, and moreover, to realize that wage earners and businesspeople had mutual interests.

There was no shortage, then, of appeals to the lower middle class, and some of the above aimed higher up the social scale too.¹¹⁸ Most of the appeals targeted at professionals were to be found under the heading of resistance to the cuts in salaries. Candidates varied between themselves on how much they stressed the plight of the unemployed and the possible hardship of the educated.¹¹⁹ A different approach to winning votes from the middle classes could be witnessed in George Lansbury's East End constituency of Bow and Bromley.¹²⁰ In an area dominated by workers, he played upon the sympathy of ministers of religion and social workers for the unemployed. Charles Duncan of Clay Cross said the National Government was balancing the budget by throwing burdens on the poor and middle-class families.¹²¹ He underlined the enthusiastic support of the House of Lords for these measures, holding forth a class

¹¹² Folder marked 1931 GEN. ELECTION ENGLISH COUNTIES.

¹¹³ *Loc. cit.*

¹¹⁴ Labour really believed such was the case since it circulated this view internally. It thought shopkeepers to a great extent would be natural National voters, but if they realized there were two sides to the story might opt for Labour or at least abstain. *Labour Organiser* XI (October 1931), p. 184.

¹¹⁵ Folder marked 1931 GEN. ELECTION ENGLISH COUNTIES.

¹¹⁶ *Loc. cit.*

¹¹⁷ *Loc. cit.*

¹¹⁸ In the words of one significant historian, the Labour Party has never succeeded in creating a stable alliance between organized workers and the lower middle class, except when it attracted notable support from social groups above these. Stedman Jones, *Languages of Class*, p. 243.

¹¹⁹ And 96% of Labour candidates mentioned the cut in unemployment benefit in their election addresses, while only 75% remarked upon the public servants' salary cut. Thorpe, *The British General Election of 1931*, p. 220.

¹²⁰ Folder marked 1931 GEN. ELECTION LONDON.

¹²¹ Folder marked 1931 GEN. ELECTION ENGLISH COUNTIES

dimension to the crisis and trying to make those in the middle come down on the side of Labour. Many more examples could be appended, but the vital point is that professionals as well as the lower middle class were addressed.

Liberals

Another new development in 1931 was that Labour began consistently urging Liberals to come over to the Party. Again this was driven to a great extent by circumstances. The genius of the National Government's campaign was that its component parts formed a kind of cartel, dividing up the seats among themselves, isolating the opposition (primarily Labour) and taking advantage of the first-past-the-post electoral system. Because its rhetoric was ostensibly national over special interest groups, it was something with which nearly everyone could identify. To counteract this, Labour's only hope was to break down the colossus by stressing the class dimension of the crisis, try to hold onto their existing voters and gain some new ones.¹²² Since the Liberals had uncomfortably submerged their identity into the National Government, aware that their policy of free trade was bound to lose against the stronger Conservatives' protectionist stance, they created an opening for Labour to appeal to normally Liberal voters on the basis of the former.¹²³

While there was very little central direction in this, the case for trying to gain support from the Liberal electorate on the basis of free trade made itself, especially after David Lloyd George had broadcast a speech reinforcing that appeal from his home on 15 October. Independent Liberal Lloyd George had said that he would not hesitate to vote for a free-trade Labour candidate against a protectionist. A great many Labour candidates quoted from this speech in their personal electoral materials. The basis for appealing to Liberals nevertheless went wider. Dr R. A. Lyster, Labour's candidate for Winchester, mentioned peace, disarmament, the League of Nations, taxation of land values before his opposition to protection, tariffs and food taxes in his "Open Letter to Liberals".¹²⁴ Ernest Winterton in Loughborough concentrated on education, temperance

¹²² As demonstrated by the Questions released by the Labour Party Press and Publicity Department to be used against National candidates. JN 1055 A6.

¹²³ Labour believed its free-trade stance could be its salvation. 93% of its candidates explained they were against tariffs and Henderson wrote in the *Daily Herald* the day before the election that the following day they would meet the "tariff enemy", as if it were the most important issue. Thorpe, *The British General Election of 1931*, p. 220, p. 242.

¹²⁴ Folder marked 1931 GEN. ELECTION ENGLISH COUNTIES.

reform and healthy homes as the means to achieve this end, although these reasons were mentioned on the level of banality. (“They are keen on education. So am I.”)¹²⁵

Robert Young in North Islington quoted Lloyd George’s opinion that the election was a “Tory ramp,” which was exactly what Labour believed.¹²⁶ Young promised to fight food taxers. Sometimes the plea to Liberals would go far enough for an alliance to be formed. In South Devonshire Major D. Graham Pole received an endorsement form the late Liberal candidate E. J. Johnson, not specifying exactly why Liberals should vote for Pole, but criticizing the Conservatives heavily.¹²⁷ Frank Wynne Davies of Stroud used the fact that he was an ex-Liberal to urge all those of progressive thought to support him, and appended quotes from Lloyd George.¹²⁸

Since “Liberal” was an ideological affiliation, it is not surprising that Labour should offer ideal benefits to these voters when trying to persuade them to vote Labour. Free trade was by far the most important element, with other policies having a role in reinforcing a progressive alliance between individuals and the Labour Party. The latter was aided by there only being 24 contests between Liberal Nationals and Labour. In the 20 contests that were straight fights between a Liberal and a Labour candidate, there was no telling reason why Liberals should switch allegiance unless they distrusted their candidate on the tariff question.

Conclusion: The 1931 election

Thus, it is evident that Labour’s basis for agitation became wider in 1931 than it had been in 1929. The focus on attracting Liberals, even as Labour was undergoing severe trauma and having its very existence challenged, confirmed its replacement of the Liberals as the party of the left in the two-party system. This had been an ongoing process since 1918 and its goal in the 1920s.¹²⁹ By appealing seriously to the middle classes, Labour began to follow through the implications of its claim to stand for the entire nation. And it found it could do so easily on the basis of its own attitudes and ideology when the National Government cut salaries. In common resistance to an attack

¹²⁵ Folder marked 1931 GEN. ELECTION ENGLISH COUNTIES

¹²⁶ Folder marked 1931 GEN. ELECTION LONDON.

¹²⁷ Folder marked 1931 GEN. ELECTION ENGLISH COUNTIES. Note that Labour tended to be centrist in South West England, so its pitch may not have been significantly different from the Liberals. Andrew Thorpe “One of the Most Backward Areas of the Country.” *The Labour Party’s Grass Roots in South West England, 1918-45* in Worley (ed.), *Labour’s Grass Roots*, p. 228.

¹²⁸ *Loc. cit.*

¹²⁹ Although it appears few Liberals took the advice of Lloyd George to vote Labour in the absence of a Liberal candidate. Kinnear, *The British Voter*, p. 50.

on living standards, Labour hoped to forge an alliance stretching from the unemployed into the bourgeoisie. It should be remembered, though, that some candidates were less keen than others on the idea, and concentrated on appealing to the disadvantaged out of these groups, ignoring the more fortunate. For those candidates there was no change from 1929.

While Labour reached out to important new groups, there were some who were less in evidence in 1931 than in 1929. Farmers were still appealed to in rural constituencies, but no specific campaign was directed at them centrally. It is possible that they would have received more attention had the election been fought at the time of Labour's choosing. The party continued to try to rally agricultural workers with leaflets produced by the party machine, instructions to candidates and locally directed appeals.

Women remained a target group for Labour and were appealed to as working women, housewives or widows.¹³⁰ They continued to be a highly significant electoral group, but the focus on them was less intense than it had been in 1929. This can be laid at the door of the crisis atmosphere in which the election was fought, or simply that 1929 provided an extra impetus since the last section of the female population was enfranchised in time for it.

When the votes had been counted and it was clear that Labour had suffered a great defeat, a number of explanations were offered with regard to the party's campaigning strategy. Labour had not been ready to fight an election, but its method of wooing the voters had hardly changed much from 1929 when it did well. Its defeat gave opponents the chance for ideological point scoring. *Izvestia*, the official organ of the Soviet Government, said it was on the cards that the Conservatives would win as Henderson's programme was merely intended to attract the labour aristocracy and the lower middle class.¹³¹ The Notes for Speakers took the upbeat view that Labour had obtained nearly seven million votes for Socialism. In the next few years the strategy of the party would be to persuade people to become Socialists, rather than seek the ephemeral support of those who "are swayed by sentiment."¹³²

¹³⁰ But were disproportionately blamed for Labour's poor result. It was thought that female electors had "succumbed" the most to the propaganda of the National Government. *Labour Organiser* XI (November 1931), p. 203. Also see p. 217 of the same issue where young people "particularly the young women" are blamed.

¹³¹ *The Times*, 29 October 1931.

Introduction to the election of 1935

And indeed the 1935 election was fought much more on ideology.¹³³

International affairs were highly important, and made for a campaign more about principles and broad lines than was the case in 1929 and 1931.¹³⁴ Although Labour's campaigning mirrored that of the other parties and could be summed up as "election address, election meetings, canvass, poll card and polling day arrangements", theoretically it should not be like this.¹³⁵ Unlike the Liberals and Conservatives it had some fundamental convictions about which it needed to persuade the electorate. Labour published leaflets with titles like "Murder from the Air" (Disarmament) and "End the Financier's Dictatorship".¹³⁶ This might be thought to make it harder to pinpoint exactly from whom they sought support, because ideologically convinced Socialists could be found in all walks of life. This is true to the extent that a larger proportion of the propaganda had general themes. Creating and expanding an electoral base occurred largely independently of grand ideas. But in 1935 54% of Labour candidates wrote about Socialism in their statements, compared to just 8% in 1929.¹³⁷ It was after 1931 and the financial crisis that a planned Socialist economy gradually became Labour's most marked policy. It had previously downplayed its ideology in order to appear more "respectable".¹³⁸

The rural classes

In 1935 Labour fielded 552 candidates, which was a distinct improvement on 1931. It had long wanted to do well in the countryside, and now it contested difficult constituencies again, which meant that rural dwellers could act on the propaganda and go and vote Labour if so inclined. As an introduction to the party's policies the leaflet

¹³² Notes for Speakers, p. 1745 in LP/ELEC/1931/1 folder marked SERIALS JN 1055 1931

¹³³ Socialism, and its corollary nationalization, was one of the most talked about issues of the election. This was in keeping with Attlee's goals for the campaign. Tom Stannage, *Baldwin Thwarts the Opposition. The British General Election of 1935* (London, Croom Helm, 1980), p. 169.

¹³⁴ Ivor Bulmer-Thomas, *The Growth of the British Party System. Volume II 1924-1964* (London, John Barker, 1965), pp. 111-112.

¹³⁵ *Labour Organiser* XV (September 1935), p. 161.

¹³⁶ Labour was very attuned to the role of the financial sector in capitalism. Partly this was the result of the fall of its government in 1931. In April 1932 a G. D. H. Cole-prepared digest of the thoughts of leading Labour figures concluded there was unanimity on the need for "immediate control of Finance." Roger Eatwell and Anthony Wright, 'Labour and the Lessons of 1931', *History* 63:207 (1978), p. 48.

¹³⁷ Stannage, *op. cit.*, p. 291. Rowe, 'The British General Election of 1929', p. 207.

¹³⁸ Matthew Worley 'Building the Party: Labour Party Activism in Five British Counties between the Wars', *Labour History Review* 70:1 (2005), p. 83.

“What Rural Britain Wants” summarized Labour’s main objectives. These were prosperous farms, well-paid agricultural workers, maintenance for the rural unemployed and a working economy (thriving shops and prosperous markets).¹³⁹ Naturally doing away with the tied cottage and providing housing at low rent remained a priority for Labour. The reverse side went into more detail about policy, explaining nationalization of the land, settlement on the land and the national plan for the countryside.

The Notes for Speakers put Labour’s understanding of the countryside succinctly. The landlords of huge estates were not occupiers of the land, but they drained off the best of it in rents while leaving some of it derelict.¹⁴⁰ Farmers were the next link in the chain, and they enjoyed no security of tenure. This in turn was passed on to their labourers, who were eking out a very tenuous existence. For this reason Labour concentrated on gaining farmers and agricultural workers for its cause, and would eliminate landlords through nationalization. It thus had policies designed to benefit the farmer and wanted to protect him from middlemen who took part of his profits, and sometimes against foreign competition through import boards. It had even more concrete, understandable policies for the labourers: greater security and higher living standards through untied cottages, higher wages, allotments of land and educational opportunities.

It was mainly farmers who were sceptical about Labour’s agricultural policies, so a flyer was produced to set their minds at rest. Meeting the challenge of the Conservatives, it dealt with the assertions that Labour would farm from Whitehall, was out for “control”, and would “nationalize.”¹⁴¹ The flyer explained that the State would take the landowner’s place, find the necessary capital, provide good conditions and security of tenure for the farmer. Under Labour the farmer would get on with farming, but would not be a landowner. Maybe as part of the conscious attempt to build Socialism instead of just winning the election, it ended with an appeal to join the Labour Party and support trade unionism.

By 1935, however, it was becoming clearer that Labour could not make much headway with farmers.¹⁴² Quoting the Notes for Speakers, Ernest Davies of

¹³⁹ LP/ELEC/1935/1. Leaflet 42 in folder marked GENERAL ELECTION 1935 LABOUR PARTY.

¹⁴⁰ Notes for Speakers, p. 57. Marked JN 1055 A8 1935.

¹⁴¹ Leaflet 15 in folder marked GENERAL ELECTION 1935 LABOUR PARTY.

¹⁴² Under the National Government a number of marketing innovations had been brought to farming. Agriculture Minister Walter Elliot’s schemes were not particularly popular, but the disaffection did not take the shape of voting Labour as its reforms were even more wide-ranging. Stannage, *Baldwin Thwarts the Opposition*, p. 163. Cf. Mansfield, *English Farmworkers and Local Patriotism, 1900-1930*, p. 197. In

Peterborough in his campaign statement revealed that the National Government had given farmers £ 45 million a year in direct and indirect subsidies. These were not in any way helping the agricultural labourer, whose wages had been falling since 1931, although now restored to that level.¹⁴³ In addition many were paid less than the minimum wage, as the inspectors Labour had appointed had been dismissed by the National Government. For these reasons or for others, “[t]he Labour Party puts the interests of the farm worker before that of the farmer or the landlord” according to Davies. He did, nevertheless, repeat Labour’s policy of cutting out middlemen to make sure the farmer received a decent price for his produce. His final appeal was to farm workers only, whom he promised better houses, pensions at 60 and a higher standard of living.

The booklet “Fifty Reasons Why You Should Vote Labour” gave reasons why the classes of the countryside ought to support the party.¹⁴⁴ Many of these were rehashed from previous elections, but some of the facts at least were new. Number 32 was agricultural wages, and Labour promised to increase them gradually through a scheme of a National Wages Board. It acknowledged that the National Government had accepted the principle of unemployment insurance for most workers, but said it did nothing about it in the outgoing Parliament.¹⁴⁵ In number 33 Labour pointed to its record over rural wages, in number 34 it promised to build 40, 000 cottages at low rent. The latter point was based on Labour’s Housing (Rural Authorities) Act which remained on the Statute Book. Number 35, though, was a new element in Labour’s rural policy: the abolition of tithes. This would be effected gradually over 15 years, as the tithes would be redeemed on the same basis as compensation for the nationalization of land. In the mean time there should be a sliding scale linking tithes to prices. Because the Ministry of Agriculture’s index of agricultural prices had been falling in recent years, it would imply a lighter burden.

the 1920s many farmers clamoured for state intervention, but they could not bring themselves to vote Labour.

¹⁴³ Folder marked 1935 GENERAL ELECTION ENGLISH COUNTIES.

¹⁴⁴ Marked JN 1055 A6 1935.

¹⁴⁵ Labour’s thunder was stolen by the Government announcing it would raise the school leaving age, increase child allowances and include agricultural workers in the unemployment insurance scheme. See Stannage, *op. cit.*, p. 168. Craig (ed.), *British General Election Manifestos 1918-1966*, pp. 78, 80. Its only possible response was to cast doubts on the Government’s willingness to do so. It also argued it was pointless to raise the school-leaving age to 15 if local authorities could permit children of 14 to work. William Thomas Morgan, *The British General Election of 1935. Reprinted from the South Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. XXXVII. No. 2. April 1938, p. 119.

The greatest problem for Labour was that the National Government had lavished subsidies on farmers. They had not passed these on in the form of higher wages, and thus it was increasingly clear to Labour that it could not expect much support from them. They had a vested interest in the present state of society, and furthermore as Labour became more Socialist in inspiration, it could not but notice that farmers were employers. Candidates differed in how much emphasis they put on attracting them, probably in accordance with the demography of their constituencies. Labour continued to believe that its majority would come from the rural seats, but in the present election there were something like 200 urban divisions which it needed to win back.¹⁴⁶ W. Simcock of Stone claimed that the higher food prices were not benefiting the farmer, so the subsidies were not really working.¹⁴⁷ In its official propaganda Labour did try to gain the farming vote, but its admission of those great subsidies being received by the group must have made most candidates less sure of success. The agricultural workers unquestionably remained a Labour target group.

Women

Women are the second audience which have been looked at from election to election. Just one leaflet was especially intended for them in 1935, namely "Housewives Look at This". Labour, however, considered women to be more concerned about children and health issues than men, and there were a further two flyers about these matters. The comparative lack of propaganda from the party machine should not be considered a downplaying of women as electors, because Labour's literature in 1935 was concentrated to a large extent on issues of war and peace, internationalism and ideology. Unlike 1931 the party's Notes for Speakers gave comprehensive reasons why women should vote Labour.

The opening remarks made the assertion that women were more acutely affected by the injustices of the present economic system.¹⁴⁸ The rest of the text was divided into arguments for housewives, mothers and working women. To the housewife they pointed out that the National Government had doubled food taxes. Labour was primarily talking to the working-class housewife here, a fact which it acknowledged openly. It promised

¹⁴⁶ *Labour Organiser* XV (July 1935), pp. 139-140.

¹⁴⁷ Folder marked 1935 GENERAL ELECTION ENGLISH BOROUGHES. In contrast the Government claimed food prices were lower, farmers were receiving 15% more for their produce than two years ago and agricultural workers had the highest wages for ten years. This could only be the effect of the subsidies. Stannage, *op. cit.*, pp. 163-164, Craig, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

to remove the food taxes. To the mother it held out a comprehensive maternity service, for which plans existed when it was thrown out of office.¹⁴⁹ It reminded them that the National Government had abolished free secondary schooling. The working woman was wooed with plans for proper legislation in regard to safety, health and ventilation.¹⁵⁰ This held true for both industrial and office workers. Labour added that the National Government caused hardship to unemployed married women in the Anomalies Act.

“Housewives Look at This” was directed at the core Labour female voter with allegations that the National Government has increased food taxes by £ 19.3 million from 1931 to 1934.¹⁵¹ While it was right to control the supply of foodstuffs, its policy was to make the poor pay. The health leaflet concentrated on issues of interest to women such as maternal mortality, health insurance benefits for women, nursery schools and maternity and child welfare.¹⁵² Labour would establish a public health service, which would include all of the priorities it was accusing the National Government of neglecting. Because most of the issues related to children in some form, it was primarily to mothers that Labour was able to appeal with this flyer. In any case Labour was promising to provide good maternity services, nursery schools and school meals for everyone, not just the certifiably under-nourished. While these would be of most use to working-class women, it is possible sympathy votes could be had on the basis of these as well. As Harold Greaves in the constituency of Camborne said, Labour appealed to women “in every section of the community, because it offers them peace, and for their children the hope of health and happiness.”¹⁵³ The leaflet to parents was not gendered at all, but dealt with the education of children.¹⁵⁴

In essence this concluded Labour’s appeal to the female sex in the 1935 election. There was very little beyond new facts which was novel. 1935 confirms that women were indeed one of the most important target groups for Labour, as there was much fewer materials designed to secure the support of other groups which have previously been dealt with. As Socialists Labour believed in welfare, and having few economic ideas beyond nationalization it was inevitable that the provision of decent services should occupy such a large part of the party’s policies. Labour believed that its incipient

¹⁴⁸ Notes for Speakers, p. 47. Marked JN 1055 A8 1935.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

¹⁵¹ Leaflet 37 in folder marked GENERAL ELECTION 1935 LABOUR PARTY.

¹⁵² Leaflet 38 *loc. cit.*

¹⁵³ Folder marked 1935 GENERAL ELECTION ENGLISH COUNTIES

¹⁵⁴ Leaflet 39 in folder marked GENERAL ELECTION 1935 LABOUR PARTY

welfare state could attract women, and therefore it considered itself a woman's party. The targeting of women in 1929 was thus not entirely opportunistic. All the time Labour's electoral wooing of women was based on a perception of their unique needs, their role in the family, prospects to be part of the economy and their perceived interests in peace and opportunities for children.

The middle classes

In 1931 a new development of great import was discovered, namely the wooing of the lower and professional middle classes. Together with the very close attention paid to rural voters, this had the potential of turning Labour into a truly national party. It was already a people's party in that it looked after the interests of common people more than it worried about advantages for industry and commerce. After 1931 Labour continued focusing on those who were better off than workers. This can best be seen in Sir Stafford Cripps's pamphlet from 1933 "Are You a Worker? Where the Middle Class Stands" and another effort from 1934, Lawrence Benjamin's "The Position of the Middle Class Worker in the Transition to Socialism".

Cripps's pamphlet attempted to enter into the mindset of middle-class people, much like an article in the *London News* had done before the 1929 election.¹⁵⁵ Beginning carefully he underlined that Labour sought a classless society, not one in which the present position of the classes were reversed.¹⁵⁶ He went on to question whether there could be any middle position between capitalists and employees, stressing that this class division is not based on birth or even wealth.¹⁵⁷ Small property owners should remember that any day under the present system they might be thrown into unemployment and impoverishment.¹⁵⁸ Cripps said this was a much greater worry than that their small savings or house might be lost, traditionally their reason for throwing in their lot with the capitalist parties. He also reminded them that "hundreds and thousands" of these petit bourgeois people were now claiming unemployment benefit or were on the Poor Law, while the large capitalists were using the aforementioned savings to prop up the profits of private enterprise.¹⁵⁹ Security was the main reason why the middle classes should support Socialism. An argument which he advanced was that

¹⁵⁵ See chapter 1, p. 46f.

¹⁵⁶ *Are you a Worker? Where the Middle Class Stands*, p. 3 in LHASC box 329.13.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

state employment had always been seen as the safest way to make a living. This held true for the civil service, the colonial and Indian services, the army, the police or local government.¹⁶⁰ Under Socialism, of course, the State would be the only employer, and everyone would partake of these secure conditions. Therefore the real choice every elector had was between safety and security under Socialism, or his savings preserving him from destitution under capitalism. Naturally there were a great number of ideal factors as well such as the plight of others, the opportunity to serve the community, the poor living and housing conditions under capitalism and the war which would inevitably follow from the anarchy of international capital.¹⁶¹ Cripps thus united two strands within recent Labour thinking: the renewed emphasis on Socialism and the need to communicate with the more prosperous members of the nation.

Lawrence Benjamin, naturally enough, was also out to reassure professionals that they would not lose their livelihood under Socialism. Neither would they be brought down to the conditions presently prevailing for labourers.¹⁶² On the contrary, the aim was to “level up” the lower paid to the position and status of professional workers. While there would be a transfer of ownership from the relatively few to the entire public, the personnel of these industries, both skilled and manual, would continue as before.¹⁶³ It would be possible to raise the many without lowering the educated because Socialism would mean an expansion of national output. This was a completely reasonable assumption at the time, since capitalism was associated with the economic crisis. In addition, Socialism presented attractive prospects for those who were engaged in society’s civilizing work— the middle classes— and Benjamin went on to enumerate almost all of these people.¹⁶⁴ He promised that Socialism would make provision for the economic and social status of every useful professional worker, and would liberate him from having to struggle to keep himself and his family in decent circumstances.¹⁶⁵

Cripps and Benjamin were able to present coherent arguments why the middle class should not be afraid of the Labour Party, and moreover advanced reasons why in fact their lives would be better under Socialism.¹⁶⁶ Neither of them really addressed the

¹⁶⁰ *loc. cit.*

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁶² *The Position of the Middle-Class Worker in the Transition to Socialism* (London, Labour Party, 1935), pp. 15-16 in LHASC box 329.13.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁶⁶ With what success is another question. It is possible that Labour’s image as the party of the working class may have made it unthinkable for the bourgeoisie to vote for it. Contrary to its intentions stressing

concerns of small property owners, though, what is called the lower middle class. Cripps's mention of these was to make the purely negative point that their situation was not good under capitalism either, but what future did they have under the common ownership of the factors of production? In reality, Labour could not accommodate this group if it was going to stress its Socialism, which is why in 1935 it all but neglected the petite bourgeoisie.

In 1931 some candidates began stressing the unity of interests between wage earners and shopkeepers or small manufacturers. The last two could not sell their goods if workers were left unemployed or received serious pay cuts. This was still an entirely valid argument, but judging by the available election addresses, fewer candidates did so. Frank Anderson of Whitehaven did make this point, and he also told house owners that their rates were higher because the Government refused to "accept liability for the unemployed on relief."¹⁶⁷ William Hirst in Bradford South produced an election newspaper, in which an imaginary shopkeeper explained why he would be voting Labour.¹⁶⁸ This shopkeeper had previously voted against the party, but was now on board because the spending power of his customers mattered to him. He represented how the party thought about this occupation, and it assumed small property owners had voted for Labour's opponents out of status consciousness. There were no centrally produced brochures for the lower middle class, although it could be argued that much of the information about health, education and such matters would be equally applicable to this group as to wage earners. From the available material it seems Labour reverted to its 1929 practice, which was to be conscious of this group, but not to focus much effort on it.

As shown above, Socialism was no hindrance to paying attention to the needs of professional workers; indeed the ideology in itself had something to offer. Often the altruistic reason of wishing to abolish the extremes of wealth and poverty was appended as well. Hirst's Bradford South election paper also included a fictitious architect and he made this point, although saying that the narrow interests of his profession would lead him to support Labour anyway, as the party wanted large housing developments. While in *For Socialism and Peace* there was no special mention of the petite bourgeoisie, in it

Socialism may have alienated the latter, and in any case, Labour did not have the leadership to match the National Government. Jack Reynolds and Keith Laybourn, *Labour Heartland. A History of the Labour Party in West Yorkshire during the Inter-war Years 1918-1939* (Bradford, Bradford University Press, 1987), p. 126.

¹⁶⁷ Folder marked 1935 GENERAL ELECTION ENGLISH COUNTIES.

Labour “appeals to the technician and the professional man, because it believes that it can offer them a wider and more creative opportunity of public service than is theirs today.”¹⁶⁹

Two examples of appeals to professionals will be appended. The fact that both candidates are mentioned elsewhere in sections about 1935, is telling proof that there was not a plethora of such appeals. In the constituency of Stone, W. Simcock claimed that the professional classes were turning to Socialism. They were doing so out of concern about the lack of security for their future and that of their children. Moreover, “the lesson given in the Churches every week is the Socialist lesson of unselfishness.”¹⁷⁰ Harold Greaves of Camborne quoted the appeal to the middle classes from the programme in his statement to the electors.¹⁷¹ While professionals were becoming a real target group for Labour, it is not a matter of doubt that a great many candidates left them out of their campaigning. The party was not offered automatic opportunities to get across to the middle classes this time, as the cuts in teachers’ and civil servants’ salaries had been restored. There was no centrally directed propaganda aimed particularly at this section of society.

While there were not many more direct appeals to the professional middle class than to small property owners, the general tendency of the campaign gives the impression that this was somewhat incidental and possibly a result of deficiencies in the archival materials. The former *were* mentioned in the programme, and appealed to at length in two pamphlets, the latter were not. Professional workers could easily be encompassed in the Socialist nation that Labour wanted to build, while the petite bourgeoisie was a side-effect of private enterprise. The middle classes continued to be less favoured as potential voters than core groups.¹⁷² Co-operators were much more often mentioned in candidate statements, but this was possibly because Labour had a concrete policy: repealing the co-op tax. (In a similar way the middle classes were more in evidence when Labour promised to reverse their salary cuts in 1931.) It is conceivable that Labour failed to distinguish more positively between professional

¹⁶⁸ Folder marked 1935 GENERAL ELECTION ENGLISH BOROUGHES.

¹⁶⁹ *For Socialism and Peace. The Labour Party's Programme of Action* (London, Labour Party, 1934), p. 3 in LHASC box 329.12.

¹⁷⁰ Folder marked 1935 GENERAL ELECTION ENGLISH BOROUGHES.

¹⁷¹ Folder marked 1935 GENERAL ELECTION ENGLISH COUNTIES.

¹⁷² Without it being the fault of Labour in any way, the results of the 1935 election were more marked by the class factor than any election held up to that time. First and foremost this was caused by the disintegration of the Liberals. Kinnear, *The British Voter*, p. 52.

workers and labourers, believing that both would recognize themselves as wage earners or workers. This, if so, was a failure of rhetoric. When Herbert Morrison said that the Labour Party promoted all who labour, the clarification that this included doctors, directors and civil engineers was in fact a necessary one.¹⁷³ But enough materials exist for the conclusion that the middle class continued to be seen as potential Labour voters by the organization and its candidates.

Liberals

Another indication of Labour's emerging role as one of the two main parties, which paradoxically began in 1931, were the appeals to Liberals. As was also seen, the check to Labour fortunes in 1931 made it profile itself as more of a Socialist party in 1935. It turned its fire on the National Government, as might be expected, with at least seven flyers attacking all aspects of its record and two out of seven pamphlets also essentially indictments of the current incumbents in office.¹⁷⁴ Since Labour centrally concentrated on showing up the National Government, it did not issue any propaganda designed to sway Liberal voters to its cause. It was left to the individual candidates to attempt this if they wished.

Cuthbert Thomson was the candidate for Roxburgh and Selkirk, and he said that nationally Liberalism had given way to Labour and would do so in the Borders as well.¹⁷⁵ This meant that he realized the Liberals were still a force to be reckoned with in his constituency and in Scotland.¹⁷⁶ But instead of harking back to the past, Liberals should give their support to Labour. The most noteworthy rhetoric was to be found in the statement of H. B. Lees-Smith of Keighley, who had the advantage of having been a Liberal MP for nine years.¹⁷⁷ He could thus say with special authority: join with Labour to further your political aims; I did it. He also had the luck not to face a Liberal

¹⁷³ Folder marked 1935 GENERAL ELECTION ENGLISH COUNTIES. And he argued that such occupations were becoming more prevalent. Hence Labour must gain more middle-class support. W. W. Knox and A. Mackinlay 'The Re-making of Scottish Labour in the 1930s', *20th Century British History* 6:2 (1995), p. 180.

¹⁷⁴ A contemporary observer judged that its most effective pamphlets were *The Sky's the Limit: Plain Words on Plane Profits*, *The Traffic in Arms*, *Up with the Houses*, *Down with the Slums!* and *Labour and Education*. Thus two on the arms trade and two on social affairs. Morgan, *The British General Election of 1935*, p. 124.

¹⁷⁵ Folder marked 1935 GENERAL ELECTION ENGLISH BOROUGHES.

¹⁷⁶ Roxburgh and Selkirk was a problem spot for Labour. It suffered from disunity, decreasing membership and poor finances. Catriona Macdonald uses it as a case study of the difficulties Labour faced in Scotland beyond the Clyde Basin. 'Following the Procession: Scottish Labour, 1918-45' in Worley (ed.), *Labour's Grass Roots*, pp. 38-39.

¹⁷⁷ Folder marked 1935 GENERAL ELECTION ENGLISH COUNTIES.

candidate in his constituency. On the League of Nations, disarmament, peace, unemployment, housing and education, he claimed the Liberals had been voting with Labour during the last Parliament. So beyond the vague assurance that progressive Liberalism was best served by Labour today, which was what the other candidates said, he was able to give some proof for why this should be so.

On the whole, though, the appeals to Liberals were unimaginative and ritualistic. And there were very few of them, scarcely going beyond what has been outlined here. Liberals were not really a target group in 1935, by no means as much as they had been in 1931. Perhaps it was their withdrawal from the National Government which made Labour judge that their voters were not likely to support another party. Apart from Mr Lees-Smith's, all of the appeals bore the hallmark of being throwaway lines, simply put there to try all possible avenues to get votes. There were no instructions from central office on how to frame appeals that might tally with Liberal supporters. In fact, there was a warning about diluting the party's message in order to appear more attractive to Liberals.¹⁷⁸ It was thought to be a bad idea to stress free trade to the exclusion of Socialism, as it risked confusing committed Labour voters. In sum it would be fair to conclude that Labour candidates were always aware that as they replaced the Liberals (and the process was not completed in 1935), they had the opportunity of making new gains within this group, but, paradoxically perhaps, it was in 1931 that Labour seriously tried to do so, while only displaying a token interest in 1929 and 1935.

Conclusion

The electoral materials in 1935 produced centrally dealt with the broad issues, and were seldom tailor-made to particular groups. There is no section above about industrial workers or core groups because even they did not seem to be favoured in the brochures. There was less written propaganda in 1935 than on the other occasions, and what exists must be read carefully to see who the intended target groups were. Appeals to the classes of the countryside continued, but it was now officially accepted that farmers would not turn to Labour in the foreseeable future. Nevertheless some appeals to the occupation took place in 1935 and 53% of all candidates mentioned agriculture in their statements. Agricultural workers were still a priority for Labour, and they as well as farmers had been targeted since 1929, the first of the elections looked at herein.

¹⁷⁸ *Labour Organiser* XV (July 1935), p. 134.

There were questions about how opportunistic Labour's appeal to women had been in 1929, owing to the lack of a follow-up in 1931. 1935, however, confirmed the seriousness with which Labour regarded this demographic group. The incipient welfare state the party planned to create was the main benefit Labour offered women. It included such features as a public health service with nursery schools, maternity services, school meals for everyone, etc. The reduction of maternal mortality was held forth as a great priority, and there would be health insurance benefits for women. It was still thought that Labour's anti-war stance would be popular with women, and this was one of the ways in which females of higher social standing might be persuaded to vote for the party. Otherwise it was understood that the appeal to women was primarily to that section of the working class.

The aim of attracting middle-class people had really only taken off in 1931. It happened in conjunction with cuts in salaries by the National Government, but three to four years later Labour explained what Socialism and the society it hoped to build offered professional workers. The main theme was security. The appeals to the middle class were not great in number, though, but by 1935 it was a standard point of view that Labour was a party also for them. The lower middle class of small property owners, on the other hand, largely disappeared as a target group despite being designated as such in 1929 before Labour started wooing professionals. Ideological considerations were behind this development. In 1935 Labour presented itself as a markedly Socialist party and there was no room for small businesspeople. Some candidates continued to make the assertion that the turnovers of the petite bourgeoisie relied on the wages of the workers being kept high. Even so Labour's position reverted to that of 1929 when it was conscious of this group, but paid little attention to it. And in 1935 it did not honour them with a brochure, either.

In 1931 many candidates had attempted to win votes from Liberal supporters. This once again was occasioned by current events, in this case the intervention of Lloyd George in the election with the assertion that Liberals should vote for free trade candidates everywhere, not supporters of the National Government. In 1935 far fewer Labour candidates attempted to woo Liberals. Those who did generally said that Labour was the new progressive force in politics, and that there was no room for a third party.

As a result of the above considerations, it may be seen that Labour presented itself as a wider, more national party in 1935 than in 1929.¹⁷⁹ Farmers and the petite bourgeoisie were not really expected to be part of the social coalition Labour was trying to build, but urban and rural workers, professionals, co-operators and some ex-Liberals were meant to carry the party forward. 1931 was a turning point also when it came to electoral appeals, and paradoxically as the party was experiencing severe trauma its outreach was at its greatest. In 1929 the party was too workerist to bring in new groups and in 1935 its ideological stance often crowded out the individual targeting of many sections of the community. Nevertheless, it is possible to see a change in Labour's attitudes during these three elections. The rural classes were important to the party throughout this period, and when the middle class was included in 1931 it was clear that Labour was finally living up to its pledge of representing "the workers by hand and by brain."

¹⁷⁹ But note that studies of by-elections between 1932 and 1939 as well as the 1935 election, have confirmed the resilience of the pattern of group support created in 1931. D. H. Close, 'The Realignment of the British Electorate in 1931', *History* 67:221 (1982), pp. 403-404.

Chapter 4. The Electoral Appeals of the Norwegian Labour Party in 1930, 1933 and 1936.

Introduction

In chapter 2 it was described how DNA campaigned during the elections of 1930, 1933 and 1936. This chapter examines the propaganda used. It looks for appeals in the brochures, leaflets and films produced by DNA. It shows how the party argued that the relevant group should support it, and includes both analysis and narration of the contents of the materials. A lot of the pamphlets were written specifically for some group, and here the appeal of course is crystal clear. But other appeals occurred in a more circumstantial way. The matter is investigated from first principles and as in chapter 2 coverage is chronological, i.e. election by election.

The main question is to whom the electioneering was directed. From whom did DNA hope or expect to gain its support? Were there any developments over time? Electoral appeal was covered briefly in chapter 2 for Oslo as the capital diverged from the national case. As by far the most important local party, Oslo DNA acted as the avant-garde and its appeals to new groups were later taken up across the nation. This was true for both non-unionized workers and clerks.

The 1930s mark the point when DNA emerged as a party of government. It thus reached Stein Rokkan's fourth threshold, that of executive power, in 1935 when for the second time in its history, it formed a government.¹ Unlike the short-lived experiment of 1928, this one was meant to last. Rokkan's notion of stages sheds some light on this development as the years were marked by DNA's increasing integration into society. In 1930 its programme of principles seemed to imply that it was at least as interested in uniting its core constituency of industrial workers as in winning the election. In 1933 it would initially reform society rather than overthrow it, while in 1936 it was the governing party and accepted what it had previously seen as bourgeois symbols of statehood, such as the national anthem and the flag. Significantly, its integration into the political system

¹ Rokkan with Campbell, Torsvik and Valen, *Citizens, Elections, Parties. Approaches to the Comparative Study of the Processes of Development* (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1970), p. 79.

resulted in the workers' integration into the nation. This understanding is that of the Social Democratic tradition of Halvdan Koht and other historians.² Why did these changes come about? There are three main reasons: 1. the fear of fascism after Hitler's rise to power in Germany in 1933, 2. the stalemate in industrial conflict after the lockout of 1931 and 3. medium-term developments promoted deradicalization anyway: leaving the Comintern in 1923 and reuniting with the Social Democrats in 1927.³

Introduction to the 1930 election

In 1930 DNA's materials consisted almost exclusively of pamphlets, which seemed to be its preferred method of reaching out to the voters in written form. Only "Vote with the Norwegian Labour Party" was in the medium of a leaflet.⁴ An interesting point in this regard is that pamphlets used for electioneering imply sincere communication with the voters. They cost more to produce and take longer to read than mere flyers. Although regular newspapers and one designed specifically for the election were also used, DNA was expecting the voters to make a bit of effort to find out what it was offering. And yet in a succinct way the only leaflet sums up the kind of rhetoric used by DNA in the 1930 election. It was a year marked by class action on both sides of the political divide. Thus "Vote with the Norwegian Labour Party" was addressed "to the working class of Norway" and signed by AFL leader Halvard Olsen as well as DNA chairman Oscar Torp. Never before, it announced, had it been so clear in an election that the political struggle was between two classes: the ruling bourgeoisie represented by the capitalist parties and the population of workers represented by DNA. It was clear that workers, smallholders and fishermen belonged to one and the same class. They were united also in having DNA to speak for them, for the party had striven to better conditions for fishermen and the inhabitants of the countryside. DNA had consistently opposed the return of the *kroner* to the

² Hallvard Tjelmeland, 'Avradikaliseringa av Det norske Arbeiderparti i mellomkrigstida. Ei historiografisk drøfting', Cand. Philol. thesis, University of Tromsø, 1982, pp. 213-214. In 1814 only the privileged were members of the nation, but during the 19th century peasants began to be included. The carrier of their claims was the Liberals. In the 1930s workers were also included in this "imagined community". Cf. Knut Martin Heidar 'The Deradicalisation of Working Class Parties: A Study of Three Labour Branches in Norway', Ph. D. thesis, University of London 1980, pp. 167-168.

³ For the lockout see chapter 2, pp. 112-113. The medium-term factors are the subject of Tjelmeland, *op. cit.*

⁴ Arbeiderbevegelsens Arkiv og Bibliotek (AAB), Oslo: 'Stem med Det norske Arbeiderparti', marked q329 (481)15 N81 br 1930.

gold standard with its attendant misery for the three groups (due to necessary deflation of the economy and loans having to be repaid at higher rates). The only mention of farmers (*bønder*), though, was in connection with the Agrarian Party having betrayed them.⁵ There was no direct suggestion that they vote DNA, probably because farmers were deemed not to belong to the working class.⁶ This message, intended for core supporters, was modified somewhat by the pamphlets. Nevertheless it provides a salient introduction to this particular election. If it is borne in mind as a tendency, it serves to distinguish 1930 from the other two elections. DNA did not abandon the sentiments expressed in the leaflet, but the language was more conciliatory later. The three groups mentioned, considered as the workers of town and country, constituted DNA's original base. Hereafter it will be seen to what extent it desired to add to it.

The working people

One brochure, "The Labour Party and the Election 1930", was a handbook for activists according to its complete title.⁷ It began by supplying DNA's programme, which justified why peasants and fishermen were in fact proletarians, as assumed in the statement above. They were forced under the domination of capital, which attained power over their land and livelihood (through mortgages). By demanding interest and profit from their work it exploited them ever more severely, and peasants and fishermen must therefore fight side by side with employees.⁸ This was a Marxist justification for why they came into this category. The main goal of the Norwegian Labour Party was to protect the daily interests of the working class, and to take the struggle to the point where "the working people" were masters of the land and the factors of production, and free from capitalist exploitation.⁹

"The working people", a term central to all of DNA's campaigning in the 1930s, roughly equalled the workers by hand and by brain (*hånden og åndens arbeidere*) who

⁵ *Bønder* means both peasants and farmers in Norwegian. The term has been translated according to context.

⁶ Traditionally it had been difficult for the Socialist labour movement to co-operate with farmers. During the Great War farmers were blamed for causing starvation among workers by raising the prices of agricultural products. These food shortages had ironically caused greater radicalization among workers and in labour circles. See Jorunn Bjørgum, *Martin Tranmæl og radikaliseringen av norsk arbeiderbevegelse 1906-1918* (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1998), p. 352.

⁷ *Arbeiderpartiet og valget 1930. Håndbok for agitatorene* (Oslo, 1930).

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

were not capitalists or closely allied to the state (e.g. bureaucrats and officers). It functioned as a wider alternative to “working class”, taking in those whose status was higher and those who were self-employed but not privileged.¹⁰ “The working people” were the sections of society DNA claimed to speak for, and to which it consequently appealed. When treating the 1936 election, it will be discussed whether the term began encompassing more people as DNA gained support from new quarters.

A further example of DNA’s projected unification of these varying groups came through its use of the term “the little people“(småkårsfolket). This was indicated in its description of the votes in Parliament in 1929 relating to the crisis of debt in the countryside. It demanded that all forced auctions of the homes of these people of humble means (an exact synonym) be stopped, and that councils as well as “the little people” be allowed to obtain relief through the law.¹¹ These passages were underlined in the original. It went on to claim there was no way of debt relief but reduction, and that the debtor must be allowed to remain in control of his property.¹² Fishermen were also in need of debt relief and support to improve production and distribution, and thus the term took on its full meaning as the workers of the country.¹³ Using the term “little people” aided these groups in recognizing themselves, as they may not have considered themselves “workers”.

The working class

Unionized workers in towns were, however, DNA’s most secure supporting group. The campaign’s only leaflet was addressed by name to them, and they were collectively members of the party. They knew what DNA stood for and if they did not, the programme declared the party was theirs. In any case, the appeal occurred through measures intended to improve their economic and cultural conditions of life. For instance, DNA produced a pamphlet devoted entirely to housing issues, promising to reintroduce controls on rents in large towns. These had previously been on the statute book, but had been repealed by the

¹⁰ This distinction was employed also by the Swedish Social Democrats. In the parliamentary election of 1911 in Blekinge province, they chose the term “working people” over “workers” in some of their messages to the voters. Mary Hilson, *Political Change and the Rise of Labour in Comparative Perspective. Britain and Sweden 1890-1920* (Lund, Nordic Academic Press, 2006), p. 195.

¹¹ *Arbeiderpartiet og valget 1930*, p. 23.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

capitalist parties with effect from 14 April 1931 (for the smallest apartments in Oslo, 14 April 1934).¹⁴ In the manifesto it promised to remove the labour-hostile legislation known as “the workhouse laws”, because it made anyone persecuting strike-breakers liable to be sent there.¹⁵ It also offered support for building one’s own home and for co-operative house building. Moreover, an extension of social legislation including sickness and accident insurance, and support of workers’ sports were offered. Many of these were not just of benefit to the working class, but would assuredly improve its quality of life and economic circumstances, as would free books and materials at school.

There was one particular section of the working class that DNA laid special emphasis on, namely youth. In the employment section of its manifesto, DNA mentioned the safeguarding of proletarian youths’ working and living conditions before the repeal of “the workhouse laws”.¹⁶ Youth were referred to very early in DNA’s election brochure about rationalization and unemployment, where it was asserted that almost a third of the unemployed were below 25.¹⁷ The same text noted that the number of workers under 18 had been reduced from 18, 667 to 10, 953 between 1915 and 1928.¹⁸ This was no indication that training and education for youth had improved, but a matter of destitution. No argument was given, but the logic was probably that as the number of jobs had contracted, the young had been squeezed out of the labour market to make room for breadwinners. In the statement to the electorate, DNA blamed the plight of youth and their increasing hopelessness on the capitalist parties.¹⁹

The rural classes

Even before 1930 smallholders and fishermen were given an equal position with the urban working class in DNA’s written communications.²⁰ And, if they were not considered

¹⁴ K. F. Dahl, *Husleiereguleringen og stortingsvalget. Frem til forsvar for hjemmene* (Oslo, Det norske Arbeiderpartis forlag, 1930), p. 15.

¹⁵ *Arbeiderpartiet og valget 1930*, p. 100.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

¹⁷ Alfred Madsen, *Rasjonaliseringen og arbeidsløsheten. Kamp mot den skjerpene utbytning* (Oslo, DNA, 1930), p. 3.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.10.

¹⁹ ‘Stem med Det norske Arbeiderparti’.

²⁰ It has been claimed that in the West Country and parts of the South, DNA presented itself as a party for industrial workers only. The brochures described in this chapter, which were used across the nation, belie this.

as entirely “working class”, it is highly debatable whether their role was intended as merely a passive one of voting for the party, as has been argued.²¹ As early as 1930, before DNA had achieved real influence, it stressed the education of country youth as a high priority. In the handbook for activists, it reminded the reader that the Labour government of 1928 had wanted to spend 300, 000 kroner on free school materials in the country and 80, 000 kroner in the towns.²² It will later be seen that it criticized fishermen for not forming unions.

The stress on gaining the peasantry and fishermen for DNA can be seen from the fact that three out of seven brochures produced for the 1930 election were devoted entirely to them, beyond the many references to the classes of the countryside in those other publications. “The Land and the Peasants” was among these pamphlets, and it began with the admission that the peasantry had shown little interest in the ideas connected to the Socialist movement.²³ Thus the Labour Party, which was working for a Socialist state, had had little support from the ordinary farmer. The second pamphlet, however, was billed as a disclosure of the Agrarian Party’s betrayal of the people.²⁴ Thus DNA consciously entered the territory of the Agrarians in search of new votes, and it knew there was a genuine opportunity because in 1927 DNA had made significant gains in the countryside.²⁵

How then did DNA argue that these segments of society should vote for it? It tried to show that traditional Socialist remedies would benefit at least the poorer farmers. Ownership of land, which should have protected against hunger and destitution, instead served to keep the debt-ridden farmers down.²⁶ Their creditors now had a greater entitlement to the farmers’ produce than they themselves, since they had claims on their land. Thus none would derive more benefit from socialization than the farmers, it was

Gabriel Øidne ‘Litt om motsetninga mellom Austlandet og Vestlandet’ in *Politiske valg i Norge. En artikkelsamling* (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1966), p. 102. It is, however, probably true that DNA failed to expand much beyond workers in those areas. Knut Kjeldstadli ‘Arbeiderbevegelsen og andre folkelige bevegelser’, *Arbeiderhistorie* 2000, p. 20.

²¹ Inger Bjørnhaug, ‘Arbeiderbevegelsen— en folkelig bevegelse?’, *Arbeiderhistorie* 2004, p. 179. She believes DNA intended to reform and develop the working class, but had no such plans for their other supporters.

²² *Arbeiderpartiet og valget 1930*, p. 71.

²³ I. K. Hognestad, *Jorden og bønderne* (Oslo, DNA, 1930), p. 3.

²⁴ K. M. Nordanger, *Landsbygda og valget. Gjelds og skattepolitikken i lys av partienes stilling. En avsløring av bondepartiets folkebedrag* (Oslo, DNA, 1930).

²⁵ It gained 77, 395 new votes in the rural areas compared to 25, 483 in the towns. (A rise of 52% and 22% respectively.) Ivar Arne Roset, *Det norske Arbeiderparti og Hornsruds regjeringsdannelse i 1928* (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1962), p. 63.

claimed. A second line of argument was that only 6% of farmers owned more than 25 acres of cultivated land.²⁷ By far the largest number of peasants were smallholders, working farmers who subsisted from their own toil. "In other words, the peasants are workers and belong to the rest of the working class."²⁸ "Peasants, support the Norwegian Labour Party," was the underlined message. And there was an indirect appeal to look at Socialism again, too, as it was mentioned that only under a different system would the exploitation of farmers and other workers stop, no matter how much was done for profitable production or how many parliamentary speeches were made.²⁹

It is possible to conceive of all country dwellers as peasants, as a status group having a similar style of life and allegedly common interests, in a nation-state that was becoming increasingly industrial.³⁰ The Agrarian Party promoted this view, a tactic made easier by any farmer's ability to associate himself with its name, no matter how small his affairs. In actual fact, though, the countryside was stratified by classes, and it became the task of DNA to point out that the Agrarians only worked for the largest and richest farmers.³¹ It was able to provide a long list of Labour proposals for improving the conditions of the less privileged country dwellers, with the appended remark that the Agrarians had voted against every single one of these in Parliament. What then were the distinctive features of DNA's policies in the countryside? One characteristic idea in 1930 was to cut 10 million kroner from the defence budget ("the useless military"), and spend it on land settlement and cultivation.³² It declared in its manifesto that it wanted the Smallholding and Housing Bank to be strengthened so as to provide interest-free mortgages for land settlement and cheap loans.³³ Further, there would be land for homeless families and building materials at reduced cost. And, confirming that DNA had no interest in the

²⁶ Hognestad, *Jorden og bønderne*, p. 7.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

²⁸ *Loc. cit.*, p. 22.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

³⁰ This can be seen from the declining proportion of farm workers within the proletariat. In 1910 they constituted 22.9 % of all workers, declining slowly to 21.5 % in 1920 and 18.0% in 1930. Stefano Bartolini, *The Political Mobilization of the European Left 1860-1980. The Class Cleavage* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 476.

³¹ DNA thought of maybe six categories of peasants determined by the amount of land owned. Knut Kjeldstadli, "Arbeider, bonde, våre hære..." *Arbeiderpartiet og bøndene 1930-1939*, *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens historie* 2/1978, p. 75.

³² Nordanger, *Landsbygda og valget.*, p. 13.

support of larger farmers, great swathes of property in land and forests would be nationalized if they were not suited for the management of a single farmer.

Fishermen

As mentioned, fishermen received a brochure to themselves, but being very much a part of DNA's concept "the working people", their interests were also addressed in the pamphlet about rationalization and unemployment. Here it was argued that an industrial revolution had taken place in fishing.³⁴ Motorized fishing boats, expanded fishing areas, new methods and equipment had dramatically increased production. But at the same time the working fisherman was suffering from more uncertainty and less prosperity than before. In other words, he had been proletarianized; growing production was just one side of the coin, the other being increasing despondency in the homes of the fishermen. It also served as an explanation for why a Marxist and Socialist party should take an interest in them.³⁵ And just as DNA sought to make fishermen feel as labourers and therefore its natural constituency, so it attempted to make them class conscious. As one author noted: by coming under capitalism they were forced to reflect not just on their own woes, but on the economic conflict of the entire people.³⁶ Socialism was indeed evident in the party's intentions for the fisheries. Fishing companies would be nationalized and collectivized.³⁷ Co-operation among fishermen would be promoted, with applications for the take-over of bait and oil distribution, the establishment of cold storage plants, the buying of equipment, admittance to fishing stations and the granting of credit. On a national level, DNA wanted control of distribution including exports, and would work to establish greater markets abroad.

Socialism was also the order of the day in the pamphlet written especially for fishermen. Noting that they were more exploited and lived under worse conditions than almost any other occupation, the pamphlet laid the greatest blame for this on the lack of

³³ Hognestad, *Jorden og bønderne*, p. 32.

³⁴ Madsen, *Rasjonaliseringen og arbeidsløsheten*, p. 8.

³⁵ At the beginning of the interwar period roughly ¾ of fishermen owned their own means of production and were therefore petit bourgeois rather than workers. Karl Egil Johansen, 'Proletar eller småborgar? Fiskarane i politikk og samfunn', *Historisk Tidsskrift* 81:2 (2002), p. 379.

³⁶ Madsen, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

³⁷ *Arbeiderpartiet og valget 1930*, p. 49.

fishermen's trade and political associations.³⁸ The remedy would be organization in co-operation with the AFL. This would look after the fishermen's interests, and make for social and economic progress. But equally vitally, it would strengthen the class front politically. DNA's idea that fishermen were one of the most grievously exploited groups in society was not mere rhetoric without foundation. Statistics for 1929 showed that fishermen had experienced a loss of income compared to industrial workers. Their average income of 1, 351 kroner a year was not even half that of the wages of factory workers at 2, 813 kroner, although primary occupations produced their own food.³⁹

DNA realized that the coastal districts had previously been dominated by the capitalist parties, but hoped that the destitution of these areas would make fishermen look again at the struggle between the ideas of capitalism and Socialism.⁴⁰ Certainly the capitalist parties had proved reluctant to support DNA's proposals for greater expenditure to support small farmers, smallholders and fishermen who were in danger of losing their homes.⁴¹ This was also the case for DNA's plans for tariff improvements beneficial to the fishing population.⁴² A very significant policy was outlined some pages later, reforms to sickness insurance for fishermen. Currently it was difficult for workers from Troms county to get hospital treatment if they fished from Lofoten in the county of Nordland and vice versa.⁴³ The low income that those engaged in fishing received also meant DNA could appeal to them in the same way as to the more traditional working class.

Perhaps surprisingly for electoral propaganda, DNA gently chided the fishermen for hitherto not having shown an interest in organizing themselves.⁴⁴ Voting and sitting back was not enough.⁴⁵ Other workers had reasoned in this way, and because of their unions, were doing better economically than fishermen. Some of the latter still did not believe they

³⁸ AAB: *Fiskerne og valget. Samvirke og plan— eller gjeld og avhengighet*. Marked q329 (481)15 N81 br 1930, p. 4.

³⁹ Knut Kjeldstadli, *Et splittet samfunn 1905-35. Aschehougs Norgeshistorie* 10 (Oslo, Aschehoug, 1994), p. 109.

⁴⁰ *Fiskerne og valget*, pp. 3-4.

⁴¹ Fr. Monsen, *Avvæbning eller militarisme?* (Oslo, DNA, 1930), p. 28.

⁴² *Fiskerne og valget*, p. 14.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁴⁴ The fishermen had founded an association in 1926, but it was only in the 1930s that it gained enough members to have any clout. Aksel Zachariassen, *Fra Marcus Thrane til Martin Tranmæl. Det norske Arbeiderparti fram til 1945* (Oslo, Tiden, 1977), p. 319.

⁴⁵ *Fiskerne og valget*, p. 18.

had common interests with industrial workers, but who except employees would be the consumers of the products of smallholders and fishermen? (This was a fore-shadowing of the insight that led to counter-crisis proposals in 1933.) The appeal ended with the rousing statement that fishermen were class comrades, who should help forge the weapon needed to look after their own interests.⁴⁶ They should join the fight to vanquish capitalist exploitation.

Summary

What is striking from reading these communications with peasants and fishermen is the emphasis DNA put on theoretical justification in appealing to them. It did not just say: vote for us and we will improve your lives. Instead it provided an invitation to join in the class struggle, and while its brochures do contain various policies attractive to their target groups, an underlying argument is that they are workers and hence they must support DNA. As such DNA indisputably showed it was still a Marxist party besides being a Socialist one, despite the reunification with the Social Democrats three years earlier. Much has been made of DNA's decision to leave out of the programme its intention to "unite the working people and thereby the majority of the population" in favour of the first four words only,⁴⁷ but in actual fact this approach showed there was no contradiction in the two alternative phrases. By being a worker's party, it was automatically a people's party, although the theoretical construct of "the working people" was needed to smooth out the rough edges.⁴⁸ And the "majority of the population" was mentioned three times in the campaign's only leaflet in a positive light as something to which the capitalist parties stood in opposition.⁴⁹ The synopsis of the rationalization of the fishing industry—remarked on in two publications—and the description of the land as really the property of financiers,

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, back page.

⁴⁷ E.g. See Per Maurseth, *Gjennom kriser til makt (1920-1935). Arbeiderbevegelsens historie i Norge 3* (Oslo, Tiden, 1987), pp. 544-547. Einhart Lorenz, *Arbeiderbevegelsens historie. En innføring. Norsk sosialisme i internasjonalt perspektiv. 1. Del 1789-1930* (Oslo, Pax, 1972), p. 186.

⁴⁸ Thus there is not such a great distinction between the two concepts as is sometimes thought. But the debate about whether DNA should be a workers' party or a people's party went back a long way. The revision of the programme in 1901 took out "the emancipation of the working class" in favour of "the people's economic emancipation." It also replaced "workers" by "the working people" and emphasized that the party was also for "less prosperous traders, industrialists and farmers." Edvard Bull jr., *Arbeiderklassen i norsk historie* (Oslo, Tiden, 1947), p. 170.

⁴⁹ Maurseth, *op. cit.*, p. 543.

convincingly make the claim that fishermen and farmers had become proletarians since they worked for the profit of others.⁵⁰

White-collar workers

Could DNA make the same claim for clerks and officials? It would have been easy to do so, as the party operated with the expression “workers by hand and by brain” (*hånden og åndens arbeidere*).⁵¹ The task of proving that white-collar workers are proletarians is much easier than for farmers and fishermen, since the first-mentioned do not own their means of production even in name.⁵² Nor were they much better paid than blue-collar workers. Figures for 1929 showed that in industry the average clerk made 2, 994 kroner compared to the factory worker’s 2, 813 kroner.⁵³ Lastly, in the same year the Association of Commercial Clerks (*Norges handels- og kontorfunksjonærers forbund*) had joined the AFL.⁵⁴ In spite of these weighty reasons, there was a real scarcity in appeals to white-collar workers by DNA in 1930. There were no pamphlets intended for them, and the few appeals that occurred were spread around.

The Labour government of 1928 had declared in its accession statement that it would negotiate with the unions of the civil servants to secure the eight-hour day and satisfactory work conditions.⁵⁵ It was reproduced as an electoral appeal in the handbook for activists. There was also a reminder of the bad blood between the capitalist parties and civil servants, caused by the former refusing to accept the outcome of wage negotiations until forced to do so by the courts.⁵⁶ The programme of the Labour Party did state that white-collar workers as well as manual workers were forced by unemployment and penury into a

⁵⁰ This had been an agreed argument since reunification with the Social Democrats in 1927. Kaare Fostervoll, *Norges sosialdemokratiske arbeidar-parti 1921-1927* (Oslo, Det norske samlaget, 1969), p. 123. It was often claimed that the Social Democrats were “semi-bourgeois” while DNA was “almost entirely” a proletarian party. If so, the formulation must have satisfied both groupings. Edvard Bull sr. ‘Arbeiderbevegelsens stilling i de tre nordiske land 1914-1920’, *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens historie* 1976/1, p. 26.

⁵¹ See for instance Hognestad, *Jorden og bønderne*, p. 3.

⁵² Kjeldstadli’s understanding from reading the programme of 1930 is that clerks were part of “the working people”, though he says there is uncertainty about this. “Arbeider, bonde, våre hære...”, *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens historie* 2/1978, p. 15.

⁵³ Kjeldstadli, *Et splittet samfunn*, p. 109.

⁵⁴ Torgrim Titlestad, *Stavanger. Norges røde by* (Stavanger, Varmen, 1989), p. 82.

⁵⁵ *Arbeiderpartiet og valget 1930*, p. 86.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

pressing, demeaning dependency on the capitalist class.⁵⁷ This would support the argument that clerks and officials were part of “the working people” in DNA’s conception, which was unclear in 1930. White-collar workers were mentioned along with labourers in the brochure about rent control.⁵⁸ They were probably the second most likely Labour voters in urban constituencies, hence the occasional appeals to them in Oslo as was discussed in chapter 2.

However, on a national level, briefly referring to this group did not add up to anything like a coherent appeal. White-collar workers were neglected. There was nothing to make them pick up any of these writings to find that they had been referred to in passing. Probably this was a result of senior Labourites’ tendency to think in terms of status, despite the Marxist leanings, which made it more conceivable that peasants should vote DNA than adherents of the privileged urban culture. There was something to be said for that. In Oslo, at least until the rise of DNA to power, even lowly clerks tended to vote for the Conservatives.⁵⁹

Liberals

There was, however, an indirect way in which DNA could persuade some of the clerks and civil servants to shift their allegiance, and that was by concentrating on habitual Liberal voters. Especially outside Oslo many of them supported the Liberals, as did peasants and fishermen. Thus DNA dealt with the Liberals in their brochure about fishing, hoping to loosen that occupation’s association with them. Its main criticism was that the Liberals had brought down the Labour government of 1928. In this connection DNA asserted that the Liberal Party had cast aside its mask, and strode forth as a party of capitalist power.⁶⁰ This was not the way Liberals liked to think of their party at all. They had long been careful to dissociate themselves from attempts to forge middle-class unity against the labour movement, seeing themselves as a “third way”.⁶¹ Country Liberals were

⁵⁷ Det norske Arbeiderparti, *Lover, program og retningslinjer* (Oslo 1932), p. 21.

⁵⁸ Dahl, *Husleiereguleringen og Stortingsvalget*, p. 7.

⁵⁹ Gabriel Øidne, ‘Sosial og politisk struktur i Oslo. Del I: 1906-1937’, *Tidsskrift for samfunnsforskning* 11 (1970), p. 129.

⁶⁰ *Fiskerne og valget*, p. 5.

⁶¹ The Liberals declined to join a coalition of the capitalist parties in 1928. They did not think many of their policies would be implemented in this way, and if they refused there was a good chance that they could form

far from being privileged, and had little to gain from being part of a bourgeois bloc. DNA went on to claim that the incumbent Liberal Government of Mowinckel were caretakers in the Conservative interest. It used inverted commas when it described the Prime Minister as a Liberal in its only leaflet.⁶²

Such allegations were potentially lethal to the Liberals because they were traditionally the party of “the little people”.⁶³ While their legendary leader Johan Sverdrup had wanted all power to be vested in Parliament, DNA thought it was beginning to dawn on some of their partisans that this was a mere fiction.⁶⁴ DNA had used a debate in Parliament to sketch its own understanding of society. Democracy was today a caricature. It was bluff that power was vested in Parliament. Tens of thousands of Liberal voters ought to realize this. Furthermore a Liberal, Mr. L. Hansen had said there would be a good deal of sympathy for disarmament in his party throughout the country, but whether it was practicable needed greater consideration.⁶⁵ Since disarmament was one of Labour’s most emphasized policies, this lukewarm endorsement was yet another proof of Liberal vacillation. The party was not to be trusted. It was hoped Liberal voters would see that there was a great chasm between what their party claimed to stand for and what it actually did. The prospects of that happening were potentially good. It seems that in the 1927 election many hitherto staunch Liberals in the countryside voted Labour.⁶⁶ They sought relief from the crisis that had engulfed them, and may have seen Labour as the heir to the Liberals, a one-time radical party which had spearheaded the struggle of peasants and teachers against the traditional elite.

The election film

A summary of the policies and attitudes of DNA in 1930 can be found in its 27-minute silent film “Forward to Victory”. Here disarmament was the leading issue. Norway

a minority government alone. Bull jr., *Arbeiderklassen i norsk historie*, p. 308.

⁶² ‘Stem med Det norske Arbeiderparti’

⁶³ DNA had an advantage over the Liberals when appealing to people of humble means. At this stage it, unlike the Liberals, did not claim to be a party for the entire people and could thus look after certain groups’ interests better. Svein Lundestad, *Arbeiderbevegelsens politiske gjennombrudd i Nordland og Troms. En sammenligning mellom to ulike fylker med særlig vekt på vilkår for oppslutning om sosialistiske partier i perioden 1900-1940* (Bodø, Høgskolesenteret i Nordland, 1988), p. 40.

⁶⁴ *Fiskerne og valget*, p. 6.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

could not stand up to any of the great powers anyway, and Sweden and Denmark were the nation's friends. Thus it would be better to spend the defence budget of 40 million kroner a year on building railways in the south and extreme north of the country.⁶⁷ It would help the farmers of Agder and Rogaland as well as northern fishermen to distribute and sell their goods. Or the money could be spent on cultivation, land allotments and extending other railways.

The election campaign of 1930 was marked by the capitalist parties' massive mobilization against DNA with accusations that it was anti-Christian and unpatriotic. DNA responded with the brochure "The Conservatives and the Fatherland". It argued that the Conservative Party was not quite as patriotic as it liked to think, with its history of supporting the union with Sweden and its supporters' tendency to put profit before nation. The election film dramatized how a ship-owner Wilhelmsen, who had called the workers traitors, registered his ships under the flag of Panama for commercial advantages.

Conclusion: The 1930 election

DNA's first campaign of the 1930s represented a continuum, as far as electoral appeal was concerned, with the 1920s. It communicated primarily with workers, peasants and fishermen. "The working people" was an extended working class, and the party had sought its votes going back a long time. In 1921, for instance, while DNA was still a member of the Comintern, its conference of 25-27 March had decided to form chapters of activists to agitate in nearby areas where the party was weak, especially with the view to organizing agricultural workers, working farmers (*arbeiderbønder*) and fishermen.⁶⁸ In a report to the Comintern 16 months later the National Executive, while refuting the International's slogan of "worker and peasant government" as unsuitable for Norway,⁶⁹ still promised to continue the agitation among agricultural workers, smallholders and fishermen with the view to extending its understanding of and sympathy for Communism, as DNA called its ideology then.⁷⁰ Apart from agricultural workers, who largely disappeared from

⁶⁶ Harald Berntsen, *I malstrømmen. Johan Nygaardsvold 1879-1952* (Oslo, Aschehoug, 1991), p. 263.

⁶⁷ AAB: 'Frem til seier. DNA's film til Stortingsvalget 1930', marked v. 324.5 (481) F.

⁶⁸ AAB: Det norske Arbeiderparti. Boks 1. D. Førkrigsarkiv (1887-1940) Vestfold (4824). Letter from the Central Committee signed Kyrre Grepp and Trygve Lie to local branches. Dated 8 April 1921.

⁶⁹ Maurseth, *Gjennom kriser til makt (1920-1935)*, p. 292.

⁷⁰ AAB: Det norske Arbeiderparti. Boks 5. D. Førkrigsarkiv (1887-1940). Statement from the National

view, the target groups were the same nine years later. DNA's base consisted of unionized industrial workers at the core, while peasants and fishermen were co-equal but taken less for granted. Therefore more propaganda had to be written for them. They were not simply shown a list of attractive policies and urged to vote DNA. Instead, they were exhorted to form trade unions and join the class struggle, uniting with other working-class people. Voting Labour was simply a step in the right direction. Thus it can be seen that the debate at the party conference in 1930 about parliamentary democracy and how important elections were, did not primarily result in de-emphasizing the campaign.⁷¹ Instead it had an effect on what the message to the voters was. DNA proclaimed that there were no easy solutions. Fishermen must strengthen the class front, and peasants must look again at Socialism. The above debate had another effect. There were hardly any appeals to white-collar workers or middle-class people.⁷²

Introduction to the 1933 election

Unsurprisingly 1933 did not break the continuum, but at the ideological level DNA's campaign seemed totally divergent from the past, or at least from 1930. The party still proclaimed the improvements it would make to the lives of workers, peasants and fishermen, but this was now set in the context of crisis management rather than mobilization for the class struggle.⁷³ In the autumn of 1930 the Depression had not yet made its effects known in Norway, though times were not good. By 1933 economic conditions had deteriorated with unemployment above 30%, and DNA was the party that decided to meet the Depression head on. It had a history of formulating counter-crisis measures stretching back to "the working people's crisis demands" in 1921 in tandem with

Executive probably August 1923. And organizations catering especially for rural youth who had moved to the cities were set up in Oslo and elsewhere. Terje Halvorsen, *Partiets salt. AUFs historie* (Oslo, Pax, 2003), p. 116.

⁷¹ See chapter 2, pp. 91-92.

⁷² "In the early phase of growth the party was essentially a coalition of workers, smallholders, and fishermen without any appeal to middle-class voters, whether of the old or new stratum. The decisive change came in the thirties with the rise of the party to a position of political dominance [...]" Stein Rokkan 'Norway: Numerical Democracy and Corporate Pluralism' in Robert A. Dahl (ed.), *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1966), p. 99.

⁷³ Stavanger DNA's proposals for the radicalization of the programme were decisively rejected. These encompassed stronger links with the Soviet Union, workers' councils as kernels of a future Socialist republic and reintroduction of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a guiding principle of the party. Titlestad, *Stavanger. Norges røde by*, p. 56.

the AFL.⁷⁴ DNA was also the only untried alternative, for the Agrarians had been in power between 1931 and 1933.

Again DNA's materials consisted largely of pamphlets, though there were more leaflets than just the one this time. The most important brochure by far was Ole Colbjørnsen's "All the People in Work!", the cover of which also displayed DNA's second most famous slogan "Town and Country Hand in Hand". Colbjørnsen was a party intellectual and international economist who is seen as the main architect of Keynesian solutions to the Depression in Norway. The pamphlet was a summary of Colbjørnsen's and the geographer Axel Sømme's book *A Norwegian Three Year Plan*, which was also published in 1933 but after the election had taken place. Planning and counter-cyclical economics were not the full impetus behind why DNA in 1933 became Social Democratic for the first time in the interwar period. The fear of fascism played a large part as discussed in chapter 2, but whatever the reasons Socialism would now come about through reformist, parliamentary steps. A periodic renewal of the programme had taken place in 1933, and the programme remained in force until 1939, thus in the 1936 campaign also. In its opening remarks DNA declared itself the political organ of the Norwegian working class, and stated its goal as a "Socialist, classless society ruled by the workers by hand and by brain."⁷⁵

The working class

Beyond its central pledge to ameliorate unemployment, most of DNA's appeal to the working class was to be found in its proposals for social legislation. As described in the manifesto, this included unemployment benefit to be paid for by contributions from the state, the local authorities, employer and employee.⁷⁶ Old age pensions, which had been passed in principle by Parliament, must come into force. Other forms of benefit were also promised: an improvement in sickness benefit, accident benefit to be extended to all occupations which qualified for social benefit and the introduction of child benefit.

⁷⁴ It has, however, been claimed that the earlier counter-crisis measures were different in kind. The 1921 proposals can be seen as mere palliatives intending to show that the labour movement had something other than Socialism to offer poverty-stricken workers. See Heidar 'The Deradicalisation of Working Class Parties', Ph. D. thesis, University of London 1980, pp. 58-59.

⁷⁵ AAB: *Det norske Arbeiderpartis prinsipielle program. Arbeidsprogram. Stortingsprogram* marked B329 (481) 15 N81 pr. 1933, p. 2.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

Employers' duties in regard to incapacitated workers would be increased, as part of accident benefit, and protection for the employee extended. Since unemployment was the principal issue for the party, appropriately there were proposals for work sharing: the six-hour day introduced by legislation and the retirement age for civil servants to be brought down to make way for the young.

Women

The propaganda fell into line with what had existed in 1930. There was a pamphlet for fishermen and two for peasants. But unlike on the previous occasion there was also a brochure intended for housewives. This was a gendered appeal to the working class, not a statement to all women. As the brochure said, "it must be self-evident to every working-class housewife that she on the day of the election 16 October supports the party that looks after her interests."⁷⁷ One of the aims of the leaflet was to counter indifference to the political process by relating the issues to household management. It claimed that it was the meagre budget of the housewife that supported the expenses of the state— administration, the military, failing banks, interest to the wealthy men and capitalist institutions that owned bonds, etc. The capitalist parties had in recent years implemented unfair taxes on "the working people" such as import and indirect taxes (increasing the poor man's taxes by 110 million kroner), while reducing tax to their own benefit— on high incomes— by 170 million kroner. A bag of sugar bought on an ordinary Saturday would be five times as large if the state had not put such an exorbitant import tax on it.

DNA claimed that housewives were most affected when illness, old age, unemployment and poverty struck at a family. The state should spend more money on a sensible and humane social policy. The class rhetoric continued as DNA pointed out that the state's expenditure on sickness benefit, old age benefit, unemployment and suchlike amounted to around 10 million kroner a year, while servicing the national debt and the military cost about 121 million kroner a year. Housewives were finally asked to support their families on the day of the election by voting DNA. Written for women, this appeal articulated the perceived demands of the working class, peasants and the poorer section of

⁷⁷ AAB: 'En lørdagshandel' reproduced in K. M. Nordanger and Alfr. Aakermann, *Det norske Arbeiderparti og valget. Stortingspolitikken 1931-1933*, marked 329 (481) 15 N81br 1933.

the middle class and contrasted these to the privileges of the wealthy.⁷⁸

Youth

The appeal to women was new, but a different demographic group had been mentioned relatively often in 1930, namely youth. On this occasion it was even more vital to make these sympathetic to DNA, because the party feared that otherwise unemployed youth could become the vanguard of fascism in Norway.⁷⁹ The parliamentary manifesto outlined in 1933, the year of Hitler's rise to power in Germany, was evidence of that. It held forth "a struggle against political speculation in the plight of unemployed youth. The unemployed youth must receive free occupational training and be given a place in the labour market."⁸⁰ This was as self-evident as demanding that farmers, smallholders, fishermen and labourers must be relieved of their debt,⁸¹ but peasants were also thought to be susceptible to fascism. As DNA's parliamentary leader Johan Nygaardsvold said, albeit in 1935, "If workers and peasants stand together, democracy triumphs. Otherwise reaction takes hold of the peasants and also some of the workers."⁸²

No brochure or flyer was aimed specifically at the young, but their predicament was often mentioned throughout the material. The debate after the state opening of Parliament in 1932 was quoted in a leaflet about economic policy and the crisis. Nygaardsvold had shown much concern in the debate for the youth of the countryside who did not have work and were thus superfluous.⁸³ He reminded Parliament that it was six years since Labour had first proposed using funds to create work for the young.⁸⁴ It had time and again raised the issue and made suggestions for the alleviation of the problem of youth unemployment, with no other result than that youth remained workless. DNA's crisis plan gave a figure of 3 million kroner to be used for employment-related courses and the

⁷⁸ Although the appeal spanned beyond the working class, the Women's Section of DNA always declined to act in unison with women outside the labour movement. Ida Blom 'Introduction' in Helmut Gruber and Pamela Graves (eds.), *Women and Socialism. Europe between the Two World Wars* (New York, Berghahn Books, 1998), p. 417.

⁷⁹ Kjeldstadli, *Et splittet samfunn 1905-1935*, p. 218.

⁸⁰ *Det norske Arbeiderpartis prinsipielle program. Arbeidsprogram. Stortingsprogram*, p. 15.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

⁸² Maurseth, *Gjennom kriser til makt (1920-1935)*, p. 577.

⁸³ 'Den økonomiske politikk. Stortingets stilling til krisen' in Nordanger and Aakermann, *Det norske Arbeiderparti og valget*, p. 35.

implementation of works especially for youth.⁸⁵ Colbjørnsen himself described it as too little by far, but said that if spent intelligently it would increase the nation's production, and create hope and motivation where despair and suicidal tendencies now reigned.

The rural classes

Peasants and fishermen were highly important target groups in 1933 as well. DNA continued to favour smaller farmers, the 80-90% with about 12 acres or so, and noted that the Agrarians wanted lower subsidies for these people.⁸⁶ The Agrarian Party's policy was redistribution from the average farmer to the larger corn-producing farmers. DNA's understanding of the plight of the peasants had developed since 1930. Noting that a very large percentage of the farmers who retained possession of their properties were indebted up to the full value of their farms or even above, it perceived that the threat of eviction lay like a shadow over their minds.⁸⁷ The novelty was the clear diagnosis of this state of affairs as resulting from lack of purchasing power on the part of workers and clerks. They were the great majority of consumers, but the reduction in economic activity and the lower wages meant they were not able to buy the quantities of milk, butter, eggs, cheese and meat which they needed, and of which the farmers could easily produce more.⁸⁸

Appeals to unity based on common interests were probably more convincing than merely stating that peasants and workers were both part of "the working people". Asking farmers to see their crisis as part of a wider picture therefore advanced the issue. If wages were reduced the prices of farm produce would decrease and the crisis worsen. This was stressed in a brochure addressed to peasants.⁸⁹ It also put paid to the Agrarian Party's solution: lower wages for workers and more subsidies to the largest farmers. Instead, DNA asked the worker and peasant, the fisherman and clerk to understand that they were dependent on each other, and therefore should solve the economic and political difficulties

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁸⁵ Ole Colbjørnsen, *Hele folket i arbeid! Det norske Arbeiderpartis kriseprogram* (DNA, 1933), pp. 26-27.

⁸⁶ 'Den økonomiske politikk. Stortingets stilling til krisen' in Nordanger og Aakermann, *Det norske Arbeiderparti og valget*, p. 59.

⁸⁷ Colbjørnsen, *Hele folket i arbeid!*, p. 5 and p. 6.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁸⁹ Ole Øisang, *Bonden og valget. Krisen i jordbruket. Arbeiderpartiets og Bondepartiets krisepolitikk* (Oslo, DNA, 1933), p. 9.

together.⁹⁰ Only when the workers by hand and by brain had found a common policy would dawn break in the nation.

Such was the basis of trying to reach out to peasants in 1933. That is not to say there were no concrete practical policies aimed at the countryside. In February DNA had launched its new crisis plan, including extra spending on agriculture and forestry to the tune of seven million kroner and debt relief to peasants and fishermen of four million kroner.⁹¹ These were voted down by the capitalist parties. Going back longer, in 1931 DNA had proposed to reduce interest for debtors in the Smallholding and Housing Bank to 3%, with the same arrangement for borrowers in the Mortgage Bank (*Hypotekbanken*) in comparable circumstances.⁹² This was also voted down. Its policies for peasants at the election comprised support for the peasant's right to ownership of the land, land allotments with secure work and life conditions for the new cultivators and effective measures against interest exploitation, such as debt settlement with real improvements for farmers.

DNA's pamphlet for fishermen was written by parliamentarian Kristian Berg, whose trade was fishing. Entitled "Out of the Speculators' Nets", it explained that the party wanted to liberate the fishing industry from exploitation,⁹³ a reference partly to the banks and partly to the middlemen who bought the fish. Colbjørnsen's crisis plan listed 1.5 million kroner for contributions to fishermen for the purpose of acquiring equipment.⁹⁴ The reasoning was that at the present time the majority of fishermen were so needy, they could not afford to maintain their current means of production, nor obtain such new tools as they required. Their incomes were far below those of pre-war times.⁹⁵ It had become necessary to support fishing communities by extraordinary works programmes, so for the fiscal year 1932-33 DNA had proposed 1.5 million kroner for this purpose.⁹⁶ The capitalist parties had blocked the measure, but in June 1933 the Government had agreed to consider Berg's other suggestion for the State to build roads and harbours in the coastal districts to inject credit into these hard-pressed communities. Implicitly this could be presented by DNA as proof

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁹³ Kristian Berg, *Ut av spekulantenes garn. Fiskernes interesse ved Stortingsvalget* (Oslo, DNA, 1933), p. 20.

⁹⁴ Colbjørnsen, *Hele folket i arbeid!*, p. 28.

⁹⁵ Berg, *Ut av spekulantenes garn*, p. 3.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

that its policies were working somewhat in opposition, notwithstanding the meanness of the capitalist parties.

DNA had a few remaining proposals calculated to gain support from fishermen. In 1932 it had suggested raising the harbour budget by one million kroner, increased to 1.2 million the following year.⁹⁷ The explanation was that far too many shipwrecks happened near badly maintained harbours; fishermen had to struggle to save both their boats and their lives if they were forced to moor at these. Equally the party wanted to improve lighthouses, fog signals and the other infrastructure of the sea, having proposed respectively 435, 000 and 425, 000 kroner extra for this purpose in 1932 and 1933.⁹⁸ As with the youth unemployment crisis money, it was not imagined to be adequate, but DNA claimed it had set the sums low to enable the capitalist parties to join it in promoting these concerns. This was adroitly argued because it proved that DNA was not merely engaged in playing to the gallery, and since the proposals nevertheless failed, showed up the other parties as hopeless on these issues. DNA's agitation to fishermen fitted in well with the general theme of the campaign. "Wake up peasants and fishermen," it proclaimed, "the time to strike down your organizations will come once the fascists have finished with the trade unions."⁹⁹

White-collar workers

A status group that may have been part of "the working people" and as such were officially a target group for DNA, were the white-collar workers. They were not much in evidence in the election of 1930, but three years later DNA campaigned under the slogan of "The Majority and Governing Power to the Labour Party," and every vote would count. There was no leaflet specifically written with them in mind, so it may be concluded immediately that they did not merit as much attention as peasants and fishermen. But DNA did acknowledge this time that office workers, staff in restaurants and hotels and others

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁹⁹ Gunnar Ousland, *Hele folkets kamp mot krise og nød. Arbeiderbevegelsen går foran* (Oslo, DNA, 1933), p. 23. One of these organizations, The Smallholder Association (*Småbrukerlaget*), was steadily orienting itself away from the Liberals and towards Labour in the 1930s. This was especially true from 1933 when the leadership was replaced. The Association wanted to be linked to a rising movement, and it took up active crisis policies of its own. Olav Rovde 'Bonde-, småbrukar- og arbeidarrørsla i konflikt og samarbeid', *Arbeiderhistorie* 2000, p. 64, p. 66.

were taking their places under the banner of trade unionism.¹⁰⁰ Colbjørnsen mentioned clerks as well as workers when writing about the “great mass of consumers” lacking purchasing power.¹⁰¹ Equally when he talked about the bourgeois alternative to DNA’s crisis policies, he said white-collar workers must be prepared to accept lower wages if they allowed the other parties to pursue their “let it slide” policies.¹⁰² Summing up the crisis programme, he opined that workers, clerks and fishermen understood that the old attitude of doing nothing about the most important question of the day had failed, and that it was the labour movement’s way out of the crisis which would work.¹⁰³

The title of a pamphlet published for the election gives a very good indication of how DNA regarded its campaign: “All the People’s Struggle against Crisis and Need. The Labour Movement in the Lead”. DNA saw workers with their party and superior organization leading clerks and officials in the direction that was beneficial to all. In the actual pamphlet, the writer conflated the blue- and white-collar workers as one class.¹⁰⁴ They were marked by not possessing property, and amounted to about half the population according to the census of 1920; 1, 263, 864 persons with dependants out of 2, 652, 894 Norwegians.¹⁰⁵ The writer was enthused by the successful unionization of clerks and office workers, who had taken a lead in recent wage struggles.¹⁰⁶ Civil servants and local government workers were also unionizing and forming ever stronger organizations. The appeal, set within the undercurrent to the contest, was such: “Arise all blue and white-collar workers from land’s end to land’s end. Your freedom and lives are at stake. The election this year will provide the answer: For or against Fascism!”¹⁰⁷

This essentially concluded DNA’s appeal to white-collar workers in the 1933 election. Bringing society out of the crisis through increased spending was of benefit to all employees, and the attractions that were offered to workers were equally applicable to the present group. For those who read through DNA’s materials, it would become clear that a

¹⁰⁰ ‘Den økonomiske politikk. Stortingets stilling til krisen’ in Nordanger and Aakermann, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-157.

¹⁰¹ Colbjørnsen, *Hele folket i arbeid!*, p. 6.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁰⁴ Ousland, *Hele folkets kamp mot krise og nød*, p. 4.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

good case could be made for white-collar workers to vote for it in their own interests. That still begs the question of why DNA did not make the case more forcefully. It was becoming clearer that clerks and officials were part of “the working people”, but it was still not certain that they were. That in a nutshell sums up DNA’s appeals to white-collar workers in the 1933 election. Like three years before, there were no real attempts to gain the support of the professional middle class.

Conclusion: The 1933 election

As in 1930 DNA released an election film. It was closely connected to the main theme of the campaign and thus bore the title “All the People in Work!”. It showed long queues of unemployed in the towns and peasants being forced to sell their homes.¹⁰⁸ With regard to its targeting of potential voters, there was hardly any development between 1930 and 1933. It is possible to detect a slightly greater focus on gaining white-collar workers for the cause in the latter year, and in any case the whole tenor of DNA’s campaign was more suited to these people in 1933. That can also be said for peasants and fishermen, neither of whom were known for their revolutionary sympathies. Workers, peasants and fishermen remained the core target groups of DNA, and the appeals to women or the young were to subdivisions of these people. There was continued emphasis on these groups organizing themselves to push through their justified claims in 1933, especially in the brochure “All the People’s Struggle against Crisis and Need”. In line with DNA’s growing belief in bourgeois democracy, however, it now had a parliamentary solution to the most pressing of their problems called counter-cyclical economics. It followed that their votes could achieve much alone. In spite of the differing theoretical underpinnings to the campaigns of 1933 and 1930, it was the same people from whom DNA hoped to gain support. As previously argued ideology played little part in how campaigning was conducted, and it also seemed to have only minor effects on whom DNA addressed.

Introduction to the 1936 election

1936 was DNA’s hardest fought election thus far, which is reflected in the available

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹⁰⁸ AAB: Bente Bogen and Tron Øgrim (eds.), *De vil ta jentene våre. Valgfilmer 1928-1936*. Unmarked

propaganda.¹⁰⁹ There was much more of it and it spanned a wider range than before. Only in 1936 can a real development be discerned in the attempted creation of its social base, though it happened along lines that were suggested by the election of 1933 in Oslo and nationally. This essentially means focus on white-collar and traditionally non-unionized workers. The ideology of the campaign remained as in 1933 with DNA proposing remedies for emerging from the economic crisis, but now it was in government and its appeal was for a parliamentary majority. Wanting this majority so that it could implement its policies without hindrance, was one of two reasons why the appeals went wider. The other was that DNA believed it was establishing hegemony and that a new era had come.¹¹⁰

Being in government allowed DNA to show it was doing something to defeat the crisis. Previously it could only quote figures for what it would like to do, but now the sums represented real accomplishments. It claimed that it had proposed 26 million kroner more for counter-crisis measures than the previous government had done.¹¹¹ In the manifesto DNA declared its intention of pursuing economic policies to raise the purchasing power of industrial workers, cultivators and the workers of the countryside to enable them to buy each others' products.¹¹² Fishermen should be unionized according to existing county organizations, to be united in Norway's Fishing Association.¹¹³ This body was to be given the protection of the law. Fishermen were to be granted the right to attend trade schools and social insurance on the same terms as other workers. Thus it may immediately be established that DNA continued to favour these groups especially. "Better conditions in country and town" in practice meant promises to secure the conditions of life and increase the purchasing power of blue and white-collar workers by higher wages, and of peasants

video.

¹⁰⁹ It was probably also the most strenuously contested election in Norwegian history. Turnout was 87.5 % in the cities and 82.6% in the countryside. Stein Rokkan 'Geography, Religion and Social Class: Crosscutting Cleavages in Norwegian Politics' in Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan (eds.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments. Cross-National Perspectives* (London, Collier-Macmillan, 1967), p. 399.

¹¹⁰ Witness Tranmæl's speech at Young's Square 10 September when he said he wanted Mowinckel's government, which DNA had displaced, to be the last capitalist government in Norway. *Arbeiderbladet*, 11 September 1936, p. 18.

¹¹¹ AAB: *Arbeid og trygge kår for alle! Arbeiderpartiets politikk og program* marked 329 (481) 15 N81br 1936, p. 12.

¹¹² AAB: *Det norske Arbeiderpartis prinsipielle program. Arbeidsprogram. Stortingsprogram.* marked 329 (481) 15 N81 pr 1936, p. 12.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

and fishermen by profitable prices on agricultural produce and fish.¹¹⁴ Youth were pledged better training for work and a reduction of the voting and qualifying age for membership of elected bodies from 23 to 21.¹¹⁵ With white-collar workers now added, DNA's established social base continued to be "the working people". They had logically belonged in the category all the time, and demographic sub-groups like youth and women had long had specific appeals directed at them.

The expanding base

In practice, the appeals spanned wider than before, and this was mirrored by theoretical justification of which groups were considered as potential sympathizers. One historian has put the figure at nine out of ten Norwegians in 1936, up from seven or eight tenths in 1930.¹¹⁶ He claims not to have explicit evidence as to who the new groups were, but suggests they may have been medium-sized farmers relying on some wage labour though also working themselves. In addition, small owners of capital in the towns were now included, again under the proviso that they themselves worked. Lastly, he suggests, some were businesspeople, the liberal professions and all but the top bureaucrats.

On the other hand, there is straightforward evidence which shows exactly whom DNA attempted to gain the support of in class terms in 1936. This is to be found in the brochures published for particular counties, which begin with information about the economy in each one. For the county of Hedmark, for instance, the classes DNA identified were as follows with their relative numbers: employees (57%), white-collar workers (6%), farmers and other small producers who did not employ others (29%), capitalist-oriented people like larger farmers, forest owners and others who employed blue or white-collar workers, rentiers and bureaucrats (9%).¹¹⁷ All but the last-mentioned constituted "the working people" whom DNA thus designated as more than 9/10 of the population of Hedmark, adding that "it has the power, if it wants it." Equally for Oslo, the social classes DNA identified and their proportions of all inhabitants were: employees (62%), white-collar workers (27%), small producers who did not use hired help (2%) and larger

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹¹⁶ Kjeldstadli, "Arbeider, bonde, våre hære...", *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens historie* 2/1978, p. 151.

¹¹⁷ AAB: Hedmark marked 329 (481) 15 N81br 1936, p. 5.

producers who employed blue or white-collar workers (9%).¹¹⁸ Again DNA explained that more than 9/10 of the population of the city was part of “the working people”, who might take power if they wanted it. In every brochure that exists, it was concluded that “the working people” constituted close to or just above 9/10 of that county, so the figure of 9 tenths of Norwegians as worth appealing to, seems correct. But farmers and other producers who employed labour were not included, whether they themselves worked or not. The Oslo brochure hinted that white-collar workers (*funksjonærer*) were the same as “workers by brain”, and thus included doctors, teachers and other educated individuals who were employed by others.¹¹⁹ As such they were part of “the working people“, but they cannot be placed in that category with absolute certainty. The reason is that some of the county brochures (e.g. Vest-Agder, Rogaland and Sogn og Fjordane) substituted “clerks” (*lavere funksjonærer*) for white-collar workers, and therefore the class of propertyless intelligentsia disappears. They *might* have been considered among those with capitalist interests, as “higher white-collar workers” which either meant bureaucrats or professionals.¹²⁰

Non-unionized workers

The countryside had people who were unequivocally part of the working class. For the first time, at least in the 1930s, DNA produced a leaflet designed for agricultural workers.¹²¹ They had never played a leading role in the labour movement.¹²² They ran the risk of being neglected when DNA reached out to those higher up the economic ladder in the country, but now the party promised improvements to their condition through the

¹¹⁸ ‘Oslo’ in *Brosjyrer utgitt av det norske Arbeiderparti Stortingsvalget 1936*, p. 5.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹²⁰ Although seldom appealed to, they had been a remote part of DNA’s base for many years. A 1921 election poster demanded power to “those who build the country and perform useful tasks”: workers, clerks, local government employees and civil servants. Knut Kjeldstadli and Victor Keul (eds.), *DNA—fra folkebevegelse til statsstøtte* (Oslo, Pax, 1973), p. 16.

¹²¹ Since the founding of DNA in 1887 it had been obvious that agricultural workers must be brought into the party. At the founding congress and at conference in 1890 resolutions had been passed about the need to improve their situation by unionization and collectivization of agriculture. But they had been lost sight of for many years, probably due to the increased attention on smallholders. Halvard Lange, *Fra sekt til parti. Det norske arbeiderpartis organisasjonsmessige og politiske utvikling fra 1891 til 1902* (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1962), p. 15.

¹²² The contemporary trade union for forestry and agricultural workers had only been founded in 1927. Kristian Gleditsch, *Skogsarbeidernes kamp* (Oslo, Fram forlag, 1932), p. 7.

law.¹²³ Numbering 150, 000 men and women, unlike the rest of the working class, their standard of living had not risen but fallen.¹²⁴ There had nevertheless been an improvement in the last year, according to DNA. While it was necessary to pursue the trade union route, the State would help out by ensuring reasonable wages, lower working hours, nutritious food and habitable dwellings. This, explained DNA, was as natural as the help that farmers had received from the state. Probably because communication between the party and these voters had been so limited, it was repeated that trade unionism would help immeasurably.¹²⁵ The first priority, though, was securing their votes, so the party twice urged farm labourers to support DNA.

It would not be true to say that maids had been completely neglected previously. Special meetings or parties had been held in Oslo on the two previous occasions. This time there was a leaflet written for them, making maids a part of the national campaign.¹²⁶ The party's concern was that they would not vote in the election, thus it argued that everyone with the right to vote had a duty to do so. As with farm workers, DNA explained that maids had lower wages, longer working hours, less spare-time and worse working conditions than other employees. This could be improved through legislation: working hours made shorter and definite rules established for days off, holidays with wages and expenses, residence during illness, etc. DNA promised to settle these issues and was thus "the party of the maid." The appeal ended by urging support for the party on election day. The leaflet was not the only means of reaching maids during the campaign. DNA printed a newspaper intended for women voters, which included an article by Thyra Hansen, chairman of the Domestic Trade Union, which had been set up earlier in the year. She mentioned that there were 84, 000 women in domestic service, about 65, 000 in the towns and 19, 000 in the countryside.¹²⁷ This made it the most usual occupation of any for a woman. Like the leaflet Miss Hansen was concerned to fight against apathy. She revealed that her trade union had

¹²³ AAB: *Landarbeiderne og valget* marked sm 329 (481) 15 N81br 1936.

¹²⁴ Their money wages in 1935 were about a third of what they had been in 1920, while industrial workers had retained 60% of their money wages over the same period. Edvard Bull jr., *Klassekamp og fellesskap 1920-1945* (Oslo, Cappelen, 1979), p. 113.

¹²⁵ In contrast to the Swedish Social Democrats, who may have prioritized farm workers higher than other groups in the countryside. Nils Elvander, *Skandinavisk arbetarrörelse* (Stockholm, Liber Förlag, 1980), p. 95.

¹²⁶ AAB: *Også hushjelpen* marked 329 (481) 15 N81 br

¹²⁷ Thyra Hansen, 'Hushjelpen og valget. Hvad forslaget til lov for hushjelp går ut på. Hushjelp stem med Arbeiderpartiet!', *Kvinnenes valgavis*, p. 3.

sent a proposal to Parliament for a new bill regulating domestic service. It included regular working hours in a 48-hour week with overtime pay, 14 days' vacation with pay plus expenses for domestic servants who had worked six months for an employer and the right not to be dismissed during illness. The period of notice would be 14 days. If DNA received a majority on 19 October it would take these proposals into consideration, and there would be a bill protecting the maid.

Continuing with DNA's outreach to less unionized workers, a leaflet was printed for those employed in hotels and restaurants. DNA claimed the trade had been neglected by previous incumbents, but that the Labour Government had seen the potential for expansion.¹²⁸ The lines of appeal were what the Government was doing to improve working conditions and how the whole trade was benefiting from Labour's economic policies. Because times were looking up the tourist trade was "in roaring development," and old tourist hotels were being modernized with state subsidies. From August 1936 official regulations had significantly improved the standards of hygiene and housing for workers. Representatives of the hotel and restaurant workers had themselves participated in setting the terms. Nothing like this had ever happened before. What these workers could gain by voting DNA was the eight-hour day, which the Government had proposed but all the capitalist parties had voted against. The Parliament to be elected would revise the law, so there was still the opportunity to secure it. The leaflet ended with the usual appeal for hotel and restaurant workers to make a declaration of trust in "their own government" (emphasis in original) by voting Labour.

A fourth leaflet to largely non-unionized workers is interesting because it shows the inherent tensions between DNA's incipient role as the party of the state and its ability to stand up for one of its own favoured groups, in this case lumberjacks. It is remarkable for not appealing particularly strongly to them.¹²⁹ Instead it takes a totalizing approach, communicating with the inhabitants of small timber towns. It did say that the Labour Government had expended 36 million kroner on relief work in forests, constructing new

¹²⁸ 'Trygge kår i hotell og restaurantfaget' in *Brosjyrer utgitt av det norske Arbeiderparti Stortingsvalget 1936*.

¹²⁹ In 1932 the daily wages of a forestry worker were a third of those of an industrial worker. Hans Fredrik Dahl, *Norge mellom krigene. Det norske samfunn i krise og konflikt 1918-1940* (Oslo, Pax, 1971), pp. 91-92.

roads, sowing, digging ditches and on blasting and preliminary building work.¹³⁰ It had doubled spending on the road and railway budget. During the summer 28, 000 men had worked on the roads and 4, 500 on railway construction. Another 12, 000 men had been in full-time employment cultivating the soil. "It helps a little! But we are still only at the beginning." DNA's forestry policy included more of the same, and the planned rationalization of forestry. This would increase profitability, and at the same time the standard of living and wages of forestry workers would rise. Some, but not all, forests would be nationalized if not managed in conjunction with ordinary farms.

The leaflet constituted the only direct appeal to forestry workers, but their case was referred to again. Lumberjacks and farm workers would by legislation receive the right to normal working hours and minimum wages, but these would be to no avail if their organizations were not first developed to ensure that the standards were adhered to.¹³¹ This was perhaps reasonable, but it was not the same message the party sent to fishermen. For the latter occupation the state would provide a catalogue of improvements, and while they were urged to develop trade unions, assistance through legislation or budgets was not made conditional on achieving this.

The working class

The segments of the working class considered above, could not be seen as the core supporters of DNA, as they were not unionized industrial workers. The propaganda showed that DNA continued to woo the working class, and in fact attempted to expand its base within it. DNA claimed that its Government was these workers' own government, believing it natural that they should support it, but fearing they would abstain. The need to win a majority by continuing to add new votes made it imperative that DNA communicate with some of the least active.¹³² It was important that it should have real achievements to show for itself. According to the party's claims, 70, 000 unemployed had found work and 25, 000

¹³⁰ AAB: *Skogsbygdene og valget* marked 329 (481) 15 N81 br 1936.

¹³¹ *Hedmark*, p. 12. Or one could appoint special inspectors like the British Labour Party did.

¹³² Turnout remained low in working-class neighbourhoods in many cities and among smallholders and fishermen. Rokkan 'Geography, Religion and Social Class: Crosscutting Cleavages in Norwegian Politics' in Lipset and Rokkan (eds.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments*, pp. 398-399. Note that Oslo was not one of those cities.

had been given relief work since its Government had been formed.¹³³ 330, 000 new workers had been brought under the law of the eight-hour day and nine days' vacation had been put on the statute books. Duties on sugar had been reduced, giving 3.5 million kroner to working-class consumers ("the Norwegian housewives"). Schools had been improved by more lessons and more subjects, and would be further improved by the provision of free materials.¹³⁴ Legislated protection at work had been extended to as many as had received the eight-hour day. The government had repealed the hated "workhouse laws", which had protected strike breakers.¹³⁵ It had also expanded sickness insurance to encompass seamen working overseas. In the same way as with old age pensions,¹³⁶ the new incapacity benefit would ease the burden on those who had to take care of the blind or other disabled people. Defeating the scourge of unemployment was still the main issue for DNA, and it claimed that for every person the state had employed the private sector had employed three or four.¹³⁷ When DNA decided to combat apathy in order to help it win a majority, it was probably especially the working class of which it was mindful.¹³⁸

Youth

One group that DNA had kept a special eye on was youth. For the 1936 election it published a leaflet entitled "Space for Norway's Youth! Youth Shall Build the Future Society". It promised first and foremost the opportunity to work and to get an education. There would be an expansion of technical education for all occupations and control of training in the workplace.¹³⁹ The leaflet promised the protection of maids and forestry workers, reasoning that these were common occupations held by youth. It also proposed the setting up of counselling offices, homes for apprentices and social benefit for the young. DNA's introduction of old age pensions was a selling point also for youth, because in

¹³³ 'Den norske stats organisasjon og administrasjon' in *Brosjyrer utgitt av Det norske Arbeiderparti Stortingsvalget 1936*.

¹³⁴ AAB: *Valget 1936. Spørsmål og svar. Det norske Arbeiderparti* marked 329 (481) 15 N81 br 1936, p. 17.

¹³⁵ *Arbeid og trygge kår for alle!*, p. 26.

¹³⁶ See pp. 222-223.

¹³⁷ *Valget 1936. Spørsmål og svar*, p. 14.

¹³⁸ "Bring abstainers to the ballot box for by far the majority of these belong to the working class." Arild Solberg, *Arbeiderungdommen*, 24 October 1936, p. 16.

¹³⁹ 'Plass for Norges Ungdom! Ungdommen skal bygge framtidens Samfund' in *Brosjyrer utgitt av Det norske Arbeiderparti Stortingsvalget 1936*.

principle DNA wanted such pensions to be payable at a retirement age of 65, creating new job opportunities for young people. The Labour Government had proposed and secured an extra allocation of 2.5 million kroner to the amelioration of youth unemployment on top of the 1.5 million kroner allocated in 1935.¹⁴⁰ The money was spent partly on work and partly on training. The most important point made was that since the economy was improving, there were more opportunities for the young.¹⁴¹

As was shown previously, DNA had an active and powerful youth league and thus an automatic means of appeal to the younger age groups. *Arbeiderungdommen* was their weekly newspaper, whose election issue contained some more directions for the young. The most strident appeal therein was intended for the youth of the countryside.¹⁴² It had been totally neglected under the rule of the capitalist parties without jobs, maintenance or future prospects.¹⁴³ In the country only the privileged youth had access to education. According to the article, changing this by giving all youth the chance to pursue knowledge was one of the highest priorities in DNA's manifesto. Maintenance was a demand, but the real desire was to get a paid job so that one could support oneself. Youth was the largest group suffering from unemployment, and those without work were first and foremost the working class and "the little people" of the countryside. By promising to help youth, DNA was making a pledge to the youngest among "the working people".

The elderly

As a complement to this, DNA released a leaflet aimed at the elderly. It was naturally a good move for the government which had finally put old age pensions into effect. DNA called it the greatest social reform in living memory.¹⁴⁴ 160, 000 people above the age of 70 would profit from its implementation. Having achieved the principle, DNA would now attempt to increase the pension and reduce the age limit. In DNA-run Oslo the sum payable was higher than the national rate, but with contributions by the state it should

¹⁴⁰ *Kvinnenes valgavis*, p. 2; *Arbeid og trygge kår for alle!*, p. 21.

¹⁴¹ *Arbeid og trygge kår for alle!*, p. 22.

¹⁴² Probably because the youth league was weaker there than in urban areas. It thus made sense to use the newspaper to couch appeals that might otherwise not have been made. In 1935 *Arbeidernes Ungdomsfylking* had chapters in 60 out of 65 towns, but only in 269 out of 647 local authorities in the country. Halvorsen, *Partiets salt*, p. 200.

¹⁴³ *Arbeiderungdommen* 24 October 1936, p. 16.

be easier for poorer local authorities to raise the amount as well. While the leaflet concluded that “We elderly also vote Labour,” DNA was clear that the advantages of the reform were shared between these, the families of “the little people” and the young. Families would be relieved of part of the burden of looking after their old relatives, and jobs would be opened up for the young. DNA insisted that parents would be able to spend more on food, clothes and the education of their children as a result of the pension. Thus it was underlined that children and youth would gain too. It could be seen as a transfer payment to “the little people.”

Women

Continuing with DNA’s appeals to subgroups of “the working people”, in 1933, as noted above, DNA had published one leaflet particularly designed for women. In 1936 there was a much greater focus on the different interests of female voters. This was part of the effort to make less certain voters (e.g. non-unionized workers) support DNA and secure its majority. Thus it published an election newspaper for women, and also made a leaflet aimed at housewives or female voters. Knowing that women were more likely to abstain, it was hoped they would realize how important this particular election was.

As in 1933 safe homes and conditions for children were the themes of the leaflet mentioned above. It suggested that nobody suffered more from unemployment in the family than the housewife. Furniture and objects that had been gathered over years were sold or taken to the pawnbroker’s.¹⁴⁵ The suffering of these women had gone unrecognized. The Labour Government, however, had already done much in the struggle against unemployment. Appealing directly to the reader, the leaflet said she could aid those in need, by helping to give Labour the majority it required for putting all the people in work. The leaflet mentioned the social legislation DNA had brought in, and looked forward to unemployment, disability and child benefit and a better sickness benefit. The coming of a modern welfare state was thus used as an argument for women to support the party. Lastly, DNA offered “housing for the people.” In Oslo alone 40-50, 000 people were forced to live in overcrowded and insalubrious houses, while in the country the conditions were even

¹⁴⁴ AAB: *Vi eldre* marked sm 329 (481) 15 N81 br 1936.

¹⁴⁵ ‘Trygge kår for barn og hjem’ in *Brosjyrer utgitt av Det norske Arbeiderparti Stortingsvalget 1936*.

worse. Primarily for the children's sake, but also for the sake of mothers and families, DNA would build new homes. And it would expand the educational system too, so that every child regardless of birth or rank could be given the same opportunities in life.

In the main brochure (*Arbeid og trygge kår for alle!*) women were told how DNA had actively engaged in women's liberation, opening up all areas of society to them.¹⁴⁶ DNA's technique of appealing to women was to imagine itself in their place. Thus in 1933 it spoke to her as a consumer doing the family shopping and in 1936 as the wife of an unemployed man. It played on her feelings as social beings as well as on her perceived interests. Work for the young was an important demand in the newspaper; naturally this would satisfy the mothers of the unemployed too.¹⁴⁷ Equally education was thought to particularly interest women, as the newspaper said, "We are anxious that our children get the best possible education."¹⁴⁸ In the remainder of the newspaper there were appeals to women in general, or "women of the working class," and to working women. The first lamented that far too many women had neglected their duty on election day.¹⁴⁹ It repeated most of the points from the housewives' leaflet, ending with what was a direct appeal to the women working at home, in factories and offices to participate in the rebuilding of the nation.

Naturally the pages intended for working women dealt with employment conditions. They urged women to marshal their comrades in the workplace to vote if the latter were thought to be indifferent. They argued that having the Labour Government behind one made for a much happier work life. There was a rendition of the improvements it had made to working life since coming to power.¹⁵⁰ Among the improvements to come it emphasized unemployment benefit, better hygienic conditions at work, shorter working hours (partly so that more people could be employed, partly because some were working too much) and the lowest wages must be raised—they were generally paid to women. The principle of equal pay was underlined. This was a gendered version of an appeal to employees.

¹⁴⁶ *Arbeid og trygge kår for alle!*, p. 27.

¹⁴⁷ *Kvinnenes valgavis*, p. 2.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁴⁹ 'En appell til kvinnene', *ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁵⁰ *Kvinnenes valgavis*, pp. 6-7.

The working people

In 1936 “the working people”, DNA’s appellation for its potential supporters, was explicitly defined to include white-collar workers and small producers.¹⁵¹ White-collar workers had long been defined within the perimeter of those who would gain by Socialist policies, but had often been neglected. In the main brochure they were wooed with the reform of economic life. It would be under the control of society to a greater degree and thus more regulated.¹⁵² This would put clerks and officials, and especially the less well-off, on parity with other workers as for security of tenure. Arbitrary dismissals and salary cuts would not be tolerated, and promotion would depend on seniority and experience.¹⁵³ Concluding this argument the brochure suggested that insecurity besides unemployment had been the main worry for blue and white-collar workers and peasants.¹⁵⁴

The rural classes

As before peasants and fishermen were the overwhelming beneficiaries of the party’s propaganda efforts, and while not as certain to vote DNA as workers, had been there from the start.¹⁵⁵ Solving the economic crisis remained the main priority for DNA, and since these groups were particularly affected by it, the appeals were likely to continue independently of the theoretical Socialist justification for promoting unity. The leaflet “80 Millions to Combat the Crisis and Destitution” was a follow-up to the crisis booklet of 1933, this time showing what the Labour Government was doing to emerge from it.

The leaflet reported that the depression had taken the form of an agricultural crisis. This truism was a mainstay of DNA propaganda because it justified its continuing concentration on country dwellers, as well as its famous slogan from 1933 also used later,

¹⁵¹ AAB: *Nord Norge* marked 329 (481) 15 N81 br/1936, p. 3.

¹⁵² *Arbeid og trygge kår for alle!*, p. 36.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹⁵⁵ DNA’s first parliamentary representatives had been voted in by the fishermen of Troms in 1903. In that county the party was more associated with the primary occupations than with industry, and consequently did better in rural areas than in the towns. Lundestad, *Arbeiderbevegelsens politiske gjennombrudd i Nordland og Troms*, pp. 33-34. Research into the preferences of new voters in the 1930s show that 73% of manual workers, 53% of smallholders and fishermen, 24% of farmers, 41% of the salaried and 28% of the independent or self-employed supported DNA in the first election in which they participated. Rokkan ‘Geography, Religion and Social Class: Crosscutting Cleavages in Norwegian Politics’ in Lipset and Rokkan (eds.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments*, p. 428.

“Town and Country Hand in Hand.” (The operative being that DNA was originally an urban party.¹⁵⁶) It singled out fishermen and forestry workers as the occupations hit most severely by the depression; these were, in any case, probably some of the most disadvantaged groups in society.¹⁵⁷ The Labour Government wanted to give farmers and smallholders higher pay for their work. Minimum payments for these were now guaranteed by it, in the same way that trade unions secured a minimum wage for blue and white-collar workers. DNA had always been strongly in favour of new cultivation and land allotments. It had fought to raise the expenditure on this by 1.8 million kroner, to make this year’s spending a total of 5.15 million kroner. Relief work in the forests had been allocated 1.8 million kroner, designed to provide temporary jobs for the unemployed lumberjacks. For the fishing industry, it was claimed, the Labour Government had marked the beginning of a new era. Previously it had been told to fend for itself. Now was proposed 8.65 million kroner for acquisition grants, loans, tax subsidies, harbour works and new infrastructure, etc.

As usual DNA published a booklet aimed at the peasant and one for the fisherman. The first of these declared the need for a radical revision of the land law.¹⁵⁸ This must be implemented to satisfy the land allotment which was going on, and just as much to provide extra land for the smallholder, without which he would be doomed to perpetual penury.¹⁵⁹ Only DNA would be willing to support such a radical law, thus implicitly the smallholder and those hoping to settle on the soil must back the party. Furthering this line of appeal, DNA went on to argue that the Agrarians would do nothing for smallholders if they were given influence. Relying on cultivation grants as they did, the erstwhile Agrarian government’s decision to cut these must have been a disappointment to hundreds of

¹⁵⁶ It alluded also to DNA’s self-proclaimed ability to overcome one of the cleavages of Norwegian society. It indicated that it was finding its role as the party of the state. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 402.

¹⁵⁷ AAB: *80 millioner til kamp mot krise og nød* marked 329 (481) 15 N81br/1936.

¹⁵⁸ At this stage, however, the larger farmers had much less to fear from DNA. In 1930 it had been in favour of nationalization, but this gradually changed from 1933. The crisis agreement with the Agrarians could not have taken place if DNA had continued to be in favour of expropriation. In 1936 Labour was holding forth land ownership as a positive value and wanted more farmers to enjoy this benefit. Tore Pryser, *Klassen og nasjonen (1935-1946). Arbeiderbevegelsens historie i Norge 4* (Oslo, Tiden, 1988), p. 118. By then, DNA had started to include larger farmers in its proposals for debt management. Øistein Hveding ‘Gjeldsforliket mellom Bondepartiet og Arbeiderpartiet i 1934’, *Historisk Tidsskrift* 58 (1979), p. 330.

¹⁵⁹ AAB: *Bonden, jorda hans og valget* marked 329(481)15 N81br 1936, p. 9.

smallholders who had voted for that party, hoping it would raise the grants.¹⁶⁰ But when the Labour Government got into office, one of its first actions had been to increase the cultivation grants. Only DNA could be trusted to pursue the policies necessary to make smallholders independent cultivators, and to give work to country youth.¹⁶¹ They were certainly among the beneficiaries of land allotments, the grants for which had risen from 40% to 45% of the estimated costs under DNA.¹⁶² The party concluded its appeal by saying that only a majority for DNA would create the conditions for small farmers and smallholders to be lifted up to an acceptable standard of life.¹⁶³ What had been done so far was only a beginning. Somewhat revealingly, only towards the very end of the booklet did DNA mention that it was working on legislation to improve life and working conditions for agricultural workers and servants.¹⁶⁴ As the working class of a failing sector of the economy, isolated from organized help, they were at the very bottom of the pile.

DNA did make a point of opposing any part of the people's status as a pariah caste, and it declared so outright in the pamphlet addressed to fishermen.¹⁶⁵ It claimed that the fishermen had sometimes been living in society without any rights. DNA claimed to have spent ten million kroner on the fishing industry in 1935, the results of which were still coming through.¹⁶⁶ In the current year the allocation was increased to 14 or 15 million kroner.¹⁶⁷ And many a coastal town would take advantage of the Ministry of Social Affairs' relief spending, now raised to 11 million kroner. While as usual DNA had an impressive list of improvements benefiting the occupation, it repeated the call for trade unions to be formed. Like for all exploited people, the liberation of fishermen must be their own work.¹⁶⁸ It would be much easier under a Labour government, which supported the masses severing the bonds of oppressive economic dependency. The industrial worker had shown the way, having improved his living standards far above what they had been 25 years ago despite recession, despite pressure on wages. "It is the trade union which has made him

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁶⁵ *Fiskeren og valget*, p. 4.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

strong, co-operation with class comrades.”¹⁶⁹

It was well worth enumerating the various advantages the Labour Government had conferred on the fishing industry. In 1935 it got Parliament to forgive the interest-free loans that had been granted for the purchase of equipment the last couple of years (which meant that even the capitalist parties had offered something before DNA came to power).¹⁷⁰ These totalled 3.6 million shared between 25, 000 fishermen. At the same time four million kroner was budgeted for the same purpose, but this time as handouts. Being in government enabled DNA to produce a staggering amount of figures showing all it did for these occupations. But fishermen like peasants were highly important since 2/3 of all seats in Parliament were located in country constituencies (100 there to 50 in towns), and neither were “natural Labour voters.” More could be gained from focusing on them. Fishermen were a significant player in Northern Norway and the West Country, and peasants almost everywhere.

The middle classes

In 1936 DNA finally began concentrating on attracting middle-class opinion, after the hesitant approach of 1930 and 1933. One leaflet was prepared for white-collar workers, another for shopkeepers in Oslo, and the brochure “Healthy Finances” was probably intended for centrist middle-class people. White-collar workers were told that no status group relied as much as they on the economy being kept going.¹⁷¹ The flyer asked them to consider that the Labour Government’s policies had already led to a significant improvement in the economy. Between 70, 000 and 80, 000 had joined the ranks of the employed and incomes had increased by 104 million kroner during 1935, the greatest rise since 1919. It also described how prudently DNA had managed the economy, reducing the national debt by nine million kroner and running a budget surplus of 19 million kroner for 1935-1936. It had introduced a tax on interest to make tax evaders pay, but all the money thus raised went on reducing local taxes in councils with financial difficulties. Equally all the money raised by the sales tax went on combating unemployment. There was an

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8

¹⁷⁰ *Nord Norge*, p. 18.

¹⁷¹ AAB: *Ingen enkelt stand* marked 329 (481) 15 N81br 1936.

assumption in the leaflet that white-collar workers had a bourgeois turn of mind (almost certainly correct), so it portrayed the Labour Government's successes by accepted capitalist standards.¹⁷² It even suggested that there would be lower taxes when full employment had been reached (since those in work would not have to pay so much for the unemployed). Lastly it encouraged white-collar workers to feel proud of their country, saying that Norway and the other Scandinavian nations were "leading the way," presumably in a Social Democratic direction. Delegations and researchers from across the globe were arriving to study how these countries had become the "best run and happiest in the world" under freedom and democracy. These were cherished middle-class values, not really DNA's, and the party did not promote nationalism when addressing industrial workers.

Taking a less status-conscious approach, the leaflet written for the small businessmen of Oslo compared their situation to that of blue and white-collar workers. Their shops were their place of employment, and they worked hard there from morning till night (proving that DNA appreciated their contribution to society as much as that of workers).¹⁷³ The Labour Government had considered its greatest task to be putting people in profitable work. With work follows money among consumers, and new opportunities for traders. For this reason, it was claimed, most shopkeepers were registering safer conditions and more sales. So they were satisfied with the results of the Labour Government's policies. The task in hand was to reinforce this safety. Through continuing new employment, DNA would create sources of income and thereby promote business life. Only the Labour Government was up to this task. Businessmen should therefore support DNA. "We too support Labour," as the leaflet ended by proclaiming. It was fairly obvious, however, that there were tensions between shopkeepers and DNA. Those who employed others were not part of "the working people", and might even be considered enemies as indicated by the two election films. Although funded nationally, this was a local appeal confined to Oslo. In the new state DNA was going to build, it could not afford to ignore the petite bourgeoisie of the towns.¹⁷⁴ It had already made their country cousins part of its base.

¹⁷² The leaflet portrayed its target group as slightly superior to workers. Odd Sverre Norrøne 'Arbeiderpartiet og Stortingsvalgekampen i 1936', Cand. Philol. thesis, University of Oslo 1978, p. 82.

¹⁷³ 'Vi handlende' in *Brosjyrer utgitt av Det norske arbeiderparti Stortingsvalget 1936*.

¹⁷⁴ These occupations were in expansion during the period. It has also been argued that DNA had noted these people's propensity to ally with the fascists in continental Europe, and wanted to prevent the same thing happening in Norway. Norrøne, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

Nevertheless DNA was clearly double-minded about shopkeepers. They were better off than small property owners in the country, and many were Conservative voters.

There was no *written* propaganda aimed directly at the professional middle class. DNA could nevertheless expect some support from this layer of society because of its Socialism or crisis management policies. A brochure published a year before the election, designed to recruit new members, stressed precisely these two aspects of DNA's functions. Entitled "Out of the Deadlock. Plan and Order", it explained that the Norwegian Labour Party was the organization which primarily worked for Socialism.¹⁷⁵ The 84, 000 party members belonged to the various sections of the working population— industrial and farm workers, fishermen and seamen, white-collar workers and workers by brain. It was probably right to believe that the propertyless intelligentsia were more interested in ideas than others. But for the entire bourgeoisie DNA published a leaflet called "Healthy Finances", in which it declared that while it had spent 200 million kroner on fighting the crisis, and although the results had exceeded all expectations, the national debt had not risen by a krone.¹⁷⁶ The point was underlined, as was the assertion that the state's finances were in the best condition for 20 years. As for those middle-class people of an open-minded or Socialist disposition, there was a serious appeal to them in the form of a film.

The election films

"Building the Country" was intended for the towns, and gave a new perspective on politics for those with whom DNA had never communicated before. It was an almost full-length drama concerning a young unemployed engineer from a bourgeois home and his working-class fiancée made good, a shop assistant.¹⁷⁷ Their union at a deep level symbolizes DNA's acceptance of the established order, but the girl and her family and friends are instrumental in converting the engineer to Socialism.¹⁷⁸ Outward pressures are even more important, though, as he struggles with his inability to get a job, then with his

¹⁷⁵ AAB: *Ut av uføret. Plan og orden. Utnytt landets rikdommer. Slutt op om Det norske Arbeiderparti*, marked 329 (481) N81br 1935.

¹⁷⁶ AAB: *Statens finanser* in folder marked Div. Brosjyrer DNA 1936 329 (481)15 N81 br 1936.

¹⁷⁷ AAB: Olav Dalgaard, *Vi bygger landet* marked v 324.5 (481)V.

¹⁷⁸ The British Labour Party had a similar film, made by a ward party in Nottingham and called "Love and Labour". It was first shown on 14 November 1934, and also featured a Socialist heroine whose young man is a Tory. He is converted at a Labour meeting, the plot ends with their wedding and shows their happy home

family's reduced circumstances when his father the banker receives a salary cut. Joining the labour movement, he becomes a mechanic under the influence of a trade union acquaintance. When the economy improves due to DNA's crisis policies, he gets his first engineering position with the same firm, again due to trade union intermission. This is portrayed as the need for workers by hand and by brain to stand together. It is stressed that when jobs for workers are created, it means new employment also for technicians and clerks. In this film, which was meant for those unfamiliar with DNA, the labour movement is shown in a positive light as young and dynamic. The viewer sees it marching imperiously in the streets and entertaining crowds with gymnastic feats. It has mental vigour too, as proved by the brandishing of Marx's *Das Kapital* on two occasions. A new era has come and those who realize it, like the engineer's father, must turn to DNA.

Surprisingly given the party's appeal to small businessmen in this campaign, one of the villains of the film is the fiancée's employer. This shopkeeper is portrayed as a reactionary who is failing to come to terms with the new order of DNA in government, and as a profiteer who has bought half a crisis-ridden farm, which he uses as a holiday home. The girl, on the other hand, is a representation of how Labour liked to see itself: respectable and idealistic, fully the equal of her middle-class betrothed.

It may be asked why a shopkeeper is pictured even less sympathetically in the rural equivalent of the above film, "Norway for the People".¹⁷⁹ The answer is that it is set in a counter-cultural, *nynorsk* speaking, teetotal environment where merchants were local dignitaries. (Only in Oslo did DNA appeal to shopkeepers through written propaganda.) The owner of the village store, Mr Berg, is shown enjoying a bourgeois lifestyle, and represents the capitalists in an understandable way to the fishermen who were the target audience for the message. Just as with the urban film, DNA here attempted to persuade those who might have traditional qualms about voting for the party. "Norway for the People" concerns the old grandfather of a fishing family who is a stubborn Liberal voter. His children and grandchildren, however, have rallied to the new order, and they eventually persuade him to vote DNA too. Most of it takes the form of dialogue in which various political points are raised and clarified. DNA stresses that it is a people's party and, now

two years later. *Labour Organiser* XIV (December 1934), p. 219.

¹⁷⁹ AAB: Helge Lunde, *Norge for folket* marked v. 324.5 (481)N.

that workers have got political rights, a nationalist party at that. The strength of the party is symbolized by one of the young Labour men throwing Berg into the sea, after the latter has tried to seduce his sweetheart. Perhaps this proved that DNA was altogether more comfortable with the professional part of the middle class than with the business segment, as the village doctor is shown as a likeable fellow. It is mentioned that many educated people were now Labour sympathizers. The drama demonstrates how DNA makes life better and gives new opportunities for the characters, who represent ordinary people with ordinary aspirations. The young men are seeking land allotments and grandfather will get his pension.

Conclusion

In 1936 DNA officially and unequivocally extended its appeals to almost everyone, leaving only a small elite consisting of 10% of the population alone. Remaining a Socialist party it had no means to attract the very wealthy, employers, top bureaucrats and capitalists. The new, clear additions in 1936 were the white-collar workers and other members of the propertyless intelligentsia and small businesspeople, whom the party preferred not to be employers. Also, for the first time DNA made a serious effort to attract non-unionized workers such as farm labourers, lumberjacks, maids, waiters and receptionists. The focus on these was primarily caused by the need for new supporters to ensure the party got a majority in Parliament, so that it could carry out its policies without impediment. Another reason was that the 1936 campaign was significantly better funded than in 1933, ensuring there were ample funds to produce brochures for new groups. In all cases were these occupations logical components of DNA's base, as it stated it wanted "the workers by hand and by brain" to rule the state. The clear appeals in 1936 were adumbrated by appeals to some non-unionized workers as well as clerks and officials in Oslo in 1930 and 1933. DNA had previously shown an interest in all of the new groups except unequivocally middle-class people. In 1930 it recorded a film from a conference of agricultural labourers. Reading the documents carefully from 1933, it is clear that the party would like support from white-collar workers, but it did not form this as a coherent appeal. DNA considered itself a people's party in 1930 because of its concentration on fishermen and smallholders, but by 1936 there is no doubt that it was.

To summarize this chapter in a sentence, DNA appealed to “the working people”, who were the labourers of town and country, peasants, fishermen and clerks. When the small number of progressive middle-class people are added to DNA’s supporters, it will be seen that the coalition exactly replicated the base of the previous party of the state, the Liberals before 1918. In 1930 “the working people” were wooed as a mobilization for the class struggle. In 1933 greater attention was paid to women and white-collar workers, though the lines of appeal were not altered significantly (despite the changeover to Social Democratic, practical counter-crisis policies). Youth were a significant target group in all these elections, partly because unemployment struck at them disproportionately.

Of these three elections 1933 marked a turning point for DNA and set it on course for its later interwar and postwar history. In terms of electoral appeal, however, it is 1936 which stands out, because there was scarcely a broadening of the perceived base between 1930 and 1933. Electoral appeals to all groups other than industrial workers stressed the benefits of unionization, and it was often pointed out that merely voting Labour might not be enough to effect real change. This is the true significance of speeches at the 1930 conference which indicated that even a parliamentary majority might not be enough to create the desired society, if the workers did not have strong organizations of their own. These three elections thus make up a logical progression in ideological content, which is not visible on the surface.¹⁸⁰

¹⁸⁰ And in 1933 DNA insisted there was continuity between the most recent programme and those of 1927 and 1930. Especially Martin Trammæl made this point in his opening speech at the conference in 1933. *Hans Fredrik Dahl 'Fra nød til sejr' in Knut Kjeldstadli and Vidar Keul (eds.), DNA—fra folkebevegelse til statsstøtte* (Oslo, Pax, 1973), p. 133.

Chapter 5. The British and Norwegian Labour Parties in the Interwar Period with Particular Reference to 1929-1936: Electoral Prospects

Introduction

There are two strands to the comparison. The first is the background to the elections which have been described and the context of interwar politics in general, especially the Depression. This strand is vital to the conclusion propounded here. The second strand concerns the British and Norwegian labour movements, how great the resources of the parties were, and in particular to whom they appealed. The results of those empirical investigations are put into context in this chapter.

In this comparative and concluding chapter there are eight sections. First, there is discussion of the issue of success, then on explanations for it. This leads to coverage of how Labour and DNA fared in the interwar elections, and then moderation vs. radicalism is analysed as a consequence of the strength or weakness of bourgeois society in these two countries. The final two sections before the conclusion are comparisons of the labour movements and the campaigning of each Socialist party. It is at this stage that the themes of the empirical chapters are reverted to.

Success as the crux of the comparison

The angle that was chosen for comparing the British Labour Party and DNA was that of success. Which was more successful in the interwar period, Labour or DNA, or was there no significant difference? And even if there was, did it ultimately matter? When the Second World War started in September 1939 Labour could look back upon three years in government. Its first government lasted nine months and its second two years and three months. DNA was in government in September 1939, and would continue in office until April 1940 when Norway was invaded. At the time, however, it had clocked up four and a half years in government, and its period of office had been consecutive after Johan Nygaardsvold became prime minister in March 1935. The ratio of length of tenure was 2:3 in DNA's favour, but neither party had been much in government during the years 1919 to

1939. As for the parties' respective achievements, Labour was much lauded for its accomplishments in the field of foreign policy,¹ but apart from some minor social reforms and useful rationalization schemes for the agricultural and coal industries, there was very little progress on the domestic front.² As a matter of fact, Labour under Ramsay MacDonald believed foreign and home affairs were inter-related, so that by promoting good relations with foreign countries, international trade would benefit, leading to a fall in unemployment.³ DNA's accomplishments were focused on social and economic matters. It presided over a reduction, though not the elimination, of unemployment and the introduction of old age pensions in 1936 and unemployment benefit in 1938.⁴ Whatever may have occurred just after the Great War and in the 1920s and 1930s may be deemed to have become irrelevant by both Labour and DNA gaining majorities for the first time in 1945. After the Second World War had ended a new dawn became possible, and interestingly it was only in Britain and Norway that Socialist parties obtained power irrespective of coalition partners.⁵

In spite of such an argument, that the fortunes of the parties were roughly equal or that they did not matter much, even in the interwar period DNA enjoyed a greater measure of success than did Labour. This is irrespective of developments occurring long after the time span chosen for the present work, such as Labour's government ending in 1951, while after 1930 DNA did not lose another election until 1965. It is to do with DNA gaining a much firmer foothold on power than Labour. In the 1930s DNA established hegemony, and the events of the rest of the interwar period also mattered to that outcome, as will be argued below. It would be true to describe what DNA achieved in the 1930s as a "social democratic breakthrough before World War II,"⁶ which had great consequences both in terms of policy, and in ending the state of flux which characterized Norwegian politics

¹ Cf. Robert Skidelsky, *Politicians and the Slump. The Labour Government of 1929-1931* (London, Macmillan, 1967), p. x, p. xiii; R. Bassett, *Nineteen Thirty-One. Political Crisis* (London, Macmillan, 1958), p. 36, Richard W. Lyman 'The British Labour Party: Conflict between Socialist Ideals and Practical Policies between the Wars', *Journal of British Studies* 5:1 (1965), p. 141.

² Paul Adelman, *The Rise of the Labour Party 1880-1945* (London, Longman, 1972), p. 65.

³ Austen Morgan, *J. Ramsay MacDonald* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1987), pp. 151-152; David Marquand, *Ramsay MacDonald* (London, Richard Cohen Books, 1997), p. 500.

⁴ Edvard Bull jr., *Klassekamp og fellesskap 1920-1945* (Oslo, Cappelen, 1979), pp. 303-304.

⁵ Stefan Berger 'Labour in Comparative Perspective' in Duncan Tanner, Pat Thane and Nick Tiratsoo (eds.), *Labour's First Century* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 320.

⁶ Gøsta Esping-Andersen, *Politics against Markets. The Social Democratic Road to Power* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1985), p. xv.

from 1918 to 1935. Norway once again had a usual party of government, replacing the Liberals which had played that role from the struggle for the introduction of parliamentary sovereignty in the 1880s to the end of the Great War.⁷ DNA's leadership can be seen from the fact that all the parties represented in Parliament after the election of 1945 signed its blueprint for reconstruction, based upon wide-ranging economic planning and nationalization.⁸ Writing about Socialists outside Scandinavia, Donald Sassoon states that such parties did not know what to do in government even if they were in a coalition. Thus they "did not produce anything resembling a model or credible alternative to capitalism."⁹

The premise of Luebbert's monumental work of comparative scholarship mentioned before is that the interwar years saw real contention for power between three types of regimes: liberal, fascist and social democratic.¹⁰ If the social democratic type of government differs enough from liberal capitalism to justify the term regime,¹¹ its being established in the 1930s must have facilitated its continuation in the post-war period. On the smaller scale of the present comparison involving just two countries, it must be noted also that DNA's years in government were consecutive, and that its ameliorations on the domestic front had a much greater degree of permanence about them. The introduction of old age pensions and unemployment benefit are undeniably important measures, and while they existed in Britain long before 1936 and 1938, that does not diminish the credit DNA gained by being the party to introduce them in Norway. It helped to make DNA's hold on power firmer when the populace could see for itself that the government formed by that party was able to deliver social welfare. Indeed, the leader of the Workers' Educational Association AOF, Haakon Lie, in retrospect described the Pensions Act as "the ace of trumps" in the election campaign of 1936.¹² In addition, DNA's government brought in a law on the protection of employees' rights in 1936, replacing the previous legislation from 1892. It made universal the improvements obtained by some trade unions such as the eight-

⁷ Parliamentarianism was introduced in 1884.

⁸ Nils Elvander, *Skandinavisk arbetarrörelse* (Stockholm, Liber Förlag, 1980), p. 107.

⁹ *One Hundred Years of Socialism. The West European Left in the Twentieth Century* (London, I. B. Tauris, 1996), p. 47.

¹⁰ Gregory Luebbert, *Liberalism, Fascism or Social Democracy. Social Classes and the Political Origins of Regimes in Interwar Europe* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991)

¹¹ cf. *ibid.*, p. 2.

¹² Odd Sverre Norrøne, 'Arbeiderpartiet og Stortingsvalgkampen i 1936', Cand. Philol. thesis, University of Oslo, 1978, p. 61.

hour day and nine days' holidays.¹³ Crucially, Nygaardsvold's government presided over the halving of unemployment between 1935 and 1939 in marked contrast to MacDonald's second government, which, beginning in 1929, saw unemployment rising and rising.¹⁴ DNA did not take all the credit for the economic upturn under its government,¹⁵ and rightly so, since it seems to have begun in 1933, two years before DNA's accession.¹⁶ It has become a truism, however, that a government is judged largely on its economic record, whatever the intricacies of the trade cycle. It is thus not in a deep metaphysical sense that it is argued that DNA was more successful in the interwar period considered as a whole, but merely pragmatically on the grounds of what it is seen to have achieved or been associated with. The débâcle of 1931 when Labour lost four-fifths of its parliamentary seats, looms large in the explanation of why DNA should be seen as the more successful of the two parties, although in the election of 1935 Labour was restored to the role of a serious opposition party. There is no need for speculation about what might have happened in the absence of the Second World War, but to illustrate Labour's predicament it might be mentioned that one historian believes 1931 "marked a decisive and long-term shift against Labour."¹⁷ Given the result of the 1935 election when Labour had 154 MPs returned, compared to 288 in 1929, he sees no evidence that the party could have won the election after that either, if it had been held before the end of 1940 as planned.¹⁸

Explanations of success

If it may from now on be assumed that DNA had greater success between the wars, the question arises of why this should be the case. As mentioned in the introduction the classes of the countryside have been seen as highly important to the outcome of the political struggle between the wars. DNA's ability to mobilize peasants has been contrasted

¹³ Even Lange, *Samling om felles mål 1935-1970. Aschehougs Norgeshistorie 11* (Oslo, Aschehoug, 1998), pp. 45-46.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 27. Unemployment in Britain rose from 1, 533, 000 in January 1930 to 2, 735, 000 in June 1931. Marquand, *Ramsay MacDonald*, p. 518.

¹⁵ Interview with Johan Nygaardsvold, *Arbeiderbladet*, 11 September 1936, p. 8.

¹⁶ Lange, *Samling om felles mål 1935-1970*, p. 41.

¹⁷ Andrew Thorpe, *The British General Election of 1931* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 4.

¹⁸ This is disputed by another scholar who sees no reason to assume that the pattern of voting established in 1931 and 1935 would have continued. Michael Hart, 'The Realignment of 1931' in *Twentieth Century British History*, 3:2 (1992), p. 148.

with Labour's trouble in gaining support in the countryside, and for some this is seen as the crux of the comparison.

DNA's success can scarcely be put down to this. It certainly needed the support of smallholders and fishermen, but gaining it may be regarded as uniting DNA's natural constituency. Class analysis would place these people as workers or petite bourgeoisie. They belonged to the latter in so far as they owned their means of production (holdings, fishing boats), but to the former to the extent that they also worked for wages at larger farms. Fishing, smallholding and paid work were often combined. In the two northernmost counties Troms and Finnmark and the northern half of the county of Møre og Romsdal, fishermen were forced to sell their produce to the owners of fishing stations at a price set by the latter.¹⁹ This effectively made them proletarians, and interestingly these were the fishing communities where voting for DNA was prevalent. Fishermen with greater independence, such as those of the southern half of Møre og Romsdal and the rest of the West Country, were more likely to vote for the Liberals. In addition, the "little people" of the countryside had far lower incomes than industrial workers, though their disposable incomes may have been comparable since they produced their own food. Put differently, the other side of the urban-rural thesis, the incorporation of rural dwellers into the voting bloc of DNA simply meant that the party was gaining the support of the working class and a fair number of the petite bourgeoisie. This is hardly surprising, and tends to rob the urban-rural thesis of its explanatory power.

What then are the explanatory factors for success? As a starting point the following two tables show the election results for the interwar period in Britain and Norway.

¹⁹ Karl Egil Johansen, 'Proletar eller småborgar? Fiskarane i politikk og samfunn', *Historisk Tidsskrift* 81:2 (2002), p. 348.

Table 5.1 British general elections.

Year	Conservatives	Labour	Liberals	Others
1918		22.2 %	12.1%	Coalition 47.6%, Other Conservatives 6.1 %
1922	38.5 %	29.7 %	28.3 %	
1923	38.1 %	30.5 %	29.6 %	
1924	48.3 %	33.0 %	17.6 %	
1929	38.2 %	37.1 %	23.4 %	
1931		30.6 %		Conservatives and National 60.5 %, Samuelite Liberals 6.5 %
1935	53.7%	37.9 %	6.4 %	

Table 5.2 Norwegian parliamentary elections.

Year	Conservatives	DNA	Liberals	Agrarians	Communists	Others
1918	30.0 %	30.9 %	32.7 %			Joint lists 5.2 %
1921	33.7 %	21.3 %	22.6 %	13.1 %		Social Democrats 9.2 %
1924	32.5 %	18.4 %	20.4 %	13.5 %	6.1 %	Social Democrats 8.8 %
1927	25.5 %	36.8 %	18.7 %	14.9 %	4.0 %	

Year	Conservatives	DNA	Liberals	Agrarians	Communists	Others
1930	30.0 %	31.4 %	21.0 %	15.9 %	1.7 %	
1933	21.8 %	40.1 %	17.6 %	13.9 %	1.8 %	Society Party 1.5 %
1936	22.6 %	42.5 %	16.4 %	11.6 %	0.3 %	Society Party 2.2 %

It will be seen that with the single exception of 1931, Labour advanced at every election between 1918 and 1935. The picture for DNA is more complicated, with an initial decline followed by a great leap forward in 1927, another downturn in 1930 and then the election victories of 1933 and 1936. However, even in 1930 DNA got more votes than at the previous election. It faltered a little in urban areas, but this was more than outweighed by greater support in the countryside.²⁰ Its seeming decline was only a relative one vis-à-vis the capitalist parties, which succeeded in driving large numbers of habitual abstainers into the polling booths, under the pretence that DNA were dangerous revolutionaries who would abolish Christianity.²¹ This leads to an important rule for both Labour and DNA: *in the interwar period, unless it were split, the party would advance in terms of votes at every election.* The 1931 Labour catastrophe was caused by a split within the party, and DNA's downturns of 1921 and 1924 were caused by the splits leading to the formation of respectively the Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party.

Another very important consideration is the observation that in no English-speaking country did a government ruling in 1930 or 1931 survive for long; they were all swept away by the Depression and replaced with another alternative.²² Labour's victory in 1929 was thus a Pyrrhic one, because it entailed forming a government in what would turn out to be

²⁰ Cf. *Arbeiderbladet*, 22 October 1930, p. 1.

²¹ Hans Fredrik Dahl, *Norge mellom krigene. Det norske samfunn i krise og konflikt 1918-1940* (Oslo, Pax, 1971), p. 66.

²² Ross McKibbin, *The Ideologies of Class. Social Relations in Britain 1880-1950* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 263. If this were applicable to all other democracies it would make a rule, but the Danish government formed in 1929 continued through the Depression till the Second World War. The tendency does, however, hold for Norway.

utterly unpropitious circumstances. However, unlike 1924, no voices in the party recommended turning down the King's request.²³ The Independent Labour Party wished to take office, although it wanted boldly to defeat unemployment whether or not there was a majority behind the proposed measures.²⁴ While the Liberals, like the ILP, favoured progressive counter-cyclical economic policies, it is not certain that such a government would have survived long. But the ILP imagined there was no need to fear an ensuing election provided Labour had made real efforts in this direction.

The Depression was a vital factor in determining the success or otherwise of parties in the 1920s and 1930s. The outcome of the political struggle between the wars was decided primarily in the early 1930s, so the elections featured in previous chapters were crucial ones. It will also be noticed that there was a neat symmetry in the results of the featured elections. Labour won the election of 1929, but went on to lose those of 1931 and 1935. DNA, meanwhile, lost the election of 1930, but won those taking place in 1933 and 1936. The Depression came in-between the first and second election in each country, reversing the fortunes of the Socialist party. Why might the slump be so important politically? Unemployment was permanently high during the interwar period, and Labour had been in government also in 1924 without being able to bring it down by much. Nevertheless it advanced at the subsequent election. The Depression seemed to herald the breakdown of the liberal capitalist economic order, and thus it permitted a wider range of political alternatives to come to the fore. When Labour advanced at every election it was probably due to partisan alignment. Workers who became convinced of the rightness of the party's cause had nowhere else to turn. Only an extraordinary upheaval like the financial crisis was liable to make them revert to one of the capitalist parties. This is a derived result from Labour getting more votes at every election unless it was split.

The effect of timing in coming to government

It is by no means a full explanation for the political achievements of DNA, but it has not gone completely unnoticed that the party was fortunate in the timing of its accession to government. As noted by one scholar, the election of 1930 has gone down in

²³ In 1924 many Labourites thought their party would be captured or corrupted by the system they were called on to administer. Marquand, *Ramsay MacDonald*, p. 311.

²⁴ Thorpe, *The British General Election of 1931*, p. 9.

DNA's history as "the great defeat," but in perspective there is no doubt that the party was lucky to avoid governmental responsibility at the outset of an economic crisis that had not yet materialized fully when the votes were cast.²⁵ Its other stroke of luck was to be thrown out of government in 1928 in such a way that it "united all workers." Within a few years the same crisis paved the way for a genuine take over of power by social democracy. The Depression had a somewhat gentler effect in Britain than in many other countries,²⁶ but in Norway during the years 1932-34 unemployment stood at above 30 % and during the winter it went above 40 %.²⁷ This explains the intense appeal behind DNA's main slogan in the 1933 election "All the people in work."

Counter-crisis proposals had an undoubted pedigree in DNA going back to 1921 and the joint programme with AFL.²⁸ In the 1910s and 1920s DNA was a party regularly gaining more than 30 % of the votes (except when split), and in the latter decade it also presented a marked Socialist image. It was in the 1930s that it formulated anti-crisis measures that it seriously intended to implement, and went above 40 % in electoral contests. These had far more purchase with the voters than the rhetoric and policies formulated during its theoretically Marxist period. It was no longer bourgeois society in itself which necessitated Socialism but the economic crisis.²⁹ DNA became the Norwegian equivalent of a "Popular Front", marshalling the support of most people with progressive views.³⁰ But it was only possible to widen the appeal through counter-crisis measures after the Depression had started. Although much of the theory behind planning and demand management already existed in the 1920s, the hyper-radicalism of DNA made its adoption unlikely, and in any case it had not yet filtered down to even politically-minded people in a

²⁵ Bjørn Gunnar Olsen, *Tranmæl og hans menn* (Oslo, Aschehoug, 1991), p. 242.

²⁶ Alan Booth, *The British Economy in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2001), p.63.

²⁷ Per Maurseth, *Gjennom kriser til makt (1920-1935). Arbeiderbevegelsens historie i Norge 3* (Oslo, Tiden, 1987), p. 554.

²⁸ Jardar Seim 'Stat, parti og fagbevegelse i Norge 1920-1940' in Jens Christensen (ed.), *Nordisk arbejderbevægelse i mellemkrigstiden. Stat, parti og fagbevægelse* (Århus, Selskabet til forskning i arbejderbevægelsens historie, 1980), p. 65. Planning and Keynesian economics had a similar tradition in Labour. K. J. Hancock, 'The Reduction of Unemployment as a Problem of Public Policy, 1920-29' in *Economic History Review* 15:2 (1962), p. 342; Alan Booth, 'How Long are Light Years in British Politics? The Labour Party's Economic Ideas in the 1930s' in *Twentieth Century British History* 7:1 (1996), p. 14. *Labour and the New Social Order* mentioned demand management, and it was especially popular between 1920 and 1922 when J. R. Clynes was leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party. After 1922 the approach declined with the return of MacDonald and Snowden to positions of prominence.

²⁹ Hans Fredrik Dahl, *Fra klassekamp til nasjonal samling. Arbeiderpartiet og det nasjonale spørsmål i 30-årene* (Oslo, Pax, 1969), p. 56.

³⁰ Dahl, *Norge mellom krigene*, p. 111.

peripheral country. The two popularizers of planning and counter-cyclical economic policies in Norway were the geographer Axel Sømme and the self-taught economist Ole Colbjørnsen, who produced *A Norwegian Three Year Plan* in 1933. The latter simplified it into a brochure entitled *All the People in Work!* for DNA's use during the election campaign. Colbjørnsen was a cosmopolitan, and his economic ideas had developed from exposure to Stalin's under-consumptionist analysis while resident in the Soviet Union. He was also familiar with Keynes's theories.³¹

Legitimate domination and the causes of moderation

Dick Geary has sketched four hypotheses concerning relations between a labour movement and the state within which it exists.³² The first is that the more liberally the state reacts against emerging working-class organizations, the more moderate and integrated the Socialist party will be. The second and the third principles also concern the causes of moderation in the labour movement. They state that the richer and more willing a nation is to provide a decent standard of living for the workers, and the more employers' organizations accept trade unions and deal with them, the more integrationist and moderate the labour movement will be. The fourth postulates that confessional loyalties hinder the development of a non-religious workers' party. Or put in Weberian language: there is elective affinity between toleration/liberality on the part of the status order (legal and parliamentary institutions and employers) and moderation in the labour movement, elective antagonism between religious ties and the success of a Socialist party.³³ On this account the only real difference between Britain and Norway is that the former state was more affluent in the period, and hence able to offer a somewhat higher standard of living for its workers. This can be seen from the second Labour government resigning in 1931 because it collectively could not agree on *cutting* unemployment benefit, while the government of DNA got credit for *introducing* such a benefit in 1938. It is true that Britain's labour movement was more moderate, but when Geary says that the British bourgeoisie remained

³¹ Esping-Andersen, *Politics against Markets*, p. 198, pp. 8-9.

³² Formulated as ideal types in Stefan Berger, *The British Labour Party and the German Social Democrats, 1900-1931* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1994), pp. 250-251. Cf. Dick Geary 'Introduction' in *id. Labour and Socialist Movements in Europe before 1914* (Oxford, Berg, 1989), pp. 2-4, p. 7.

³³ Cf. Stephen Kalberg, *Max Weber's Comparative-Historical Sociology* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1994), p. 103f.

committed to democratic politics and employers were tolerant of trade unions and willing to make collective wage agreements,³⁴ exactly the same could be said of the Norwegian equivalents. (He does make an exception of some employers who were not so liberal, and again that might be said of some Norwegian employers.) Certainly the response of the State was fundamental to the moderation or radicalism of the Socialist party. As will be shown, the question of moderation or otherwise played some part in the success of these parties.

Ross McKibbin's explanation of Labour moderation concentrates on the class it represented or sought to speak for, although he notes in passing that any attack by the Labour Party on peers or the House of Lords, and naturally suggestions by the Labour left that the Lords should have their powers cut or abolished, brought an anxious reproach from the court.³⁵ This suggests that the Labour leadership was in a dependent relationship with the monarchy.³⁶ The working class meanwhile was attached to the monarchy to a "surprising" degree.³⁷ By the end of the nineteenth century the overt political role of the crown had ended, and it took on an "emotionally pleasing and politically uncontentious" ceremonial character.³⁸ It seemed to act as a guarantor of the even-handedness of Parliament, another institution which the working class believed in. As McKibbin puts it, "the acceptability of both to the working class underwrote the existing status-order and preserved the country's institutions and class-system more or less intact."³⁹

McKibbin's explanations of the moderation of the Labour Party will be pursued here in a comparative context. In order to perpetuate itself any established order has to legitimate itself, because if adherence to the order is purely based on self-interest an unstable situation is created.⁴⁰ The established order in this example means of course bourgeois society, which both Labour and DNA were officially committed to replacing with Socialism. In Weberian parlance the chance that any given command will be obeyed is

³⁴ Dick Geary, *European Labour Politics from 1900 to the Depression* (London, Macmillan, 1991), p. 18.

³⁵ McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures*, p. 15.

³⁶ Carl Cavanagh Hodge, *The Trammels of Tradition. Social Democracy in Britain, France, and Germany* (London, Greenwood Press, 1994), p. 14. In fact, when King George V made MacDonald a privy councillor prior to appointing him Prime Minister in 1924 he complained about the singing of the "Red Flag" and the "Marseillaise" at a Labour meeting in the Albert Hall a few days before. Marquand, *Ramsay MacDonald*, p. 304.

³⁷ McKibbin, *The Ideologies of Class*, p. 17.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁴⁰ Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1978), p. 213. Also see discussion pp. 212-215.

called domination, and under capitalism who gives the commands and who solely obeys them, is primarily determined by ownership of property. The British established order was better at legitimating its right to continue than its Norwegian counterpart, and this had several important political effects. But why should the status order and institutions have greater legitimacy or authority than in Norway? Primarily because Britain is a much older nation. Traditional legitimate domination is one of the three ideal types identified by Weber. "Obey me, because it has always been done," is very powerful grounds for authority. The ruling class of a nation-state that had only become independent in 1905 could not make the same often unspoken appeal. It had been under the command of others itself just two or three decades before. While it would be a grave mistake to imagine Norway as an egalitarian country, it had a foreign king and queen, no aristocracy, arguably no gentry and, with late industrialization, manufacturers had not yet developed an hereditary ruling ethos.⁴¹ In ordinary language, legitimate domination is called deference. A good proof of the above assertion is the large number of workers voting for the Conservatives in Britain. Nothing similar existed in Norway. The reason behind the phenomenon was partly the greater attention paid to workers by the British Conservatives through the Primrose League and its working men's clubs, but whether voting for that party in order to increase one's living standards or for other reasons, it inescapably means acceptance of the established order.

As alluded to above, legitimate domination affected the Socialist party too. Although Labour had adopted clause IV in 1918, probably to free itself from Liberal tutelage by proclaiming its own ideology,⁴² it was moderate and sought to bring improvements to its supporters *within* the system. This has been interpreted by several writers as a belief that Socialism would be built upon the success of capitalism, not upon its failure.⁴³ DNA was moderate too until 1918, but when the new leadership had come to the fore, and undoubtedly influenced by the Russian Revolution, it turned its back upon established society. (These changes existed as a potentiality before 1918, but if the status

⁴¹ When DNA examined the structure of the countryside in 1929 it found just 21 persons whom it classed as landowners. Kjeldstadli, "Arbeider, bonde, våre hære...", *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens historie* 2/1978, p. 59.

⁴² cf. Kenneth D. Wald, 'Advance by Retreat? The Formation of British Labour's Electoral Strategy' in *Journal of British Studies* 27 (July 1988), p. 287.

⁴³ Marquand, *Ramsay MacDonald*, p. 544, Skidelsky, *Politicians and the Slump*, p. 47, Andrew Thorpe, *A History of the British Labour Party* (London, Macmillan, 1997), p. 17.

order and Norwegian institutions had been able to legitimate themselves better, the Socialist party in their midst would have reverted to moderation earlier. It only did so under the impact of the Depression and the fear that unless it formed a government, reaction or fascism would triumph.⁴⁴) Thus DNA sought to overthrow bourgeois society, and Martin Tranmæl said so publicly as late as 1936. It set no store on the conciliatory and liberal king or even the Norwegian nation, proclaiming that the workers had no fatherland, and since they owned no part of Norway, how could it be their country?⁴⁵

The moderation or otherwise of the Socialist party might have had either a positive or negative effect upon its chances of succeeding in its aims (except that if it actually believed in the established order it would not change it much), but in the context of the 1920s moderation was not an effective strategy. The economist Arthur Pigou described the 10 % of the working population unable to find regular employment in that decade in Britain as the “intractable million.”⁴⁶ The Independent Labour Party, which had relations with DNA and resembled it politically more than the latter resembled Labour,⁴⁷ produced two schemes for curing unemployment: *Revolution by Reason* (1925) and the *Living Wage* (1926).⁴⁸ The former was the work of Oswald Mosley, the latter one of Clifford Allen’s study groups which had included the renowned economist J. A. Hobson. Both sought to cure unemployment by increasing working-class purchasing power, and would conduct

⁴⁴ This has been labelled a class compromise, which it undoubtedly was. The labour movement was under pressure and had to yield on certain issues, but it continued to uphold the class struggle. Finn Olstad, *Arbeiderklassens vekst og fall. Hovedlinjer i 100 års norsk historie* (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1991), pp. 10-11.

⁴⁵ The moderate Nygaardsvold confided to his diary in 1934 that he felt like “a wet dog” when he as president of Parliament was forced to ask God to save the King and the fatherland. Harald Berntsen, *I malstrømmen. Johan Nygaardsvold 1879-1952* (Oslo, Aschehoug, 1991), pp. 298-299. His New Year’s wish for 1932 was that Norway would lose its court case against Denmark on the Greenland issue. The youth organization “was ready to defeat patriotism in whatever form.” DNA often mocked national celebrations. Dahl, *Norge mellom krigene*, p. 29. This hostility only ended in 1935 with its coming to government.

⁴⁶ Skidelsky, *Politicians and the Slump*, p. 1.

⁴⁷ They were both members of the International Socialist Bureau based in Brussels, an organization for Socialists not affiliated to either the Second or Third International. (DNA joined upon leaving the Comintern.) For DNA’s understanding of the ILP’s aims see *Arbeiderbevegelsens Arkiv og Bibliotek*: letters from Haakon Meyer to DNA dated 14 April 1926 and 28 August 1926 in folder marked 1926-27. *Det norske Arbeiderparti, Daa Førkrigsarkiv* (1887-1940). *Internasjonale forbindelser 1896-27*. James Maxton was a guest at DNA’s conference in 1930 which adopted the ILP’s slogan “Socialism in our time”, cf. *Det norske Arbeiderparti. Beretning 1930*, p. 9; *Protokoll over forhandlingene på Det norske Arbeiderpartis 28. ordinære landsmøte i Oslo 14-16 mars 1930*, p. 11, p. 166.

⁴⁸ Skidelsky, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

some nationalization to ensure the smooth running of the schemes.⁴⁹ While bold action on unemployment would undoubtedly have seemed like a success if it had worked, the real reason why moderation was liable to lead to disappointment was that it might induce the Socialist party to take governmental responsibility in 1929 or 1930 and preside over the start of the Depression. This of course is exactly what Labour did with all the consequent travails. Using the tendency noted by McKibbin, such governments did not usually last long. They ran the risk of seriously damaging the record of the incumbent party. David Marquand argues that there was no alternative to economic orthodoxy available, even in embryo, between 1929 and 1931.⁵⁰ If so, it follows from his argument that a Socialist party had better avoid office between those years.⁵¹ Being radical enough to refuse to govern the prevailing order would have ensured this. And if it had had a majority and was forced to take on the burden, radical thinking might have ensured at least an attempt to tackle unemployment with an alternative economic plan.

The moderation of Labour is accounted for by the Weberian explanation of successful legitimate domination on the part of the established order, but in this context the other side of the coin is DNA's radicalism. It proved to have a lucky break in staying away from government in the 1920s when there was very little the party could do. Radicalism was not really the reason for its adoption of counter-cyclical economic policies, though, that was more a product of the times. By 1933 it was obvious that something had to be done about unemployment, and in Norway also about the crisis in the countryside. The prices of agricultural produce had fallen year on year since 1924.⁵² Farmers, and more particularly smallholders, were losing their properties as they could not pay for their mortgages. The number of repossessions rose from 1, 987 in 1925 to 6, 578 in 1932.⁵³ As the leader of the Agrarians Jens Hundseid put it: "free competition is about to become free damnation."⁵⁴ The Fatherland Association founded in 1925 had at that time argued for the proscribing of

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 481.

⁵⁰ Marquand, *Ramsay MacDonald*, p. XII.

⁵¹ The premise is, however, false. The Liberals, who were a mainstream and centrist party, fought the 1929 election on deficit financing to cure unemployment. Socialists were not considered mainstream and if they were bold, could have chosen any number of counter-cyclical remedies.

⁵² Bull jr., *Klassekamp og fellesskap*, p. 20.

⁵³ Øistein Hveding, 'Gjeldsforliket mellom Bondepartiet og Arbeiderpartiet 1934', *Historisk Tidsskrift* 59 (1979), p. 328.

⁵⁴ Lange, *Samling om felles mål 1935-1970*, p. 17.

DNA and the Communists. By 1933 its leader Joakim Lemkuhl agreed with Colbjørnsen and Sømme that the State must create employment and bring the economy out of the rut, as formulated in his book *Norway's Path*.⁵⁵

The strength of the labour movements

Having provided a trajectory and background to the differences between the parties in the 1920s and 1930s with the most emphasis on the crucial period 1929-1936, the findings must be related to the actual comparison. The first two chapters in this thesis described how Labour and DNA fought their election campaigns, and the strength of each labour movement. The three elections fought by each party will be considered together below. Just as the trajectories form the backdrop to the three elections fought, so the power and influence of wider labour culture and its organizations are a good starting point for comparing campaigning. According to the official statistics the British population was 45, 672, 000 in 1929, 46, 038, 000 in 1931 and 46, 869, 000 in 1935.⁵⁶ The Norwegian population was 2, 815, 000 in 1930, 2, 857, 000 in 1933 and 2, 893, 000 in 1936.⁵⁷ Since electoral expenses will be compared, the pound sterling was worth 18.2 Norwegian *kroner* in 1930, 19.7 in 1933 and 19.9 in 1936.⁵⁸

The very core of the labour movement was the party and the trade unions. The following is an extract from a table showing membership of the Labour Party in the three relevant years.

Table 5.3 Labour Party membership.

Year	Individual membership	Nationally affiliated membership
1929	227, 897	2, 102, 948
1931	297, 003	2, 061, 063
1935	419, 311	1, 958, 204

(Source: Labour Party Report of Annual Conference 1936 (London, Labour, 1936), p. 59.)

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁵⁶ David Butler and Gareth Butler, *Twentieth-Century British Political Facts 1900-2000* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2000), p. 347.

⁵⁷ *Statistisk årbok for Norge. 57. årgang* (Oslo, Aschehoug, 1938), p. 4.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

The nationally affiliated membership includes trade unionists who belonged to Labour through their union. As a measure of the total strength of the movement, though, it is of some relevance how many people belonged to Labour's ally the Trades Union Congress as well. This is given in the following table.

Table 5.4 TUC membership.

Year	Membership	Unions
1929	3, 673, 144	202
1931	3, 719, 401	210
1935	3, 388, 810	211

(Sources: Walter Citrine (ed.), TUC annual reports (London, Co-operative Society, n.d.): 1929, p. 79; 1931, p. 91; 1935, p. 83.)

The equivalent Norwegian figures for DNA are to be found in the following table. All members of the AFL were affiliated to DNA, whether they chose to be active or not.

Table 5.5 DNA membership.

Year	Individual membership
1930	80, 177
1933	95, 327
1936	142, 790

(Sources: DNA annual reports (Oslo, DNA): 1930, p. 11; 1933, p. 9; 1936, p. 51.)

The AFL was simply the industrial wing of DNA. In 1933 and 1936 each member was levied a day's pay in order to finance the campaigning of the party. The membership was as follows.

Table 5.6 AFL membership.

Year	Membership
1930	139, 591
1933	157, 524
1936	276, 992

(Sources: AFL annual reports: 1930 (Oslo 1932) p. 105; 1933 (Oslo 1934), p. 137; 1936 (Oslo 1937), p. 171. End of year figures.)

Starting with individual membership of the party, Labour organized about 0.5 % of the population in 1929, 0.65 % in 1931 and 0.89 % in 1935. DNA, meanwhile, enlisted a significantly higher proportion of its compatriots, 2.85 % in 1930, 3.34 % in 1933 and 4.94 % in 1936. In both parties membership continued to rise within the population, but at the last interwar election not one in a hundred British citizens were individual members of Labour, while almost one in twenty Norwegians had made a conscious decision to belong to DNA. The affiliate membership is related to the ability to raise funds, and implies some connection with the party. By this measure Labour comprised about 5.1 % of the population in 1929 and the same in 1931 and 1935, including individual membership. While party membership rose significantly, the number of affiliate members declined in this period, which is why a greater degree of penetration was not achieved. In Norway the affiliate membership was simply the number of people organized by the AFL, and adding these to DNA's membership it is discovered that 7.8 % of Norwegians were members of the labour movement in 1930, 8.85 % in 1933 and 14.51 % in 1936. The figures do not leave any doubt that organizationally DNA was considerably stronger.

The existence of a youth organization as an appendix to the Socialist party may be regarded as important in wooing younger voters, who were definitely a target group for both Labour and DNA. It has been argued, however, that Labour showed a real lack of enthusiasm both in setting up and in developing the League of Youth. In fact the League developed spontaneously after the First World War, but the Labour leadership feared it might direct resources away from the main party or that it could become the point of entry for Communist infiltration.⁵⁹ In 1933 the NEC for the first time began developing the League, and permitted it to join the International Union of Socialist Youth in 1931.⁶⁰ In worrying that the League might become a centre of opposition to the leadership, there is no reason to suppose that Labour had the example of DNA's youth organization in mind. Yet before DNA's youth section was refounded in 1927 as part of the reunification of DNA and the Norwegian Social Democratic Party, it had indeed been an alternative power base to the

⁵⁹ Zig Layton-Henry, 'Labour's Lost Youth', *Journal of Contemporary History* 11 (1976), p. 275, p. 276, pp. 277-278.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 279.

leadership. Support for the Comintern was especially prevalent in it, so that when DNA left the Third International in 1923, about 150 of the 200 branches joined the new Communist Party.⁶¹ But in 1933 AUF, as it was known from 1927, played a preponderant part in DNA's campaign.⁶² In any case, membership of Labour's League of Youth and AUF was as follows:

Table 5.7 Labour's League of Youth membership.

Year	Membership	Branches
1929	Unknown	233
1930	c. 3,000	335
1935	c. 2, 550	510

(Sources: Layton-Henry 'Labour's Lost Youth', *Journal of Contemporary History* 11 (1976), p. 280, Labour annual reports 1929, p. 233; 1930, p. 28; Report of the Conference of the League of Youth 9 January 1932.)

Labour's annual reports tended to give the number of branches rather than members.⁶³ DNA's annual reports also give the membership figures.

Table 5.8 AUF membership.

Year	Membership	Branches
1930	14, 000	275
1933	21, 000	410
1936	c. 32, 000	693

(Sources: DNA annual reports: 1930, p. 44; 1933, p. 48; 1936, p. 86.)

⁶¹ Terje Halvorsen, *Partiets salt. AUFs historie* (Oslo, Pax, 2003), p. 15. Or possibly the split was 135:65, but the great majority joined the Communists.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 175.

⁶³ In contrast to the figures shown above it was claimed that the League of Youth had 20, 000 members in more than 200 branches in 1929! But the League was growing in 1931 when it joined the Socialist Youth International upon the basis of having 3, 000 members. The figure of 20, 000 members diverges completely from everything that is known about the League and may be discounted. *Labour Organiser* IX (August 1929), p. 151.

Even a cursory glance at these figures show that AUF was unusually superior in numbers. This of course is all the more significant given the relative size of the populations from which they could recruit. By comparison with DNA's youth organization, Labour's League of Youth was an amateurish affair, and the lack of precise information in the annual reports rather prove the point that it was not taken seriously enough. Another organization which mobilized many young people in both countries was the Workers' Sports Association. In 1936 it was stated that more than 13, 000 individuals had joined the British organization, which included some 380 clubs.⁶⁴ The Norwegian equivalent comprised 62, 000 members in the same year.⁶⁵ Despite Norway's small size it became the second largest workers' athletics union in the world on the eve of the Second World War, only beaten by its Soviet counterpart.⁶⁶ Besides helping to instil Labour values in the population at large, AUF and AIF, the sports association, were actively part of DNA's campaigns, and it is probable that the League of Youth took part in some electoral tasks for Labour.

Apart from having active members in various organizations belonging to the labour movement, the importance of the press is obvious in gaining support for the party at election times or otherwise. There was no 1929 *Labour Year Book* in Britain, but it was incorporated into the publication brought out the following year. It is far from ideal not to have a separate list of newspapers for 1929, especially since elections were in close succession. For this reason it seems better to include the figures for 1928. The overall picture is not changed in a significant way.

Table 5.9 Labour newspapers.

Year	Number of publications
1928	2 dailies, 25 weeklies, 74 monthlies, 5 quarterlies and 1 irregular
1931	1 daily, 16 weeklies, 69 monthlies
1935	1 daily, 12 weeklies, 25 monthlies, 1 quarterly and 11 irregulars

⁶⁴ Labour Party Annual report 1936, p. 85.

⁶⁵ AAB: Leaflet marked Arbeidernes Oplysningsforbund, p. 1 in Archive: Arbeidernes Ungdomsfylking Serie: Da-Saksarkiv. Korrespondanse A-B, 1935-1959 Da 0003, folder marked AUF agitasjon.

⁶⁶ Knut Kjeldstadli, *Et splittet samfunn 1905-1935. Aschehougs Norgeshistorie 10* (Oslo, Aschehoug, 1994), p. 133.

(Sources: Labour Year Book 1928 (London, Labour, n.d.), pp. 540-541, Labour Year Book 1931 (London, Labour, n. d.), p. 549. Royden Harrison et al., *The Warwick Guide to British Labour Periodicals 1790-1970* (Hassocks, Harvester, 1977))

It will be seen that there was a contraction between the two first years, including the loss of the *Aberdeen Citizen* which was published daily. This happened before 1930, which was also the case for all the folded weeklies.⁶⁷ From 1930 therefore Labour had only one daily newspaper, but it should be noted that this was the *Daily Herald*, which after being partially leased to Odhams Press in 1930 achieved spectacular sales. In mid-1933 it became the first newspaper in the world to reach a circulation of two million, although the *Daily Express* equalled the achievement within days.⁶⁸ Despite this outstanding success, Labour was worried about its network of newspapers: “The number of local Labour newspapers or periodicals shows little sign of increasing. Weeklies may be counted on one’s fingers, and as for monthlies [...] it would seem that no sooner is one fresh published by one Party than another gives up the effort.”⁶⁹

Table 5.10 DNA newspapers.

Year	Number of publications
1930	20 dailies, 1 published 4 times a week, 11 published 3 times a week and 2 weeklies.
1933	21 dailies, 1 published 4 times a week, 12 published 3 times a week, 8 published twice a week and 1 weekly.
1936	26 dailies, 1 published 4 times a week, 8 published 3 times a week and 7 published twice a week.

(Sources: DNA Annual reports: 1930, p. 51; 1933, pp. 51-53; 1936, pp. 79-80.)

⁶⁷ Cf. *Labour Year Book 1930 (incorporating 1929 Year Book)* (London, Labour, n. d.), p. 557.

⁶⁸ Huw Richard, ‘The Daily Herald’, *History Today* 31 (Dec. 1981), p. 15.

⁶⁹ *Labour Organiser* XIII (May 1933), p. 89.

The newspapers of the Norwegian labour movement can thus be seen to appear with much greater frequency than the labour press in the United Kingdom. The huge difference in the number of dailies and the significant number of publications appearing several times a week are two noteworthy facts. They prove that there was a very good spread of labour news across the country.⁷⁰ As a much smaller nation it was impossible for Norway to have a title like the *Daily Herald* with an enormous circulation, but in 1930 the total circulation of all DNA's newspapers was 120, 000, which was a fifth of the entire market.⁷¹ In 1933 the total circulation had risen to 192, 244 and by 1936 it was 200, 000. DNA's main daily was *Arbeiderbladet*, published in Oslo, but never the equal of the Conservative *Aftenposten* in terms of sales.⁷² The latter was an Establishment quality newspaper.

Finally, there is the question of funding in the election campaigns. It is known how much Labour spent in each year because figures are available for average expenditure per candidate, and the published sources explain what was spent centrally. DNA's expenditure is less straightforward. The archives contain information on central fund expenditure in 1933 and 1936, but not for 1930. And for each of these three election years it is impossible to tell how much local and municipal branches raised and spent. Fortunately the budgets and actual expenditure of Oslo DNA, by far the most important local party, are available for all three years. In addition, almost all money came from the AFL and was distributed in areas outside the capital. The only possibility of arriving at a fair estimate must be to add the expenditure of Oslo DNA to the central fund in each election. The small element of double-counting involved in reckoning funds from the central party transferred to Oslo DNA twice, must be taken to represent the money raised by local branches.

⁷⁰ Labour would have liked to have had a similar network. William Henderson, as press secretary, thought provincial weeklies were more likely to attract support than a national daily. Stefan Berger 'The Formation of Party Milieux: Branch Life in the British Labour Party and the German Social Democratic Party in the Interwar Period' in Matthew Worley (ed.), *Labour's Grass Roots. Essays on the Activities of Local Labour Parties and Members, 1918-45* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005), p. 246. For an earlier period it has been claimed that the Norwegian labour movement had more newspapers per capita than in any other European country. Håkon Meyer 'Arbeiderpartiet 1914-1923' in Halvdan Koht (ed.), *Det norske Arbeiderpartis historie 1887-1937* (Oslo, DNA, 1939), p. 281.

⁷¹ Svernik Høyer, 'Partiet i pressen— et omriss av arbeiderpressens utvikling i Norge', *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens historie* 1/1979, p. 18.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

Table 5.11 Labour election expenditure.

Year	Number of candidates	Amount spent
1929	569	£ 282, 188
1931	490	£ 186, 733
1935	552	£ 207, 860

(Sources: Thorpe, *The British General Election of 1931*, p. 185. Labour annual reports: 1929, p. 221; 1932, p. 58; 1935, p. 53; 1936; pp. 98-99; Butler and Butler, *Twentieth-Century British Political Facts 1900-2000*, p. 260.)

In each of these elections Labour was heavily outspent by the Conservatives, and in 1929 also by the Liberals.⁷³ The method of arriving at these figures has been to add expenditure in the constituencies to what was spent centrally minus the grants to candidates (already counted in the constituencies). In 1929 Labour could if it had wished spent more. £ 9, 200 raised for campaigning went unused, and was subsequently transferred to the general fund.

Table 5.12 DNA election expenditure.

Year	Amount spent
1930	£ 6, 120
1933	£ 31, 301
1936	£ 47, 795

(Sources: Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1930, sak. Nr. 348-128, Da 0113, folder marked DNA-Arbeiderbladet. Letter from AFL to DNA 6 September 1930; Oslo DNA annual report 1930, p. 47; Oslo DNA annual report 1933, p. 55; Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1933, sak nr. 553-754, Da 0139, Folder marked Stortingsvalget; Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, Serie: Ac-Sekretariatets protokoller, Ac 0011, Sekretariates protokoll 1937, p. 24; Oslo DNA annual report 1936, p. 65.)

In 1930 DNA's expenditure was dwarfed by the Conservatives, who spent about £ 31, 500, and the disparity was even greater than Labour vs. the Conservatives in Britain the year before.⁷⁴ Some writers are operating with lower figures for central spending in DNA's

⁷³ If Rowe's figures can be trusted the Conservatives seem to have spent £ 524, 607 in that year and the Liberals £ 406, 920. He puts Labour's expenditure at £ 256, 601, which is plainly wrong. It is, however, a close approximation to what was spent in the constituencies. E. A. Rowe, 'The British General Election of 1929', B. Litt. thesis, Oxford University 1959, p. 534.

⁷⁴ Rolf Danielsen, *Borgerlig oppdemningspolitikk 1918-1940. Høyres historie 2* (Oslo, Cappelen, 1984), p. 208.

case in 1930.⁷⁵ They may well be right as there is some question about how seriously DNA approached elections before 1933. In 1927 DNA spent less than half of its central budget for electoral campaigning.⁷⁶ In 1933 and 1936, however, DNA was at least on parity with the capitalist parties individually. In order to compare Labour and DNA it will as before be necessary to take the size of the populations into account. DNA's spending in 1930 was considerably below Labour's in 1929 per capita. The equivalent sum in Britain would have been less than £ 100, 000. Since 1929 represented Labour's most costly election, it may be used as a yardstick. If compared with DNA's serious attempts to gain power in 1933 and to extend it in 1936, it is discovered that DNA spent considerably more relative to Norway's smaller population. In 1933 DNA's per capita expenditure was 1.77 times as high, and in 1936 it spent 2.67 times as much by the same measure.

On the whole, the comparison involving resources and the strength of each respective labour movement usually favours DNA over Labour. Sometimes the disparities are strikingly large such as over the numbers enrolled by the Socialist party, by its labour movement or by youth and sports organizations. While the 1927 Trade Union and Trade Disputes Act did not cause Labour to suffer financially in the 1929 election, the British labour movement clearly was damaged over time. This can be seen most easily from the large difference between the numbers of trade unionists and Labour's nationally affiliated membership. Separate figures are not given here for those who affiliated to Labour through their trade union, but even including co-operators, ILP members and Socialist intellectuals, Labour's affiliate members only make up somewhat above half of the total membership of the TUC. Another interesting aspect, in tune with general trends, is that DNA's figures continuously got better. The Norwegian labour movement expanded in these years, but while there are signs of improvement in 1935, the British labour movement presents a more complex picture. It lost newspapers and nationally affiliated members, and the TUC had fewer members in 1935 than in 1929 (almost certainly caused by the Depression, but the AFL grew during this period). Labour had its successes, though, and possibly the greatest was the staggering increase in the circulation of the *Daily Herald*. Before 1930 it had a circulation of about 250, 000, but topped the million mark in the first week after its

⁷⁵ Per Maurseth has put the amount at 68, 000 kroner, whereas in table 5.12 it has been assumed that DNA spent the entire donation from AFL of 75, 000 kroner. *Gjennom krise til makt (1920-1935)*, p. 543.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 568.

relaunch.⁷⁷ By 1931 circulation had reached 1.25 million and in September 1932 it was 1.6 million.⁷⁸ In 1933 it received an auditor's certificate confirming that circulation was above 2 million, and thereafter further progress was made.⁷⁹

Campaigning, party structures and electoral appeals

The remainder of this chapter will focus on interesting similarities and differences between the campaigning of the two parties. The most striking contrast is the confederative nature of the Labour Party, which had an effect when preparing for elections. In 1929 and 1931 the affiliated Independent Labour Party and Co-operative Party joined Labour in its efforts. In 1935 the Co-operative Party remained affiliated to it. There were both advantages and disadvantages for Labour in its relations with the autonomous components. The ILP had its own national and central organization and a network including its long-established journal, the *New Leader*.⁸⁰ It could only be a benefit to Labour that the ILP's resources were added to its own. In areas where the ILP was particularly strong and dominated local Labour organizations such as in Bradford, Glasgow and Clydeside, its disaffiliation in 1932 must have been a heavy blow to Labour. The blow was perhaps softened by the decreasing number of seats which the ILP won for Labour. In 1929 ILP influence was quite extensive. It sponsored 37 of the intake of Labour MPs, and another 123 MPs had membership of the ILP.⁸¹ In 1931, when no agreement could be reached, and the ILP contingent was technically running independently of Labour, it returned just six MPs. The ILP had been the natural home in the Labour Party for individuals who had no trade union, but by disaffiliating it forced those of its members with ambitions to leave it behind. The disadvantages for Labour lay in the extra effort involved in coordinating its electoral activities with another organization. As was noted in chapter 1, wrangling between the NEC and local parties ensued in 1931 because Glasgow Kelvingrove and Camborne constituencies had chosen ILP candidates on the financial responsibility of the affiliate.⁸² In

⁷⁷ Labour Party Annual report 1930, p. 60.

⁷⁸ Labour Party Annual report 1931, p. 61; Labour Party Annual report 1932, p. 65.

⁷⁹ Labour Party Annual report 1933, p. 54.

⁸⁰ Gideon Cohen, 'The Independent Labour Party, Disaffiliation, Revolution and Standing Orders', *History* 86: 282 (2001), p. 201.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

⁸² P. 54.

that year no final agreement was reached between the ILP and Labour, meaning that all the candidates of the former were unendorsed.

As for the Co-operative Party it was a similar story. In 1929 the local co-operative society was often lauded for the efforts it made in campaigning for Labour candidates. That was irrespective of whether the candidates were sponsored by the Co-operative Party. In 1929, 12 Labour candidates received their funding from the Co-operative Party, and of these nine were elected.⁸³ Although it has been stated that the programme of the Co-operative Party remained essentially subservient to Labour's plans, there were nevertheless very real tension between the two which cost the NEC much time and effort to repair.⁸⁴ The essential difficulty was that the Co-op Party National Executive had power over its MPs elected on a Labour ticket. In 1934 relations deteriorated to a crisis point, continuing into 1935. If these difficulties had persisted, it is easy to see that the electioneering of Labour might have been compromised one way or another. Either the Co-operative Party might have disaffiliated, making it much harder to win the seats where the MPs belonged to it, or, if left unchecked, Labour might have been completely sidelined in those areas. DNA as a unitary party did not have anything like the same problems with co-operators. In the same year as matters were brought to a head in Britain, DNA merely instructed its members who also belonged to the co-operative movement to vote against proposed constitutional changes strengthening the neutrality of that organization.⁸⁵ It nevertheless thought it important enough to send a circular to trade unions and local party branches on this issue.⁸⁶ It is highly unlikely that the confederative nature of Labour had any bearing on the question of overall success, but it is brought out as a difference emerging from the two chapters on how the parties campaigned.

Another difference in the campaigning strategies, though a small and relatively unimportant one, was that DNA relied almost exclusively on pamphlets for its written propaganda. Election newspapers were used by both parties, but only in a few cases did DNA produce a leaflet. One was "Vote with the Norwegian Labour Party" at the 1930

⁸³ Labour Party Annual report 1929, p. 8.

⁸⁴ Matthew Hilton, *Consumerism in Twentieth-Century Britain. The Search for a Historical Movement* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 87.

⁸⁵ AAB: Report from a meeting of the Joint Committee 5 February 1935. Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LOs saksarkiv 1935, sak nr. 71-113, Da 0153.

⁸⁶ *Loc. cit.* dated 18 February 1935.

election, another a flyer entitled “Who is Quisling?” in 1933. By contrast, for the 1929 election William Henderson of the Research and Publicity Committee suggested that Labour should stop issuing pamphlets altogether in order to concentrate on leaflets.⁸⁷ But Labour continued to use both pamphlets and flyers during the campaigns. Several of DNA’s pamphlets were densely argued and required some effort on the part of the reader. On the other hand, there was a greater theatrical component to DNA’s campaigning than to Labour’s. It was there from the start as 1930 featured both amateur drama and open-air meetings, which had an element of show about them. These were considerably increased in 1936 as a function of greater funding and the introduction of “drama gangs” of youngsters, making a spectacle of what might otherwise have been mundane political meetings. In each election year there was a mass rally at Young’s Square in Oslo the evening before polling day, attracting more than 40,000 people every time. These were carefully choreographed to produce a pleasing and powerful impression in the minds of the spectators. Apart from the political content represented by speeches, there was communal singing, recitals and music. The election film was shown in nearby halls, while in Britain “Labour film propaganda was conspicuous by its absence.”⁸⁸ In 1936 one of the two films was projected onto the walls of the headquarters of DNA.⁸⁹ In that year especially, and to a lesser extent in 1930 and 1933, many of DNA’s meetings were mini-versions of the final rally. Unison singing also played a part in Labour’s campaigning, witness the Albert Hall rally which marked the beginning of the election campaign in 1929.⁹⁰ The sources give no indication, however, that entertaining propaganda was emphasized as with DNA, although Labour clearly had the capacity to create a spectacle if it wanted to. There was good provision of recreation and leisure pursuits in the local branches, and in 1928 Labour had staged a Festival of Labour at the Crystal Palace. This featured “sports, dancing, community singing, organ recitals, and many other events.”⁹¹

⁸⁷ Minutes of the Research and Publicity Committee 2 November 1928.

⁸⁸ Dominic Wring, *The Politics of Marketing the Labour Party* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 35. Though Labour used films in 1929.

⁸⁹ *Arbeiderbladet* 19 October 1936, p. 2.

⁹⁰ *Daily Herald* 29 April 1929, p. 1.

⁹¹ Stephen G. Jones, *Workers at Play. A Social and Economic History of Leisure 1918-1939* (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), p. 145. In some localities cultural pursuits may have been means to the end of aiding Labour expansion. Thus in Rhonda, Wales they ceased between the early 1920s and mid-1930s. Chris Williams, *Democratic Rhondda. Politics and Society, 1885-1951* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1996), p. 113.

Having brought these circumstances out, it should be stated that major differences were not found in the electioneering of Labour and DNA. It was argued earlier that the former was more moderate, but this could not be deduced from the rhetoric employed during campaigning. Both parties argued for higher living standards for workers and other disadvantaged people, stressed their commitment to peace and claimed to be constitutional. It was entirely true for Labour and essentially true for DNA, but when the Norwegian party was deliberating among itself its greater radicalism shone through. At the party conference of 1930 its vice-chairman, the historian Edvard Bull, called democracy “an old superstitious phrase from the nineteenth century.”⁹² Three years later DNA chairman Oscar Torp said democracy was a “fictitious concept”, but it mattered to many from whom the party needed support.⁹³ There is an interesting parallel in the way the two parties used rhetoric about the capitalist parties essentially being fascists who were dangerous to the labour movement. In 1931 Labour claimed that if the National Government won the election, it would “naturally and inevitably” lead to a dictatorship.⁹⁴ Ramsay MacDonald wanted to be a dictator with Parliament as a “Council of State on the Fascist model.” The labour movement was already being seen as a national menace, and the TUC as a “dangerous enemy which must be curbed.”⁹⁵ Evidence for the above was to be found in capitalist-supporting newspapers and speeches made during the campaign. This is an exact parallel to what DNA claimed in 1933. Martin Tranmæl argued at the party conference that year that the reactionary capitalist parties were trying to create a Norwegian form of fascism.⁹⁶ At a public meeting in the early stages of the election campaign, Socialist politician K. F. Dahl said that the Agrarian and Conservative press contained articles in praise of fascist governments.⁹⁷ Democracy in Norway was also at risk from a dictatorship in the fascist mould.

The question of electoral appeal to a variety of groups has been the subject of a chapter in each national context. Labour was by nature a party for the workers, but of whom exactly did it seek the support in these three elections? In 1929 Labour showed some concern for the lower middle class. The manifesto claimed that the Conservative

⁹² *Protokoll over forhandlingene på landsmøtet 1930* (Oslo, DNA, 1930), p. 45.

⁹³ *Protokoll over forhandlingene på landsmøtet 1933* (Oslo, DNA, 1934), pp. 54-55.

⁹⁴ *Daily Herald* 26 October 1931, p. 8.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁹⁶ *Protokoll over forhandlingene på landsmøtet 1933*, p. 39.

⁹⁷ *Arbeiderbladet*, 6 September 1933, p. 6.

Government had put massive indirect taxes on shopkeepers and other small property owners.⁹⁸ This was the de-rating measure which gave tax breaks for larger industries, but increased them for landlords and small businesses. Women under 30 could vote for the first time in 1929, and Labour tried particularly hard to gain their support as well as their older sisters'. Nine out of 66 available leaflets were directed especially at women, and probably every candidate statement stressed their importance. Rural dwellers were the other main priority. As stated in chapter 3, 14 out of 66 leaflets were intended for the classes of the countryside.⁹⁹ Most of these appeals targeted agricultural workers, but several of them were addressed to farmers. Among the workers, subsections such as the young and the old were appealed to, and there was a little bit of focus on the non-unionized, including domestic servants and fishermen. The appeal to shopkeepers was not extensive, and there was hardly any attempt to attract parts of the middle classes. In 1931 some middle-class people were added to Labour's perceived base, when the party promised to restore cuts in salaries. This did not, however, have as great a priority as restoring cuts in unemployment benefit.¹⁰⁰ Shopkeepers were more often mentioned as a target group than they had been in 1929. The rest of the desired social coalition remained the same with renewed interest in rural dwellers. 1935 was not wholly different, either. Between these two elections, Labour produced two pamphlets arguing the case for Socialism to professionals. There was a greater emphasis on the unity of interests between small business people and workers. Women continued to be in evidence as a high priority for the party. Labour was already a people's party in 1929, and the subsequent elections brought something of a widening of its base in class terms. By far the most propaganda was directed at workers in all these elections.

As for DNA, the development of its electoral appeal closely matched Labour's. For all three elections its target group was officially "the working people", which comprised the workers, smallholders and fishermen. In 1930 the written propaganda was overwhelmingly directed at these, not least the rural dwellers because other parties also sought their support. Youth were given especial attention, but despite the last editorial in *Arbeiderbladet* before

⁹⁸ Quoted in F. W. S. Craig, *British General Election Manifestos, 1900-1974* (London, Macmillan, 1975), p. 55.

⁹⁹ P. 153.

¹⁰⁰ Thorpe, *The British General Election of 1931*, p. 247.

the election being addressed to women, the latter group was not.¹⁰¹ The written propaganda was hardly conscious of clerks, but they and the smaller group of civil servants received some attention in *Arbeiderbladet* and meetings in Oslo were held specifically for them. As with small property owners in Britain, it was hoped that they would vote for the party, but they were not prioritized to the same extent as the core groups. In 1933 the target groups remained essentially the same, but there was greater focus on white-collar workers in the election materials. Also a specific brochure was written for women, “A Saturday Shopping Trip”, which sought to relate politics to everyday affairs. Youth continued to be specifically targeted, especially as unemployed workers. DNA still did not address itself seriously to middle-class groups, and it was not made apparent that they or white-collar workers belonged to “the working people”. Only in 1936 did this change. That election saw the widening of DNA’s self-perceived base to nine out of ten people.¹⁰² All the groups that had previously been included within the social coalition remained there, of course, and some that had previously been neglected were concentrated on. These included non-unionized workers such as maids, agricultural labourers and forestry workers, each receiving their own brochure. It was finally confirmed that clerks were part of the “the working people”, and they also had a brochure to themselves. Not so much in the written election materials, but through *Arbeiderbladet* and one of the election films, an appeal was for the first time directed at technicians and professionals.¹⁰³ They were called on to use their expertise in the service of the new state DNA intended to build.

It will thus be seen that major differences did not exist between Labour and DNA as for campaigning strategy or from whom it sought votes. In view of the established explanation of success, it is particularly important that Labour continuously addressed itself to the classes of the countryside. Whether it made any progress with them is another matter. 1929 was its best election in terms of seats in the interwar period, but it took only five constituencies classified as agricultural, two of which were also mining seats.¹⁰⁴ Kinnear chose to describe constituencies with more than 30 % of the occupied male population over

¹⁰¹ *Arbeiderbladet* 20 October 1930, p. 3.

¹⁰² Kjeldstadli, “Arbeider, bonde, våre hære...”, *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens historie* 2/1978, p. 151.

¹⁰³ cf. *Arbeiderbladet* 11 September 1936, p. 3; 16 October 1936, p. 2 and p. 9.

¹⁰⁴ Michael Kinnear, *The British Voter. An Atlas and Survey since 1885* (London, Batsford Academic and Professional, 1981), p. 48.

12 involved in agriculture in this way, and there were 86 such seats in 1929.¹⁰⁵ Although Labour concluded that to get a parliamentary majority it needed more support in the countryside,¹⁰⁶ the above statistics rather cast doubts on that. As a party with national aspirations Labour wanted to appeal to all regions, but it was not strictly necessary to gain the rural areas like it was for DNA in Norway. No rule in Britain stipulated that 2/3 of the seats in Parliament must be drawn from the countryside.

Luebbert argues that no good could come to the Socialist party from organizing the agrarian proletariat.¹⁰⁷ Strictly speaking his point holds true for the present comparison. Labour did try to gain the support of farm workers throughout this short period, and its agricultural policy designed to benefit them went back at least to the early twenties.¹⁰⁸ DNA tried for support from this group as well, but most of the effort was directed at smallholders and fishermen, and it was only in 1936 that it singled out agricultural labourers for special attention with a brochure intended for them. But Luebbert's argument cannot apply to Britain anyway, because not bringing farm workers into the party was preparatory to making a crisis deal with the family peasantry.¹⁰⁹ In Britain such an agreement could only have been with the Liberals, who had some rural support and may have been the party of medium-sized farmers, at least in the Celtic fringe. When the Liberals held the balance of power from 1923 to 1924, however, it was too early for a crisis deal, and it would have required superb political skills to arrange one in 1929-1931 as the Depression was just getting underway. Labour had not even adopted a plan of counter-cyclical economics, so the option simply was not there. This goes back to the point made earlier about Labour being too willing to govern. Had it been intact and in opposition, there is a chance it would have taken up some form of crisis measures since New Deal-type policies were formulated by progressive forces from about 1932.

In actual fact, though, this chapter has been arguing that it was not necessary to have an urban-rural class alliance in order for a Socialist party to attain power and govern successfully. It is quite logical to predicate an explanation of Socialist success on the basis

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 119-120.

¹⁰⁶ *Daily Herald* 4 June 1929, p. 4.

¹⁰⁷ Luebbert, *Liberalism, Fascism or Social Democracy*, p. 288.

¹⁰⁸ Philip Snowden, *If Labour Rules* (London, Labour, 1923), p. 44. Agriculture was its weakest area, but there was growing appreciation of its vital importance.

¹⁰⁹ Luebbert, *op. cit.*, p. 268.

of what the Scandinavian parties did. Even in Britain at the time they were referred to as good role models,¹¹⁰ but the propounded thesis of the urban-rural alliance is not necessarily the only path to Socialist success. It was stated above that in Britain the agricultural sector was much smaller than in Norway (6.2 % of the UK population in the sector around 1930 compared to 16.7 % in Norway or 20.5 % in the entire primary sector¹¹¹). And 86 out of 615 seats in Parliament were “agricultural” by Kinnear’s measure compared to 100 out of 150 in Norway. It is an open question how much one may generalize from the Scandinavian situation. No doubt it is a good use of the method of formulating ideal types from several contexts (Denmark, Norway and Sweden) and applying them elsewhere. The explanation certainly casts light on the outcome of the political struggle between the wars, and has acted as a guide to the present work. However, when the perspective is reduced to just two countries and a study is performed of the trajectories of the Socialist parties, the strength of the labour movements and the level of funding in vital campaigns, these seem to be better indicators of success.

Conclusion

Summarizing such a densely argued chapter is no easy task. It was posited at the beginning that DNA was more successful than Labour in the interwar period, quite apart from its establishing hegemony in the 1930s. Its length of tenure was longer than Labour’s and in the ratio 3:2. Its rule was consecutive and it achieved much of what it wanted in office. It reduced unemployment to half of what it had been, presided over peaceful industrial relations (though the Main Agreement between AFL and the Employers’ Association NAF in 1935 was not its work),¹¹² brought in old age pensions and unemployment benefit, improved employment rights and ended anti-labour legislation such as the “workhouse laws”. These achievements laid the groundwork for its long-standing governments after the Second World War. Many of these benefits accrued to Britain earlier than they did in Norway, but capitalist governments could take the credit. Labour’s best performance was in the field of international relations. It recognized the Soviet Union in

¹¹⁰ Arthur Greenwood’s radio address in the 1935 election campaign. *Daily Herald* 5 November 1935, p. 4.

¹¹¹ McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures*, p. 108; *Statistisk årbok for Norge. 57. årgang*, p. 9.

¹¹² It came into force on 9 March 1935, 11 days before the accession of DNA to power. Jardar Seim, *Hvordan Hovedavtalen av 1935 ble til. Staten, organisasjonene og arbeidsfreden 1930-35* (Oslo, Tiden, 1972), p. 11.

1924, and Ramsay MacDonald made the first official visit by a British prime minister to the United States. The Wheatley Housing Act of 1924 was, unfortunately for Labour, set aside by later capitalist governments. But given the huge internal problems that the British and Norwegian societies faced between the wars, especially unemployment, even a masterly foreign policy on its own cannot be seen as being of crucial importance.

As for the explanation of DNA's greater success, it was mostly found in the contingency of that party being in government at the tail-end of the Depression rather than at the beginning. This was, however, related to the moderation vs. radicalism issue, and it was suggested that if Labour had been more radical it might well have achieved more. It would not then have found itself in the nearly impossible situation of being in a minority government grappling with unemployment above 2.5 million. Nor would it have ended up as a mere shadow of its former self in Parliament with all of its leaders except Lansbury gone, and a washed-out alternative for the rest of the 1930s. The example of DNA shows that it could have gone on to govern, provided that the Conservatives and Liberals did not remain bound together, holding "coupon" elections.

The moderation of Labour and the contrary radicalism of DNA were explained through the successful or otherwise legitimation of the social order by the State and the Establishment. This is offered as an alternative to Geary's idea that an open-minded attitude on the part of the State and employers had this effect.¹¹³ Judging by the figures, it seems likely that DNA would have come to power after the 1933 election whatever the electoral system. Instead of the crisis agreement with the Agrarians in 1935 being the underlying reason why DNA became a successful Socialist party, it appears as a necessity thrown up by proportional representation. DNA, having the examples of similar deals in Denmark and Sweden before it, made a good move in the prevailing circumstances. It allowed the Agrarians to get most of what they wanted in return for being able to form a government implementing forward crisis policies.¹¹⁴ The crisis agreement was only a necessity due to proportional representation, though, and consequently the urban-rural thesis of Luebbert and Esping-Andersen is shown to be a local explanation, not a general one. It might still

¹¹³ Geary, *European Labour Politics from 1900 to the Depression*, p. 18.

¹¹⁴ Furre, *Norsk historie 1905-1940*, p. 240.

apply to Germany which had PR,¹¹⁵ but it has little explanatory power for the United Kingdom. Labour's project was not doomed from the start due to either not organizing enough rural dwellers, or not making a crisis deal with a party representing the interests of medium-sized farmers. Starting from an hypothesis that significant differences would be uncovered in electoral strategy or how campaigning was done, the success of these two Socialist parties seems instead to have been determined by labour movement strength, contingency and, in an incidental way, the age-old question of moderation or maximalism.

¹¹⁵ Esping-Andersen, *Politics against Markets*, pp. XV-XVI.

Appendix 1

Labour grants to candidates in 1929 (£ s. d.)

<u>Region</u>	<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Grant</u>	<u>Loan</u>
Beds.	Bedford	C. Dixon	70/4/6	
	Mid Bedford	H. W. Fenner		60
	Luton	Mrs Harrison Bell		75
Berks.	Abingdon	A. Reade		75
	Newbury	P. H. Jaques		60
	Windsor	A. H. Chilton		50
Bucks	Aylesbury	F. G. Temple		60
	Buckingham	J. L. George		50
	Wycombe	Mrs Townsend		60
Cambs.	Cambridge	D. R. Hardman		40
Ches.	Wallasey	J. D. Mack		40
	Chester	W. Herron	26/19/3	
	Northwich	Mrs B. Ayrton Gould		75
	Wirral	G. Beardsworth	51/15/0	
Corn.	Bodmin	Paul Reed		40
	Camborne	H. J. Sharman		75
	Northern	F. E. Church		60
	Penryn & Falmouth	F. J. Hopkins		75
	St. Ives	W. Arnold Foster		60
Cumb.	Northern	C. A. O' Donnell	75/19/2	25
	Penrith & Cockermouth	A. Dodd		60
Derby	Chesterfield	G. Benson		75
	West Derby	W. Wilkinson		75
Devon	Exeter	J. Lloyd Jones		40
	Plymouth Drake	J. J. H. Moses		40
	Plymouth Devonport	Rev. D. Fraser		40
	Plymouth Sutton	W. Westwood		40
	Barnstaple	D. Mullins		60
	Honiton	Mrs F. R. Davies		60
	Tiverton	H. Wreford-Glanvill		40
	Torquay	H. H. Medland		60
	Totnes	Miss K. Spurrell		60
Dorset	Eastern	E. J. Stocker		60
	Northern	Colin G. Clark		60
	Southern	A. Wiltshire		50
	Western	T. Robins		60
Durham	Hartlepool	G. Oliver	59/14/6	
	Consett	Rev. H. Dunnico		75
Essex	Ilford	C. R. de Gruchy		40
	West Leyton	Rev. R. Sorensen		25
	Stratford	T. Groves		40
	Epping	J. T. Walton Newbold		50
	Romford	H. T. Muggeridge		75
	Saffron Walden	W. Cash		60
Glos	Bristol North	W. Ayles		40
	Bristol West	Lady Clare Annesley		40
	Cheltenham	W. Piggot		40
	Cirenc. & Tewkesb.	E. W. Fredman		40
	Stroud	F. E. White		60
	Thornbury	Godfrey Elton		75
Hants	Bournemouth	Col. M. Spencer		40
	Portsmouth Cen.	W. G. Hall		40

<u>Region</u>	<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Grant</u>	<u>Loan</u>
	Portsmouth South	Miss J. Stephen		40
	Aldershot	J. R. McPhie		50
	Basingstoke	W. J. Beck		60
	Fareham	A. J. Pearson		50
	N.Forest & Christch.	G. W. Austin		60
	Petersfield	Mrs H. J. Massingham		50
	Winchester	Dr R. A. Lyster		50
Hereford	Hereford	H. Cooper		60
Herts.	Hertford	R. S. Edwards		50
	Hitchin	Dick Gifford		50
Hunts	Huntingdon	C. S. Giddins		50
Isle of Ely		Maj. D. J. Freyer		50
Kent	Hythe	Miss G. M. Colman		40
	Ashford	Dr M. Follick		60
	Canterbury	P. S. Eastman		50
	Chislehurst	J. L. Thomson		60
	Dartford	J. E. Mills	64/14/11	
	Dover	E. L. McKeag		50
	Faversham	Maj. D. Leigh Aman		75
	Isle of Thanet	E. Plaisted		60
	Maidstone	J. Morgan		100
	Sevenoaks	J. Hamilton Fyfe		60
	Tonbridge	W. F. Toynbee		75
Lancs	Blackpool	E. Machin		30
	Bootle	J. Kinley		40
	Liverpool East Toxteth	J. J. Cleary		40
	Liverpool Edge Hill	J. H. Hayes		40
	Liverpool Walton	F. A. P. Rowe		40
	Liverpool Wavertree	S. L. Treleaven		40
	Liverpool West Toxteth	J. Gibbins		40
	Manchester Blackley	W. A. Burke	40 (returned)	
	Manchester Exchange	A. Moss		40
	Manchester Moss Side	A. A. Purcell		40
	Manchester Withington	Dr Robinson		40
	Salford South	J. Toole		40
	Southport	A. L. Williams		40
	Darwen	T. Ramsden		50
	Lancaster	R. P. Burnett		50
	Lonsdale	J. Henderson		75
	Stretford	F. Anderson		60
	Waterloo	J. Clifford Leigh		40
Leicester	Bosworth	J. Minto		75
	Harborough	E. J. Wise		60
	Loughborough	E. Winterton		60
	Melton	A. E. Stubbs		60
Lincs.	Grimsby	E. Marklow		40
	Holland-w-Boston	C. E. Snook		300
	Grantham	M. W. Moore		75
	Rutland & Stamford	H. J. Jones		60
	Brigg	D. J. K. Quibell		60
	Gainsborough	G. Deer		60 16/16/0
	Horncastle	J. R. Sanderson		60
	Louth	T. Holmes		50
London	Battersea N.	W. S. Sanders		40
	Camberwell, Dulwich	Dr C. A. Smith		40

10

<u>Region</u>	<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Grant</u>	<u>Loan</u>
	Chelsea	Rev. A. G. Prichard	40	
	Hackney North	F. G. Bowles	40	
	Hackney South	Ald. H. Morrison	40	
	Hammersmith North	J. P. Gardner	40	
	Hampstead	F. E. Dawkins	20	
	Holborn	F. W. Hickinbottom	40	
	Islington East	Dr E. Bentham	40	
	Islington North	R. Young	40	
	Islington South	W. S. Cluse	40	
	Islington West	Ald. F. Montague	40	
	Kensington North	F. R. West	40	
	Lambeth, Brixton	A. B. Bishop	40	
	Lambeth, Kennington	L. W. Matters	40	
	Lambeth, Norwood	W. O' Brien Reeves	40	
	Lewisham East	J. C. Wilmot	40	
	Lewisham West	Mrs C. M. Wadham	40	44/17/7
	St. Marylebone	D. A. Ross	40	
	St. Pancras North	J. Marley	40	
	St. Pancras South West	W. Carter	20	
	Shoreditch	E. Thurtle	40	
	Stepney Mile End	J. Scurr	40	
	Stoke Newington	F. L. Kerran	40	
	Wands. Balh. & Toot.	Dr Brook	40	
	Wandsworth Central	Maj A. G. Church	40	
	Wands. Putn. & Southf.	J. C. Lawder	40	
	Wandsworth Streatham	F. Hughes	40	
	Westminster St. George's	J. C. Butler	40	
	Westminster Abbey	J. H. MacDonnell	40	£ 17/12/8
	Woolwich East	H. Snell	40	
	Woolwich West	W. Barefoot	40	
Middlx.	Ealing	J. Maycock	40	
	Hornsey	F. A. Wiltshire	40	
	Tottenham South	F. Messer	40	
	Acton	J. F. Shillaker	40	
	Enfield	W. W. Henderson	75	
	Finchley	J. G. Stone	40	
	Harrow	Capt. Beaumont	40	
	Hendon	Dr. R. Lyons	40	
	Spelthorne	F. Wilson Temple	50	
	Twickenham	T. J. Mason	50	
	Uxbridge	R. Bridgman	40	
	Wood Green	E. P. Bell	40	
Norfolk	Norfolk East	W. Holmes	75	
	Norfolk South	G. Young	65	
	Norfolk South West	W. B. Taylor	75	
Northampto	Peterborough	J. F. Horrabin	75	
Northumb.	Tynemouth	J. Stuart Barr	40	
	Berwick	Ald Kegie	50	
	Hoxham	E. Dunnico	75	
Notts	South	Holford Knight	40	
	Bassetlaw	Malcolm MacDonald	75	
	Broxtowe	F. Seymour Cocks	80	50
	Mansfield	C. Brown	75	
	Newark	Coun. W. Haywood	75	
	Rushcliffe	Miss F. Widdowson	75	

<u>Region</u>	<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Grant</u>	<u>Loan</u>
Oxford	Banbury	L. Wingfield		75
	Henley	B. B. Gillis		60
Salop	Ludlow	T. Hardwick		75
	Owesity	H. S. Evans		60
	Shrewsbury	A. A. Beach		50
Somerset	Bath	G. G. Desmond		40
	Bridgwater	J. M. Boltz		60
	Taunton	J. A. Sparks		60
	Wells	Mrs J. Davies		60
	Weston-s-Mare	Mrs Borrett		60
	Yeovil	F. C. R. Douglas		50
	Staffs	Walsall	J. J. McShane	
Wolverhampton E.		D. R. Williams		40
Burton-on-Trent		W. T. Paling	59/16/4	
Kingswinford		C. H. Sitch		60
Leek		W. Bromfield		50
Stone		G. Belt		75
Suffolk		Eye	Owen Aves	
	Lowestoft	Capt. Basil Hall		60
	Woodbridge	L. Spero		60
	Bury St. Edmunds	P. Astins		75
	Sudbury	J. Shingfield		60
Surrey	Croydon North	G. A. Foan		40
	Croydon South	E. W. Wilson		40
	Richmond	P. Butler		40
	Wimbledon	T. Braddock		40
	Epsom	Rev. S. Morgan		50
	Farnham	Noel Palmer		50
	Guildford	L. N. Worsnop		60
	Mitcham	Shane MacKay		75
	Reigate	P. H. Collick		60
	Sussex	Brighton	W. McLaine/J. S. Cheshi	
Eastbourne		R. S. Chatfield		25
E. Grinstead		T. Crawford	44/13/0	
Lewes		Alban Gordon		100
Rye		G. Greenwood		60 £ 25/11/9
Warwick	Horsham & Worthing	Miss H. M. Keynes		75
	Birmingham Duddesdon	G. F. Sawyer		40
	Birmingham Edgbaston	W. H. D. Caple		40
	Birmingham Erdington	C. J. Simmons		100
	Birm. Handsworth	L. Anderson Fenn		40
	Birmingham Ladywood	W. Whiteley		150
	Birmingham Moseley	Dr F. G. Bushnell		40
	Birmingham Sparkbrook	Allan Young		250
	Birmingham West	O. G. Willey		40
	Nuneaton	F. Smith		75
Westmorland	Tamworth	G. Horwill		60
	Warwick & Leamington	C. G. Garton		50
	W. Bone			60
Wilts	Chippenham	W. R. Robins		60
	Devizes	R. Sheppard		60
	Westbury	G. Ward		60
Worcs	Dudley	Oliver Baldwin		40
	Worcester	Kenneth Lindsay		40
	Bewdley	Sardius Hancock		60

<u>Region</u>	<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Grant</u>	<u>Loan</u>
Yorks	Evesham	R. Aldington		60
	Kidderminster	F. G. Lloyd		75
	Stourbridge	W. Wellock		75
	Bradford North	Norman Angell		40
	Dewsbury	Ben Riley		40
	Halifax	A. W. Longbottom		65
	Hull East	G. Muff		40
	Leeds Central	Hon. R. W. Denman		40
	Sheffield Hallam	B. Rawson		40
	Buckrose	H. Vickers	59/7/0	
	Holderness	J. W. Hewitt		25
	Scarborough	H. D. Rowntree		50
	Pensitone	Rennie Smith		75
	Pudsey & Otley	A. W. Brown		60
	Ripon	A. Godfrey		50
	Skipton	J. P. Davies		50
Spenn Valley	H. H. Elvin		75	
Wales	Anglesey	Wm. Edwards		40
	Brecon & Radnor	Peter Freeman		75
	Carnarvon Boroughs	T. ap Rhys		40
Carmarthen	Llanelly	J. H. Williams		50
Denbigh	Wrexham	Prof. R. Richards		75
	Flint	C. O. Jones		75
Glam.	Cardiff Central	E. N. Bennett		40
	Cardiff East	J. E. Edmunds		40
	Cardiff South	A. Henderson		40
	Llandaff & Barry	C. Ellis Lloyd		75
Merioneth		J. Jones Roberts		60
Monmouth		Luke Bateman		75
Montgomery		J. Evans		50
Pembroke		W. J. Jenkins		75
Welsh University		Rev. D. Richards		5
Scotland	Aberdeen Central	Fraser Macintosh		50
	Aberdeen Eastern	Rev. J. E. Hamilton		40
Fife	Eastern	W. Ross Garson		65
Lanark	Glasgow Pollok	W. Muter		40
	Glasgow Kelvingrove	Coun. J. Winning		5
Midlothian	Edinburgh North	Miss E. Stewart		30
Kinross & Western Perth		Rev. W. D. Stewart		60 £ 24/6/8
Roxburgh & Selkirk		R. Gibson		60

Source: NEC minutes

Appendix 2

Labour newspapers in 1935

Daily (1)

Daily Herald

Weekly (12)

Barrow Guardian

Barry Herald

Bristol Labour Weekly

Barnsley and District Labour Standard

Glasgow Eastern Standard

(Heanor and Ripley) Gazette

South Wales Voice

New Age

New Statesman and Nation

Labour's Northern Voice

Reynolds Illustrated News

Town Crier: Birmingham's Labour Weekly

Monthly (25)

(Bolton) Citizen

Balham and Tooting Citizen

Carshalton Labour Herald

Central Southwark Citizen

Country Standard

East Kenton Log

East Lewisham Citizen

East Woolwich Citizen

Edinburgh Clarion

Gateshead Herald

Huddersfield Citizen

Hull Sentinel

London News

News and Notions

North Camberwell Citizen

North Lambeth Citizen

North Southwark Citizen

Park and Heeley Gazette

Rhondda Clarion

Spenn Valley Pioneer

Voice

Wakefield Forward

Welsh Labour Outlook

Wimbledon Citizen

Workers' Monthly

Quarterly (1)

Commonwealth

Irregular (11)

Bermondsey Labour Magazine

Bradford Pioneer

Challenge

Comradeship and Wheatsheaf

East Ham North Citizen

Greenwich Citizen
King's Norton Labour News
Labour Torch
North East Kent Chronicle
University Forward
West Woolwich Citizen

Source: Compiled from Royden Harrison et al., *The Warwick Guide to British Labour Periodicals 1790-1970. A Check List* (Hassocks, Harvester Press, 1977)

Appendix 3

Electoral contributions to DNA's newspapers (kroner)

<u>Newspaper</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>1933</u>	<u>1936</u>
1. mai	Stavanger	Rogaland	8,500	8,500
Akershus Arbeiderblad	Lillestrøm	Akershus	1,000	1,000
Arbeider-Avisen	Trondheim	Sør Trøndelag	6,500	8,500
Arbeidets Rett	Røros	Sør Trøndelag	1,000	2,000
Bergens Arbeiderblad	Bergen	Hordaland	9,000	5,000
Dagningen	Lilleham.	Oppland	2,000	3,000
Dunderlandsdølen	Mo	Nordland	300	300
Eidsvoll Arbeiderblad	Eidsvoll	Akershus	500	500
Finnmarken	Vardø	Finnmark	1,000	1,000
Folkets Frihet	Kirkenes	Finnmark	1,000	500
Folkets Røst	Askim	Østfold	500	500
Folkeviljen	Harstad	Troms	2,500	2,500
Follo	Ski	Akershus	1,200	1,500
Fremover	Narvik	Nordland	2,000	3,000
Fremtiden	Drammen	Buskerud	—	3,000
Halden Arbeiderblad	Halden	Østfold	4,000	2,500
Hamar Arbeiderblad	Hamar	Oppland	4,000	5,000
Haugarland Arbeiderbl.	Haugesund	Rogaland	2,000	4,000
Helgeland Arbeiderblad	Mosjøen	Nordland	500	500
Horten Arbeiderblad	Horten	Vestfold	500	1,000
Kongsving. Arbeiderbl.	Kongsving.	Hedmark	3,000	4,000
Moss og Om. Arb.	Moss	Østfold	1,500	1,500
Namdal Arbeiderblad	Namsos	Nord Trøndelag	2,500	2,500
Nordlands Fremtid	Bodø	Nordland	3,000	3,000
Nordlys	Tromsø	Troms	3,000	4,000
Nybrott	Larvik	Vestfold	1,500	2,000
Oppland Arbeiderblad	Gjøvik	Oppland	6,000	4,000
Rjukan Arbeiderblad	Rjukan	Telemark	1,500	2,000
Romerikes Blad	Jessheim	Akershus	300	300
Sarpsborg Arbeiderbl.	Sarpsborg	Østfold	1,000	1,000
Smålenenes Social-Dem.	Fredrikstad	Østfold	1,000	1,000
Sørlandet	Kristians.	Vest-Agder	3,500	2,500
Sunnmøre Arbeideravis	Ålesund	Møre og Romsdal	1,500	6,000
Telemark Arbeiderblad	Skien	Telemark	7,500	7,500
Tiden	Arendal	Aust-Agder	4,000	4,000
Tidens Krav	Kristans.	Møre og Romsdal	3,000	3,000
Vadsø Arbeiderblad	Vadsø	Finnmark	—	500
Vestfinnm. Arbeiderbl.	Hammerf.	Finnmark	2,500	1,000
Vestfold Arbeiderblad	Tønsberg	Vestfold	4,000	1,500
Vestfold Fremtid	Sandefjord	Vestfold	500	500

Source: AAB: Archive: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge, LO's saksarkiv 1936, sak nr. 280-482, Da 0167, folder marked Stortingsvalgkampen sak nr. 301 1936

Appendix 4

Topics mentioned in Labour candidate statements

1929

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Unemployment	100
<i>Stressed</i>	47
Cures for unemployment:	
(a) Public works (roads)	59
(b) Raise school leaving age	52
Generous maintenance of unemployed	69
Unemployment increased under Conservatives	28
Peace	97
<i>Stressed</i>	48
Disarmament	50
League of Nations	69
Labour's good record in international relations	70
Deterioration in international relations under Conservatives	56
Would call General Disarmament Conference	23
Peaceful settlement of disputes	51
Russia	50
Pensions	94
Education	65
Housing and slums	83
<i>Rent Restriction Act</i>	32
Health and Welfare Services	40
Agriculture	45
<i>Price stabilization</i>	34
<i>Security of tenure</i>	25
Nationalization	70
<i>Mines</i>	57
<i>Land</i>	29
<i>Bank of England</i>	25
Taxation	
<i>Labour would tax fairly</i>	64
<i>Conservative taxation favours rich</i>	62
<i>No taxes on food</i>	43
<i>No taxes on necessities</i>	30
<i>Graduated surtax</i>	31
<i>Chancellor's "raids"</i>	24
<i>Taxation of land values</i>	31
Safeguarding equals Protection	16
Temperance	18
Empire and Commonwealth	19
Socialism	8
Red "bogey"	27
Labour democratic and constitutional	27
Devolution	8
Alternative to Conservatives is Labour	46
Liberal disunity	27
Factory Act	20
Ratify Washington Convention	29
Profiteering	21
Local government	17
Women	55
<i>Labour record in fight for vote</i>	41

1931

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Free trade, anti-tariff	93
Public economy	
<i>Taxation</i>	48
<i>Unemployment benefit cut</i>	96
<i>Public servants' salary cut</i>	75
<i>Means test</i>	21
Socialism or anti-Socialism	34
Nationalization	15
<i>Bank of England</i>	76
<i>Coal</i>	50
<i>Iron and steel</i>	46
<i>Transport</i>	48
<i>Land</i>	40
Crisis	
<i>Most critical in history</i>	2
<i>Starvation if opponents win</i>	6
<i>Bankers' ramp</i>	62
<i>Election unnecessary or Conservative ramp</i>	66
<i>National Government "reactionary"</i>	42
Record of Second Labour Government	34
Personalities	
<i>MacDonald</i>	22
<i>Snowden</i>	8
<i>Baldwin</i>	25
<i>Simon</i>	1
<i>Samuel</i>	3
<i>Lloyd George</i>	8
<i>Henderson</i>	14
Ex-ministers actions in August	14
Employment or unemployment	71
General wage level or standard of living	67
Agriculture	56
Education	34
Housing	54
Local issues	8
House of Lords	14
Electoral reform	1
Trade Disputes Act 1927	4
League of Nations	40
Disarmament	25
World disarmament conference	43
War debt and reparations	61
War in Manchuria (started Sept.)	1
No mention of foreign affairs	14
India	15

1935

Democracy, freedom	14
National Government	53
1931 crisis	12
Socialism, anti-Socialism	54
House of Lords	20
Baldwin	12

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Rearmament	29
Fear of massive rearmament	85
Empire	7
Nearness of war	49
Disarmament	71
League of Nations	90
Italo-Abyssinian war	50
"Peace ballot"	20
Germany	7
No mention of foreign affairs	2
Prosperity, cost of living, standard of living recovery	20
Tariffs, exports, trade	49
Taxation	36
Tax on co-operative societies	41
Employment, unemployment	82
Means test, public assistance	84
UAB regulations	56
Distressed areas	60
Public works, "prosperity loan"	32
Agriculture	53
<i>Marketing</i>	8
<i>Land settlement</i>	5
Coal industry wages and conditions	30
Nationalization	
<i>Coal</i>	65
<i>Land</i>	66
<i>Bank of England</i>	69
Repeal of Trade Disputes and Trade Union Act 1927	41
Education	76
<i>School leaving age</i>	62
Health (e.g. maternal mortality)	60
Pensions	61
<i>At 60 years</i>	62
Housing	67
<i>Built "to let"</i>	51
<i>Rent Restriction Act (1933), rents</i>	16
<i>Slum clearance</i>	53

Sources: E. A. Rowe, *The British General Election of 1929*, B. Litt. thesis, Oxford University 1959
 Andrew Thorpe, *The British General Election of 1931* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991)
 C. T. Stannage, *Baldwin Thwarts the Opposition. The British General Election of 1935* (London, Croom Helm, 1980)

Appendix 5

A Note on the Sources

The sources for the thesis have varied a fair amount. Chapter 1 was about Labour's campaigning. It was based on the minutes of the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party, its annual reports, the *Daily Herald*, the *London News* and minutes of the Executive Committee of the London Labour Party. Additionally, annual reports of the Trades Union Congress and the papers of the London trades councils have been consulted, as well as the papers of MacDonald's "National Labour" in the National Archives. Although other committees than the NEC have been referenced, these are all available on microfiche under that heading. The main weakness in the sources is the lack of information about the national campaign. Despite great efforts, no suitable materials were unearthed. With some work it was possible to estimate the expenditure of Labour in each election, but the sources do not explain how electioneering was conducted across the country. The closest it is possible to get are the details of the leader's speaking engagements reported in the *Daily Herald*. Each constituency Labour party was responsible for its own campaigns, but the sheer number of branches made it impracticable to go through those papers where they are available. If the focus had solely been on Britain, a scientific sample of these would have been looked at. Certainly in 1929 at least, there was coordination of speakers across the country, but the details do not come out in the printed or archival sources.

Chapter 2 was about how DNA conducted its campaigning. The first point that ought to be made about DNA's archives is that only a fraction of the papers from before 1945 remain. The papers of DNA were confiscated by the German occupants after the invasion of Norway on 9 April 1940, and have never been returned. If they still exist, their whereabouts are unknown. Faced with this problem, it has been necessary to look at the mirror image of the papers in the collections of *Arbeidernes Faglige Landsorganisasjon*, the Trade Union Confederation. For each year AFL usually kept a folder with materials about DNA, but these were generally not extensive. There are therefore some gaps in everyone's knowledge; for instance, it cannot be stated precisely why DNA found itself in grave financial difficulties in the autumn of 1935. Chapter 2 was based on the AFL papers, DNA and AFL annual reports, reports of the conferences of DNA, *Arbeiderbladet* and

some of the papers of *Arbeidernes Ungdomsfylking*, the youth organization. In addition, Oslo provided a lot of the details, and the information was taken from the annual reports of Oslo DNA and *Arbeiderbladet*, which was a national daily but published in Oslo. A variety of other sources have been used marginally, such as the annual reports of *Arbeidernes Opplysningsforbund*, which is the Workers' Educational Association.

Chapter 3 was written on the basis of boxes relating to Labour's election campaigns in the University of Manchester Labour History Archive and Study Centre. These boxes contained the Speaker's Handbook for 1929 and Speaker's Notes for 1931 and 1935, election newspapers (both Labour and Co-operative), Labour candidate statements with some from their opponents, newspaper cuttings and centrally produced leaflets. In a few cases these were supplemented by pamphlets available elsewhere in the Archive. There need be no major complaints about the primary sources for this chapter. It would perhaps have been helpful to have a few more candidate statements for 1935, as there were fewer in the box than for 1929 and 1931. But it was felt that a good overall picture emerged from what was available.

Despite the extremely limited nature of the sources in DNA's archive, chapter 4 could be written without undue hindrance. This is because brochures and the occasional leaflet comprising the party's electoral materials have been preserved. Most of the brochures exist as printed publications, and others are to be found in bound volumes. It was even possible to watch DNA's election films from 1930 and 1936, and brief extracts from 1933's offering. Some of the films used at the time have therefore been incorporated into the chapter, though not all the moving pictures which DNA utilized as propaganda. Some were not their own, such as the German film "Poison Gas" featured in 1930. The party also produced an entire book in 1936 and electoral broadsheets for women in 1933 and 1936, all of which have been read and duly noted. It is probable that the available propaganda constitutes very nearly everything that was distributed in these elections, at least on the national level.

Chapter 5 contained a summary of the four preceding chapters drawing on all the sources mentioned above and the printed records of both parties such as the annual reports and, for Britain, the *Labour Year Book*. The electoral expenses have been tabulated and compared in this chapter, repeating the figures from chapters 1 and 2. They were calculated

through the use of archival materials, printed sources and secondary literature. One problem with the entire comparison is that the *Labour Year Book* was not published between 1933 and 1940. For 1935 it was necessary to calculate the number of newspapers from another source, and the criteria used may not have matched Labour's own. It is a real drawback that Labour did not publish membership details about its League of Youth beyond the number of branches in existence. The two membership figures given are estimates. It is mentioned in the chapter that the League of Youth was never a priority for Labour, and the lack of information about it as well as its relative impotence prove this point. True membership figures would nevertheless have been illuminating.

A lot of what preceded, especially in chapters 3 and 4 about electoral appeal, consisted of narrative of what Labour and DNA said. One should be sceptical about taking everything the parties claimed at face value. In 1931, for instance, the *Daily Herald* reported that things were going very well for Labour when in fact the party was on the threshold of its worst-ever defeat. The *Daily Herald* and its Norwegian equivalent *Arbeiderbladet* were much used sources, but it is assumed that their factual reporting is correct. Their interpretations were designed to rally Socialist sympathizers.



Labour's
Bid For Power
1928
£100,000
Fighting Fund.

I 25374

RECEIVED

1d.

for

LABOUR'S
BID FOR
POWER
FUND.

**A LABOUR
GOVERNMENT
NEXT TIME!**

BUY A COUPON EACH WEEK, AND
HELP TO SWELL LABOUR'S £100,000
FIGHTING FUND.



Labour's
Bid For Power
1928
£100,000
Fighting Fund.

I 25376

RECEIVED

1d.

for

LABOUR'S
BID FOR
POWER
FUND.

**A LABOUR
GOVERNMENT
NEXT TIME!**

BUY A COUPON EACH WEEK, AND
HELP TO SWELL LABOUR'S £100,000
FIGHTING FUND.

Illustration 1. Coupon for the Bid for Power Fund of 1929.



Illustration 2. 1929 Labour poster.



LABOUR STANDS FOR ALL WHO WORK

Illustration 3. "Workers by hand and by brain".



Illustration 4. The class dimension of the 1931 election.



Illustration 5. "All the People in Work" (1933).

80.000
ARBEIDSLØSE KREVER



FLERTALLET TIL
ARBEIDERPARTIET

Illustration 6. 80, 000 unemployed demand a Labour majority.



Illustration 7. Johan Nygaardsvold (1936).

Geography

Geography Primary Source

University of Toronto Library Digital Collections



Illustration 8. End of campaign rally, Young's Square 1936.

Bibliography

Unpublished Primary Sources

University of Manchester Labour History Archive and Study Centre

Labour Party Archive LP/ELEC/1929/1
Labour Party Archive LP/ELEC/1931/1
Labour Party Archive LP/ELEC/1931/2
Labour Party Archive LP/ELEC/1935/1
By-Election Reports 24 July 1929-6 Sept 1937. Elections Sub-Cttee Minutes 3 May 1934-1 Dec 1944 Box I
Labour and the New Social Order. A Report on Reconstruction in 329.12 box
Philip Snowden, If Labour Rules in 329.12 box
Labour and the Nation in 329.12 box
For Socialism and Peace. The Labour Party's Programme of Action in 329.12 box
Victory for Socialism in 329.12 box
Sir Stafford Cripps, Are You a Worker? Where the Middle-Class Stands in 329. 13 box
Lawrence Benjamin, The Position of the Middle-Class Worker in the Transition to Socialism in 329.13 box

National Archives, Kew, Surrey

PRO 30/69/388 Political: General Election 1931 Oct.
PRO 30/69/1320 General Election: Correspondence and Cuttings 1931 Sept-Oct
PRO 30/69/1321 General Election: Candidates. Correspondence 1931 Sept-Oct
PRO 30/69/1323 General Election: Various 1931 Sept-Oct
PRO 30/69/1324 General Election: Receipts and Letters 1931 Sept-Oct
PRO 30/69/1327 Shorthand notes of a meeting to discuss Labour policy for the coming election [?1931]
PRO 30/69/1364 General Election: Various 1935 Nov
PRO 30/69/1493 General Election: Press Cuttings 1929 June
PRO 30/69/1535 Donations: General Election 1931

Trades Union Congress Library Collections, London Metropolitan University

Local Labour Parties. London Trades Council Annual Reports. 1 JN 1129 LON

London Metropolitan Archive, Islington

Acc 2417/A/1 London Labour Party Executive Committee Minutes March 18th 1919- December 4th 1930

Acc 2417/A/2 London Labour Party Executive Committee Minutes January 18th
1931- December 7th 1939

Arbeiderbevegelsens Arkiv og Bibliotek, Oslo

Det norske Arbeiderparti Daa 1
Det norske Arbeiderparti Daa 2
Det norske Arbeiderparti Daa 3
Det norske Arbeiderparti Daa 4
Det norske Arbeiderparti Daa 5
Det norske Arbeiderparti Daa 6
Det norske Arbeiderparti Daa 7
329 (481) 15 N81br DNA brosjyrer 1930
q 329 (481) 15 N81 br DNA brosjyrer 1912-1936
Frem til seier. Video v. 324.5 (481) F
Det norske Arbeiderparti. Lover, program og retningslinjer (Oslo 1932) B 329 (481)
15 N81pr1930
Arbeidernes Oplysningsforbund. Beretning 1932-38 374.2 (481) Ar 15b
Det norske Arbeiderparti. Prinsipielle program. Arbeidsprogram. Stortingsprogram
B 329 (481) 15 N81pr1933
Den økonomiske krise og fascismen 329 (481) 15 N81br 1933
Hvem er Quisling? Sm 329 (481) 15 N81br [1933] ureg.
329 (481) 15 N81br DNA brosjyrer 1933
Brosjyerer utgit av Det norske Arbeiderparti Stortingsvalget 1933 329 (481)15
N81br 1933
Bente Bogen og Tron Øgrim. De vil ta jentene våre. Video
Det norske Arbeiderpartis kriseplan. Forslag for Stortinget fra Det norske
Arbeiderparti 329 (481) 15 N81br 1934
Ut av uføret. Plan og orden i produksjonen. Utnytt landets rikdommer. Slutt op om
Det norske Arbeiderparti 329 (481) N81br 1935
Brosjyrer utgitt av Det norske Arbeiderparti Stortingsvalget 1936
Det norske Arbeiderparti. Prinsipielle program. Arbeidsprogram. Stortingsprogram
329 (481)15 N81pr1936
Kvinnenes valgavis 1936
Arbeiderungdommen 24. oktober 1936
Norge for folket. Video v. 324.5 (481) N
Vi bygger landet. Video v. 324.5 (481) V
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Ab 0002
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Ac 0008
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Ac 0009
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Ac 0010
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0110
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0111
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0113
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0114
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0116

Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0123
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0124
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0128
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0130
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0134
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0136
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0139
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0140
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0141
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0142
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0148
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0150
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0153
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0155
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0156
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0162
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0163
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0165
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0166
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0167
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0169
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Da 0170
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge Db 0008
Arbeidernes Ungdomsfylking Da 0002
Arbeidernes Ungdomsfylking Da 0003

Printed Primary Sources

Archives of the Labour Party. Harvester Press. Part 1: NEC Minutes since 1900 (on microfiche)

Arbeiderbladet 1930, 1933 and 1936

The Daily Herald 1929, 1931 and 1935

The London News 1929, 1931 and 1935

Published Primary Sources

Arbeidernes Faglige Landsorganisasjon — Beretning 1930. For sekretariatet ved Halvard Olsen og Alfred Madsen (Oslo, Arbeidernes Aktietrykkeri, 1932)

Arbeidernes Faglige Landsorganisasjon — Beretning 1933. For sekretariatet ved Halvard Olsen, Alfred Madsen og Elias Volan (Oslo, Arbeidernes Aktietrykkeri, 1934)

Arbeidernes Faglige Landsorganisasjon — Beretning 1936. For sekretariatet ved Olav Hindahl og Lars Evensen (Oslo, Arbeidernes Aktietrykkeri, 1937)

Berntsen (ed.), Harald — Johan Nygaardsvold. Dagbøker 1918-48 og utvalgte brev og papirer 1916-52 (Oslo, Aschehoug, 1998)

Bryn, Dag and Lange, Halvard Manthey 'Klasse eller folk' in Det 20. Århundrede 1930, pp. 67-75

Butler, David and Butler, Gareth — Twentieth-Century British Political Facts 1900-2000 (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2000)

Citrine (ed.), Walter — Report of Proceedings at the 60th Annual Trades Union Congress. Held at Swansea 3rd to 8th September 1928 (London, Co-operative Printing Society, n. d.)

Citrine (ed.), Walter — Report of Proceedings at the 61st Annual Trades Union Congress. Held at Belfast September 2nd to 6th 1929 (London, Co-operative Printing Society, n. d.)

Citrine (ed.), Walter — Report of Proceedings at the 62nd Annual Trades Union Congress. Held at Nottingham September 1st to 5th 1930 (London, Co-operative Printing Society, n. d.)

Citrine (ed.), Walter — Report of Proceedings at the 63rd Annual Trades Union Congress. Held at Bristol September 7th to 11th 1931 (London, Co-operative Printing Society, n. d.)

Citrine (ed.), Walter — Report of Proceedings at the 64th Annual Trades Union Congress. Held at Newcastle September 5th to 9th 1932 (London, Co-operative Printing Society, n. d.)

Citrine (ed.), Walter — Report of Proceedings at the 65th Annual Trades Union Congress. Held at Brighton September 4th to 8th 1933 (London, Co-operative Printing Society, n. d.)

Citrine (ed.), Walter — Report of Proceedings at the 66th Annual Trades Union Congress. Held at Weymouth September 3rd to 7th 1934 (London, Co-operative Printing Society, n. d.)

Citrine (ed.), Walter — Report of Proceedings at the 67th Annual Trades Union Congress. Held at Margate September 2nd to 6th 1935 (London, Co-operative Printing Society, n. d.)

Citrine (ed.), Walter — Report of Proceedings at the 68th Annual Trades Union Congress. Held at Plymouth September 7th to 11th 1936 (London, Co-operative Printing Society, n. d.)

Craig (ed.), F. W. S. — British Electoral Facts 1885-1975 (London, Macmillan, 1976)

Craig (ed.), F. W. S. — British General Election Manifestos 1900-1974 (London, Macmillan, 1975)

Craig (ed.), F. W. S. — British General Election Manifestos 1918-1966 (Chichester, Political Reference Publications, 1970)

Det norske Arbeiderparti — Beretning 1930 (Oslo, DNA, 1931)

Det norske Arbeiderparti — Beretning 1933 (Oslo, DNA, 1934)

Det norske Arbeiderparti — Beretning 1936 (Oslo, DNA, 1937)

Det norske Arbeiderparti — Protokoll over forhandlingene på Det norske Arbeiderpartis 28. ordinære landsmøte i Oslo 14-16 mars 1930 (Oslo, DNA, 1930)

Det norske Arbeiderparti — Protokoll over forhandlingene på Det norske Arbeiderpartis 29. ordinære landsmøte i Oslo 26-28 mai 1933 (Oslo, DNA, 1934)

Det norske Arbeiderparti — Protokoll over forhandlingene på Det norske Arbeiderpartis 30. ordinære landsmøte i Oslo 22-24 mai 1936 (Oslo, DNA, 1937)

Det Statistiske Centralbyrå — Statistisk årbok for Norge. 57 årgang 1938 (Oslo, Aschehoug, 1938)

Hansen, Arvid — Arbeiderbevegelsens politiske kurs (Oslo, Internasjonalt Arbeiderforlag, 1936)

Hansen, Arvid — Hvor går Det norske Arbeiderparti? (Oslo, Internasjonalt Arbeiderforlag, 1933)

Harrison (ed.), Royden et al. — The Warwick Guide to British Labour Periodicals 1790-1970. A Check List (Hassocks, Harvester Press, 1977)

Labour Party — Reports of Annual Conferences. Thirtieth Report (London, Labour, 1930)

Labour Party — Reports of Annual Conferences. Thirty-fifth Report (London, Labour, 1935)

Labour Party — Reports of Annual Conferences. Thirty-first Report (London, Labour, 1931)

Labour Party — Reports of Annual Conferences. Thirty-fourth Report (London, Labour, 1934)

Labour Party — Reports of Annual Conferences. Thirty-second Report (London, Labour, 1932)

Labour Party — Reports of Annual Conferences. Thirty-sixth Report (London, Labour, 1936)

Labour Party — Reports of Annual Conferences. Thirty-third Report (London, Labour, 1933)

Labour Party — Reports of Annual Conferences. Twenty-eight Report (London, Labour, 1928)

Labour Party — Reports of Annual Conferences. Twenty-ninth Report (London, Labour, 1929)

Meyer (ed.), Håkon — Det norske Arbeiderparti. Samtlige landsmøtebeslutninger, resolusjoner, valg etc. 1912-1933 (Oslo, DNA, 1934)

Nordanger, K. M and Aakerman, Alfr. — Det norske Arbeiderparti og valget. Stortingspolitikken 1931-1933 (Oslo, DNA, 1933)

Oslo Arbeiderparti — Beretning og regnskap 1928 (Oslo, DNA, 1929)

Oslo Arbeiderparti — Beretning og regnskap 1930 (Oslo, DNA, 1931)

Oslo Arbeiderparti — Beretning og regnskap 1931 (Oslo, DNA, 1932)

Oslo Arbeiderparti — Beretning og regnskap 1932 (Oslo, DNA, 1933)

Oslo Arbeiderparti — Beretning og regnskap 1933 (Oslo, DNA, 1933)

Oslo Arbeiderparti — Beretning og regnskap 1934 (Oslo, DNA, 1935)

Oslo Arbeiderparti — Beretning og regnskap 1935 (Oslo, DNA, 1936)

Oslo Arbeiderparti — Beretning og regnskap 1936 (Oslo, DNA, 1937)

The Labour Organiser. A monthly journal devoted to political organization, electioneering and business matters. Volume IX (January, 1929-December, 1929).

Edited by H. Drinkwater (Birmingham, National Union of Labour Organisers and Agents, n.d.)

The Labour Organiser. A monthly journal devoted to political organization, electioneering and business matters. Volume X (January, 1930-December, 1930). Edited by H. Drinkwater (Birmingham, National Union of Labour Organisers and Agents, n.d.)

The Labour Organiser. A monthly journal devoted to political organization, electioneering and business matters. Volume XI (January, 1931-December, 1931). Edited by H. Drinkwater (Birmingham, National Union of Labour Organisers and Agents, n.d.)

The Labour Organiser. A monthly journal devoted to political organization, electioneering and business matters. Volume XII (January, 1932-December, 1932). Edited by H. Drinkwater (Birmingham, National Union of Labour Organisers and Agents, n.d.)

The Labour Organiser. A monthly journal devoted to political organization, electioneering and business matters. Volume XIII (January, 1933-December, 1933). Edited by H. Drinkwater (Birmingham, National Union of Labour Organisers and Agents, n.d.)

The Labour Organiser. A monthly journal devoted to political organization, electioneering and business matters. Volume XIV (January, 1934-December, 1934). Edited by H. Drinkwater (Birmingham, National Union of Labour Organisers and Agents, n.d.)

The Labour Organiser. A monthly journal devoted to political organization, electioneering and business matters. Volume XV (January, 1935-December, 1935). Edited by H. Drinkwater (Birmingham, National Union of Labour Organisers and Agents, n.d.)

The Labour Organiser. A monthly journal devoted to political organization, electioneering and business matters. Volume XVI (January, 1936-December, 1936). Edited by H. Drinkwater (Birmingham, National Union of Labour Organisers and Agents, n.d.)

The Labour Year Book 1928 (London, Labour, n. d.)

The Labour Year Book 1930 (incorporating 1929 Year Book) (London, Labour, n. d.)

The Labour Year Book 1931 (London, Labour, n. d.)

The Labour Year Book 1932 (London, Labour, n. d.)

Vegheim, Olav — Fra kaos mot plan i Norge. Material samling 1936 (Oslo, DNA, 1936)

Secondary Sources

Aasland, Tertit 'Valgordningen 1906-1918' in *Historisk Tidsskrift* 44 (1965), pp. 267-297

Aasland, Tertit — Fra arbeiderorganisasjon til mellomparti. Det radikale folkepartis (arbeiderdemokratenes) forhold til Venstre og sosialistene (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1961)

Adelman, Paul — The Rise of the Labour Party 1880-1945 (London, Longman, 1972)

Antcliff, John 'Politics of the Airwaves: Party Political Broadcasts in the 1920s and 30s', *History Today* 34 (March 1984), pp. 4-10

Aubert, Vilhelm 'Sosiale klasser og lag' in Natalie Rogoff Ramsøy and Mariken Vaa — *Det norske samfunn. Bind I* (Oslo, Gyldendal, 1975)

Ball, Stuart Thorpe, Andrew and Worley, Matthew 'Elections, Leaflets and Whist Drives: Constituency Party Matters in Britain between the Wars' in Matthew Worley (ed.) — *Labour's Grass Roots. Essays on the Activities of Local Labour Parties and Members, 1918-45* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005)

Barker, Rodney 'Political Myth: Ramsay MacDonald and the Labour Party', *History* 61:201 (1976), pp. 46-56

Bartolini, Stefano — *The Political Mobilization of the European Left 1860-1980. The Class Cleavage* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000)

Bassett, R. — *Nineteen Thirty-One. Political Crisis* (London, Macmillan, 1958)

Berger, Stefan "'Organising Talent and Disciplined Steadiness": The German SPD as a Model for the British Labour Party in the 1920s?', *Contemporary European History* 5:2 (1996), pp. 171-190.

Berger, Stefan 'Comparative History' in Stefan Berger, Heiko Feldner and Kevin Passmore (eds.) — *Writing History. Theory & Practice* (London, Hodder Arnold, 2003)

Berger, Stefan 'Herbert Morrison's London Labour Party in the Interwar Years and the SPD: Problems of Transferring German Socialist Practices to Britain', *European Review of History* 12:2 (2005), pp. 291-306

Berger, Stefan 'Labour in Comparative Perspective' in Tanner, Duncan Thane, Pat and Tiratsoo, Nick (eds.) —Labour's First Century (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000)

Berger, Stefan 'The Formation of Party Milieux: Branch Life in the British Labour Party and the German Social Democratic Party in the Interwar Period' in Matthew Worley (ed.) — Labour's Grass Roots. Essays on the Activities of Local Labour Parties and Members, 1918-45 (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005)

Berger, Stefan — The British Labour Party and the German Social Democrats, 1900-1931 (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1994)

Berman, Sheri — The Social Democratic Moment. Ideas and Politics in the Making of Interwar Europe (Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1998)

Berntsen, Harald — I malstrømmen. Johan Nygaardsvold 1879-1952 (Oslo, Aschehoug, 1991)

Björgum, Jorunn — Martin Tranmæl og radikaliseringen av norsk arbeiderbevegelse 1906-1918 (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1998)

Bjørnhaug, Inger 'Arbeiderbevegelsen- en folkelig bevegelse?', Arbeiderhistorie 2004, pp. 164-181

Bjørnson, Øyvind — På klassekampens grunn (1900-1920). Arbeiderbevegelsens historie i Norge 2 (Oslo, Tiden, 1990)

Blom, Ida 'Introduction' in Helmut Gruber and Pamela Graves (eds.) — Women and Socialism. Europe between the Two World Wars (New York, Berghahn Books, 1998)

Booth, Alan 'How Long are Light Years in British Politics? The Labour Party's Economic Ideas in the 1930s' in Twentieth Century British History 7:1 (1996), pp. 1-26

Booth, Alan — The British Economy in the Twentieth Century (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2001)

Breuilly, John — Labour and Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century Europe. Essays in Comparative History (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1991)

Bull jr., Edvard — Arbeiderklassen i norsk historie (Oslo, Tiden, 1977)

Bull jr., Edvard — Klassekamp og fellesskap 1920-1945 (Oslo, Cappelen, 1979)

Bull sr., Edvard 'Arbeiderbevægelsens stilling i de tre nordiske land 1914-1920' in Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevægelsens historie 1/1976, pp. 3-28

Bulmer-Thomas, Ivor — The Growth of the British Party System. Volume II 1924-1964 (London, John Barker, 1965)

Close, D. H. 'The Realignment of the British Electorate in 1931' in History 67: 221 (1982), pp. 393-404

Cohen, Gideon 'The Independent Labour Party, Disaffiliation, Revolution and Standing Orders' in History Vol 86 No 282 (2001), pp. 200-221

Cole, G. D. H. — A History of the Labour Party from 1914 (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969)

Cook, Chris — The Age of Alignment. Electoral Politics in Britain 1922-1929 (London, Macmillan, 1975)

Dahl, Hans Fredrik 'Arbeiderbevegelsen og offentligheten', Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevægelsens historie 1979/1, pp. 3-9

Dahl, Hans Fredrik 'Fra nød til sejr' in Knut Kjeldstadli and Vidar Keul (eds.) — DNA- fra folkebevegelse til statsstøtte (Oslo, Pax, 1973)

Dahl, Hans Fredrik — Fra klassekamp til nasjonal samling. Arbeiderpartiet og det nasjonale spørsmål i 30-årene (Oslo, Pax, 1969)

Dahl, Hans Fredrik — Norge mellom krigene. Det norske samfunn i krise og konflikt 1918-1940 (Oslo, Pax, 1971)

Danielsen, Rolf — Borgerlig oppdemningspolitikk 1918-1940. Høyres historie 2 (Oslo, Cappelen, 1984)

Davies, Sam — Liverpool Labour. Social and Political Influences on the Development of the Labour Party in Liverpool, 1900-1939 (Keele, Keele University Press, 1996)

Eatwell, Roger and Wright, Anthony 'Labour and the Lessons of 1931', History 63: 207 (1978), pp. 38-53

Edwards, A. D. — 1931: The Fall of the Labour Government (London, Edward Arnold, 1975)

Eley, Geoff — Forging Democracy. The History of the Left in Europe, 1850-2000 (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002)

- Elvander, Nils — Skandinavisk arbetarrörelse (Stockholm, Liber Förlag, 1980)
- Espagne, Michel — Les Transferts culturels franco-allemands (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1999)
- Esping-Andersen, Gøsta — Politics against Markets. The Social Democratic Road to Power (Princeton NJ, Princeton University Press, 1985)
- Fair, John D. 'The Conservative Basis for the Formation of the National Government of 1931' in *Journal of British Studies* 19: 2 (1980), pp. 142-164
- Fostervoll, Kaare — Norges sosialdemokratiske arbeidarparti 1921-1927 (Oslo, Det norske samlaget, 1969)
- Fredrickson, George M. 'From Exceptionalism to Variability: Recent Developments in Cross-national Comparative History', *Journal of American History* 82:2 (1995), pp. 587-604
- Fry, Geoffrey K. 'A Reconsideration of the British General Election of 1935 and the Electoral Revolution of 1945' in *History* 76 (1991), pp. 43-55
- Furre, Berge — Norsk historie 1905-1940 (Oslo, Det norske Samlaget, 1970)
- Galenson, Walter — Labor in Norway (Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1949)
- Geary, Dick 'Introduction' in Dick Geary (ed.) — Labour and Socialist Movements in Europe before 1914 (Oxford, Berg, 1989)
- Geary, Dick — European Labour Politics from 1900 to the Depression (London, Macmillan, 1991)
- Gleditsch, Kristian — Skogsarbeidernes kamp (Oslo, Fram, 1932)
- Graves, Pamela — Labour Women. Women in British Working-Class Politics (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994)
- Greve, Tim — Det norske Storting gjennom 150 år. Bind III. Tidsrommet 1908-1964 (Oslo, Gyldendal, 1964)
- Grew, Raynomd 'The Case for Comparing Histories' in *American Historical Review* 85:4 (1980), pp. 763-778
- Groves, Ray — Sharpen the Sickle! The History of the Farm Workers' Union (London, Porcupine Press, 1949)

- Halvorsen, Terje — *Partiets salt. AUFs historie* (Oslo, Pax, 2003)
- Hancock, K. J. 'The Reduction of Unemployment as a Problem of Public Policy, 1920-29' in *Economic History Review* 15:2 (1962), pp. 328-343
- Hansen, Rolf W. 'Arbeiderbevegelsen og kringkastingen 1925-1940. Fra konflikt til samarbeid', *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens historie* 1979/1, pp. 119-153
- Hart, Michael 'The Realignment of 1931' in *Twentieth-Century British History* 3:2 (1992), pp. 196-198
- Haupt, Heinz-Gerhard and Kocka, Jürgen 'Comparative History: Methods, Aims, Problems' in Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor (eds.) — *Comparison and History* (New York, Routledge, 2004)
- Heidar, Knut 'The Norwegian Labour Party: Social Democracy in a Periphery of Europe' in William E. Paterson and Alastair H. Thomas (eds.) — *Social Democratic Parties in Western Europe* (London, Croom Helm, 1977)
- Heidar, Knut 'Towards Party Irrelevance? The Decline of both Conflict and Cohesion in the Norwegian Labour Party' in Donald S. Bell and Eric Shaw (eds.) — *Conflict and Cohesion in Western European Social Democratic Parties* (London, Pinter, 1994)
- Heidar, Knut Martin 'The Deradicalisation of Working Class Parties: A Study of Three Labour Branches in Norway', Ph. D. thesis, University of London, 1980
- Hilson, Mary — *Political Change and the Rise of Labour in Comparative Perspective. Britain and Sweden 1890-1920* (Lund, Nordic Academic Press, 2006)
- Hilton, Matthew — *Consumerism in Twentieth-Century Britain. The Search for a Historical Movement* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003)
- Hjertholm, Sverre — *Arbeiderbevegelsen i Vestfold. Trekk fra den politiske og faglige arbeiderbevegelse 1906-1956* (Drammen, Vestfold DNA, 1956)
- Hodge, Carl Cavanagh — *The Trammels of Tradition. Social Democracy in Britain, France, and Germany* (London, Greenwood Press, 1994)
- Hveding, Øistein 'Gjeldsforliket mellom Bondepartiet og Arbeiderpartiet i 1934' in *Historisk Tidsskrift* 58 (1979), pp. 326-357
- Høyer, Sverre 'Partiet i pressen— et omriss av arbeiderpressens utvikling i Norge' in *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens historie* 1/1979, pp. 11-35

International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences. Volume 4 (Amsterdam, Elsevier, 2001)

Jeffery, Tom 'The Suburban Nation. Politics and Class in Lewisham' in David Feldman and Gareth Stedman Jones (eds.) — *Metropolis-London Histories and Representations since 1800* (London, Routledge, 1989)

Jensen, Lill-Ann 'I hammerens tegn. Nye agitasjons- og propagandaformer i norsk arbeiderbevegelse på 1930-tallet', *Arbeiderhistorie* 2002, pp. 101-119

Jensen, Lill-Ann and Damslora, Svein — *Bildet som våpen. Norsk arbeiderbevegelses bruk av bildet i kamp og agitasjon* (Oslo, Tiden, 1984)

Johansen, Karl Egil 'Proletar eller småborgar? Fiskarane i politikk og samfunn' in *Historisk Tidsskrift* 81: 2 (2002), pp. 347-380

Jones, Stephen G. — *Workers at Play. A Social and Economic History of Leisure 1918-1939* (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986)

Kalberg, Stephen — *Max Weber's Comparative-Historical Sociology* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1994)

Keul, Vidar and Kjeldstadli, Knut 'DNA- fra folkelig bevegelse til herskerapparat' in Knut Kjeldstadli and Vidar Keul (eds.) — *DNA- fra folkebevegelse til statsstøtte* (Oslo, Pax, 1973)

Kinnear, Michael — *The British Voter. An Atlas and Survey since 1885* (London, Batsford Academic and Educational, 1981)

Kjeldstadli, Knut 'Arbeiderbevegelsen og andre folkelige bevegelser', *Arbeiderhistorie* 2000, pp. 9-29

Kjeldstadli, Knut "'Arbeider, bonde, våre hære..." Arbeiderpartiet og bøndene 1930-1939' in *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens historie* 2/1978

Kjeldstadli, Knut and Keul, Vidar (eds.) — *DNA- fra folkebevegelse til statsstøtte* (Oslo, Pax, 1973)

Kjeldstadli, Knut — *Et splittet samfunn 1905-1935. Aschehougs Norgeshistorie* 10 (Oslo, Aschehoug, 1994)

Knox, W. W. and Mackinlay, A. 'The Re-making of Scottish Labour in the 1930s', *Twentieth Century British History* 6:2 (1995), pp. 174-193

Kristvik, Bjørn and Rokkan, Stein 'Valgordningen' in *Politiske valg i Norge. En artikkelsamling* (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1966)

Lange, Even — Samling om felles mål 1935-1970. *Aschehougs Norgeshistorie* 11 (Oslo, Aschehoug, 1998)

Lange, Halvard — Fra sekt til parti. Det norske Arbeiderpartis organisasjonsmessige og politiske utvikling fra 1891 til 1902 (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1962)

Langfeldt, Knut — Moskva-tesene i norsk politikk (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1972)

Layton-Henry, Zig 'Labour's Lost Youth' in *Journal of Contemporary History* 11 (1976), pp. 275-308

Lorenz, Chris 'Comparative Historiography: Problems and Perspectives', *History and Theory* 38:1 (1999), pp. 25-39

Lorenz, Einhart — Arbeiderbevegelsens historie. En innføring. Norsk sosialisme i internasjonalt perspektiv. 1 del. 1789-1930 (Oslo, Pax, 1972)

Lorenz, Einhart — Arbeiderbevegelsens historie. En innføring. Norsk sosialisme i internasjonalt perspektiv. 2 del. 1930-1973 (Oslo, Pax, 1974)

Luebbert, Gregory M. — *Liberalism, Fascism or Social Democracy. Social Classes and the Political Origins of Regimes in Interwar Europe* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991)

Lundestad, Svein — Arbeiderbevegelsens politiske gjennombrudd i Nordland og Troms. En sammenligning mellom to ulike fylker med særlig vekt på vilkår for oppslutning om sosialistiske partier i perioden 1900-1940 (Bodø, Høgskolesenteret i Nordland, 1988)

Lyman, Richard W. 'The British Labour Party. Conflict between Socialist Ideals and Practical Policies between the Wars', *Journal of British Studies* 5:1 (1965), pp. 140-152

Lyman, Richard W. — *The First Labour Government 1924* (London, Chapman & Hall, 1957)

Macdonald, Catriona 'Following the Procession: Scottish Labour, 1918-45' in Matthew Worley (ed.) — *Labour's Grass Roots. Essays on the Activities of Local Labour Parties and Members, 1918-45* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005)

Mansfield, Nicholas — *English Farmworkers and Local Patriotism, 1900-1930* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2001)

Marquand, David — *Ramsay MacDonald* (London, Richard Cohen Books, 1997)

Maurseth, Per — Fra Moskvateser til Kristiania-forslag. Det norske Arbeiderparti og Komintern fra 1921 til februar 1923 (Oslo, Pax, 1972)

Maurseth, Per — Gjennom kriser til makt (1920-1935). Arbeiderbevegelsens historie i Norge 3 (Oslo, Tiden, 1987)

McKibbin, Ross — Classes and Cultures. England 1918-1951 (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000)

McKibbin, Ross — The Evolution of the Labour Party 1910-1924 (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1983)

McKibbin, Ross — The Ideologies of Class. Social Relations in Britain 1880-1950 (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991)

Meyer, Håkon 'Det norske Arbeiderparti 1914-1923' in Halvdan Koht (ed.) — Det norske Arbeiderpartis historie 1887-1937 (Oslo, DNA, 1939)

Meyer, Håkon — Det norske Arbeiderparti 1918-1924 (Kristiania, DNA, 1924)

Middlemas, Keith — Politics in Industrial Society. The Experience of the British System since 1911 (London, André Deutsch, 1980)

Miller, William — Electoral Dynamics in Britain since 1918 (London, Macmillan, 1977)

Morgan, Austen — J. Ramsay MacDonald (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1987)

Morgan, William Thomas 'The British General Election of 1935', Reprinted from the South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol. XXXVII, No. 2, April 1938

Nordlinger, Eric A — The Working-Class Tories. Authority, Deference and Stable Democracy (London, Macgibbon & Kee, 1967)

Norrøne, Odd Sverre 'Arbeiderpartiet og Stortingsvalgkampen i 1936', Cand. Philol. thesis, University of Oslo, 1978

Olsen, Bjørn Gunnar — Tranmæl og hans menn (Oslo, Aschehoug, 1991)

Olstad, Finn 'Some Reflections on Thought and Action. The Case of the Norwegian Labour Movement' in Bo Stråth (ed.)— Language and the Construction of Class Identities. The Struggle for Discursive Power in Social Organisation: Scandinavia and Germany after 1800 (Gothenburg, Department of History Gothenburg University, 1990)

Olstad, Finn — Arbeiderklassens vekst og fall. Hovedlinjer i 100 års norsk historie (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1991)

Pimlott, Ben — Labour and the Left in the 1930s (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977)

Pryser, Tore — Klassen og nasjonen (1935-1946). Arbeiderbevegelsens historie i Norge 4 (Oslo, Tiden, 1988)

Przeworski, Adam and Teune, Henry — The Logic of Social Inquiry (New York, Wiley-Interscience, 1970)

Renshaw, Patrick 'Anti-Labour Politics in Britain 1918-1927' in *Journal of Contemporary History* 12 (1977), pp. 693-705

Reynolds, Jack and Laybourn, Keith — Labour Heartland. A History of the Labour Party in West Yorkshire during the Inter-War Years 1918-1939 (Bradford, Bradford University Press, 1987)

Rhodes, Rita — An Arsenal for Labour. The Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society and Politics 1896-1996 (Manchester, Holyoake Books, 1998)

Richard, Huw 'The Daily Herald' in *History Today* 31 (Dec 1981), pp. 13-16

Riddell, Neil — Labour in Crisis. The Second Labour Government 1929-1931 (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1999)

Robinson, James C. 'The British General Election of 1935', *Journal of Contemporary History* 9:1 (1974), pp. 149-164

Rokkan, Stein 'Geography, Religion and Social Class: Crosscutting Cleavages in Norwegian Politics' in Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan (eds.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives* (London, Collier-Macmillan, 1967)

Rokkan, Stein 'Electoral Mobilization, Party Competition and National Integration' in Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Wiener (eds.), *Political Parties and economic Development* (Princeton NJ, Princeton University Press, 1966)

Rokkan, Stein 'Norway: Numerical Democracy and Corporate Pluralism' in Robert A. Dahl (ed.), *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1966)

Rokkan, Stein with Campbell, Angus Torsvik, Per and Valen, Henry — *Citizens, Elections, Parties. Approaches to the Comparative Study of the Processes of Development* (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1970)

Roset, Ivar Arne — *Det norske Arbeiderparti og Hornsruds regjeringsdannelse i 1928* (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1962)

Rovde, Olav 'Bonde-, småbrukar- og arbeidarrørsla i konflikt og samarbeid', *Arbeiderhistorie* 2000, pp. 57-79

Rowe, E. A. 'The British General Election of 1929', B. Litt. thesis, Oxford University, 1959

Sassoon, Donald — *One Hundred Years of Socialism. The West European Left in the Twentieth Century* (London, I. B. Tauris, 1996)

Savage, Mike and Miles, Andrew — *The Remaking of the British Working Class, 1840-1940* (London, Routledge, 1994)

Scheflo, Inge 'Det norske Arbeiderpartis Stortingsgruppe' in *Det norske Storting gjennom 150 år. Bind IV. Spesialartikler* (Oslo, Gyldendal, 1964), pp. 250-274

Seim, Jardar 'Stat, parti og fagbevegelse i Norge 1920-1940' in Jens Christensen (ed.) = *Nordisk arbejderbevægelse i mellemkrigstiden. Stat, parti og fagbevægelse. Rapport fra nordisk konferanse i arbejderbevægelsens historie på Roskilde Højskole 19-21 april 1979* (Århus, Selskabet til forskning i arbejderbevægelsens historie. 1980)

Seim, Jardar — *Hvordan Hovedavtalen av 1935 ble til. Staten, organisasjonene og arbeidsfreden 1930-35* (Oslo, Tiden, 1972)

Self, Robert — *The Evolution of the British Party System 1885-1940* (London, Longman, 2000)

Sewell, William H. 'Marc Bloch and the Logic of Comparative History', *History and Theory* 6:2 (1967), pp. 208-218

Skidelsky, Robert — *Politicians and the Slump. The Labour Government of 1929-1931* (London, Macmillan, 1967)

Skocpol, Theda and Somers, Margaret 'The Uses of Comparative History in Macrocausal Inquiry', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22:2 (1980), pp. 174-197

Smart, Nick 'Constituency Politics and the 1931 Election', *Southern History* 16 (1994), pp. 122-151

Stannage, Tom — Baldwin Thwarts the Opposition. The British General Election of 1945 (London, Croom Helm, 1980)

Stedman Jones, Gareth — Languages of Class. Studies in English Working-Class History 1832-1982 (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983)

Swift, John — Labour in Crisis. Clement Attlee and the Labour Party in Opposition, 1931-40 (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2001)

Tanner, Duncan 'Class Voting and Radical Politics: The Liberal and Labour Parties, 1910-1931' in Lawrence, Jon and Taylor, Miles — Party, State and Society. Electoral Behaviour in Britain since 1820 (Aldershot, Scolar Press, 1997)

Tanner, Duncan 'The Labour Party and Electoral Politics in the Coalfields' in Alan Campbell, Nina Fishman and David Howell (eds.) — Miners, Unions and Politics (Aldershot, Scholar Press, 1996)

Tanner, Duncan 'The Pattern of Labour Politics, 1918-1939' in Duncan Tanner, Chris Williams and Deian Hopkin (eds.) — The Labour Party in Wales, 1900-2000 (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2000)

Tanner, Duncan — Political Change and the Labour Party 1900-1918 (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990)

Thorpe, Andrew "'One of the Most Backward Areas of the Country.'" The Labour Party's Grass Roots in South West England, 1918-45' in Matthew Worley (ed.) — Labour' Grass Roots. Essays on the Activities of Local Labour Parties and Members, 1918-45 (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005)

Thorpe, Andrew 'Arthur Henderson and the British Political Crisis of 1931' in The Historical Journal 31:1 (1988), pp. 117-139

Thorpe, Andrew 'J. H. Thomas and the Rise of Labour in Derby, 1880-1945', Midland History 15 (1990), pp. 111-128

Thorpe, Andrew — A History of the British Labour Party (London, Macmillan, 1997)

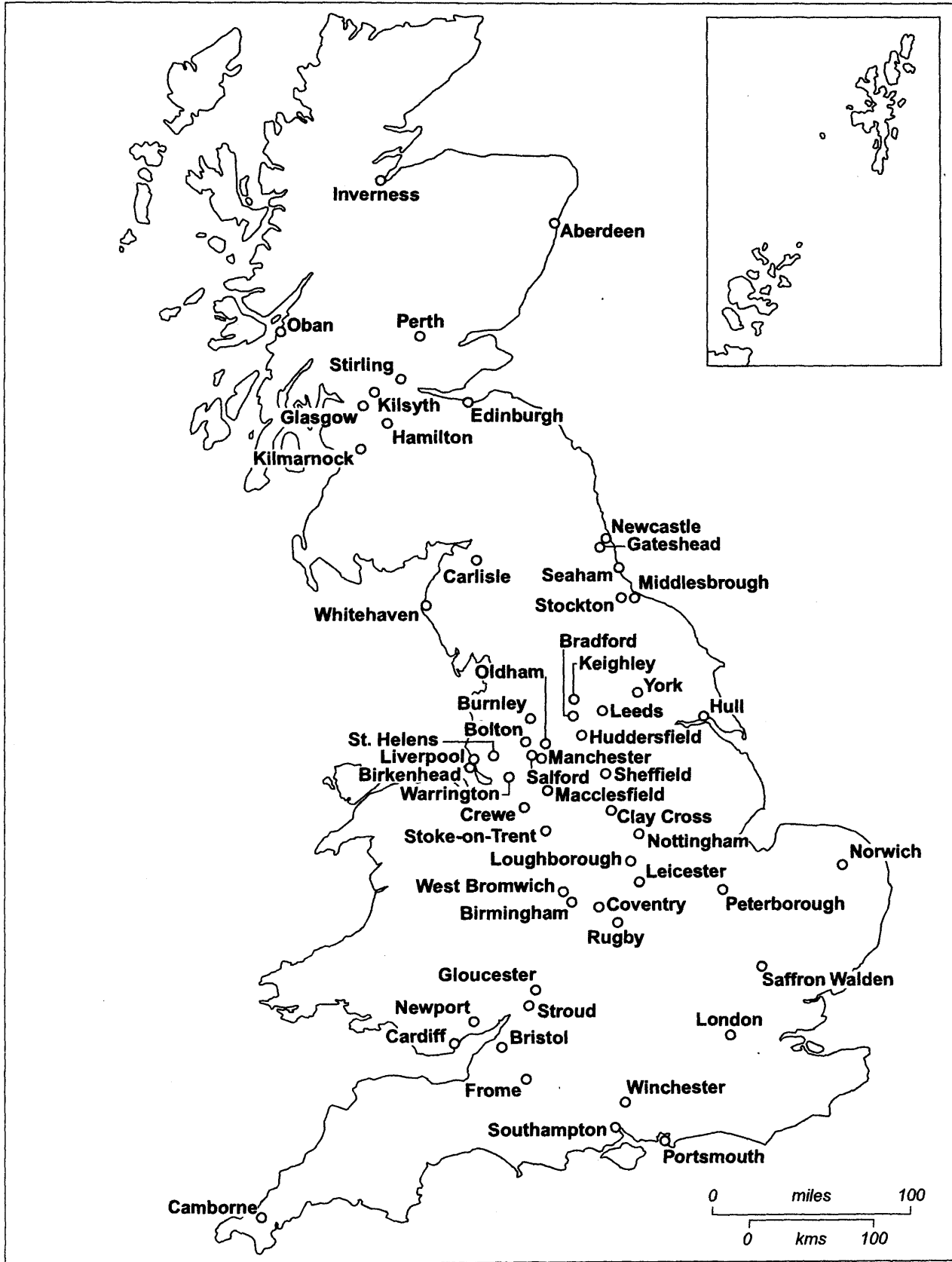
Thorpe, Andrew — The British General Election of 1931 (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991)

Tilly, Charles — Big Structures Large Processes Huge Comparisons (New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 1984)

Titlestad, Torgrim — Stavanger. Norges røde by (Stavanger, Varmen, 1989)

- Tjelmeland, Hallvard 'Avradikaliseringa av Det norske Arbeiderparti i mellomkrigstida. Ei historiografisk drøfting', Cand. Philol. thesis, University of Tromsø, 1982
- Torgersen, Ulf 'De politiske institusjonene' in Ramsøy and Vaa (eds.), *Det norske samfunn 2* (Oslo, Gyldendal, 1975)
- Van Den Braembussche, A. A. 'Historical Explanation and Comparative Method: Towards a Theory of the History of Society', *History and Theory* 28:1 (1999), pp. 1-24
- Wald, Kenneth D. 'Advance by Retreat? The Formation of British Labour's Electoral Strategy' in *Journal of British Studies* 27 (July 1988), pp. 283-314
- Ward, Stephen R. — James Ramsay MacDonald. *Low Born among the High Brows* (New York, Peter Long, 1990)
- Watts, Duncan — Ramsay MacDonald. *A Labour Tragedy?* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1998)
- Weber, Max — *Economy and Society* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1978)
- Williams, Chris — *Democratic Rhondda. Politics and Society, 1885-1951* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1996)
- Worley, Matthew 'Building the Party: Labour Party Activism in Five British Counties between the Wars', *Labour History Review* 70:1 (2005), pp. 73-95
- Worley, Matthew — *Labour Inside the Gate. A History of the British Labour Party between the Wars* (London, I B Tauris, 2005)
- Wring, Dominic 'Selling Socialism: Marketing the Early Labour Party', *History Today* 55: 5 (2005), pp. 41-43
- Wring, Dominic — *The Politics of Marketing the Labour Party* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2005)
- Zachariassen, Aksel — *Fra Marcus Thrane til Martin Tranmæl. Det norske Arbeiderparti fram til 1975* (Oslo, Tiden, 1977)
- Øidne, Gabriel 'Sosial og politisk struktur i Oslo. Del I: 1906-37' in *Tidsskrift for Samfunnsforskning* 1970, volume II, pp. 125-158

Øidne, Gabriel 'Litt om motsetninga mellom Austlandet og Vestlandet' in Politiske valg i Norge. En artikkelsamling (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1966)





UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

SENATE HOUSE, MALET STREET, LONDON, WC1E 7HU



REPRODUCTION OF THESES

A thesis which is accepted by the University for the award of a Research Degree is placed in the Library of the College and in the University of London Library. The copyright of the thesis is retained by the author.

As you are about to submit a thesis for a Research Degree, you are required to sign the declaration below. This declaration is separate from any which may be made under arrangements with the College at which you have *pursued* your course (for internal candidates only). The declaration will be destroyed if your thesis is not approved by the examiners, being either rejected or referred for revision.

Academic Registrar

To be completed by the candidate

NAME IN FULL (Block Capitals) DAVID ALY REDVALDSEN

TITLE OF THESIS THE BRITISH AND NORWEGIAN LABOUR PARTIES IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO 1924-1936: ELECTORAL PROSPECTS

DEGREE FOR WHICH THESIS IS PRESENTED DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DATE OF AWARD OF DEGREE (To be completed by the University)

31 DEC 2007

DECLARATION

1. I authorise that the thesis presented by me in *[2006] for examination for the MPhil/PhD Degree of the University of London shall, if a degree is awarded, be deposited in the library of the appropriate College and in the University of London Library and that, subject to the conditions set out below, my thesis be made available for public reference, inter-library loan and copying.
2. I authorise the College or University authorities as appropriate to supply a copy of the abstract of my thesis for inclusion in any published list of theses offered for higher degrees in British universities or in any supplement thereto, or for consultation in any central file of abstracts of such theses.
3. I authorise the College and the University of London Libraries, or their designated agents, to make a microform or digital copy of my thesis for the purposes of inter-library loan and the supply of copies.
4. I understand that before my thesis is made available for public reference, inter-library loan and copying, the following statement will have been included at the beginning of my thesis: The copyright of this thesis rests with the author and no quotation from it or information derived from it may be published without the prior written consent of the author.
5. I authorise the College and/or the University of London to make a microform or digital copy of my thesis in due course as the archival copy for permanent retention in substitution for the original copy.
6. I warrant that this authorisation does not, to the best of my belief, infringe the rights of any third party.
7. I understand that in the event of my thesis being not approved by the examiners, this declaration would become void.

*Please state year.

DATE _____ SIGNATURE 4 MARCH 2006

Note: The University's Ordinances make provision for restriction of access to an MPhil/PhD thesis and/or the abstract but only in certain specified circumstances and for a maximum period of two years. If you wish to apply for such restriction, please enquire at your College about the conditions and procedures. External Students should enquire at the Research Degree Examinations Office, Room NBQ1 (North Block), Senate House.

THIS DECLARATION MUST BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED WITH THE MAIN EXAMINATION ENTRY FORM