'THE FOOLS HAVE STUMBLED ON THEIR BEST MAN BY ACCIDENT': AN ANALYSIS OF THE 1957 AND 1963 CONSERVATIVE PARTY LEADERSHIP SELECTIONS

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Abstract

This thesis assesses the outcomes of the 1957 and 1963 Conservative Party Leadership Selections of Harold Macmillan and Sir Alec Douglas-Home. It analyses the two selections using an original analytical framework, that demonstrates the importance of both individual and situational criteria in determining the outcomes of leadership selections. The individual criteria are the party status of the candidates, and their actions and conduct during the selections. The situational criteria are the situation and circumstances surrounding the selections, the formal and informal aspects of the selection procedure used, and the candidates fulfilment of acceptability, electability, and governability. Acceptability, (the need to retain or maintain party unity), electability, (the need to be electable), and governability, (the ability to govern), are the three core situational criteria on which the candidates are judged. This framework was developed to offer a full and inclusive explanation of the outcomes of the two leadership selections, because the existing analyses of leadership selections has a restrictive approach, and does not offer a conclusive and systematic analysis.

The thesis demonstrates that the outcomes of the 1957 and 1963 leadership selections have clear parallels and distinctions in their outcomes. Both selections produced a stop-gap leader in a time of crisis for the Conservative Party. However, the situations were clearly distinct, and this was influential in the outcome. The 1957 selection occurred following a crisis over foreign policy, while the 1963 selection occurred during a deep-seated period of domestic crisis and upheaval. In January 1957, the Conservatives had three years before a general election had to be held, while in October 1963, a general election was imminent within twelve months. The selection procedure was influential in both selections. The informal aspects of the procedure were more influential in 1957, while the procedure had become more formalised in 1963, and this prepared the way for the establishment of formal leadership elections in the Conservative Party in 1965. The choice of Macmillan and Home was made because of the circumstances in which the selections occurred, and because they fulfilled the three core criteria more conclusively than the other candidates. In both outcomes, acceptability was clearly the most important core criteria because the selections occurred at a time of severe disunity in the party, and this deemed party unity as the crucial task of the new leader. In 1957, Macmillan was selected as he fulfilled the requirements of the situation better than R.A. Butler, the other candidate. In 1963, Home became leader because of the weaknesses apparent in the other candidates, and was the compromise candidate to retain party unity.

This thesis concludes that the wider individual and situational criteria set the terms of reference on which the core situational criteria of acceptability, electability, and governability are judged. The most important wider criteria were the candidates' actions during the selection, the selection procedure, and the situation that the selection occurred in. This demonstrates the utility of the analytical framework developed in the study.

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Introduction

The Area For Investigation

This thesis analyses the outcomes of two Conservative Party leadership selections. These are the selections of Harold Macmillan to replace Sir Anthony Eden in January 1957, and of Sir Alec Douglas-Home to replace Macmillan in October 1963. These selections are two of the most controversial in the history of leadership selection in Britain, because of the manner in which Macmillan and Home were selected, and the outcomes they produced. Both selections were made using the 'magic circle' system of selection. This was the method by which the Monarchy and the party hierarchy conducted informal consultations to determine the best candidate, rather than using a formal election procedure. Both selections occurred at a time when there was a call for greater accountability and openness in political parties, and the selection of Home in October 1963 led to the downfall of the 'magic circle' procedure. In 1965, the Conservative Party introduced formal leadership elections, using a secret ballot of the party's MPs. The selection of Macmillan also contributed to that process, but the selection of Home was the catalyst for the change.

Leadership selection is an understudied and misunderstood area of political science, and the two selections chosen for analysis are typical of the misinterpretation and weaknesses in existing work on leadership selection in Britain. Many of the publications on the two selections are restrictive in their analysis, and do not fully explain the outcomes. This is because of the dominant emphasis on the issue of party unity, at the exclusion of any investigation of the other determining factors that influenced the outcomes. This has led to the need for the development of a coherent analytical methodology by which to analyse leadership contests, because of the lack of

a viable approach in existing analyses. The analytical framework developed and applied in this study offers a new, inclusive, and systematic approach to the analysis of the outcomes of leadership selections, by assessing the importance of all individual and situational criteria that may influence the outcome of a selection. The individual criteria are the party status of the candidates, and the impact of their actions and conduct during the selection process. The situational criteria are the situation and circumstances surrounding the selection, the selection procedure used, and the candidates' fulfilment of the three core criteria on which they are judged. These are acceptability (the need for party unity), electability (the need to win elections), and governability (the ability to govern). This method of analysis will, therefore, offer a full explanation of the outcomes of the two selections.

The Research for the Study

The research for the study had three main components, each with a distinctive objective. The first consisted of an in-depth analysis of the secondary source material on the history of the Conservative Party's methods of leadership selection, the two selections of January 1957 and October 1963, and works on the careers and lives of the candidates in the selections. These were R.A. Butler, Harold Macmillan, Lord Home, Lord Hailsham, and Reginald Maudling. This provided the background information for the investigation. The second was a study of the existing literature on political leadership, leadership politics and leadership selection. This was utilised in the development of the analytical framework applied in the investigation. The final area of research consisted of archival material to gain primary evidence to develop the study. The following collections of archival material were consulted: The Conservative Party

Archive, the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford; The Diaries of Harold Macmillan, the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford; The Papers of R.A. Butler, Trinity College, University of Cambridge; The Public Record Office, Kew; and The Papers of the First Earl of Halifax, the Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, University of York. This level of research has developed the study into one that encompasses research and ideas in British party politics, political science, political psychology, and contemporary history.

The Method of Analysis

The method of analysis of the outcomes of the two selections has three stages. The first is the presentation of the analytical framework to be used to analyse the selections. This is assessed in chapter one, and outlines the individual and situational criteria that will be analysed, to assess their influence on the outcome of the selections. All of the component factors of each criteria are demonstrated here. The second stage is the application of the analytical framework to the two selections. This is assessed in chapters two to seven. Chapter two analyses the Conservative Party's history of leadership selection from 1902, to the selection of Home in October 1963. This sets the context for the study, and demonstrates the different situational parallels and distinctions between the selections over the period. This, therefore, acts as a contextual introduction to the analysis of the two selections. The third chapter assesses the careers, party status and personalities of the candidates, and therefore, analyses the first individual criteria.

Chapters four and five apply the analytical framework to the selection of Macmillan. Chapter four analyses the candidates' actions during the Suez Crisis, which

formed the selection process, because the demise of Eden was widely expected. Chapter five applies the Situational Interpretation to the selection. This chapter analyses the influence of the situational criteria of the situation, the selection procedure, and the candidates' fulfilment of acceptability, electability, and governability. Chapters six and seven apply the analytical framework to the selection of Home. Chapter six assesses the importance of the candidates' actions during the selection procedure, and chapter seven applies the Situational Interpretation to the selection.

The final stage is the assessment of the outcomes. This forms the conclusion to the study, and brings together the results of the investigation into the two selections. The conclusion will demonstrate a full explanation of the outcomes of both selections, and assess the different influence of the individual and situational criteria in determining the outcomes. The study will finish with a discussion of the parallels and distinctions between the two outcomes, and will assess what they demonstrate about how the Conservative Party selects it's leaders in different situations and circumstances.

Chapter One

The Analytical Framework

This chapter has two sections. The first assesses the Interactionist Interpretation of political leadership and leadership selection, and the influence this has had on the development of the analytical framework. The second section discusses the analytical framework. This is outlined in abstract form, and is then applied to party leadership selections in the British Conservative and Labour parties between 1957 and 1997. The two main components of the analytical framework will be discussed. These are the Individual Interpretation, which assesses the importance of the candidates' party status and their actions, and the Situational Interpretation, which assesses the influences on the selection. The situational factors are the circumstances that the selection occurred in, the selection procedure used, and the importance of each of the three core criteria that must be met in leadership selections: Acceptability, Electability, and Governability. The section will finish with an analysis of party leadership selection in the British Conservative and Labour Parties between 1957 and 1997. Five specific selections from that period are analysed using the framework to demonstrate its application.

The Interactionist Interpretation of Political Leadership

The Development of the Interactionist Interpretation

The Interactionist Interpretation of political leadership has resulted from the synthesis of the 'Great Man' and the Determinist/Situational schools of political leadership.[1] Recent analysis has stressed the importance of personality's interaction

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[1] The term 'Interactionist Interpretation' is derived from Elgie's use of the 'interactionist approach' in R. Elgie, Political Leadership In Liberal Democracies, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995). The term I

with the environment in understanding political action and behaviour.[2] The Interactionist Interpretation developed from the realisation that 'Great Man' theories, and Situational Interpretations were insufficient to account for political leadership and the emergence of political leaders. It developed from the assumption that political leaders do matter, and that individuals do make a difference within the political environment. However, the Interactionist Interpretation does not assume that individuals play the dominant role in the leadership environment, but takes as its central assumption that 'all leaders are constrained in the extent to which they are able to act freely'.[3]

The 'Great Man' School of Political Leadership

The 'Great Man' school of political leadership has a long tradition, dating back to the nineteenth century, and stresses the importance of great figures who emerged at certain times to have a major impact on the course of history. Thomas Carlyle was a theorist of the 'Great Man' school, and he stressed the importance of these men. He made four assertions. The first was that some people were born great, and greatness was an innate God-given quality. The second, was that such people were objectively great, and it was not just that everyone thought they were great. The third, was that their greatness enabled them to change the course of history. The final assertion, was that they changed the course of history for the good, and were moral people.[4] Carlyle wrote in 1840

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have used is phrased as the 'Interactionist Interpretation' as it fits more clearly my framework of analysis.

[2] A.C. Elms, Personality in Politics, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), p.iv; and F.I. Greenstein, Personality and Politics: Problems of Evidence, Inference, and Conceptualization, (Chicago: Markham Publishing, 1969), pp.28-29

[3] Elgie, Political Leadership in Liberal Democracies, p.5

[4] Elgie, Political Leadership in Liberal Democracies, p.6

Universal history, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at the bottom the history of the Great Men who have worked here. They were the leaders of men, these great ones...all things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result, the practical realisation and embodiment, of thoughts that dwelt in the Great Men sent into the world: the soul of the whole world's history, it may be justly considered, were the history of these[5]

The 'Great Man' school emphasised the impact of outstanding individual figures on the course of history, and believed that these figures were more important than the environment in which they operated. Romantic philosophers like Frederich Nietzsche agreed with Carlyle's ideas, as they believed that a sudden decision by a great man could alter the course of history.[6] William James stated that developments in society were due to great men who initiated movement, and prevented others moving society in another direction.[7] This school believes eras of history are directly associated with 'Great Men'. For example, the Reformation is associated with Luther and Calvin, the Russian Revolution with Lenin and Stalin, and fascism with Hitler and Mussolini. Eighteenth-century rationalists believed that luck must be added to the personal qualities of great men if they were to determine the course of history.

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[5] T. Carlyle, Heroes and Hero Worship, (Boston: Adams, 1841) in Elgie, Political Leadership in Liberal Democracies, p.6

[6] B.M. Bass, Bass and Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research and Managerial Applications, (London: Collier Macmillan, 1990), p.37

[7] W. James, 'Great Men, Great Thoughts and their Environment', Atlantic Monthly, 46, 1880, pp.441-459 in Bass, Handbook of Leadership, p.37

There are obvious problems with the theories expounded by the 'Great Man' school. Firstly, it excluded the impact of 'great women', and it also did not specify what was a 'morally good' action. Most importantly in the context of the Interactionist Interpretation, it 'exaggerated the influence that individuals exerted on the course of events and is irrelevant in the context of modern political leadership, because it takes no account of the many factors, institutional, social and historical, that act as constraints on political leaders'.[8]

The Determinist/Situational School of Political Leadership

The Determinist or Situational school of analysis stresses the absolute importance of the situation or environment on determining political leadership, thus directly opposing the 'Great Man' school. The Determinist school argued that 'the course of history was determined by the impersonal interplay of social and cultural forces over which individuals had little control'.[9] The Determinist school states that leaders have power because they are in the right position, or they have the abilities required by the situation at that moment.[10] It disparages the 'Great Man' school as it believes it neglects the great impersonal forces of history, and saw the school as a misplaced personality cult. This school has argued that leadership does not really count, and is merely an epiphenomenon.[11] The school of cultural determinism developed to oppose the ideas of men like Carlyle. Herbert Spencer, a cultural determinist, wrote in 1873

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[8] Elgie, Political Leadership in Liberal Democracies, p.5
[9] Elgie, Political Leadership in Liberal Democracies, p.6
[10] D.G. Winter, The Power Motive, (New York: The Free Press, 1973), p.11
[11] J. Blondel, Political Leadership: Towards a General Analysis, (London: Sage, 1987), p.18

If it be a fact that the great man may modify his nation in its structure and actions, it is also a fact that there must have been these antecedent modifications constituting national progress before he could be evolved. Before he can re-make his society, his society must make him...If there is to be anything like a real explanation of these changes, it must be sought in the aggregate of conditions out of which both he and they have arisen[12]

Elgie has argued that the school of Social Determinism implies that individuals are powerless, and that all individuals would act the same way in the same situation, which is a contention he disagrees with. He claims that this school of analysis is reductionist in its approach to political leadership, and therefore does not explain the leadership process fully. Elgie's contention is difficult to dispute. Political leadership is much more complex than either the 'Great Man' or Determinist schools suggest. These levels of analysis give no recognition to the importance of a power motive, or any personality variable, that would influence the course of events. Blondel has asserted that the environment introduces constraints and provides opportunities, and is thus of overriding importance. It is the 'raw material, substance and framework'.[13]

<u>The Utility of the Interactionist Interpretation</u>

The Interactionist Interpretation that results from the synthesis of these two levels of analysis is the dominant paradigm for the study of political leadership today,

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[12] B. Kellerman, Political Leadership: A Source Book, pp.13-14 in Elgie, <u>Political Leadership In Liberal Democracies</u>, p.7

[13] Blondel, <u>Political Leadership</u>, p.30

and it explains a considerable amount about the emergence of political leaders. The Interactionist approach developed, because both the 'Great Man' and Determinist schools were reductionist, in emphasising only one aspect that influences political leadership. For Elgie, the essence of the Interactionist Interpretation is that it emphasises 'the extent to which political leaders are able to influence the decision-making process [and] is considered to be contingent upon the interaction between the leader and the leadership environment in which the leader operates.'[14] The Interactionist Interpretation combines the personal and systemic demands of the leadership process.

Three elements comprise the interaction process of political leadership. The first are the ambitions and styles of political leaders, the second are the institutional structures of the societies they lead, and the third are the needs of the society. The Interactionist Interpretation believes that the environment in which leaders operate will both structure their behaviour, and limit their freedom of action.[15] Elgie has demonstrated this in Political Leadership In Liberal Democracies. He has analysed the roles of Presidents and Prime Ministers in six countries, Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Germany and the United States.

Elgie's prime aim was to assess the extent to which the leaders in these countries can shape the decision-making process, or whether it was shaped for them. His main conclusion was that, in all six countries, the leadership process was influenced most significantly by institutional structures. However, this does not mean that leadership is determined in advance, and 'institutionalism is neither deterministic

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[14] Elgie, Political Leadership in Liberal Democracies, p.7
[15] Elgie, Political Leadership in Liberal Democracies, p.8, and p.191

nor reductionistic'.[16] By pinpointing the three central elements of the Interactionist approach to political leadership, Elgie has illustrated the necessity of an inclusive approach to the study of political leadership, as many factors are involved in exercising it. The institutional approach to politics is an important aspect of the Interactionist Interpretation. The approach shows how 'institutions help to determine the nature of the leadership process', and how the institutional structure of a society is primarily responsible for structuring the interaction between the leaders and their environment. [17]

The Influence of the Interactionist Interpretation on the Analytical Framework

The Interactionist Interpretation's emphasis on the importance of political actors within the environment in which they work, has had a major influence on the development of the analytical framework used in this study. The three core components of the Interaction process of political leadership: the ambitions and styles of political leaders, the institutional structures of the societies they lead, and the needs of the society, are embodied in the two interpretations that are central to the analytical framework. The ambitions and styles of the candidates are embodied in the Individual Interpretation, which analyses the candidates' party status, and their actions and conduct. The institutional structures of the society, and the needs of the society are at the core of the Situational Interpretation. This analyses the selection procedures used (the institutional structures) and the circumstances surrounding the selection, and the need for acceptability, electability and governability (the needs of the society). Society is taken here to mean both society in a general sense, and the Conservative Party in a specific sense, as the forum in which the selections were made.

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[16] Elgie, Political Leadership in Liberal Democracies, p.191, and 206
[17] Elgie, Political Leadership in Liberal Democracies, p.203

The Interactionist Interpretation, by its inclusive and non-reductionist approach, also advocates a full assessment of both individual and situational factors, and this has led to the inclusive approach used in the analytical framework. This means that a full assessment of all the influencing factors on the leadership selections of 1957 and 1963 is evident in this study.

The Analytical Framework

This section outlines the two Interpretations that are used to analyse the two leadership selections. These are the Individual Interpretation and the Situational Interpretation. The analysis is not meant merely to demonstrate whether one interpretation was more valid than the other, but to use them to show whether any of the different components within the two interpretations were more important than the others. For instance, is party unity always the principal dominant objective, or does the imminence of an election, and the obvious need to win that election, or a need to rescue a party's reputation for governmental competence, override the importance of this objective? These graduations of the importance of the component factors of each interpretation, are a significant part of the analysis of the two leadership selections, and the section will finish with an account of how the two leadership selections will be assessed using the analytical framework.

The analytical framework was developed from the use of a number of sources consulted during the literature review of material on leadership selection, leadership selection in British political parties, and party leaders in Britain. Use was also made of archival material which highlighted significant aspects of importance in leadership selections, especially in the Conservative Party. The following diagram sets out the

analytical framework used in the study. The aim of the analysis is to illustrate if any of the components of the Individual and Situational Interpretations had a determinant role in the selections of 1957 and 1963. This is why the framework is set out with the core situational criteria at the foundation of the framework, and the wider individual and situational criteria connecting to it.

Diagram One: The Selection of Party Leaders: Analytical Criteria [18]

INDIVIDUAL/SITUATIONAL CRITERIA

THE CANDIDATES	THE SELECTION PROCEDURE	THE SITUATION
- Party status - Their actions towards the leadership selection -Effect of campaign for the leadership	- Formal aspects of procedure - Informal networks of communication	- Broad internal/external requirements - Often determinants on other criteria e.g. imminent election

Order of priority	**goal = good leader**
3rd	**Governability**
↓	*To govern - to implement policies and programmes*
2nd	**Electability**
↓	*To win elections and form a government*
1st	**Acceptability**
	To retain/maintain unity as a cohesive party

THE CORE SITUATIONAL CRITERIA

[18] The development of this table was influenced by Stark's analysis of the 'Hierarchy of Strategic Party Goals', which stressed the importance of unity, victory and policy. This is in L. P. Stark, Choosing A Leader. Party Leadership Contests in Britain from Macmillan to Blair, (London: Macmillan, 1995), p.125

The Individual Interpretation

The Party Status of the Candidates

This section considers the importance of the candidates' position in their party, and more specifically in the Cabinet or Shadow Cabinet. A significant aspect is whether any of the candidates occupied the three 'great offices of state', the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Foreign Secretary, or Home Secretary, or their shadows in opposition. This needs consideration to illustrate if occupation of these positions gave the candidates an advantage over opponents who did not occupy these offices. The seniority and status these positions give to politicians appears to give them an advantage in leadership selections. Of the 53 candidates to stand in leadership selections in British political parties from 1963 to 1994, 26 had served in the 'Great offices of state', and only 9 of the 53 lacked Cabinet or Shadow Cabinet experience.[19] This illustrates two matters of significance. First, that Cabinet or shadow Cabinet experience is essential for leadership candidates, and second, that experience in one of the 'great offices of state', is often an essential requirement.

The level of progression or decline in a candidate's career at the time of a selection must be addressed. If a candidate's career was progressing towards an achievement, or an occupation of the great offices of state, this appears to give them an advantage over candidates who may have previously occupied one of the most senior positions, but whose career paths had moved into less senior positions at the time of a selection. The Parliamentary position of candidates in terms of whether they were members of the House of Commons, the traditional career path to the Premiership, or whether they were members of the House of Lords, may have an

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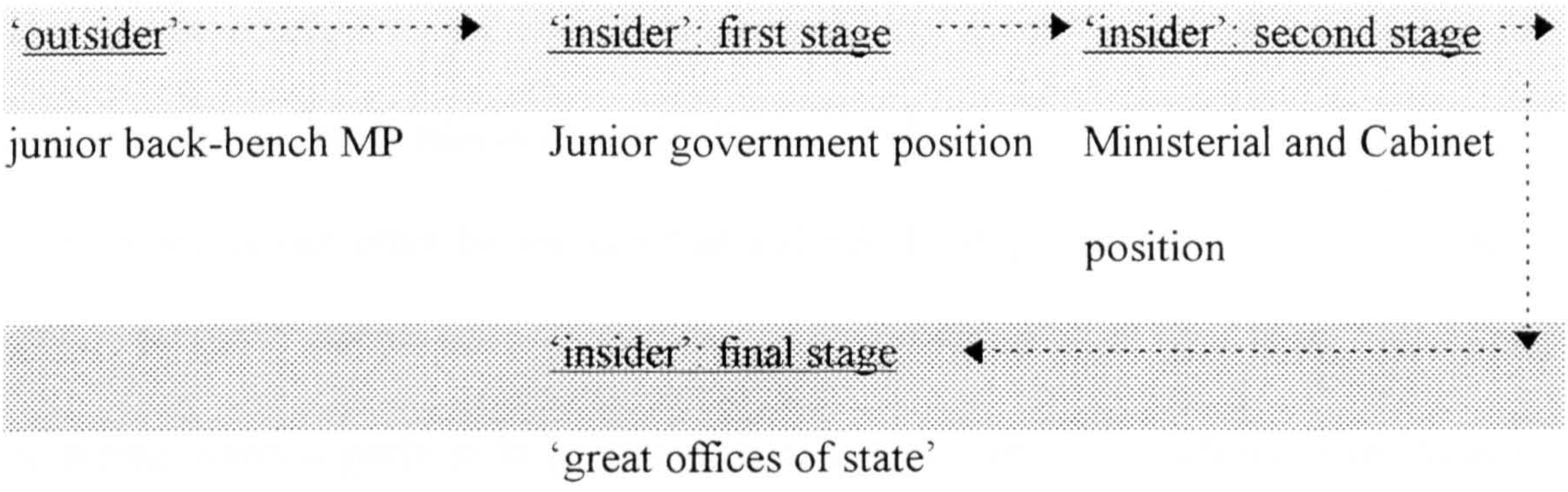
[19] Stark, Choosing A Leader, p.85

influence on the outcome. These issues raise aspects of great significance. First, that if a candidate has experience of office as Chancellor, Foreign Secretary, or Home Secretary, but no longer occupies one of those offices, then their chances of attaining the leadership will be reduced. The level of this reduction of their chances will depend on how far they have fallen away from the summit of political office. The clearest example of this is the candidacy of R.A. Butler in the Conservative Party selections of 1957 and 1963. Butler was Chancellor from 1951 to 1955, but was Leader of the Commons and Lord Privy Seal at the time of the selection of Harold Macmillan in 1957, who had replaced Butler at the Treasury in December 1955. In 1963, Butler was First Secretary of State, and de facto Deputy Prime Minister, having previously been Home Secretary from 1957 to 1962. Butler's career at the time of both selections can, therefore, be perceived to have been in decline away from the principal offices of government. The failure of Dennis Healey's candidacy in the 1980 Labour Party selection is another example. Healey had been Chancellor in the 1976-79 Labour government, and the May 1979 election defeat may have led him to be perceived as having experienced a step away from the principal offices of state, and reduced his status. On similar lines, the failure of Kenneth Clark in the 1997 Conservative Party selection of William Hague can be explained in this way. Clark had been Chancellor in the 1992-97 Conservative administration, and the massive election defeat of May 1997 may have reduced his status.

The level of 'insider' status of a candidate is of great importance in an analysis of leadership selections, and therefore requires definition. The move from 'outsider' status to 'insider' status in a political party seems to develop over a number of stages. A politician is an 'outsider' at the start of their careers as a junior back-bencher. If they

do not progress beyond back-bench status, they remain political 'outsiders' in the party. The first stage of 'insider' status is an attainment of a junior government position, as a Parliamentary Private Secretary, or an Under-Secretary. The second stage is promotion to ministerial or Cabinet rank. The attainment of one of the 'great offices of state' marks the final stage, and a full achievement of 'insider' status. This marks the ultimate step in 'insider' status in a political party. This level of progression is displayed in the following diagram.

Diagram Two: Levels of Progression from 'Outsider' to 'Insider' Status in a Political Party



This section analyses the different status of the candidates in both selections by analysing the above criteria, and assesses the importance of their party status in their selection. This part of the Individual Interpretation is analysed in chapter three.

The Candidates and their Actions

This section analyses the importance of the candidates' actions and conduct during the selections. The issues for consideration here are first, the reaction of the candidates to the possibility of their candidature, and how this affected their conduct in the rest of the selection process. Stark has correctly identified three aspects that need consideration in analysing candidates' decisions to stand. The first aspect is whether the candidates' participation in the selection was expected. The 1963 selection was unique in this respect, as the situation was complicated by the passage of the Peerage Act in July 1963. This Act allowed peers to renounce their peerages, and stand for election to the Commons. This meant that both Lords Home and Hailsham became candidates in the 1963 selection, when they were not previously expected to stand. This was especially the case with Home, who did not enter the contest until late in the controversy. In many selections, candidacies can be foreseen and predicted, but the eventual victor can often be perceived as a shock. Examples of this include Thatcher's victory in 1975, and Major's in 1990. Another significant point here is that selections occurring when a party is in government can attract more candidates than those in parties in opposition, as the new leader is certain to become Prime Minister. However, as Stark has pointed out, this is unconfirmed by the data of selections in Britain from 1963 to 1994. He notes that selections in governing and opposition parties have averaged similar numbers of candidates. These are 4.0 in governing parties, and 3.5 in opposition parties.[20]

The second aspect is the apparent (or declared) motivation behind the candidacy. There appear to be three broad motivations for standing in a leadership

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[20] Stark, Choosing A Leader, p.95

selection. First, the candidates believe they can win. This is the dominant motivation, and Stark's analysis has shown that 36 of the 53 candidates in British contests from 1963 to 1994 stood to win. However, in only 6 of the 16 contests over that period, did all the candidates stand to win. These were the 1963 Conservative contest, the 1967 Liberal contest, the 1976 Liberal contest, the 1982 SDP contest, the 1988 Liberal Democrat contest, and the 1990 Conservative contest.[21] It is a matter of great significance to note here, that the Conservative Party's informal method of selection before 1965, was designed to find candidates who could win, and were thus not determined by any other motive. The formal election procedure by a secret ballot of MPs opened the procedure to candidates of all three motivations. This was certainly the case with John Redwood's candidacy in the 1995 Conservative Party contest, as he stood primarily to enhance his reputation as a possible 'leader-in-waiting'. This was illustrated by his candidacy in the 1997 election, following Major's resignation.

The second motive is that candidates want to enhance their reputations and be seen as a 'leader-in-waiting', as preparation for a future contest. This appears to be the second most dominant motive, and examples of this include James Callaghan's candidacy in the 1963 Labour Party contest, Geoffrey Howe's and James Prior's in the 1975 Conservative contest, and as already noted, John Redwood's candidacy in 1995. The third, is they wish to attract attention to themselves, to enhance their reputation as politicians rather than as 'leaders-in-waiting', and also to attract attention to a particular issue that they are committed to. This is the least common motive, and the following examples have been cited: Enoch Powell in the 1963 Conservative contest, Bryan Gould in the 1992 Labour contest, and Anthony Meyer in the 1989

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[21] Stark, Choosing A Leader, p.100

Conservative contest.[22] Another motive that appears to be less common is the wish to remove an incumbent from office. This motive could be applied to Anthony Meyer in 1989, and Michael Heseltine in 1990. However, this motive is often in alignment with other motives, particularly the belief in victory, and this was the case with Heseltine's candidacy in 1990. The third aspect concerns whether the leadership selection rules were a factor in the candidate's decision to stand. This is particularly the case with the Conservative Party's selections before 1965, where only the motivation of winning was of prime significance, as the party's senior figures would not consider candidates with other motives as viable leadership candidates.[23]

Another significant area for consideration are the 'campaigns' of the candidates. As the Conservative Party selections of 1957 and 1963 were 'magic circle' selections, campaigns were not as important as in formal elections. The actions of the candidates during the selection process is of obvious significance to their candidature as perceptions of them could change dramatically during the selection process. 'Leadership selections resolved by the magic circle typically did not involve anything which could easily be recognised as a 'campaign'. This was one of the informal selection systems supposed virtues: candidates were not seen to be competing against one another'.[24] This, however, changed with the 1963 Conservative Party selection, as the announcement of Macmillan's intention to resign during the Party Conference at Blackpool created a situation where the candidates could 'campaign' for the leadership, and turned the Conference into a US-style leadership convention. This development played a major part in the downfall of the informal system, and its

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[22] Stark, Choosing A Leader, p.99
[23] Stark, Choosing A Leader, p.85
[24] Stark, Choosing A Leader, p.106

replacement by a formal election procedure of the party's MPs in 1965. The motives and impact behind these actions will also be assessed.

Leadership campaigns are of great importance in leadership elections, as it gives the opportunity for the candidates to compete for the support of the selectorate. Stark has asserted that leadership campaigns only matter if the outcome of the contest would have been different if the ballot for the election had taken place before, rather than after, the campaigning.[25] However, this analysis is restrictive, and ignores the importance of campaigning. Stark is correct in asserting that campaigning is only important if it affected the result of the selection, and the 1963 Conservative Party selection illustrates the effect that campaigning can have on the result of a selection. This was because Hailsham, Butler and Maudling's chances of success were adversely affected by their 'campaigning' at the Party Conference. Home's conduct at the Party Conference left him in a stronger position, as he did not appear as a candidate and did not overtly campaign, but he nevertheless performed well at the Conference. What Stark's assertion does ignore is that all campaigns can be said to have some effect, as they all either improve or weaken candidates' chances, and it is only the level of that effect that differs in impact. This is especially the case in Conservative Party selections since 1965, as the campaigns of Margaret Thatcher in 1975, John Major in 1990 and 1995, and William Hague in 1997, all contributed significantly to their victories. The 1975, 1990 and 1997 selections show this as the outcomes were not predicted before campaigning began, and in 1995, Major's campaign appears to have consolidated his support in the party. The candidates' actions and conduct in the two selections are analysed in chapters four and six.

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[25] Stark, Choosing A Leader, p.117

The Situational Interpretation

The Situation and its Requirements

The influence of the situation and circumstances that the party found itself in will be assessed here. These will be shown to set the basic terms and requirements that the successful candidate must fulfil when he or she succeeds as party leader. The aspects of the situation that are assessed are first, the state of the party. If the party was disunited and low on morale, then the new leader must reunite it and invigorate it. The second concerns whether a general election was imminent. If an election was imminent, then the candidates must demonstrate that they had the necessary qualities to appeal to the electorate. This is always an important attribute, but becomes of most significance in selections near to a general election. The third concerns the party's reputation. If the party had lost a reputation for governmental competence, then the new leader must demonstrate the necessary ministerial skills, experience and effectiveness to improve the party's reputation. An important analytical distinction will be made in the assessment of this factor. This is between the different importance of competence and effectiveness. The new leader must demonstrate an effectiveness at leading from the front. This is of more significance than competence, as competence does not necessarily endow the candidate with an ability to direct and dictate as head of a government.

The Selection Procedure: Formal Aspects and Informal Networks

i) Formal Aspects

The procedure by which leaders are selected is a significant aspect of leadership selection. The most important aspect of the selection procedure is that it should produce a satisfactory outcome - a good leader. A leader of a political party has many important functions, and must fulfil the roles of 'Election-winner, party-unifier, Cabinet-maker, Cabinet-manager and inter-party broker', among others.[26] This illustrates the importance of the analytical framework developed in the study, as the first concerns electability, the second, acceptability, and the final three, governability. The circumstances surrounding a selection will determine the exact importance of each criteria, but as the former Liberal leader, Lord Grimond, once stated, 'The trick of being a "good" leader is to be on the stage when the audience is ready to like your sort of performance'.[27] The selection system should be practical and flexible, and be able to meet the needs of a political party at a particular time, but the most important aspect is producing the right outcome. It must also be regarded as legitimate by the participants, the party and the public. The 1963 Conservative Party selection of Home signalled the downfall of the Conservatives informal system of 'emergence', as the nature of Home's selection undermined the system because of the atmosphere of conspiracy that surrounded it, and the adverse reaction it inspired in Home's opponents, the Labour Party and the public. The acceptability and the credibility of the system had collapsed.

An important factor is whether the system has an influence on the types of leaders that were selected. Punnett has argued 'the particular method that a party uses

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[26] R. M. Punnett, Selecting The Party Leader. Britain in Comparative Perspective, (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), p.11

[27] The Independent, 29 July 1988 in Punnett, Selecting The Party Leader, p.12

to select its leaders is likely to affect the types of persons that emerge, and the abilities they bring with them'.[28] This is certainly true, and is of most interest when applied to the Conservative Party's method of selecting its leaders before 1965, as there was no definite procedure, so the method used in each selection until 1965 was designed to find the right person for the situation that the party found itself in. The methods used by the party in the two selections of 1957 and 1963 analysed in this study, involved informal consultation within the upper echelons of the party - what could be termed the party hierarchy, to find the leader most acceptable to the party. The party hierarchy is the group of senior and influential figures at the apex of the party, in both the Parliament (the House of Commons and House of Lords), and the party in the country. This group of senior figures and party managers play a major role in the key decisions that are taken in the management and co-ordination of the party, such as the selection of a new leader. An important fact that must be noted is that this group is not a monolithic block - its membership varies depending on the decision that must be taken, and the pressures of the situation that the party finds itself in. However, certain key figures always appear to be constant members of the party hierarchy. These are the Prime Minister, the Chairman of the 1922 Committee of Conservative backbenchers, the Chief Whip in the House of Commons, the Chief Whip in the House of Lords, the party chairman and the chairman of the NUCUA, and constituency associations.

What Macmillan termed in 1963 as 'the customary processes of consultation' did not exist, as there were no clearly defined rules to the procedure. The new leader 'emerged' as the right man to unite the party, manage it and lead it to victory in the General Election. This final requirement became of particular importance if a General

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[28] Punnett, Selecting The Party Leader, p.2

Election was imminent. Leadership selection procedures are dynamic processes, and the Conservative Party before 1965, altered its method of selection to meet the requirements of each situation that the party found itself in. There were core principles on which each selection was built, but the procedure was meant to be flexible, so as to meet the requirements of each situation. This means that the formal aspects of the procedures used in 1957 and 1963 are an important part of the analysis of the outcome of each selection. It is interesting to note that each political party in Britain has changed its leadership selection procedure on more than one occasion since the two leadership selections of 1957 and 1963. After Home's resignation in 1965, the Conservative Party formally elected its new leader, Edward Heath, using an election of its MPs by secret ballot. This was a change Home was instrumental in instituting, as he saw that the procedure by which he was selected was tainted beyond repair. The Conservative Party used this system of a secret ballot of the party's MPs until the election of William Hague as successor to John Major in June 1997. Following his election, Hague introduced a system of one member, one vote (OMOV) for the election of future Conservative leaders. The Labour Party introduced an electoral college process for the election of party leaders in 1981, and the Liberals (and subsequently, the Liberal Democrats after the merger of the Liberals and the Social Democratic Party in 1988) elected new leaders by a ballot of party members from 1976. This shows the importance of analysing the selection procedure in each selection, as the characteristics of the system influence the outcome fundamentally.

ii) Informal Networks of Communication

The informal networks and lines of communication within political parties are of importance in leadership selections, and this is particularly the case with the Conservative Party's methods of selection before 1965. Punnett has noted the importance of informal networks in selection procedures, as 'the formal rules of a leader-selection system do not necessarily reveal how the process will actually operate.'[29] These informal networks exist in two broad forms. The first are those within the party itself. These serve as lines of communication within the party hierarchy, and help to find the leader who is most acceptable to the party. 'No matter how democratic and open a leader-selection system may appear on the basis of the formal rules, in practice it may be managed by an elite.'[30] There are also lines of communication within the party that link the upper reaches of the party to the back-benches and grass-roots organisations. The 1922 Committee of back-benchers in the Conservative Party and its executive, serve to communicate opinion to the leadership stratum, and the NUCUA serves the same purpose for the constituency membership. The second set of lines of communication are those between the party and the press. These often serve as a means of the party hierarchy filtering information to the press in situations like the 1963 Conservative Party selection, when the party hierarchy wanted to prepare the party and the public for the emergence of Home. These are also significant in the opposition that can develop to the emergence of one particular leader, and act as feeders of information to the opponents, particularly if the press is in sympathy with the opponents.

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[29] Punnett, Selecting The Party Leader, p.10
[30] Punnett, Selecting The Party Leader, p.10

Stark has argued that 'the outcome of a contest has little to do with who is making the choice', and it is the qualities of the candidates and the situation in which the contest arises that determines who wins. He argues that different electorates appear to apply the same criteria of acceptance, electability and competence in leadership selections, and 'the fact that leadership selection rules determine the composition of the leadership electorate does not mean that the rules determine the outcome of contests'. Thus, he argues that 'there is little support for the view that *how* parties choose their leaders determines *who* they will choose'. [31] This assessment appears to be restrictive, and ignores the importance that different selection procedures can have on the outcome of selections. The most prominent example of the effect a selection procedure can have on a selection is the 1963 Conservative Party selection of Home. Home would not have been elected in a ballot of the party's MPs, the system used to select Home's successor, Edward Heath in 1965, and if that system had been used in 1963 the likely victor would have been Butler or Reginald Maudling.

The Acceptability Criterion

This is the first of the core criteria that must be met by candidates for the leadership, if they are to be serious contenders. This criterion means the attribute of acceptability in the party, and the consequent ability to unite it. It denotes acceptability to the party principally, and public acceptance is a secondary consideration to this. Various aspects of this must be analysed. The first is the extent to which candidates are acceptable to the party in a general sense. If the candidates arouse hostility, or have a history of arousing hostility in the party, this will affect their fulfilment of this

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[31] Stark, Choosing A Leader, p.131, and pp.137-138

requirement. The second is the extent of opposition to the candidates in the party. Whether the opposition is from a small or a large section of the party, is of obvious significance in this respect. The third aspect is from what area of the party this opposition comes from. If it is from a section that has major influence in the party, this will affect candidates' fulfilment of the criteria. However, if it is from a small and insignificant grouping, this may not affect the level of the candidates' acceptability in the eyes of the selectorate who determine the decision.

This factor has been termed the 'first-order criterion' and is certainly of massive significance, as disunited parties do not operate effectively in government, and do not win general elections. As Stark has suggested, 'in assessing the relative merits of leadership candidates, a party's highest priority is to select someone who will preserve the unity of the party'. However, as Stark argues, this is not the only consideration in selecting a leader, and the level of determinant importance of this criterion depends on the extent of disunity in the party at the time of the selection. 'Only in extraordinary circumstances does this unity goal become an explicit consideration'. Stark offers the example of the selection of Michael Foot as Labour Party leader in 1980, as a selection when a party was in almost complete disunity, and acceptability was the decisive criterion.[32] The selection of William Hague as Conservative Party leader in June 1997 following the Conservative's worst election defeat since 1906 can also be cited as an example, as the party was an almost complete state of disunity.

Rather than the ultimate determining factor, the acceptability factor can be termed as the base criterion which must be achieved, if a candidate has any chance of

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[32] Stark, Choosing A Leader, p.126

being successful in a leadership selection. It is the first goal but not always the decisive one, as many factors are taken into account in the selection of a party leader. However, in many cases, if a candidate fulfils the acceptability factor, then he or she usually becomes leader, even if other candidates better fulfil the other criteria.

The Electability Criterion

This factor is often of prime significance in leadership selection, especially if the selection occurs at a time when a general election is imminent. This criterion revolves around a perceived ability to win general elections, as judged by the party hierarchy. Electoral appeal is of obvious importance to leadership candidates, and is a major factor in the decision of the selectorate. If parties do not win elections they do not gain or retain power, and are ineffective as a party or potential party of government. This factor has been correctly termed 'the second-order criterion', as it is the second fundamental factor that candidates must achieve in order to gain the leadership. Acceptability is the first as disunited parties do not win elections, and then electability comes to the fore, as parties do not gain power if their leader is unelectable. The aspects that candidates must achieve in order to be seen as electable include first, a good public image that reaches out to the electorate generally and, most significantly, does not offend any significant section of the electorate. Secondly, candidates must be good public performers and communicators. This is distinct from an ability to perform in the House of Commons, and an ability on a public platform is of more importance. Third, is good public visibility. A candidate that currently holds one of the 'great offices of state' would find this easier to achieve, as he or she would be widely known to the electorate, because of the status and public visibility of the post. A failure to

fulfil these aspects seriously affected a candidates chances of gaining the leadership. This was especially true if a candidate was not widely known to the electorate, or perhaps more significantly, it offended a section of it and aroused hostility in the country.

Different circumstances obviously require different leaders, and a specific circumstance that increases the importance of electability, is whether a selection takes place when a general election is imminent. However, other circumstances affect the types of leaders that will be chosen based on their level of electability. Some examples of this from formal leadership elections, include the election of John Major as Conservative Party leader in November 1990, in succession to Margaret Thatcher. Major was chosen, as Thatcher's increasingly conflictorial style was offending Conservative voters, and causing party disunity. A general election was due in 1992, so the party removed Thatcher from office, after the challenge of Michael Heseltine against her leadership, as it was felt she would not win the next general election. Major was chosen for his more conciliatory and voter-friendly image, that signified a change of style, not substance, that contributed to the Conservative Party's fourth successive election victory in April 1992. Another recent example is the election of Tony Blair as Labour Party leader in 1994. Blair was elected after the death of John Smith, as he offered a new image that denoted a sea-change from 'old Labour' to 'new Labour', as the image of 'old Labour' was perceived to have contributed to the party's poor electability from 1979, and this was exacerbated after the party's fourth successive defeat in April 1992.

The Governability Criterion

This factor is the ability, or perceived ability, to implement policy programmes and manage government affairs - to govern the country. Significant aspects that come under consideration here are whether a candidate has wide and extensive ministerial experience, especially in the domestic arena. For parties in opposition, a senior position on the opposition front-bench would denote governability. This would count heavily in a candidate's favour, as it would enhance their reputation in the party as an effective Minister. Secondly, concerns whether a candidate has held, or is currently in occupation of one of the three 'great offices of state'. Current occupation of one of these posts is a major advantage to candidates, and this is more significant than having previously held one of the posts, as this signifies that a candidate's career is in decline, away from the summit of government. An aspect of major importance is the candidates' reputation for effectiveness, as compared to competence. Competence in government illustrates an ability to fulfil a role as a Minister, whereas effectiveness denotes a more dynamic reputation. This is an ability to make things happen, and more importantly, to lead from the front, to direct affairs, as compared to just fulfilling a role in office. Demonstrating this attribute significantly enhanced a candidate's reputation, and their chances of gaining the leadership.

<u>The Assessment of the Two Leadership Selections using the Analytical Framework</u>

The analytical framework outlined in this chapter will be applied to the two leadership selections of 1957 and 1963, and will account for the selections of Harold Macmillan in January 1957 and of Sir Alec Douglas-Home in October 1963. This assessment will be based primarily around the candidates' fulfilment of the three main

criteria of acceptability, electability, and governability, but will demonstrate the importance of the other influential factors, such as the status of the candidates, their actions during the selections, the immediate requirements of the situation, the selection procedure, and the informal networks of communication used in the selection procedure. The analysis will, therefore, offer a full explanation of the two selections by considering both the criteria that candidates are assessed on, and the other influences on the decisions that are made. The analysis takes into account both internal and external factors, direct and indirect factors, and assesses the importance of the differences of the situations surrounding the two selections.

The assessment of the candidates' fulfilment of the three core criteria will demonstrate which of the criteria Macmillan and Home fulfilled, and therefore show which, if any, was considered the most important by the selectorate in that selection, and if any was the determining factor. The criteria will thus be levelled in importance in each selection. It is important to note that all the criteria are of vital consideration in leadership selections, so it will not be the case that any are discounted in importance, but the analysis will demonstrate whether any were considered of more importance during the selections. This multi-layered approach to the analysis will offer the fullest explanation of both outcomes.

The assessment of the wider influential factors will serve to emphasise the distinctions between each selection, and analyse the role of external factors such as the circumstances surrounding the selections, and the nature of the influence of the aspects of the selection procedure, both formal and informal. These will be shown to set the basic terms of reference for the core acceptability, electability, and governability criteria.

The Analytical Framework and Party Leadership Selection in Britain: 1957-1997

The following table sets out an analysis of leadership selections in the British Conservative and Labour Parties from 1957 to 1997, using the three core situational criteria of Acceptability, Electability and Governability. It is based on a range of primary sources and secondary sources on leadership selection in Britain.

Table One: *The Acceptability, Electability, and Governability Criteria and Party Leadership Selection in the British Conservative and Labour Parties: 1957-1997*[33]

Contest	Criteria	Strongest candidate	Winner
1957 Conservative	Acceptability	Macmillan	Macmillan
	Electability	Macmillan	
	Governability	Macmillan/Butler	
1963 Labour	Acceptability	Wilson	Wilson
	Electability	Wilson	
	Governability	Wilson	
1963 Conservative	Acceptability	Home	Home
	Electability	Hailsham/Home	
	Governability	Butler/Maudling	
1965 Conservative	Acceptability	Heath/Maudling	Heath
	Electability	Heath/Maudling	
	Governability	Heath/Maudling	
1975 Conservative	Acceptability	Whitelaw	Thatcher
	Electability	Whitelaw	
	Governability	Whitelaw	
1976 Labour	Acceptability	Callaghan	Callaghan
	Electability	Callaghan	
	Governability	Callaghan	
1980 Labour	Acceptability	Foot	Foot
	Electability	Healey	
	Governability	Healey/Foot	
1983 Labour	Acceptability	Kinnock	Kinnock
	Electability	Kinnock/Hattersley	
	Governability	Kinnock	
1988 Labour	Acceptability	Kinnock	Kinnock
	Electability	Kinnock	
	Governability	Kinnock	
1989 Conservative	Acceptability	Thatcher	Thatcher
	Electability	Thatcher	
	Governability	Thatcher	

[33] The format for this table is based on a similar analysis by Stark in Choosing A Leader, p.132.

1990 Conservative	Acceptability	Major	Major
	Electability	Major/Heseltine	
	Governability	Major/Hurd	
1992 Labour	Acceptability	Smith	Smith
	Electability	Smith	
	Governability	Smith	
1994 Labour	Acceptability	Blair	Blair
	Electability	Blair	
	Governability	Blair	
1995 Conservative	Acceptability	Major	Major
	Electability	Major	
	Governability	Major	
1997 Conservative	Acceptability	Hague	Hague
	Electability	Hague/Clarke	
	Governability	Clarke/Howard	

The table shows that in the fifteen contests between 1957 and 1997, the winners of the contests most often met the acceptability criterion, as fourteen of the fifteen winners met this. Only in the 1975 Conservative contest did the winner not meet the acceptability criterion, and significantly, the victor, Margaret Thatcher, did not meet any of the criterion in that contest. This contest is thus unique in leadership selections since 1957.[34] The next most commonly met criterion was electability, and thirteen of the fifteen winners met this. Only in the 1975 Conservative, and 1980 Labour contest was this criterion not met. In both instances, the parties were in a state of disunity and weakness after an election defeat, and the dominant need was for unity.[35] Governability was the least met criterion, and eleven winners met this. Winners met all criterion in eleven contests. Only in the 1963 Conservative, 1975 Conservative, 1980 Labour and 1997 Conservative, were all criterion not met by the winners. Thus, acceptability was the most common criterion to be achieved by eventual victors in leadership selections from 1957 to 1997, with 93.3% of victors achieving this criterion.

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[34] For an analysis of the 1975 Conservative Party Selection, see chapter one, pp.40-43

[35] Punnett, Selecting The Party Leader, p.61 for an account of the state of the Conservative Party in the 1975 leadership election, and p.p.91-94 for the state of the Labour Party in the 1980 leadership election.

Electability was the next most common, with 86.6% of victors achieving this. Governability was the least common with 73.3% of victors fulfilling this criterion. The following table displays this data.

Table Two: *Totals of Winners of Leadership Selections, 1957 to 1997, and their fulfilment of the Acceptability, Electability, and Governability Criteria*

Criteria	**Winners fulfilling each criteria in leadership selections from 1957 to 1997. Total = 15 winners**	**Percentages of winners fulfilling each criteria (%)**
Acceptability	14	93.3
Electability	13	86.6
Governability	11	73.3
All three criteria	11	73.3

What these figures show is that all, or virtually all, winners in leadership contests must be acceptable to the party, and this is the base criterion on which they are fundamentally judged. However, virtually all candidates must also be perceived to be electable to be successful, and candidates are also judged strongly on their experience as a senior member of the government or opposition. Despite the acceptability criterion being met by the most winners, the difference between the figures of winners who met all three criteria (73.3%) is not a major difference, and points to the significance of achieving all three in leadership selections. It appears that the exact circumstances of the selections affect the importance of each criterion, but all are of fundamental importance in determining the outcome of leadership selections.

This analysis illustrates a number of points of significance. First, that if candidates are to win the contest, they must be acceptable to the party, and offer prospects of uniting it, or retaining unity. Second, that candidates must be seen as electable and present a good public image, and be a good public performer. Third,

governability is an important attribute in most cases, and if candidates have experience as a member of Cabinets or Shadow Cabinets, this gives them a clear advantage. It is also clear from the contests of 1957 to 1997 that experience in one of the 'great offices of state', or the shadow positions, gives candidates a distinct advantage.

The analysis of the contests using the three core criteria also shows that being the strongest candidate on all three criteria most often has resulted in that candidate being elected, but it is possible to reach conclusions on whether any of the criteria are more important than any of the others. Despite the fact that most victors met the acceptability criterion, this does not mean that this is the most important. The closeness of the numbers meeting the electability criterion to those who attained acceptability (thirteen to fourteen), shows that both appear to be of equal significance in leadership selections, and of more importance than the governability criterion. Governability is still of real significance in leadership selections, shown by eleven of the fifteen winners attaining this, but it is apparent that acceptability and electability are of more importance in leadership selections than governability.

Rather than the criteria being seen as separate objectives to be met in leadership selections, it is more useful to see them as part of a progressive level of suitability for the position. If candidates cannot unite parties (acceptability), they cannot win elections as the electorate rarely votes for disunited parties (electability), and if they cannot win elections, they are not in a position to govern (governability). The criteria form part of a leadership sequence that must be fulfilled for the leader to be successful. The relative importance of the criteria in specific leadership selections are often, therefore, determined by the exact circumstances of the situation that the party finds itself in. The imminence of a general election increases the importance of

electability, for instance. This demonstrates how the wider individual and situational criteria set the terms of reference on which the core criteria are judged. It is useful to see the three criteria as part of the stages towards the party's attainment of a successful leader. Acceptability is the core criterion, the foundation upon which a successful candidacy is built. Electability follows on from this at the next level, leading towards a successful leadership. Governability moves the leadership candidacy onto the final level, that of governance.

The Individual and Situational Criteria and Specific Leadership Selections in Britain, 1957-1997

The following section relates the broad data on leadership selection in Britain from 1957 to 1997, using the acceptability, electability and governability criteria, to specific examples to illustrate how the analysis can be used to explain the outcomes of leadership selections. The selections chosen for use are the 1965 and 1975 Conservative Party selections, and the 1980, 1983 and 1992 Labour Party selections. These five selections have been chosen for a number of reasons. First, they illustrate selections that used different formal procedures - the 1965 and 1975 Conservative selections used a secret ballot by the party's MPs, and the 1980, 1983 and 1992 Labour selections used a ballot of the Parliamentary Party in 1980, and an electoral college of the Parliamentary Labour Party, the unions and the constituency parties in 1983 and 1992. Second, they illustrate how different situations and circumstances, and how candidates' reputations can affect selections.

The 1965 Conservative Party Selection

The selection of Edward Heath to succeed Sir Alec Douglas-Home in July 1965 was the first formal leadership election in the Conservative Party. Heath was elected by a secret ballot of the party's MPs, and despite not achieving the required majority, became leader after Reginald Maudling, his only rival, decided not to stand in the required second ballot. On the three core criteria, acceptability, electability, and governability, Heath and Maudling were of equal status, and the wider individual and situational factors determined the outcome.

The party status of the candidates was significant. Following the election defeat in 1964, Home had appointed Heath as Shadow Chancellor, and Maudling Shadow Foreign Secretary. This was a significant promotion for Heath, and a demotion for Maudling that affected his status and his prospects of succeeding Home. Maudling had been Chancellor in the Macmillan and Home administrations, and was widely discredited after the election defeat for his failure to provide an upturn in the economy to coincide with the election.[36] Maudling's appointment as Shadow Foreign Secretary signified a downturn in his leadership prospects, as Home was a former Foreign Secretary, and as party leader, took the dominant role in foreign affairs.

Heath's promotion to Shadow Chancellor signified that he was seen as the 'leader-in-waiting', and was favoured by Home to be his successor. His handling of the opposition's response to the government's Finance Bill in 1965 impressed Conservative MPs and improved his position, though Maudling was the favourite because of his wider ministerial experience.[37] The conduct and campaigning of Heath

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[36] See J. Campbell, Edward Heath. A Biography, (London: Cape, 1993), p.166 for details of the effect of Heath and Maudling's appointments in the Shadow Cabinet in 1964 on their leadership prospects.
[37] A. Watkins, The Road To Number Ten: From Bonar Law to Tony Blair, (London: Duckworth, 1998), p.186; Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.130; and J. Ramsden, The Winds of Change: Macmillan to Heath, 1957-1975, (London: Longman, 1996), pp.235-236

and Maudling was significant in the result. Maudling appeared to take a diffident attitude to the selection at the outset, whereas Heath organised his campaign well. 'Heath's campaign was efficient, well organised and much brisker and more aggressive than Maudling's'.[38] Ramsden has noted the importance of the press reporting on the difference of the two men's styles, and that Butler and Macleod switched their allegiance from Maudling to Heath because of his aggressive campaigning and style.[39] This illustrates the significance of the campaigning in determining the outcome. It was also important in that the party was selecting a Leader of the Opposition, not a Prime Minister. The party needed someone who displayed a combative style to take on Harold Wilson, rather than an emphasis on ministerial experience, as the party wanted 'a political bully'.[40]

Maudling's relaxed attitude convinced many Conservative MPs that Heath was the better option to take on Wilson.[41] Maudling's campaign has been described as lethargic, as he did not even canvass his colleagues in the Shadow Cabinet. His tactics were to rely on a reaction to Heath's role in Home's downfall, and to portray Maudling as the family man, against Heath the bachelor. Given the outcome, his strategy was not successful.[42] This signifies the importance of the candidates' personalities, the situation and circumstances, as the Conservatives needed a leader who would provide strong opposition to Wilson in the Commons and the country, as

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[38] N. Fisher, The Tory Leaders. Their Struggle For Power, (London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), p.125

[39] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.237

[40] Ramsden, The Winds of Change, p.238

[41] See Campbell, Edward Heath, p.166; and D.R. Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1996), pp.386-390 for Home's support of Heath and the decline of Maudling's position regarding the leadership. Maudling denies he was diffident and 'lazy' towards the 1965 selection and states that he did not overtly campaign for the leadership as he felt the opportunity should be offered to him, rather than fighting for it. Fighting for the leadership would have made his task as leader far more difficult. For details see R. Maudling, Memoirs, (London: Sidgewick and Jackson, 1978), pp.136-137

[42] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, pp.124-125

an election was imminent due to the narrowness of Labour's election victory.[43] As the two candidates were equal on the three core criteria, their status and conduct, and the situation surrounding the selection played a major role in determining the selection of Edward Heath in 1965. As The Economist's Alistair Burnett noted, the party picked Heath as the man 'most likely to bullock their way back into power'.[44]

The 1975 Conservative Party Selection

This contest is unique in leadership selections between 1957 and 1997, as this was the only contest that saw the eventual victor not meet any of the three core criteria of acceptability, electability and governability. Margaret Thatcher's victory can be accounted for by the circumstances of the selection, and the reputations and conduct of the other candidates, principally William Whitelaw, Thatcher's main opponent in the second ballot. There was a wide feeling in the Conservative Party that Edward Heath could no longer continue as Conservative leader after two successive election defeats, and that Heathite Conservatism had run its course. Thatcher's narrow, but nevertheless, impressive, victory over Heath in the first ballot opened the way for a contest between Thatcher and other widely tipped successors. Thatcher's victory was so impressive, as she was not an expected successor to Heath, and did not have wide governmental experience. An important situational factor was the circumstances of the contest. It has been widely acknowledged that there was 'a dearth of talent at the top' in 1975, as Maudling and Powell were no longer contenders. Whitelaw was the

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[43] Fisher has argued that this contest centred on the difference of personalities of Heath and Maudling. This is in The Tory Leaders, p.126

[44] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.238

beneficiary of this, but he was too loyal to Heath to exploit it, and felt that as Party Chairman, appointed by Heath, he could not oppose him.[45]

Thus, the circumstances of the discrediting of the Heath administration and his brand of Conservatism, and the growing desire for a move to the right, led to Thatcher's victory in the first ballot, and the momentum of that victory carried her through to defeat Whitelaw decisively in the second ballot. In the second ballot, Thatcher gained 52.9% of the vote, to Whitelaw's 28.6%. The reputation of the candidates was important in the selection, as Thatcher campaigned vigorously in the first and second ballots. This persuaded many MPs to vote for her in the first ballot as her campaign team, led by Airey Neave, told MPs that her candidacy was only a means of removing Heath, and then someone else would win the second ballot. Thatcher was presented as the 'stalking horse', designed not to beat Heath, but to take enough support away from him to open the contest up to Whitelaw.[46] However, Thatcher's widely unexpected victory over Heath led to the momentum that carried her through to victory over Whitelaw in the second ballot. Whitelaw's reputation was also significant in Thatcher's victory. He was seen as an 'alternative Heathite', and with the move away from Heathite Conservatism that was signified by Thatcher's victory in the first ballot, this meant he could not gain the necessary support to beat Thatcher with this reputation. Conservative MPs had been coerced to move to a new brand of Conservatism, after the two election defeats of 1974

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[45] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.154

[46] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.443 and 449. Ramsden notes the importance of Neave's role and the under-estimation of Thatcher's chances of victory.

In the mood of the moment the fact that, after Heath's fall, he [Whitelaw] was the established candidate may not have been to his advantage. He was too closely identified with the old regime and with the old policies to be acceptable to those who wanted to the leadership to have a new look.[47]

Similarly, Ramsden has noted that, '[Thatcher] acquired great credit simply by having forced the party into the decision it had now taken, to get rid of Heath; the votes on the first ballot proved to MPs that without her determination they would have taken a decision that most of them did not actually want'.[48] This explains much about the decision to select Thatcher as Heath's successor. She offered a new approach, and different policies, and the only real alternative to Heath, Whitelaw, was trapped by his loyalty to him and his identification with the Heath regime. Whitelaw's loyalty to Heath also determined the nature of his conduct, and led him to have a minimal and ineffective impact on the contest, despite being the best equipped candidate on the core criteria. Ramsden has also noted that the candidates in the second ballot were 'tainted by their cowardice' for not standing against Heath in the first ballot.[49] This denotes the importance of the circumstances surrounding the election, and the state of the party, and explains why the three core criteria of acceptability, electability, and governability, proved to be of little importance in the determination of the outcome. The acceptability criterion came into play in the second ballot, as the other candidates now appeared to

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[47] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.174
[48] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.451
[49] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.153; Watkins, The Road to Number Ten, p.190; and Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.451 and 454

offer a threat to party unity, as if there had not been a second ballot, the party would have united around the new leader after the first ballot.

1980 Labour Party Selection

The eventual victor in this contest, Michael Foot, fulfilled the acceptability and governability criteria, and his victory can also be explained by the circumstances of the selection, and the reputation of Denis Healey, his main rival. Foot was the most acceptable candidate, as Labour MPs and union leaders were opposed to Healey's election, because of his reputation as Chancellor in the 1976-79 Labour administration. Healey had introduced measures which were controversial with Labour MPs and union leaders, such as the measures during and following the IMF crisis of 1976.[50] This shows the importance of Healey's reputation and party status in his failure to succeed Callaghan. This led the initially reluctant Foot to be persuaded to stand by union leaders.[51]

Healey had more governmental experience than Foot, but his reputation was affected by his role in the previous Labour government that had been defeated in 1979. Foot was Deputy Leader to Callaghan in the 1976-79 government, and was loyal to Callaghan. Healey's reputation was in decline, while Foot's remained stable after the election defeat. A significant factor in Foot's victory was his popularity with the party outside Parliament. This was important, as Labour planned to introduce an electoral college for the election of party leaders, which would be comprised of MPs, union leaders, and constituency parties. Foot was the most acceptable with union leaders,

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[50] Watkins, The Road to Number Ten, p.150

[51] Callaghan has noted that Foot told him he did not intend to be a candidate. This is in M. Jones, Michael Foot, p.446 in Watkins, The Road to Number Ten, p.152. For details of the pressure put on Foot to stand by union leaders, see Watkins, The Road to Number Ten, p.p.152-156

and the party in the country, and was a well-liked MP. He played on the movement to an electoral college, and it contributed to his victory, as he would have won a contest under the proposed electoral college system.[52]

The 1983 Labour Party Selection

This contest used the electoral college system, under which MPs had 30% of the vote, union leaders had 40% of the vote, and constituency officials had 30% of the vote. The winner of this contest, Neil Kinnock, was seen as the 'acceptable face of the left' by MPs and union leaders, and he fulfilled the acceptability, electability, and governability criteria. His main rival, Roy Hattersley, fulfilled the electability criterion, but Kinnock was the widely expected victor from the outset of the contest, especially by the left of the party, who were in the ascendancy.[53] The acceptability factor appears to have played the dominant role in the selection of Kinnock as leader, and Hattersley as deputy leader, as their alliance seemed to offer the best prospects of uniting the party, as Kinnock represented the left and Healey the right. This alliance has been described as 'the dream ticket'. This was of major importance because of the divisions in the Labour Party after the massive election defeat of 1983, and points to the importance of the circumstances surrounding the selection.[54] Kinnock gained a clear victory, showing his acceptability to the party. He gained 71% of the total vote, and 38 of the 46 unions represented supported him, 75% of MPs voted for him, and almost all of the constituency parties.[55]

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[52] This account is based on Punnett, Selecting The Party Leader, pp.91-94; and Watkins, The Road to Number Ten, pp.152-156

[53] Watkins, The Road to Number Ten, p.162

[54] Watkins, The Road to Number Ten, pp.162-164

[55] This account is based on Punnett, Selecting The Party Leader, p.111; and Watkins, The Road to Number Ten, pp.161-165.

The 1992 Labour Party Selection

John Smith succeeded Neil Kinnock by a massive majority, following Kinnock's resignation after the April 1992 election defeat. Kinnock himself felt Smith's election was inevitable, and advised the other contender, Bryan Gould, a close associate of Kinnock's, against standing, as 'Smithy had got it all sewn up'.[56] Smith fulfilled all three core criteria, and from the beginning of the contest was regarded as the likely victor. He received the immediate backing of the leaders of the three largest unions.

This contest was not surrounded by the difficult circumstances of party disunity. It was not a battle between the left and right of the party, as Kinnock's reforms of the party had shifted the party to the right. Smith represented the desire to continue that process in an long-term effort to regain power, following the party's fourth successive election defeat. The only other candidate, Bryan Gould, was not a serious contender, and the contest was over differences in tone and style, not policy.[57] The election of Margaret Beckett, a left-winger, also suited the circumstances of the election as the Smith-Beckett alliance could be presented as a 'dream ticket' of left and right, securing harmony and balance in the parliamentary party.[58] Smith fulfilled the three core criteria, and was the most senior and experienced of the candidates, and represented the Labour Party's desire to continue the process of reform to gain a more moderate image, and regain power at the next general election.[59]

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[56] B. Gould, Goodbye To All That, p.253 in Watkins, The Road to Number Ten, p.166
[57] Watkins, The Road To Number Ten, p.168
[58] Watkins, The Road to Number Ten, p.167
[59] The details of this contest are in Punnett, Selecting The Party Leader, pp.115-118; and Watkins, The Road to Number Ten, pp.165-175

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the analytical framework to be used to analyse the Conservative Party selections of 1957 and 1963. The abstract section on the framework showed that a wide range of individual and situational factors must be considered in an analysis of any leadership selection. This section, and the analysis of leadership selection in Britain from 1957 to 1997, has shown that successful candidates must be assessed as being successful on the three core situational criteria of acceptability, electability, and governability - they must demonstrate an ability to unite the party, to win elections and govern effectively. However, the wider individual and situational criteria, such as the selection procedure, the reputations and actions of the candidates, and the circumstances surrounding the selection, must be analysed as they often play a central, if not determinant role, in the outcome of leadership selections. As has been stressed, they set the basic terms of reference on which the core criteria are judged. This shows the significance of using an inclusive, interactionist approach to analyse all the individual and situational factors that contribute to the outcome of leadership selections, and this will be demonstrated by the analysis of the 1957 and 1963 Conservative Party selections using this analytical framework.

Chapter Two

The Conservative Party and The Selection of Its Leaders

This chapter has five sections. The first is a summary of the Conservative Party's selection of its leaders from 1902 to 1965. The second analyses the functions of Conservative Party leaders. The third discusses the formal aspects of the selection procedure. The fourth analyses the importance of the informal networks of communication used in the selection procedure. The final section analyses the situational parallels and distinctions in the outcomes of the selections from 1902 to 1965.

The Selection of Conservative Party Leaders: 1902-1965

This century the Conservative Party has had a variety of experiences in the selection of its leaders. The nature of the experience often depended on whether the party was in opposition or in power, whether there was an obvious heir apparent, and whether there was contention over who should become leader. This section has two parts. The first discusses those occasions when the leadership passed to obvious heir apparents while the party was in power, and the changeovers were swift and easy and illustrated the benefits of the system. These occurred in 1902, 1921, 1922, 1937 and 1955. Interestingly, three of these (Austen and Neville Chamberlain, and Anthony Eden), were failures as party leader. The second part discusses those selections which involved competition for the leadership. This is defined as being the case when there were two or more candidates considered in the selection. These occurred in 1911, 1923, 1957 and 1963.

The Succession of Clear Heir Apparents

1902: *Arthur Balfour*

In 1902, Lord Salisbury resigned as Prime Minister and was succeeded by Arthur Balfour, his nephew. Balfour was the obvious successor to Salisbury, as he had a good reputation as a Minister, and few opposed his succession. King Edward VII commissioned Balfour to form a government, and two days later he was acclaimed leader of the party by a meeting of Conservative Peers and MPs at the Carlton Club. [1]

1921: *Austen Chamberlain*

In March 1921, Bonar Law resigned as party leader because of ill health. The Conservatives were still part of the Coalition that had been formed during the First World War. The party, however, took the same governmental approach, as if they were in government as the single ruling party, because of their dominant position in the Coalition. Prime Minister Lloyd George appointed Austen Chamberlain Leader of the Commons, and on 21 March 1921 a meeting of MPs at the Carlton Club acclaimed him as Leader of the Unionists in the Commons. [2]

1922: *Andrew Bonar Law*

The next leadership selection took place in October 1922, after the Carlton Club meeting which broke up the coalition government. Lloyd George then resigned as Prime Minister, and advised the King to send for Bonar Law, as Austen Chamberlain had resigned because of his wish to continue the coalition. In an unprecedented step

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[1] 'Appendix 1. Conservative Party Leadership Selection This Century'. Geoffrey D.M. Block. 3 February 1965 CPA CCO 20/39/3

[2] 'Appendix 1. Conservative Party Leadership Selection This Century.' Geoffrey D. M. Block. 3 February 1965 CPA CCO 20/39/3

for the party, Law insisted on being approved as party leader before accepting the Premiership in discussions with Lord Stamfordham, the King's Private Secretary.[3] On 23 October 1922, the meeting took place at the Hotel Cecil, and Law was selected unanimously. He then immediately kissed hands with the King on accepting office.[4]

1937: *Neville Chamberlain*

On 28 May 1937, Neville Chamberlain was asked by the King to succeed Stanley Baldwin, following the latter's resignation. The succession was rapid as Chamberlain, Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1931, was the unopposed successor to Baldwin. On 31 May 1937, a meeting of the party at the Carlton Club endorsed him as leader.[5]

1955: *Sir Anthony Eden*

On 6 April 1955, Sir Anthony Eden succeeded Churchill as Prime Minister, after Churchill had resigned the previous day. Like Chamberlain, Eden was the long recognised crown prince and had waited many years to succeed Churchill. He was endorsed as party leader at the party meeting on 21 April 1955 at Church House.[6]

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[3] For an analysis of the role of the Stamfordham and Law discussions and the reasons for Law's request, see chapter two, pp. 65-66

[4] 'Appendix 1. Conservative Party Leadership Selection This Century.' Geoffrey D. M. Block. 3 February 1965 CPA CCO 20/39/3

[5] 'Appendix 1. Conservative Party Leadership Selection This Century'. Geoffrey D. M. Block. 3 February 1965 CPA CCO 20/39/3; and Watkins, The Road to Number Ten, p.39

[6] 'Meetings Held To Elect The Conservative Leader'. Geoffrey D. M. Block. 3 February 1965 CPA CCO 20/39/3; and Watkins, The Road To Number Ten, pp.62-63

Successions Involving Competition for the Leadership

1911: *Andrew Bonar Law*

The 1911 leadership selection was unique as the Conservatives were in opposition, and it was the first time there had been a vacancy in the leadership of the party in the Commons in opposition since Disraeli had assumed the leadership in 1849.[7] In November 1911, Balfour resigned because of attacks on his leadership, and the divisions in the party over tariff reform. Balfour was also widely regarded as a failure as party leader. As the party was in opposition, there was one leader of the party in the Commons and one of the party in the Lords. Lord Lansdowne was already leader of the Lords, but there was considerable disagreement as to who should succeed Balfour as leader of the Commons.

There was also disagreement over how the leader should be chosen. There were two candidates, Austen Chamberlain and Walter Long. Long declared that the correct procedure was for the issue to be decided by a meeting of the Privy Councillors, but this was a minority view. Neither of the two candidates could gain an overall consensus of support throughout the party, as Long was widely viewed as being incompetent, and Chamberlain was distrusted as a Liberal Unionist, and for his position on tariff reform. They were also 'champions of two interests': Long of rural Conservatism and moderate protectionism, and Chamberlain of Liberal Unionism and tariff reform.[8] This explains their candidacies, and also their failure to attain the leadership, as they were considered as feasible leaders by the supporters of the issues they represented, but could not unite the whole party behind their candidacies. The

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[7] V. Bogdanor, 'The Selection of The Party Leader', in A. Seldon/ S. Ball (eds.), Conservative Century. The Conservative Party in Power Since 1900, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p.70

[8] A. Seldon, 'Conservative Century' in Seldon/ Ball (eds.), Conservative Century, p.27

issue needed to be resolved swiftly because the party conference was due to be held in Leeds the following week, and the party's senior figures wanted to keep the conference out of any decision on the leadership. The view that was most popular was that a meeting of all Unionist MPs should be summoned to elect a leader, and this should be convened hastily. Lord Balcarres, the Conservative Chief Whip, declared on 9 November, the day after Balfour announced his resignation, that the Conservative MPs objected to an alternative vote system, and wanted the candidates reduced to two, and then settled by consultation.[9]

Bonar Law, however, insisted on standing. Law was little-known, but was a compromise candidate who offered better prospects of uniting all sections of the party.[10] As we have seen, Long and Chamberlain could not unite the party, whereas Law was in a better position to do so, as he had supported Balfour in his call for a referendum on tariff reform before the general election of December 1910, and could not, therefore, be accused of disloyalty.[11] On 13 November 1911, at a meeting of Unionist MPs at the Carlton Club, Long and Chamberlain withdrew from the contest. This occurred after they agreed privately to do so before the meeting, to allow Law to come forward, as they both saw that they could not unite the party behind their candidacies. They then proposed and seconded Law as leader of the party in the Commons.[12] Law was the right choice in the circumstances, as he offered the best prospects of guaranteeing party unity, and Lloyd George stated at the time, 'The fools have stumbled on their best man by accident'.[13]

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[9] Balcarres Diary, 9 November 1911, in Vincent (ed.), The Crawford Papers (Manchester: 1984) in Bogdanor, 'The Selection of The Party Leader' in Seldon/Ball, (eds.), Conservative Century, p.71
[10] 'Appendix 1. Conservative Party Leadership Selection This Century.' Geoffrey D. M. Block. 3 February 1965 CPA CCO 20/39/3
[11] Bogdanor, 'The Selection of the Party Leader' in Seldon/Ball (eds.), Conservative Century, p.73
[12] For analysis of the significance of the Long and Chamberlain meeting, see chapter two, p.64
[13] J. Ramsden, The Age of Balfour and Baldwin 1902-1940, (London: Longman, 1978), p.91

1923: *Stanley Baldwin*

The selection of Stanley Baldwin on 28 May 1923 followed the resignation of Bonar Law as Prime Minister, because of recurring ill health. There were two candidates for the leadership: Baldwin, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Lord Curzon, the Foreign Secretary. King George V selected Baldwin after taking advice through Lord Stamfordham, and Lords Balfour and Salisbury, which suggested doubts about the suitability of Curzon.[14] Curzon had seemed to have the stronger claim, as he had been acting Prime Minister during Law's illness, and was the most senior figure in the Cabinet. Stamfordham told Curzon that he had not been selected as he was a peer, but Punnett has labelled this as an excuse rather than the real reason, yet fails to offer an explanation for this. However, Bogdanor suggests that Curzon may have been seen as a stalking horse for the return of Austen Chamberlain as leader, and this would have been viewed as treachery by the Conservative back-benchers, who had stood by Law and Baldwin after the removal of Lloyd George.[15] One possible explanation is that a memorandum supporting Baldwin was drafted by J.C.C. Davidson, which was given to Stamfordham by Law's Private Secretary, and the King took this as a statement of Law's own views, but the importance of the Davidson Memorandum can be discounted.[16] The King's own views, and the advice of Balfour, and Lord Derby who was vehemently opposed to Curzon, were decisive in the outcome. The explanation for the appointment of Baldwin is that the King had doubts about appointing a peer in the

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[14] 'Appendix 1. Conservative Party Leadership Selection This Century.' Geoffrey D. M. Block. 3 February 1965 CPA CCO 20/39/3. For analysis of Balfour and Salisbury's advice, see chapter two, pp. 68-69

[15] Bogdanor, 'The Selection of the Party Leader', in Seldon/Ball (eds.), Conservative Century, p.74

[16] Punnett, Selecting The Party Leader, p.35. For an analysis of the role of the Davidson Memorandum, see chapter two, pp. 65-66

current circumstances, and feared a provocative, class-war gesture to Labour, as there were no members of the Labour opposition in the Lords.

On 23 May, a party meeting of peers and MPs was held at Hotel Cecil, at which Baldwin was unanimously endorsed as party leader, after Curzon had proposed the motion. Baldwin had been an anonymous figure before the fall of the coalition, but his role in the downfall of Lloyd George greatly improved his reputation, and he became a key Minister in Law's administration as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Baldwin also had a moderate image, and was seen to be in a better position to preserve the unity of the party that Law had achieved following the departure of Austen Chamberlain.

1957: *Harold Macmillan*[17]

In January 1957, when Anthony Eden resigned in the aftermath of the Suez Crisis, there were only two obvious candidates for the party leadership: Harold Macmillan, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and R.A. Butler, the Leader of the Commons and Lord Privy Seal. Despite this, and the fact that Butler was almost unanimously expected to succeed Eden, the succession of Macmillan was relatively swift. Eden resigned as Prime Minister on 9 January, and Macmillan was chosen by the Queen on the afternoon on 10 January.[18] The Queen consulted Lord Salisbury, Lords Chandos and Waverley, and Winston Churchill, who all expressed a preference for Macmillan. Salisbury conveyed the feelings of the Cabinet, who he had consulted along

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[17] For the detailed analysis of this selection, see chapters four and five

[18] A. Howard, RAB. The Life of R.A. Butler, (London: Cape, 1987), p.246. For details of the wide expectation of Butler to be Eden's successor; and 'Appendix 1. Conservative Party Leadership Selection This Century'. Geoffrey D. M. Block. 3 February 1965 CPA CCO 20/39/3. For the chronology of the succession.

with Lord Kilmuir. Eden, however, did not directly advise the Queen, but supported Butler to succeed him.[19]

There was a massive majority in the Cabinet in favour of Macmillan, and only three Butler supporters have been identified.[20] A new feature of this selection was the Cabinet consultations, and the limited weighing of the opinions of the party, that were reported to the Monarch. The limited consultations of wider party opinion were undertaken by the Chief Whip, Edward Heath, and the Chairman of the 1922 Committee, John Morrison, of the opinions of Conservative MPs, and of Oliver Poole, the Chairman of the Party Organisation, of party organisers. Salisbury delivered these to the Queen along with the Cabinet consultations. Kilmuir has stated that the views of Cabinet ministers were the decisive factor in the selection of Macmillan.[21] The consultations also showed that Butler aroused hostile opposition in some sections of the party, especially the 'die hard' Imperialist wing, after his appeasing stance during the Suez Crisis. Macmillan, on the other hand, had no such opposition to him, and was the unity candidate. Macmillan was elected as leader of the party at a meeting at Church House on 27 January 1957.[22]

1963: *Sir Alec Douglas-Home*[23]

The leadership selection of October 1963 condemned the informal system to its downfall, and a major factor in this was the length of time it took to settle the

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[19] Avon Papers, AP 20/33/12 Eden to Adeane, 12 January 1957 in B. Pimlott, The Queen: A Biography of Elizabeth II, (London: Harper Collins, 1995) p.259

[20] A. Horne, Macmillan 1894-1956, (London: Macmillan, 1989), p.468; and Howard, RAB, p.247

[21] 'Appendix 1. Conservative Party Leadership Selection This Century'. Geoffrey D. M. Block. 3 February 1965 CPA CCO 20/39/3; and Lord Kilmuir, Political Adventure: Memoirs, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964), p.286

[22] 'Appendix 1. Conservative Party Leadership Selection This Century'. Geoffrey D. M. Block. 3 February 1965 CPA CCO 20/39/3

[23] For the detailed analysis of this selection, see chapters six and seven

leadership question. The cue for the selection was Macmillan's prostate illness, which led him to signal his intention to resign on Tuesday 8 October.[24] The issue was not resolved until Home kissed hands with the Queen on agreeing to form an administration on Saturday 19 October.[25] This longevity was central to the discredit that was heaped on the party after the leadership had been decided.

The 1963 leadership selection had two aspects that made it unique in the history of the Conservative Party's selection of its leaders. The first was that the situation was complicated by the announcement of Macmillan's intended resignation during the Party Conference in Blackpool. This turned the Conference into a quasi-U.S. Presidential campaigning forum, a situation that had previously always been successfully avoided. The second was the more formal attempt to canvass the views of the whole of the party, through consultations of the MPs, peers, candidates and party members. This opened the door to greater accountability, and the unsatisfactory outcome of the selection, and its effect on the party's image, meant a new system of selection was inevitable.

The Functions of Conservative Party Leaders

The leader of the Conservative Party holds a unique position in British party politics, as their authority far surpasses that traditionally bestowed on their Labour and Liberal Democrat counterparts. Kelly has argued that the leader's authority dominates three areas of the party machinery. Firstly, policy is at the sole discretion of the leader. He or she has the final word on policy, and no 'official' constraints exist, even though

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[24] R. Shepherd, The Power Brokers: The Tory Party and its Leaders, (London: Hutchinson, 1991), p.152

[25] Punnett, Selecting The Party Leader, p.43

there are many sections of the party that influence policy discreetly. Party Conferences and party meetings do not have a formal influence on policy. Secondly, the leader chooses the Cabinet and Shadow Cabinet. Thirdly, the leader shapes the organisation of the party, inside and outside Parliament, by his or her appointment of the Party Chairman.[26] The leader thus shapes and defines the upper echelons of the party. 'The Conservative Party has always entrusted its leader with great authority. He is free to choose his Cabinet or Shadow Cabinet and he appoints the chairman and officers of the party.'[27] Fisher thus concurs with Kelly's argument, and shows the extent of the power bestowed on the leader of the party.

Bogdanor has correctly suggested that the Conservative Party leader has five tasks. They must, firstly, be competent and efficient as a senior member of the government or opposition. Secondly, they must be perceived as an electoral asset, and thirdly, they must have the support of the Conservative back-benchers. Fourthly, they must retain the support of the party in the country. However, 'Above all, a Conservative leader must not split the party'.[28] For this reason, candidates for the leadership who are perceived as being divisive, do not gain the post. These tasks show the importance of the analytical criteria of acceptability, electability, and governability, as the first task is governability, the second electability, and the final two concern acceptability.

Nigel Birch, Financial Secretary to the Treasury from 1957-1958 in Macmillan's first government, once asserted that the party's organisation instituted a system of 'leadership by consent', which meant that the leader was leader, only as long

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[26] R. Kelly, 'Power in the Conservative Party. Towards a New Assessment', Politics Review, 1, (4), April 1992, p.26
[27] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.1
[28] Bogdanor, 'The Selection of the Party Leader' in Seldon/ Ball, Conservative Century, p.94

as the party wanted him to be leader.[29] Mckenzie has suggested that the impression of absolute power in the leader is misleading, and that the Conservative Party's leaders have traditionally been in a much more insecure position than the leaders of the Labour Party.[30] This is correct because if a leader is not successful, he or she will be quickly jettisoned and replaced.

'The Leadership of the Conservative Party is a subject which gives rise to a considerable popular and even academic mythology.' There are two conventional viewpoints about the Conservative Party leadership. The first is that the party 'is and always has been oligarchical'.[31] According to this view, the people who matter in the party are the influentials, or 'the men in grey suits', and the introduction of the formal election procedure in 1965 has not changed the party's essential power structure. The second viewpoint is that the party was once oligarchical, but the new electoral procedure of 1965 changed all that. Thatcher or Major, and perhaps Heath, would not have been elected under the old system of emergence.[32] One feature that has certainly remained constant over the course of the century is that if the party finds itself in difficulty, the leader takes sole responsibility for the party's fortunes. 'The leader leads and the party follows, except when the party decides not to follow; then the leader ceases to be leader.'[33] This illustrates the power the leader of the Conservative Party holds, and also the insecurity of the position.

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[29] Birch, The Conservative Party, p.42 in R. Mckenzie, British Political Parties, (London; Heinemann, 1964), p.21

[30] Mckenzie, British Political Parties, p.22

[31] Bogdanor, 'The Selection of The Party Leader' in Seldon/Ball (eds.), Conservative Century, p.69; and 95

[32] Bogdanor, 'The Selection of The Party Leader' in Seldon/Ball (eds.), Conservative Century, p.96. The inclusion of Heath as an example is my choice.

[33] Mckenzie, British Political Parties, p.145

The Formal Aspects of the Selection Procedure

The Conservative Party's selection of its leaders before the institution of formal leadership elections in 1965, did not have any specific formal election rules, and different methods were used to select the party's leaders, depending on the circumstances surrounding the selection. The only formal aspect to the selection process that was a constant feature of all selections, was the party meeting that endorsed the selection made after the informal networks and consultations had determined the new leader, and if the party was in power he had been appointed Prime Minister. These informal networks and consultations dominated all the selections where an heir apparent did not exist. 'In 1902, 1921, 1922, 1937, 1940 and 1955 there was no need for any procedure to be devised, since there was an obvious heir apparent'.[34] In 1922, Bonar Law, contrary to tradition, was endorsed as leader at the party meeting before becoming Prime Minister.[35] This denotes the importance of the adaptability of the party's selection system, and how the nature of the selection was determined by the circumstances surrounding it.[36]

An interesting development over the course of this century has been the changing composition of the party meeting, and this evolved to give a wider endorsement from the party to the new leader. Before 1922, the meeting only consisted of Conservative MPs and Peers, but in 1922, prospective Conservative candidates were also invited. This, however, was not a binding precedent, and was not repeated in 1923. In 1937, Conservative MPs, Peers, prospective candidates and

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[34] Bogdanor, 'The Selection of the Party Leader' in Seldon/Ball (eds.), Conservative Century, p.69; and Mckenzie, British Political Parties, pp.51-53

[35] Memo by Stamfordham, Windsor Castle, Royal Archives, K.1814/1 in Bogdanor, 'The Selection of The Party Leader', in Seldon/Ball (eds.), Conservative Century, p.70

[36] For an analysis of the 1922 selection, see chapter two, pp.65-68

members of the Executive Committee of the National Union, were invited to the meeting to endorse Neville Chamberlain as Prime Minister and party leader. From 1955, National Liberal Peers, MPs and candidates were invited, and this remained the composition of the party meeting until 1965.[37] 'At no stage in this process of evolution was the Party Meeting seriously considered as an electoral college nor was its composition considered from this point of view', demonstrating its role of endorsement, not election.[38] Humphrey Berkely, Conservative MP for Lancaster in 1964, who had pressured Home for a change to the party's selection system following the 1963 controversy, noted of the system traditionally used in the party

> In the past and until 1963 despite differences in terminology as to the leadership and differences in the composition of the electoral college, the same procedures so far as the party is concerned have in practice been applied. Soundings of influential people have been taken, a contest has been avoided, and when the party has been in power, a Prime Minister has already been appointed. The Leader was then presented, amid universal acclaim, to the electoral college, most of whom, until 1963, had not been consulted.[39]

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[37] 'Appendix 1. Conservative Party Leadership Selection this century'. Geoffrey D. M. Block. 3 February 1965. Attached to 'Secret. Selection of Party Leader'. JAD/EAM. 5 February 1965. CPA CCO 20/39/3

[38] 'Appendix 5. Alternative Form of Party Meeting', 5 February 1965, JATD/GME CPA CCO 20/39/3

[39] 'Choosing A Leader - Memorandum by Mr. Humphrey Berkely, MP, 9 December 1964' CPA CCO 20/39/3

Before 1965, the Conservative Party took a governmental approach to the selection of its leaders, which meant the method of selection used depended on whether the party was in power or in opposition.[40] Until 1922, the party only had a formal leader when there was a Conservative Prime Minister in office, or when an ex-Prime Minister remained as leader in the Lords or Commons. When in opposition, the party did not have a leader of the whole Parliamentary Party, but had a leader of the House of Commons and a leader of the House of Lords. If the party returned to power, it was for the Monarch to choose who would become Prime Minister. If the party had only recently left office, then the former Prime Minister retained his dominant position.

These methods of leadership selection emerged from the practices of nineteenth century politics, from a time when the party did not have an extra-Parliamentary organisation.[41] This only developed towards the end of the nineteenth century, as mass democracy developed. The party's practices thus evolved from a time when the views of the party outside Parliament were not considered to be important. Two features of the Conservative Party's leadership selection emerged from the practices of this time. The first was the exercise of the Royal Prerogative which required the Monarch to chose the Prime Minister. He or she would seek advice and make informal consultations, but the choice was essentially that of the Monarch. The party hierarchy, however, guided the Monarch towards their preferred candidate.

The second feature was the weighing of opinion in the party by party notables. This was the informal manner by which the party's preferences could be communicated to the Monarch, and is considered in detail in the next section. This practice of

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[40] Punnett, Selecting The Party Leader, p.28
[41] Punnett, Selecting The Party Leader, p.33

weighing opinion in the party had a long and honourable tradition, and was perceived as being effective. It ran against conventional democratic practices, but analysts of Conservative Party leadership selection have agreed on two distinct advantages of the older system.[42] The first is that the method was swift and easy. The selection of Macmillan to replace Eden in January 1957 took a day to resolve, for example. The second advantage is that a consensus can emerge more easily than in a ballot of MPs and wider party figures, and thus can maintain party unity as a leader who is generally acceptable to all sections of the party is selected.

The informal networks and consultations, therefore, rather than any formal procedure, were the most important aspect of the selection process until 1965. 'Meetings, elections, votes, majorities: they play little part in Conservative culture, as anyone knows who has studied the perplexity of Conservative MPs when they are confronted by an election of any description within their own party'.[43]

The Informal Networks of Communication

Apart from the selections of 1902, 1921, 1937 and 1955, where heir apparents to the leadership were clear and obvious, informal networks played a vital and determinant role. In each of the other selections, the Monarch consulted senior party figures or privy councillors, or the outgoing Prime Minister, and then invited the candidate they identified as the most suitable, to form a government. The Monarch normally consulted the outgoing Prime Minister. The exceptions in the Conservative Party's selection of its leaders are 1923 and 1955 - the succession in 1955 was

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[42] Bogdanor, 'The Selection of The Party Leader' in Seldon/Ball (eds.), Conservative Century, p.71; Mckenzie, British Political Parties, p.45; and Punnett, Selecting The Party Leader, p.34

[43] Watkins, The Road To Number Ten, p.9

obvious, and in 1923 Bonar Law was too ill to be consulted, and he asked to be excused from offering advice.[44] The outgoing Prime Ministers to offer advice were Macmillan in 1963, and Eden in 1957.

The Monarch also consulted any senior party figure or privy councillor, that was felt to be able to offer valuable advice in determining the choice. For example, Lords Chandos and Waverley, and Churchill in 1957, and Balfour and Salisbury in 1923.[45] Therefore, the party hierarchy played a major role in the informal networks.[46] Their advice, especially that of senior party figures and former party leaders in the selections before 1957, was often crucial in the decisions that were taken. One feature that is apparent is that the Monarch was not bound to ask a retiring Prime Minister for a view as to his or her successor, and the precedent of 1957, when Eden's advice was not influential, shows that the Monarch does not have to accept those views.[47] This illustrates that in most cases the advice of an outgoing leader was not deemed to be crucial to the decision, and the advice of the party's 'elder statesmen' was of more significance. The only exception to this was Macmillan's role in the 1963 selection, as he was determined to play a central role in the selection of Home, and felt that role was essential for Home to become leader.

If a Prime Minister resigned or died with no obvious successor, 'the electoral machinery of the party concerned will be used to choose a new party leader, and that person will be summoned to the palace and appointed Prime Minister'.[48] This illustrates the vital role of the informal networks in the party, as before 1965 they were the 'electoral machinery' of the party. The reason for the use of the informal networks

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[44] V. Bogdanor, The Monarchy and the Constitution, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p.79
[45] Bogdanor, The Monarchy and the Constitution, p.79
[46] For a definition of the party hierarchy and its composition, see chapter one, p.24
[47] Bogdanor, The Monarchy and the Constitution, p.94
[48] Bogdanor, The Monarchy and the Constitution, p.84

was 'because the crown was anxious to appoint somebody who would be acceptable to the party', and the party hierarchy felt this was a more effective method of finding the most acceptable candidate than a formal leadership election.[49] Until 1957, the consultations were limited to a small number of advisers, but in 1957, the Cabinet were consulted as part of the procedure for the first time, and the consultations in that selection were more exhaustive. In 1963, this was entrenched further as the consultations covered all sections of the Parliamentary party, and consultations were undertaken of the views of the party in the country. The informal networks became more extensive because of the difficult circumstances surrounding the selection. There was also growing pressure for greater accountability by the party and the public, 'But despite these more extensive soundings there was still criticism that the leader was effectively chosen by a 'magic circle' of senior figures in the party'.[50]

There was no set pattern or uniformity to the informal consultations of each selection, and they, therefore, fitted the situation and circumstances that surrounded each one. The consultations were of an undefined nature, and there were no written rules or conventions. A certain degree of consistency can be found across the selections, but this was more due to situational parallels, than a uniform pattern in the nature of the informal consultations. This undefined nature meant that the practice was adaptable, and allowed the party to face different situational requirements. On 18 November 1964, Sir Michael Fraser, the General Director of the CRD, wrote to Lord Blakenham, the Party Chairman, during the development of the formal leadership election procedure

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[49] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.6
[50] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, pp.6-7

Because of the sort of party we are, no system of election or selection will in fact succeed unless the actual process has really been resolved by private negotiations before it takes place. In any new arrangements we make, therefore, it is most important not to think that they can do the job for us from scratch. [51]

This view denotes the tradition in the party of the use of informal networks in the selection of the party's leaders, and the vital role they were felt to have. The examples of the informal networks in the party's selection of its leaders before 1965 include those during the 1911 selection of Bonar Law. These were the agreement between Long and Chamberlain, the other two candidates, to stand aside for Law, and the offer made by Balcarres to undertake 'soundings' in the party of opinion on who should succeed Balfour. Balcarres offered to make soundings of opinion to see if there was a majority for one candidate, and 'if so, whether the others might be persuaded to withdraw so that the party meeting might be offered just one name'.[52] The decisive action in the outcome, however, was Long and Chamberlain's private agreement to withdraw if another candidate came forward. They did so after Chamberlain offered to withdraw to settle the deadlock, but only if Long also agreed to, and 'once that offer was made, Long could hardly refuse'. Many Conservative MPs at the party meeting expressed dismay at the choice being made by private agreement, but it followed in the tradition of the party's leadership selection in using informal networks to settle the succession.[53]

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[51] Fraser to Blakenham, 18 November 1964 CPA CCO 20/39/3
[52] Bogdanor, 'The Selection of the Party Leader' in Seldon/Ball (eds.), Conservative Century, p.72
[53] J. Ramsden, An Appetite For Power. A History of the Conservative Party Since 1830, (London: Harper Collins, 1998), p.215; and Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.23

In 1922, the discussions between Stamfordham and Law to persuade Law to succeed as party leader were significant. Following Lloyd George's resignation, Stamfordham was at once despatched to ascertain Bonar Law's views. Law told him he was no longer leader of the party, and that the party was 'broken up'. He declared that until he knew he had the party's support, he could not accept office. Law then stated that he would need to be present at a meeting of the 'whole party', to discover if he had its full backing. Stamfordham told him that the King was sending for Law 'independently of these party considerations', and that the King had a duty to form a government as soon as possible after accepting Lloyd George's resignation. He also told Law that unless a new government was formed, the Irish Treaty would not be ratified, and would lapse. Law still maintained that he needed to be elected leader of the party at a party meeting. Following a considerable amount of discussion between the Palace and Law, the King accepted that he should be elected at a party meeting, and he told the King he would consult with 'those who might help him form a government'. On 23 October, Law was elected leader at the party meeting and was then appointed Prime Minister, reversing the usual procedure to fit the circumstances that the selection took place in.[54]

In 1923, the Davidson Memorandum, the soundings undertaken by Stamfordham, and the Balfour and Salisbury consultations were the informal communications. According to Fisher, Bonar Law preferred Baldwin, but did not express this view.[55] The King decided, after consulting both Lord Balfour, the only other living Conservative ex-Premier, and a Conservative elder statesman, Lord Salisbury (the son of the former Prime Minister), to appoint Baldwin. There was no

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[54] Watkins, The Road To Number Ten, pp. 8-10; and Mckenzie, British Political Parties, p.35
[55] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.28

attempt at a systematic canvass of the Cabinet or of MPs, pointing to the importance of informal networks in the decision.

Watkins has stated of the Davidson Memorandum, 'Law had nothing to do with it. Indeed, it misrepresented his views'. Ramsden has argued that Bonar Law gave no formal advice to the King, but 'may have known' of the Davidson Memorandum, which was supposed to represent Law's view that Baldwin should succeed him.[56] Clark has argued that Davidson's objectives were clear, as he had long been 'intimate' with Baldwin, more so than he was with Law, but had nothing in common with Curzon, 'nor any prospect of promotion, nor of keeping a job in government at all'. He believes that the crucial assertion in the Davidson memorandum was 'Lord Curzon is regarded in the public eye as representing that section of privileged Conservatism which has its value but in this democratic age...'.[57]

The Davidson memorandum was delivered by Colonel Waterhouse, Bonar Law's Private Secretary to Stamfordham on May 20, when he informed Stamfordham of Law's resignation. It was said by Stamfordham's note on the succession in the Royal Archives, to have 'practically expressed the views of Mr. Bonar Law'. Blake has argued that 'there is no internal evidence in the document to suggest that it expressed Bonar Law's views'. Davidson stated that it was written, as he was requested by Stamfordham to give the 'point of view of the average back bencher in the House of Commons'. Davidson believed it did correspond with Law's own views, but the memorandum was an expression of Davidson's views only.[58] Stamfordham advised

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[56] Bogdanor, 'The Selection of the Party Leader' in Seldon/Ball (eds.), Conservative Century , p.73; Watkins, The Road To Number Ten, p.11; and Ramsden, An Appetite For Power, p.250

[57] A. Clark, The Tories. Conservatives and the Nation State, 1922-1997, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1997), p.23

[58] R. Blake, The Conservative Party From Peel to Major, (London: Arrow, 1997, third edition), pp.211-212; and R. Rhodes-James (ed.), Memoirs of a Conservative. The Memoirs and Papers of J.C.C. Davidson, 1910-1937, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969), pp.151-163

the King to send for Curzon, so the Davidson Memorandum could not have influenced his views strongly, and the King's decision was formed by his own belief that the circumstances were wrong for a peer to be Prime Minister.[59] However, the Davidson Memorandum was not decisive, while the advice of Balfour was influential, as it confirmed the King's own assessment that Baldwin was the best candidate in the circumstances.[60]

'In those days the accepted method of settling the succession lay in 'soundings' of opinion by the King's private secretary, Lord Stamfordham'.[61] Balfour urged that Baldwin should be appointed for 'one over-riding reason: the Prime Minister ought to be in the House of Commons'. The King decided after Balfour's advice, which were conformity with his personal judgement, to send for Baldwin.[62] Lord Salisbury stated that Curzon's candidacy should not 'lightly be ignored', but his advice was not influential. Balfour recorded his observations, and his belief that Baldwin should succeed Law, in a memorandum for the record confirming his views. He also stated that he 'understood from Stamfordham, that these views were probably in very close conformity with those already held by His Majesty'.[63] The fact that Curzon was a peer, and none of the members of the Labour opposition were in the Lords counted against Curzon, but the choice was only made to suit these circumstances, and did not mean that Lords would permanently be excluded from consideration for the party

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[59] Blake, The Conservative Party, p.212
[60] For an explanation of this point, see chapter two, pp.52-53
[61] Blake, The Conservative Party, p.211
[62] 'Appendix 1. Conservative Party Leadership Selection This Century', Geoffrey D.M. Block, 3 February 1965 CPA CCO 20/39/3; Mckenzie, British Political Parties, p.40; and Ramsden, An Appetite For Power, p.250
[63] Watkins, The Road To Number Ten, p.11, C. Hazelhurst, 'The Baldwinite Conspiracy', Historical Studies, 16 (1974), p.169 in Bogdanor, The Monarchy and the Constitution, pp.90-91; and Clarke, The Tories, p.23

leadership. 'It is clear that the principle reason for the choice of Baldwin was the difficulty of having a peer as Prime Minister'.[64]

The examples of the use of informal networks of communication in the selection of the party's leaders, has shown that they were the vital component of the selection procedure, where a clear heir apparent did not exist. They helped to inform the Monarch, or confirm his or her own judgement, of who was the best candidate in the circumstances surrounding the selection.

The Outcomes: Situational Parallels and Distinctions

The first clear trend in the selections is that if there was a clear heir apparent, no procedure was needed or used, and that person succeeded automatically. The examples of this are Balfour in 1902, Austen Chamberlain in 1921, Bonar Law in 1922, Neville Chamberlain in 1937, and Anthony Eden in 1955. The second is that the informal practices used in the selections allowed it to be adaptable, and meet the needs of different situations and circumstances surrounding selections. For example, Bonar Law was elected leader before becoming Prime Minister in 1922, contrary to tradition when the party was in power, because of the unusual circumstances surrounding the selection.

The informal consultations became more extensive if the party had to select a new leader in a time of severe difficulty. For example, the party meeting in 1922 to elect Law as leader before he became Prime Minister, for the reasons explained earlier.[65] Another example is the Cabinet consultations in 1957, and the informal canvasses of party opinion by Heath, Poole and Morrison. This was the first time the

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[64] Blake, The Conservative Party, p.213
[65] See chapter two, pp.65-66

Cabinet had been consulted, and this was because of the severe state of disunity in the party after the Suez Crisis. This was entrenched further by the selection of Home in 1963, when the informal consultations of the Cabinet, Conservative MPs, the Lords, and the constituency parties, took a more formal nature. This was because the party was in a severe state of disunity, and the party hierarchy wanted to assess party opinion fully. The fourth trend is that the party meeting did not elect its leaders, but merely endorsed the decision of the party hierarchy and the monarch. As already noted, the only exception to this was the 1922 selection of Law.

It is clear that when the Monarch consulted the outgoing Prime Minister for advice on his successor, that advice does not always have to be taken up, and is not always decisive. It was in 1963, but in 1957, Eden offered his opinion that Butler would be a worthy successor, whereas Macmillan was selected. Conversely, the advice given by senior party figures to the Monarch was usually decisive, and this was especially the case if it confirmed the Monarch's view on a successor. For example, the advice of Balfour in 1923, and Churchill in 1957. The next clear trend is the role of the Monarch's Private Secretary was often of vast significance in ascertaining the views of the party's senior figures on the selection of a new leader. For example, the role of Stamfordham in 1922 and 1923, and Adeane and Ford in 1957 and 1963.

A significant trend is that situational pressures had a highly influential role on the nature of the selection, and the system was designed to be flexible enough to cope with a wide range of situational variables. For example, the imminence of a party conference affected the selection procedure, as it threatened to allow wider party opinion to play a role in the selection, a factor successfully avoided by the party hierarchy in finalising the choice quickly. This occurred in 1911, and also in 1963 as

the selection was controlled tightly, the two instances where the party conference was a complicating factor. Both selections produced similar outcomes: the party selected a surprise compromise leader to keep the party together, as the other candidates experienced substantial opposition to their candidacies.[66]

In 1963, Macmillan's statement of his intention to resign, made by Home during the party conference, signalled the opportunity for the party conference to play a role in the selection of Macmillan's successor. It also complicated the party hierarchy's deliberations on who that successor should be. The role of the party conference was important in the 1963 selection as it meant that a 'campaign' for the leadership, similar to campaigns in formal leadership elections, was instigated by the public platform that the candidates found themselves on. Their actions during the party conference had an important bearing on the outcome of the selection, as Home improved his candidacy, whereas Butler, Maudling and Hailsham all adversely affected theirs.[67]

The next situational pressure was the wider party political situation, and the Parliamentary position of candidates. This was an important situational factor in the 1923 and 1963 selections, although both had different outcomes. The 1923 selection of Baldwin was affected by this as his main rival, Lord Curzon, was a peer and it was felt that a peer could not succeed Law at this time. This was because there were no members of the Labour opposition in the House of Lords, and a Prime Minister from the Commons was felt to be more suitable in this situation. In 1963, a key situational influence was the institution of the Peerage Act in July 1963. This legislation allowed peers to renounce their peerages, and stand as candidates for the House of Commons.

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[66] For an explanation of the effect of the party conference on the 1911 selection, see chapter two, p.51
[67] For the effect of the party conference on the 1963 selection, see chapter six

This allowed Home and Hailsham to become viable candidates to succeed Macmillan, and therefore, was a factor in the outcome of the selection.

The imminence of an election has proved to be a strong situational influence on the selection of the party's leaders, and this was especially the case with the 1963 selection of Home. This selection occurred with only a year to go before a general election had to take place, and alongside the key situational influence of the wide discredit heaped on the Macmillan regime, was a key factor in the outcome. The imminence of an election means that electability becomes a key attribute, in an effort to gain or secure another term in office. Home's electability was felt to be significant, as he was not directly associated with the domestic failures of the Macmillan regime, had an inoffensive reputation, and a wide reputation as a competent minister. This was in contrast to the other candidates, especially Butler, whose electability was felt by the party to be low, because of his direct association with Macmillan. Conversely, the 1957 selection occurred at a convenient place in the electoral cycle, as the party had until 1960 before it had to hold an election. Evidence suggests that Macmillan was selected as a stop-gap leader, as Home was in 1963, because of the wide expectation that the government would fall because of the Suez Crisis, but Macmillan was the best qualified candidate for the situation.[68]

A clear feature is that general acceptance in the party can often be more important than widespread enthusiasm for a candidate. This is especially when there was substantial opposition to the favoured candidates, and this occurred in 1911 and 1963. This points to the nature of the party's selection of its leaders: the party often took a pragmatic approach, designed to keep ideology and factions out of the party's

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[68] For a fuller analysis of this point, see chapter five.

key decision-making, and it's approach to government. Opposition to candidates was deemed to be of more importance than appointing a leader who was enthusiastically endorsed in the party. This is especially apparent in selections when the party was in a state of severe division and difficulty, as in 1911, 1957 and 1963.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the Conservative Party's selection of its leaders before 1965 was dominated by the use of informal networks of communication to find the best leader. There were no formal rules, and the only formal aspect of the procedure was the party meeting that endorsed the choice of the Monarch and the party hierarchy. The system was designed to be flexible enough to meet a wide variety of situational variables that the party may have met in selecting its leaders, and this was its raison d'être. The procedures adaptability is also apparent in the different ways the system was used in different circumstances.

The important role of the party hierarchy in the selection of the party's leaders has been demonstrated, as they were the foremost actors in giving advice to the Monarch, and in undertaking soundings of party opinion. It is also apparent that the role of the party hierarchy evolved over the period Until 1957, the informal consultations were limited to a small number of the advisors and were randomly conducted, but in 1957 and 1963, they had more extensive and more formal roles in the soundings of Cabinet and party opinion. It is clear, however, that the informal selection procedure was designed to find the most generally acceptable leader, and that this was often more important than a widespread enthusiasm for a candidate. This is

especially apparent in selections at times of severe difficulty for the party, like the selections of 1957 and 1963.

Chapter Three

The Candidates: Party Status and Personalities

This chapter analyses the party status and personal qualities of the candidates in the two leadership selections. The candidates were Harold Macmillan and R.A. Butler in January 1957, and Butler, Lord Home, Reginald Maudling, and Lord Hailsham in October 1963. The party status of the candidates discusses the posts that they had achieved, and the extent to which they were political 'insiders' or 'outsiders' in the party, during their careers prior to the leadership selections they were involved in. This aspect is analysed by demonstrating different graduations of 'insider' status, following the definition set out in chapter one.[1] The section on the candidates' personalities analyses the characteristics that were important in their success or failure in the two selections.

The Candidates' Party Status

Macmillan

Before 1940, Macmillan was unsuccessful in attaining any significant status in the party. He was in many ways a 'frustrated careerist', who from becoming an MP in 1925 remained an obscure back-bencher. Macmillan, from the base of his first constituency, Stockton-On-Tees, focused on economic issues as a means of gaining attention. In publications such as Industry and the State (April 1927), Reconstruction: A Plea For A National Policy (December 1933), The Next Five Years (March 1935), and The Price Of Peace (May 1938), he attacked the government's policies to deal with economic and industrial problems. Macmillan was greatly influenced by the

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[1] For the analysis of the graduations of 'outsider' and 'insider' status, see chapter one, pp.16-17

poverty, deprivation, and industrial decline in Stockton, which led him to focus on this issue. However, despite these efforts, Macmillan remained a political 'outsider' in the Conservative Party. He can be classified as an 'outsider' in this period, as he was not regarded as a successful back-bencher. Unlike Butler, he did not gain the traditional junior posts that gained him the first stage of 'insider' status in the party, such as Parliamentary Private Secretary or Under-Secretary. Macmillan was an ordinary back-bencher on the outer realms of the Parliamentary Party.

Macmillan's lack of success led him to consider joining Oswald Mosley's New Party in 1931, but he did not as he believed that remaining with the Conservative Party was the best way of furthering his career.[2] That Macmillan was tempted to join Mosley illustrates the extent to which he was unsuccessful as a party politician in this period. He continued his strategy of attacking the government's economic policies in The Middle Way in June 1938. Macmillan believed this was his political testament, but like his earlier work, it was not successful in improving his party status, but did influence younger Conservatives, like Hugh Fraser and Edward Heath.[3]

The policy of appeasement towards Nazi Germany gave Macmillan another focus of attack in his efforts to kick-start his career. He became one of the anti-appeasers, along with Winston Churchill and Anthony Eden. The anti-appeasers were not successful, and were not feared as a threat by the Conservative Party hierarchy. Macmillan later noted that 'We had no power to change the Government, even if we could have rallied at that time sufficient Members to bring about its fall'.[4] The declaration of war on 3 September 1939 did not change Macmillan's 'outsider' status,

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[2] H. Nicolson, Diaries and Letters 1930-1939, (London: Collins, 1966), entry for 30 May 1930, p.76. Harold Nicolson was a member of the New Party, and Macmillan told him he felt it was better for him to remain a Conservative MP.

[3] Horne, Macmillan 1894-1956, pp.107-109

[4] H. Macmillan, Winds Of Change 1914-1939, (London: Macmillan, 1966), p.550

but when Chamberlain fell as Prime Minister in May 1940, he held high hopes for an up-turn in his career, as Churchill succeeded Chamberlain as Prime Minister.

After Churchill came to power, Macmillan gained his first government post, as Under-Secretary to the Minister of Supply, Lord Beaverbrook on 29 June 1941. This was his first government post after sixteen years as an MP, and was the most junior position in the Ministry. Following that appointment, Macmillan occupied the same post at the Colonial Office. In December 1942, he became British Minister Resident in North Africa. This was a clear promotion for Macmillan, as he had direct contact with Churchill and Cabinet status. However, Macmillan remained a political 'outsider', as although he had attained the first stage of 'insider' status, he was detached from the Westminster scene, and was of low status in the party. The advantages of the post were perceived by Macmillan, and he accepted Churchill's offer 'immediately and gratefully'.[5] He did gain valuable experience in this post, and was a success, as he gained a good reputation with Eisenhower, the Allied Commander-in-Chief. This came to be of great significance during the Suez Crisis. Once the war had ended, Macmillan became Secretary of State for Air in the caretaker government before the 1945 election. He finished the war years with an enhanced reputation, but was still an insignificant figure detached from the upper realms of the party.

During the opposition years of 1945-1951, Macmillan began to improve his status in the party. He became a chief contributor on the Industrial Policy Committee that produced The Industrial Charter of 1947, and played a key role in publicising it at the meetings with trade unionists and businessmen, which contributed to the formulation of the policies. Macmillan produced key documents that were influential in

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[5] H. Macmillan, War Diaries, (London: Macmillan, 1984), p.xxi; and H. Macmillan, The Blast Of War 1939-1945, (London: Macmillan, 1967), p.185

the final version of The Industrial Charter, such as Industrial Policy and The Government and Industry. Conservative Research Department documents reveal the central role he played in the formulation of the IPC's policy proposals, and the publicity of them.[6] This helped to increase perceptions of Macmillan in the party as a politician with good electability. This role also served to decrease Macmillan's 'outsider' chic in the party because of his role on the IPC, but his party status remained outside the upper realms of the party.

When the Conservatives returned to power at the 1951 election, Macmillan gained the post of Minister of Housing and Local Government. This was a junior position in the Cabinet, and evidence suggests that he wanted a more senior post. This appointment, however, illustrates how far away from the summit of the party Macmillan was in 1951. It proved, nevertheless to be a successful appointment for him, and its potential was summed up when Churchill told Macmillan on his appointment: 'It [will] make or mar my political career. But every humble home will bless my name, if I succeed'.[7] Macmillan's ability as an effective legislator and administrator, and his electability in publicising the housing drive, improved Macmillan's status in a post of vital electoral significance. His role as the man who built 300,000 houses a year increased Macmillan's party status and his visibility in the country, and he was invited to give one of the first ever Party Political Broadcasts in 1953. As Ramsden has noted, 'Macmillan was seen as one of the government's stars, much in demand for constituency engagements'.[8] Bracken noted to Beaverbrook that 'Macmillan has shown a great deal of good sense in his dealings with the public'. This was illustrated

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[6] 'The Worker and Industry', initialled 'H.M', The Government and Industry', undated; 'Industrial Policy', undated; and 'Suggested Plans and Dates for Areas to be visited by members of the Industrial Policy Committee, 5 December 1946 CPA CRD 2/7/56

[7] Diary entry for 28 October 1951, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.9* (111)

[8] J. Ramsden, The Age of Churchill and Eden, 1940-1957, (London: Longman, 1995), p.257

when Macmillan visited Exmoor in August 1952 following severe floods which destroyed Lynmouth, and the national press acclaimed Macmillan's visit.[9] Macmillan became more of an 'insider' in the party over this period because of his success at Housing, and he further increased this status when he penetrated the 'inner circle' of the Churchill government, when he was promoted to Minister of Defence in October 1954. Macmillan did not enjoy this post as defence matters were dominated by Churchill, and he had little success there, but the post improved his status in the party, and also his governability as he moved into one of the key foreign policy positions in the government.

When Eden succeeded Churchill as Prime Minister in April 1955, Macmillan succeeded him as Foreign Secretary. This significantly improved his status in the party, as he now occupied one of the three 'great offices of state', and was on a traditional career path to the party leadership. Macmillan now fulfilled the final stage of 'insider' status. Macmillan had always coveted the position of Foreign Secretary, and enjoyed the job, but did not appreciate Eden's interference in the work of the Foreign Office. Macmillan was only at the Foreign Office for six months before agreeing to become Chancellor of the Exchequer in December 1955, replacing Butler at the Treasury. Eden had first asked Macmillan to consider going to the Treasury before the 1955 election, and he was asked again on 23 September 1955.[10] This move, after months of stalling and negotiation over terms for moving posts, was significant for Macmillan as he now occupied another of the three 'great offices of state'. It was the key domestic position

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[9] R. Cockett (ed.), My Dear Max: The Letters of Brendan Bracken to Lord Beaverbrook, 1925-1958, (London: Historians' Press, 1990), entry for 7 January 1953, pp.135-136; and The Times, 20 August 1952

[10] Diary entry for 3 April 1955, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.20 (79); and Diary entry for 23 September 1955 Ms. Macmillan dep. d.23* (57-58)

in the government, and a traditional career path to the leadership that was more common than the Foreign Office route.[11]

> Macmillan's three years at Housing had given him an appetite for power and had shown the party something of his flair for presentation, hitherto generally unsuspected; from 1954 he moved within two years through the Ministry of Defence, the Foreign Office and the Exchequer, and so developed an all-rounder's claims on the highest post of all.[12]

Following the onset of the Suez Crisis in July 1956, Macmillan became one of Eden's most important ministers, and, along with Lord Salisbury, was the most vocal 'hawk' in the Cabinet who supported Eden's aggressive stance towards Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company. Macmillan was at the core of key Ministers on the Egypt Committee, and played a major role in the determination of policy and planning for the invasion of the Canal Zone. As Chancellor, Macmillan had the ultimate responsibility for the safe-guarding of Britain's financial well-being. His concerns over the state of the British economy, after the full extent of Britain's problems with the oil supply, led him to signal the retreat from the Canal Zone on 6 November, after it became clear that the US government would not help Britain financially unless a cease-fire was called. Macmillan's centrality in this decision shows the full extent of his status and position in the party.

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[11] The details of Macmillan's negotiations with Eden, and his belief that Butler should not become Deputy Prime Minister (which Butler wanted) are in Diary entries for 24 October, 18 November and 7-13 December 1955, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.24* (2-4, 81, 108v-114v)

[12] Ramsden, Age of Churchill and Eden, p.257

This signalling of the cease-fire also served to increase Macmillan's status, despite his transformation from one of the most aggressive Ministers in calling for military action, to giving the signal for the retreat, and being 'first in, first out'. This was because when Eden went to Jamaica, Butler became the focal point for Conservative MPs' discontent, while Macmillan used the situation to promote his status regarding his leadership candidacy, if Eden was forced to resign because of the crisis. This was especially apparent at the 1922 Committee meeting of 22 November when Macmillan delivered a rallying cry to the party's MPs that invigorated their spirits. The speech increased his status as a leadership candidate, as it had then become clear to the party that Eden was unlikely to continue as leader. Following Eden's departure for Jamaica, Macmillan played a key role alongside Butler in re-building Anglo-US relations. His long-standing friendship with President Eisenhower was rejuvenated in this period, and Macmillan's actions in securing the necessary financial help for the British government increased his status with the US government, who appeared to favour him over Butler in succession to Eden. At the time of the selection of Eden's successor, Macmillan occupied a position of considerable status in the party, and was in a prime position to become leader should Eden relinquish his position.

<u>Butler</u>

Butler became the Conservative MP for Saffron Walden at the 1929 general election, and rapidly attained his first position of junior rank in the government. In August 1931, He became Parliamentary Private Secretary to Sir Samuel Hoare at the India Office, and was promoted to Under-Secretary of State in August 1932. Sir Samuel Hoare, the Secretary of State for India told Lord Willingdon, the Viceroy of

India, that he appointed Butler because of his knowledge of Indian affairs.[13] He then became Under-Secretary at the Ministry of Labour in May 1937, before moving to the same position at the Foreign Office following Eden's resignation as Foreign Secretary on 20 February 1938.

Over the first decade of his career, Butler became a political 'insider' in the Conservative Party, as he attained a junior position in the party quickly, and was then promoted several times. This can be deemed as the first stage of Butler's 'insider' status. His time at the Foreign Office was crucial to his party status, as he gained good experience by his close work with Chamberlain and Halifax, and represented the Foreign Office in the Commons as Halifax was a peer. 'He became far more of an habitué of No. 10 than any other junior Minister'. This was significant in terms of Butler's experience of governability. However, it had a disadvantage as Butler was directly associated with the policy of appeasement, and when this failed by the outbreak of war, this affected his status with the anti-appeasers in the party, but they did not represent a significant section of Conservative MPs.[14] The 'Munichite' tag only affected Butler's party status later in his career, during both leadership selections of 1957 and 1963. This tag acted in accumulation with the Suez Crisis and with the dissolution of the Central African Federation in 1963, which affected Butler's status with the traditionalist right wing of the party. This accumulation of doubts affected his acceptability in both selections, but did not affect his status during the late 1930s, as he was still a junior member of the government, and obviously not a contender for the leadership of the party at this time. In the New Years Honours list of 1939, Butler was

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[13] R.A. Butler, The Art of The Possible, (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1971), pp.45-46

[14] Howard, RAB, pp.72-73; and R. Rhodes-James (ed.), 'Chips': The Diaries of Sir Henry Channon, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1993), entry for 13 April 1939, p.193. Channon was Butler's Parliamentary Private Secretary, and noted the closeness of Butler and Chamberlain.

nominated by Chamberlain to the Privy Council, and at thirty-six he was the youngest Privy Councillor since Churchill, and Butler was obviously delighted at this award, which buttressed his growing 'insider' status. He noted of the honour: 'Greatest political honour. Youngest except for Winston' [Churchill].[15]

On 20 July 1941, Butler became President of the Board of Education, and this was a clear promotion for him. His work in introducing the 1944 'Butler' Education Act significantly enhanced his reputation, and status in the party as a progressive Conservative who was likely to play a key role in the rejuvenation of Conservatism after the Second World War. Churchill telegraphed Butler on the passage of the Act on 3 August 1944, and told him 'Pray accept my congratulations. You have added a notable Act to the Statute Book and won a lasting place in the history of British education'. Ramsden noted that 'The Act was a signal triumph whose passage into law...established Butler as a major figure for the future'.[16] Butler's work as Chairman of the Post-War Problems Central Committee (PWPCC), which aimed at preparing the party for the realities of Post-War Britain also increased his party status, and both significantly increased his governability.

Following the 1945 election defeat, Butler became a key player in the rejuvenation of the Conservative Party, and its adaptation to the conditions of Post-War Britain. He is widely acknowledged as the party's 'Philosopher-in Chief' through his work as Chairman of the Conservative Research Department (CRD) and the Advisory Committee on Policy and Political Education (ACPPE). This was increased by his role as Chairman of the Industrial Policy Committee (IPC) that produced The

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[15] Notes, 'Privy Councillor', c.May 1939, Butler MSS RAB G10 (22)

[16] 'Telegram from the Prime Minister addressed to Mr. R.A. Butler on the occasion of the Education Act receiving Royal Assent and becoming law'. Signed Winston S Churchill, undated Butler MSS RAB G16 (179); Butler, Art of the Possible, p.122; and Ramsden, Age of Churchill and Eden, p.40

Industrial Charter of 11 May 1947. The Industrial Charter emphasised the party's acceptance of the role of the state in the planned economy, and the public ownership of coal, rail transport, and the Bank of England. Both were important groups in preparing the party's response to Labour's Post-War settlement, and Butler's role as Chairman of these influential party organisations showed his growing status in the party. Butler's governability was also illustrated by his successful chairmanship of both committees. His appointment as Chairman of the IPC was a surprise to him, as Oliver Stanley and Oliver Lyttelton, two other members of the IPC, were of more senior status. This serves to illustrate Butler's central role in the rejuvenation of party policy after 1945, and the consequent status in the party that went with that role.[17] This period served to increase his 'insider' status, as he gained more influence in the upper-realms of the party.

However, his role in the 1945-51 period of opposition increased doubts about Butler with the right wing of the party. Their doubts first arose during the appeasement era. He was seen as a 'wet' and a 'milk and water socialist', who was denigrating the party's principles, and this decreased his acceptability with this wing of the party. The opposition of the right wing was led by Sir Waldron Smithers, Conservative MP for Orpington, who attacked The Industrial Charter in correspondence to Butler, and in the press.[18] However, two points must be noted about the effect of this on Butler's status in the party. Firstly, this period was far before the two leadership contests that he was involved in, and was therefore, not influential in affecting his status in 1957 or 1963. The circumstances surrounding both selections, and Butler's response to them,

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[17] Butler, Art of the Possible, p.135

[18] 'Orpington Division - Private and Confidential', Smithers to Butler, July 1947 Butler MSS RAB H92 (110), 'Private and Confidential - not for publication - 'Industrial of Magna Charter?' The Conservative Industrial Charter attacked by Sir Waldron Smithers, J.P., M.P. - to the authors of the Charter. London, July 1947'. Butler MSS RAB H92 (112-145); and The Times, 12 May 1947

were the most influential factors in the outcomes. Secondly, despite misgivings in some sections of the party to the conciliatory response adopted to Labour's Post-War settlement, many saw the necessity of such a response, and did not oppose Butler for playing a key role in directing it. The failure of the right wing opposition to The Industrial Charter at the 1948 Party Conference illustrates the lack of effect this had on Butler's party status. There were only three votes against The Industrial Charter at the Conference, after the members of the IPC submitted an amendment that called for it to be accepted only as a basis of Conservative policy, and this was almost unanimously accepted.[19] Memories are often long in politics, but not that long. Macmillan noted of Butler's role in The Industrial Charter: 'His [Butler's] work in guiding the unfolding of the new Conservatism placed him in the first rank of the party's leaders'.[20] This is a correct assessment of Butler's party status, and was illustrated when he was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Conservative's return to power in October 1951.

Butler now entered one of the 'great offices of state' with an obvious positive effect on his 'insider' status, and his governability, acceptability and electability, as a possible future candidate for the leadership. However, Eden was the clear heir apparent in 1951, and was expected to succeed Churchill sooner rather than later. Butler was chosen by Churchill for his moderate image and his ability to deal with the 'Commons stuff', over the widely expected appointment, Oliver Lyttelton. Sir Robert Hall, the Director of the Economic Section based in the Cabinet office, noted in his diary that Lyttelton was the expected appointment in the Treasury, and Macmillan

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[19] Butler's notes for an essay on the party's evolution after the Second World War, undated CPA CRD 2/53/1; and Butler, Art of the Possible, p.148

[20] H. Macmillan, Tides of Fortune 1945-1955, (London: Macmillan, 1969), p.308

noted that Lyttelton was also the expected appointment within the party.[21] Butler was successful as Chancellor in dealing with the massive deficit that the new government inherited, and was a popular chancellor with the party and the public.[22] By the autumn of 1952, the balance of payments was back in surplus. In January 1953, Party Chairman, Lord Woolton wrote to Butler and told him 'you seem to be working financial marvels'.[23]

In June 1953, Churchill suffered a stroke, and as Eden was also recuperating from major surgery, Butler became de facto acting Prime Minister for the period of their absence. This was significant for his status, and he came to be seen as a possible alternative to Eden as party leader, but Eden remained the obvious successor to Churchill. However, the 'establishment plot' against Butler to prevent him from succeeding Churchill instead of Eden, with the plan for Lord Salisbury, the Lord President, to be the figurehead for the government during their absence, illustrated doubts about his acceptability to the party hierarchy. Butler was aware of the plot to prevent him succeeding Churchill, as he revealed in 1978.[24] However, the plot was probably due to the wish to secure the succession for Eden as it was felt to be rightly his, rather than a plot directly against Butler. He was pressured by a number of back-bench MPs who were opposed to Eden succeeding Churchill, but the vast majority appear to have shared the party hierarchy's view that Eden was the right successor to Churchill.[25] However, Butler's conduct during Churchill and Eden's absence improved

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[21] Butler, Art of the Possible, p.156; A. Cairncross (ed.), The Robert Hall Diaries, 1947-1953, (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), entry for 15 October 1951, p.169; and Macmillan, Tides of Fortune, p.497

[22] The Balance of Payments Deficit was £700 million

[23] Woolton to Butler, 15 January 1953 Butler MSS RAB G26 (9)

[24] BBC Radio Profile, 29 June 1978 in Howard, RAB, p.199

[25] Rayner to Butler, 12 July 1953 Butler MSS RAB G26 (63-64). Brigadier Ralph Rayner urged Butler to grasp the leadership as he felt Eden was not the right successor to Churchill, and stated that many of his back-bench colleagues shared his view.

his relationship with Churchill, and his status in the party hierarchy. This point was noted by Jane Portal, Butler's niece, who was also Churchill's secretary.[26]

Butler's status in the party began to take a down-turn, when Eden finally succeeded Churchill in April 1955. Following the give-away Budget before the election, and its resultant negative effect on the British economy, Eden wished to remove Butler from the Treasury, as he felt Butler had lost control of the economic front, and was losing his touch as Chancellor. Eden retained him at the Treasury after the election victory, but within a few months, had decided to promote Macmillan to Chancellor.[27] There followed months of negotiation with both men to persuade them to take the planned new posts, as they were reluctant to move. Butler's reputation as Chancellor worsened in October 1955, as he had to introduce a package of emergency measures to restore confidence in the pound, and repealed many of the measures of the April Budget.[28] He also received a hostile reception at that year's Party Conference. Butler decided in December 1955 to become Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the Commons, a clear demotion in status.

Butler's move away from the Treasury had a significant effect on his party status, as he moved away from the 'great offices of state', and the summit of the party. He was still an 'insider', but his influence was decreasing in the upper realms of the party. This move also left Butler without a firm departmental footing, as his new posts were administrative and presentational. It also signalled a decline in Butler's

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[26] Portal to Butler, 28 June 1953 Butler MSS RAB G26 (55), and Portal to Butler, 23 September 1953 Butler MSS RAB G26 (56-58)

[27] Notes, September 1955 Butler MSS RAB G28 (93). Butler reveals that Eden asked Butler to consider a move from the Treasury that month, and discussed the matter at Chequers. Eden asked Butler to 'lead the Commons and handle the party'.

[28] Butler increased Purchase tax by a fifth at all levels and increased profits tax from 22.5% to 27.5%. Details of the announcement of these measures are in Parliamentary Debates (Commons), Fifth Series. Vol.545, 26 October 1955, cols. 202-230

electability, as he was not as publicly visible as when he was Chancellor, and was also perceived negatively by his colleagues in the Cabinet and the Parliamentary party.

The onset of the Suez Crisis in July 1956 marked a further down-turn in Butler's party status. As he no longer occupied a senior office, he did not exercise any significant influence over government policy, and was not at the core of the Egypt Committee. Evidence suggests that Butler was deliberately excluded by Eden and the party's senior figures because he was distrusted, and did not agree with the aggressive policy adopted towards Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company. This illustrates his lack of status and influence at the apex of the party.

When Eden became ill and went to Jamaica for recuperation in November 1956, Butler became de facto acting Prime Minister and took on the responsibility for the withdrawal of British troops from the Canal Zone. He also had to instigate the re-building of Anglo-US relations, that had been tarnished by the government's attitude towards Nasser's actions and the resultant invasion of the Canal Zone. Butler's new temporary position served to inflate his status in the party, but it had disastrous consequences for his position in the party when Eden resigned in January 1957. Butler's exposed position as acting Prime Minister led him to become the focal point for the fury of Conservative MPs, who felt betrayed by the withdrawal of the British forces, and felt humiliated at the failure of government policy. He was, therefore, in a weakened position in the party in January 1957.

The same loss of status occurred to Butler before the leadership struggle of October 1963. He became Home Secretary following Macmillan's appointment as party leader in January 1957, and also held the posts of Party Chairman and Leader of the Commons before the 'Night of the Long Knives' of 12 July 1962. The posts he

held in Macmillan's governments had adversely affected his party status. This was despite Butler occupying one of the 'great offices of state' as Home Secretary, and it can be deduced that this post is less prominent as a traditional avenue to the Premiership, than the Treasury or the Foreign Office. The posts Butler occupied were posts that required senior status and vast experience, but adversely affected his party status regarding the leadership for two reasons. First, they aroused opposition in the party. This was especially the case with the dissolution of the Central African Federation, which Butler was placed in charge of as Minister for Central Africa in July 1962. This offended the traditionalist right wing of the party, who were opposed to the dissolution of the empire. It exacerbated the doubts about Butler by re-stirring memories of accusations levelled at him during the Suez Crisis and the appeasement era. These accusations of 'wetness' served as a cumulative effect from the three episodes that affected his party status in 1963. The second reason was that the posts Butler held were not necessarily posts that attracted the right kind of publicity needed for a leadership candidate. The Chancellor can demonstrate a sound handling of the economy, and can contribute positively to the party's electoral fortunes, as the economy is often the central issue in general elections. The Foreign Secretary is in a position to convey a statesman-like image and develop good relationships with foreign leaders, and also present a good electoral image as a competent statesman. Butler did not occupy one of these two prime positions at the time of the selection, and this damaged his leadership prospects.

Following Macmillan's extensive reformulation of his government on 12 July 1963, Butler became First Secretary of State and de facto Deputy Prime Minister, and also Minister for Central Africa. In a letter to Macmillan prior to the re-shuffle, Butler

pointed out his fears that this move could affect his position and status in the party, and compared the situation to that of December 1955. He wrote that

> Without a classical office such as Lord President I shall be out on a raft as I was after Anthony Eden's decision in 1955. I know what this means. One has a personal assistant and inadequate staff to transact business. I therefore think I shall be out on an African limb, since all the work done as Deputy viz. the Broadcasting and White Papers and interviews with ITA etc. is anonymous, as is the Home Affairs Committee and almost everything worthwhile.[29]

Nevertheless, Butler agreed to take on the position, probably after assurances by Macmillan that his status as the most senior minister in the government would be made fully clear, and that his position as the most likely successor to Macmillan was not affected. His move away from the 'great offices of state' did lead to a decline in his party status, and in October 1963, Butler was perceived as a spent force.

Home

Lord Home had risen slowly through the ranks of the party until he became Commonwealth Secretary under Eden. He became Parliamentary Private Secretary to Neville Chamberlain in February 1936. Home later became Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office in the caretaker government of 1945 before the massive Conservative

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[29] Butler to Macmillan, 11 July 1962, Butler MSS RAB G38 (22)

defeat. Like Butler, Home reached the first stage of 'insider' status quickly, but when he left the Commons in July 1951 on succeeding to the Earldom of Home, his status in the Parliamentary party decreased, as he was now in the Lords. However, he became Minister of State at the Scottish Office in October 1951, and Ramsden has stated that Home's success in this job 'was the re-launching of Alec Home's career towards the premiership'.[30] As Commonwealth Secretary, he was a member of the Egypt Committee during the Suez Crisis. When Macmillan came to power in 1957, Home remained at the Commonwealth Office, and became one of his confidants, especially on foreign and colonial policy. This close relationship with Macmillan was to be central to Home's party status at the time of the 1963 leadership struggle, and also showed his position as a political 'insider' in Macmillan's government.

Problems over foreign policy came to dominate the early years of the Macmillan regime, and Home's response to the many problems, including the Seretse Khama and the long-running Cyprus problem 'consolidated his position in the upper ranks of the Cabinet'.[31] When Lord Salisbury resigned over the release of Archbishop Makarios, the spiritual leader of the Greek Community and the advocate of political union with Cyprus, Home gained Salisbury's positions as Lord President of the Council and Leader of the Lords, further enhancing his status in Macmillan's Cabinet. When the resignation of Derek Heathcoat-Amory as Chancellor became widely expected in 1959, Macmillan wanted to replace him with Foreign Secretary Lloyd, and felt Home would be the potential replacement for Lloyd at the Foreign Office.[32]

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[30] Ramsden, Age of Churchill and Eden, p.246
[31] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, pp.190-191
[32] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.194

Thorpe has argued that Home's five years at the Commonwealth Office were the 'most important of his career to date'. This was because he was now the most senior of the younger generation of Conservatives that included Hailsham, Duncan Sandys, Selwyn Lloyd, Edward Heath and Iain Macleod. His work at the Commonwealth Office also gave him a higher governability rating, as he worked with senior international statesman, and gained a reputation as a competent minister in the foreign policy arena. Home became Foreign Secretary on 27 July 1960 and 'with this promotion, Home entered the innermost circle of Macmillan's Cabinet'.[33] Thorpe has argued that 'there was no figure in the Conservative Cabinet who had the necessary seniority and knowledge of the wider context of foreign affairs to deny Home the succession to the Foreign Office'. It is clear that Butler had the first, but it is not as apparent if he had the second. Thorpe's assessment seems to ignore two important points. Firstly, Butler was far more senior than Home in the summer of 1960, and it was widely known, especially to Macmillan, that he wanted to go to the Foreign Office. Secondly, Macmillan wanted a Foreign Secretary he could control, much in the way that both he and Eden had treated Lloyd. This subservience that Home would yield to Macmillan, unlike Butler because of his status in the party, explains his appointment better than an emphasis on seniority.

This promotion was certainly important for Home, as he entered one of the 'great offices of state', and occupied a traditional avenue to the leadership. His 'insider' status reached fruition when he entered became Foreign Secretary. When Home became Foreign Secretary, he saw Macmillan every day as the Prime Minister believed a close relationship between Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary was vital

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[33] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.204

to the successful operation of governments.[34] This increased his visibility and reputation with the party hierarchy and its most senior figures. Home's appointment was greeted by Conservative back-benchers with amazement because he was an Earl, but Thorpe has argued that 'when the dust had settled and unbiased observers realised that Alec Home was not an ineffectual aristocrat but a politician of wide practical experience, the tune began to change'.[35] This assessment by Home's biographer is a charitable one, and does cloud the wide feeling in the Parliamentary party that he was 'an earl too far', as Macmillan did have a penchant for having Peers in key offices in his government, such as Poole and Hailsham.

Thorpe is correct in asserting that Home's competence as Foreign Secretary improved his status. His wide experience of contemporary problems of foreign policy, which developed from his time at the Commonwealth Office, impressed his colleagues and also leading foreign politicians. Home's experience of government was principally in foreign affairs. He had been Parliamentary Private Secretary to Chamberlain during the Munich crisis, and later served as a Minister of State, and as Commonwealth Secretary in Macmillan's government before becoming Foreign Secretary, so his qualifications for the post cannot be disputed. Home particularly impressed the party hierarchy as Foreign Secretary, by the good relationships he developed with world ministers in charge of foreign affairs. One particularly important relationship that developed was between Home and Dean Rusk, the US Secretary of State from November 1960. This was of particular importance during the Cuban missile crisis.

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[34] Macmillan conveyed this in a letter to Home on 21 July 1986 in the Home Archive in Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.213

[35] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.210

Home's status in the party increased after the 'Night of the Long Knives'. 'In a Cabinet now weighted towards a younger generation, Macmillan turned increasingly to Home for disinterested advice'.[36] This was because, for a variety of reasons, Macmillan did not trust Butler, principally because he had leaked news of the impending reshuffle of 12 July 1962. The majority of the Cabinet were now of the next generation of leading Conservatives like Maudling and Heath, who Macmillan did not feel as comfortable with. Home's position within the party became more important after 12 July, as Butler's position was in decline with his move away from the senior offices of state. Maudling, promoted to Chancellor, was seen as one of the younger generation, a possible leader-in-waiting who was not yet quite ready for the leadership. Home was conveniently placed between the two, and was in a good position for the leadership for a number of reasons. First, he occupied one of the two offices that are traditional avenues to the leadership, the Foreign Office, and this had many advantages for his party status, including an increased seniority and influence, and positive electoral connotations. Second, Home was not seen as a possible successor to Macmillan, so could increase his status as a politician rather than as a possible leader. Third, he was in a position between the Macmillan 'Old Guard' (that included Butler) and the 'Next Generation' (that included Maudling and Heath). This was advantageous to Home's party status, as the old guard were now discredited and not wanted as possible leaders, and the party had doubts about the younger men over whether they were yet ready to take over. Home was in a compromise position in party status between the two.

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[36] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.255

Maudling

Reginald Maudling was elected as a Conservative MP in February 1950, following a period at the Conservative Research Department following the 1945 election defeat. Maudling was a secretary on the Industrial Policy Committee that produced The Industrial Charter of 1947. In early 1952, he was appointed Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Civil Aviation. Maudling was unsure whether to take the offer, as he was more interested in economic policy, but accepted after Butler advised him to do so, as it would a step on the political ladder . In November 1952, he was appointed Economic Secretary to the Treasury.[37] He gained valuable experience by deputising for Butler at the World Bank and IMF meeting in 1953. It is clear that Maudling reached the first stage of 'insider' status in the party very quickly, and this gave him a platform to improve his position in the party.

When Eden became Prime Minister in April 1955, he promoted Maudling to Minister of Supply, his first full ministerial post, and with the post, he became a Privy Councillor. Maudling had thus risen to his first ministerial post within five years of becoming an MP. When Macmillan became Prime Minister in January 1957, he wanted Maudling to continue as Minister of Supply, but Maudling declined and took the post of Paymaster-General. This involved a demotion from ministerial rank, but Maudling has stated that he did not regret his decision, as the work was 'fascinating'.[38] He deputised in the Commons for Lord Mills, the Minister of Fuel and Power, and also assisted Heathcoat-Amory, the Chancellor.

Maudling became President of the Board of Trade after the Conservative victory in the 1959 election, his first Cabinet post. This promotion to one of the key

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[37] Maudling, Memoirs, pp.52-53
[38] Maudling, Memoirs, p.65

economic briefs in the government increased his status in the party. In October 1961, Maudling was promoted to Secretary of State for the Colonies. This involved a move away from the domestic economic portfolios that he had occupied before, but was an important post because of the rise of African nationalism and the granting of independence to the colonies. Maudling's main task was to supervise the transition of the colonies to independent status, and the previous Secretary of State, Iain Macleod, had come in for criticism from the right wing of the party, for the progressive policy of granting independence. Therefore, the post ran a severe risk to Maudling's acceptability to the party. A major problem was the Central African Federation, which was made the responsibility of Butler in 1962. The effect of the Central African problem on Maudling's party status has been well outlined by Ramsden. He argues that it served to 'undermine the claims of Macleod, Maudling and (once again) Butler to become party leader, for in all three cases their policy on Central Africa turned right-wingers into implacable opponents'.[39] This post, therefore, clearly affected his acceptability with the right wing of the party.

Following the 'Night of the Long Knives', Maudling was promoted to Chancellor of the Exchequer. This promotion confirmed the final attainment of his 'insider' status in Macmillan's government, as he entered one of the 'great offices of state'. Maudling had a good deal of experience at the Treasury after his time as Economic Secretary and Paymaster General, and was viewed by Macmillan as a progressive appointment. When Macmillan appointed Maudling, he gave him the brief of expanding the economy, and reducing unemployment in preparation of the next election. However. there 'was a time lag between government changes and the

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[39] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.150

reaction in the economy'. Ramsden has argued correctly that the recovery did not start until the middle of 1963, and before that the worst winter for sixteen years increased seasonal unemployment. The overall unemployment figure was three-quarters of a million, the worst since 1947.[40] Maudling was nevertheless successful at presenting the economic measures with confidence, something that Lloyd, his predecessor, had failed to do. His 1963 Budget was a success and increased confidence in the government.

Maudling himself felt that the strength of his position in the leadership struggle was based on this success. In 1963, The Daily Telegraph published a regular poll of Conservative MPs views on who they would like to have as leader in succession to Macmillan. In the summer of 1963, Maudling had 'a very large majority'. [41] Clearly, after his displays of sound control over the economy, he was rated highly by Conservative MPs and was felt to be the leading candidate to succeed Macmillan from the 'younger men'. This was also the case among his Cabinet colleagues, who felt that a change to the next generation of leading Conservative figures, was the best option because of the discredit being heaped on older Conservatives, and especially Macmillan. Of his standing in the party over the summer of 1963, Maudling noted 'I had a remarkable summer of support from the Parliamentary Party, who were likely to be in substance if not in form the decisive element'.[42]

On 18 June 1963, 'a wave of hysteria' was created when the officers of the 1922 Committee presented the case for Maudling's immediate succession. Ramsden has described the reasons behind this move: 'The theory behind this was that the party

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[40] Ramsden, Winds of Change, pp.179-180
[41] Maudling, Memoirs, p.125
[42] Maudling, Memoirs, p.126

should skip straight to the next generation and play safe by going for a safely married man'. He has also noted that Macmillan referred to Maudling as being a good option because of his attraction as a 'respectable Wilson'. The Daily Telegraph reported on 20 June 1963, after interviewing fifty 'representative' Conservative MPs, that their votes on the succession were: Maudling - 21, Hailsham - 8, Heath - 6, Butler - 4, Powell - 3, Home and Macleod - 1 each, and undecided - 5. A poll in The Daily Express also found Maudling was the clear favourite. [43] This assessment is significant, as it reveals a reason for his attraction to Conservative MPs: His 'clean' image would be a distinct advantage to the party. It presented a man of the next generation, not tainted by the sleaze accusations against Macmillan's government, that were prompted particularly by the Profumo affair.

However, after the summer, Maudling's prospects began to decline, as his support began to dissipate and his position weakened. He has noted that after the summer recess, his Cabinet colleagues estimation of him began to drop, and their reactions to him became 'less enthusiastically cordial'. Thorpe has stated that Maudling's support 'melted away like the morning dew.'[44] Maudling has also recorded an episode at the party Conference in Blackpool which indicated his loss of status. He met an unidentified Cabinet colleague in the lobby of the Imperial Hotel, who had written to him over the summer stating that Macmillan should go, and Maudling should take over. This colleague now told him that he was supporting Home to be Macmillan's successor.[45]

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[43] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.192
[44] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.259
[45] Maudling, Memoirs, p.126

This dissipation of Maudling's status can be accounted for by focusing on a number of reasons. First, the support was not as widespread as it has been accounted. This has been argued by Thorpe, who believed that the support for Maudling in the summer of 1963 that was recounted in The Daily Telegraph polls, was not as well founded as the polls suggested. He has stated that the polls had a low initial base of MPs, and were conducted selectively among younger MPs sympathetic to Maudling. It did not convey the views of senior Conservative MPs, who were nevertheless influenced by the polls, and began to consider the virtues of a Maudling candidacy. Second, the party did want to move to a new generation of leaders, of which Maudling was then the leading figure, but did not feel the time was yet right to move, and settled on Home as the stop-gap leader to take the party through the forthcoming election. Third, Maudling's status began to collapse because of his conduct and the characteristics he displayed. He did not appear as a competent public figure; he remained too quiet, and did not give the impression by his conduct that he wanted the leadership. Macmillan noted he felt Maudling was 'uninspiring'. Along with the mistakes he made, especially his poor conference speech on the economy, this explains the decline in Maudling's party status.[46]

Hailsham

Lord Hailsham was Minister of Education between January and September 1957. Hailsham then became Party Chairman and Lord President of the Council, with Cabinet rank, and contributed significantly to the party's victory in the 1959 election.

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[46] Maudling noted that he could not explain the decline in his support, and this lack of perception is indicative of the reasons for his failure. Maudling notes he could not explain his collapse of support in Maudling, Memoirs, p.126

The Conference Chairman at the 1957 Party Conference was told by a constituency representative that 'the audience gave [Hailsham] the mantle of Churchill. His star rose like a rocket'.[47] Hailsham increased his profile and status at the party conference by his publicity stunts, including bathing in the sea to the delight of photographers, eating giant sticks of rock, and ringing a bell to signal the start of Macmillan's leader's address to the conference. However, Macmillan felt he had been upstaged at the Conference, his first as leader, and in 1958 his staff made discreet attempts to ensure this was not repeated at that years conference. Hailsham did, nevertheless, still ring the bell at the 1958 Blackpool Conference. 'Hailsham's main job was thus to rally the party morale and in this he was a great success'.[48] During his tenure as chairman, he addressed meetings of constituency leaders, and spoke at a considerable amount of constituency meetings and dinners. There is evidence that Hailsham offended certain senior figures in the party with his exuberance, and was removed as Chairman after the election victory. Hailsham has noted that 'I did not get many thanks. Harold Macmillan wrote me a reasonably polite letter of thanks after the result and immediately demoted me'. Hailsham has stated that his demotion was due to a mis-understanding by Macmillan of his role 'in an entirely private matrimonial matter in which I had been called as a witness', but fails to specify the meaning of this.[49] He has also recorded that he did not expect to stay as party chairman after the election victory, and would not have accepted the offer if it had been made. Hailsham wished to leave the government altogether, because 'I was fed up with being cold shouldered

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[47] Ramsden, Winds of Change, pp.47-48
[48] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.49
[49] Lord Hailsham, A Sparrow's Flight: Memoirs, (London: Collins, 1990), p.324

and snubbed after I had given my best and achieved success in a seemingly impossible task'. However, Poole persuaded him to remain in the government.[50]

Hailsham then became Minister for Science and Technology and Lord Privy Seal. Hailsham, however, was demoted, as he relinquished the position of Lord President of the Council. Following Home's promotion to the Foreign Office in July 1960, he became Leader of the Lords. He led the governments negotiations in the talks on the Multi-Lateral Test Ban Treaty in July 1963. However, Hailsham's governability stagnated after his chairmanship of the party, and rather than gaining promotion and an increase in status, his position in the party did not improve. Hailsham did not reach the same level of 'insider' status as the other candidates, as he did not occupy any of the senior domestic or foreign policy Cabinet portfolios. He did not occupy any of the 'great offices of state' during his career prior to the leadership contest. His status as a candidate in October 1963 was based purely on his success as Party Chairman, with the electability he demonstrated being the prime factor in his position as a candidate.

By the time of the Blackpool Conference, Hailsham's status in the party was high, as it became clear Macmillan favoured him as his successor, and this began to dissipate via informal networks to the party, principally through Julian Amery, Maurice Macmillan and Randolph Churchill. However, his flamboyant conduct at the Conference reduced his status in the party drastically, especially among older and traditional Conservatives, who already had doubts about his temperamental suitability for the leadership. His status was based largely on style over substance, because of his flamboyant image, but after Blackpool his status in the party as a leadership candidate had diminished greatly.

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[50] Hailsham, A Sparrow's Flight, p.326

The Candidates' Personalities

Macmillan

It has often been suggested that Macmillan's rise through the party to become Prime Minister in January 1957 was due to his 'killer instinct'. This personality trait is often left undefined, and thus in existing analyses of his personality remains unsubstantiated, and appears as a vague cliché. This term, therefore, requires definition to illustrate why it was a significant factor in Macmillan attainment of the leadership. A 'killer instinct' can be defined as a sense of opportunism, an ability to take chances when they appear. It is, therefore, an ability to act decisively. It has often been suggested that this 'killer instinct' was the result of Macmillan's wife, Dorothy's thirty year affair with Bob Boothby, a colleague of Macmillan's. It is said that this gave him 'the grit of the oyster' that drove him to gain the party leadership. However, such an assessment must remain as conjecture, as Macmillan never stated that the effect of his wife's affair led to the development of this attribute. Many of his friends and colleagues did believe that the effect of his wife's affair gave Macmillan a determination to succeed in politics, but it is still an assumption that cannot be proved.[51]

Nevertheless, Macmillan's decisiveness at certain points of his career, and his ability to exploit situations, was of great significance in his progress to the summit of the Conservative Party. Two instances of this were of most importance. The first was his conduct during the saga of the December 1955 re-shuffle when Eden wanted to

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[51] Pamela Egremont, a close friend of Macmillan's, told this to Alistair Horne, Macmillan's official biographer, and Butler also told Horne that Macmillan's wife's affair did 'enhance his character'. Details of these interviews are in Horne, Macmillan 1894-1956, pp.89-90

replace Butler at the Treasury with Macmillan. Butler was determined not to be moved unless he became Deputy Prime Minister, but Macmillan saw an opportunity to block his request to buttress his own position in the Cabinet. Macmillan also believed that the post of Deputy Prime Minister was not necessary in the government, but saw that he could surpass Butler in party status if he became Chancellor, and Butler became Leader of the Commons, without the title of Deputy Prime Minister. Only when Eden agreed to decline Butler the position did Macmillan agree to move to the Treasury. The second instance, which was of more significance, was Macmillan's decisiveness during key stages of the Suez Crisis, including the instigation of the cease-fire in the Canal Zone, and his conduct during the 1922 Committee meeting of the 22 November 1956, when he confirmed his suitability as Eden's successor. This is considered in detail in chapter four.

One of the key personality traits that Macmillan displayed was his ability as a showman, a salesman for the party and its policies. This was demonstrated during his promotion of The Industrial Charter in 1947, but came to the fore with great effect during Macmillan's time as Minister of Housing from 1951 to 1954. His image as the man responsible for the housing drive and the 300,000 houses a year, was vital to Macmillan's growing attractiveness to Conservative MPs because it demonstrated his electability. Housing was a social issue of major electoral significance in 1951, because of the destruction of houses during the second world war. The 1945-51 Labour government's inability to deal with this issue gave the Conservatives the opportunity to exploit its full electoral potential in 1951, and Macmillan did this with great aplomb. His rapid promotion through the party ranks over the next six years showed the effect

this quality had on Macmillan's leadership candidacy when Eden retired in January 1957.

Butler

It has often been commented in existing analysis that Butler lacked a 'killer instinct', unlike Macmillan, to grasp the opportunities that he had to gain the leadership of the party. As with the assessment of Macmillan, this term is often not defined, and therefore remains unsubstantiated. However, following the definition set out in the previous section, it is clear that Butler did not have the same sense of opportunism as Macmillan, and was perceived as being indecisive during his career. This was especially so during his time as Chancellor from 1951 to 1955. Macmillan noted during the controversy over the ROBOT plan to float the pound in 1952, that 'He [Churchill] is evidently disappointed in Butler, who is really too agreeable, too pliant, and too ready to go from plan to plan, accepting perhaps too readily the rejection of each'.[52] This indecisiveness and lack of direction was also commented on by Sir Robert Hall, who worked closely with Butler at the Treasury. Hall believed that Butler's method of working at the Treasury was to try out a policy, and then discard it quickly, if it did not produce immediate dividends. This served to frustrate his colleagues, and Hall noted in July 1952 that 'I have now lost most of my respect for the Chancellor though I still like him and think he is good at some things. But he is a weak man fundamentally. I feel stronger than he is and as he is not a very good instrument, one tends to discount him'.[53] As Hall worked closely with Butler, as Director of the Economic Section at the Cabinet Office, his views are significant.

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[52] Diary entry for 29 February 1952, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.10 (2v-3v). Emphasis on original.
[53] Cairncross (ed.), Hall Diaries 1947-1953, entry for 16 July 1952, p.240

Butler's lack of a 'killer instinct' was displayed during his time as acting Prime Minister when Eden and Churchill were incapacitated in the summer of 1953. As he was the temporary figure-head for the government, Butler had an ideal opportunity to stake his claim and demand the leadership. However, the 'establishment plot' designed to protect Eden's position as the heir apparent appeared to intimidate Butler, and he merely 'concentrated on the smooth running of the administrative machine'.[54] He had a chance to improve his position in the party by making some outstanding performances in the Commons, but he does not appear to have done so. John Colville, Churchill's Private Secretary, noted in July 1953, of Butler's performance during his opening of a foreign affairs debate in the Commons that 'It was a dull speech, yet more dully delivered. He is certainly no orator'.[55]

Another personality trait is Butler's inability to inspire the party when it was most necessary. Ramsden has noted that this inability became apparent when Butler became Leader of the Commons and Lord Privy Seal in December 1955, and that he was 'efficient in this role if lacking in the inspirational qualities needed in a party manager. The management of the Parliamentary party improved, but the impression given to the country at large did not.[56] This came most notably to the fore during the 1922 Committee meeting of 22 November 1956 in the aftermath of the Suez Crisis. On that occasion, it was imperative for Butler's leadership candidacy that he gave an uplifting performance to Conservative MPs to convince them of his virtues as Eden's successor. This is something he failed to do, and is considered in detail in the next chapter. This failure counted strongly against Butler's electability rating in January

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[54] Howard, RAB, pp.199-200
[55] J. Colville, The Fringes of Power: Downing Street Diaries, 1939-1955, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1985), entry for 21 July 1953, p.332
[56] Ramsden, Age of Churchill and Eden, p.291

1957, and again in October 1963, he failed to uplift the party at the party conference in Blackpool. This was also a significant factor in his failure to succeed Macmillan, as it led him to be perceived as a candidate who could not inspire the party in the forthcoming general election, and he was viewed as having low electability. This is also evidence of Butler's lack of a 'killer instinct', as he was in the best position to grasp the leadership in 1963 by convincing the party of his electoral virtues, yet he failed to do so.

A key element of Butler's personality that became apparent over this period was that he was a competent minister, but not necessarily a leader. There appears to be a clear distinction between competence and effectiveness in political leaders, and by 1955, Butler was failing to be effective as Chancellor. There is no doubt that he had lost his way at the Treasury by the last year of his tenure, and this must have raised doubts about his ability as a possible leader of the party. Alongside Butler's reputation for indecision, this inability to dictate from the front, and his loss of grip on the economic front, was a clear factor in the reduction of his governability. This was something that Eden felt strongly, and was the reason behind his desire to replace Butler at the Treasury with Macmillan from September 1955. It can, therefore, be assumed that this was also perceived by his Cabinet colleagues, who were the main selectorate for Eden's successor.

Butler's competence as a minister and his governability were the reasons behind Macmillan's appointment of him as Minister for Central Africa in July 1962. The government had been beset by problems with Central Africa, and he felt Butler was the only minister who could deal with it effectively. Macmillan noted that 'Rab

[Butler] is wise and wily - both useful qualities in this tangled problem'.[57] However, he did not feel that Butler had the necessary qualities to be party leader. Macmillan noted on the day Home became party leader that 'All this pretence about Rab's [Butler's] "progressive" views is rather shallow. His real trouble is his vacillation in any difficult situation. He has no strength of character or purpose and for this reason should not be P.M.'.[58] Clearly, Macmillan believed that Butler was a competent minister, but not a 'leader'. The comments of Hall cited earlier show that he was not the only person who believed Butler did not have the necessary personal qualities to be party leader.

Home

The key aspect in Home's personality that was influential in his selection in October 1963 as Macmillan's successor was his inoffensive image. This acceptability deemed him the ideal compromise candidate to hold the party together, as it was divided over the other candidates. This image was also considered to be a valuable asset by the party hierarchy in Home's electability in October 1963, but his status as a peer counted against this. Ramsden has noted that 'Home had few personal enemies and hardly anyone suspected him of underhand motives...after the recent claims about the lack of integrity in public life, this was Home's strongest suit'.[59] 'His greatest achievement at the Commonwealth Office was his ability to hold together the disparate elements of a multifarious family, with its differences, feuds and rivalries'.[60] This

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[57] Diary entry for 9 October 1962, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.47 (47)
[58] Diary entry for 19 October 1963, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.51* (30). Emphasis on original.
[59] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.201
[60] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.202

enlightens this key attribute that Home displayed: a general acceptance and acceptability

> Underneath his insouciant air of calm, Home possessed an intuitive feel for what was important and what was secondary. Underlying this was his remarkable political skill in knowing what would wash with the party and what would be acceptable to Parliament...Unlike Rab Butler, he did not see politics as the art of the possible; he regarded it as a choice between the unpalatable and the disastrous.[61]

This illustrates a significant personality trait of Home's: that he knew what would be acceptable to the party and what would not, and this was central to his acceptability as Macmillan's successor in 1963. He had an 'intuitive feel for what was politically viable'.[62] Thorpe has argued that one of the central reasons that Macmillan appointed Home was his 'ability to establish productive political relationships', and this was a vital attribute at the Foreign Office in dealing with international statesman. It also illustrated Home's governability.

Thorpe believes that Home had 'done good by stealth' in his career as he had not naturally sought public attention, unlike Hailsham. The posts that he held in governments from 1951 to 1963 also complemented this, as his posts at the Scottish Office and the Commonwealth Office were not posts that attracted public attention. Thorpe also believes this was the case with Home's time at the Foreign Office, but this

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[61] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.214
[62] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.212

must be questioned for two reasons. Firstly, foreign policy was at the fore-front of Conservative policy under Macmillan, and when Home became Foreign Secretary, he was more in the public gaze. Secondly, the Cuban Missile Crisis thrust Home into the public arena, because of the national and international press and television coverage that it received. Nevertheless, Thorpe's argument has some merits in explaining a key aspect of Home's personality that was of significance in October 1963. As he had 'done good by stealth', and also because of his position as an outside candidate for the leadership, he was not scrutinised in the same way as the other candidates and his weaknesses were not so obvious because of this. The effect of this was due to his self-effacing personality and the circumstances of his candidature.[63] Macmillan believed that Home's best quality was that he was 'not ambitious in the sense of wanting to scheme for power although not foolish to resist honour when it comes to him. He gives that impression by a mixture of great courtesy'.[64] This personal quality was of vast significance in October 1963, because of the scandals that had beset the Conservative Party, and Home's 'honourable' image was felt by the party hierarchy to be vital in regaining Conservative support.

Maudling

A key element of Maudling's personality was his inability to inspire the party when it most needed it, and he most needed to do it. This was most apparent during his speech to the party conference in October 1963, and counted against the party hierarchy's assessment of his electability. This key aspect of Maudling's personal failing is analysed in later chapters, but Lamb has noted its significance: 'His lack of

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[63] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, pp.287-288
[64] Memorandum by the Prime Minister, 15 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (28)

enthusiasm and spontaneity in delivering it convinced too many present that he was not the type to 'convert the uncommitted or inspire the faithful' in an election campaign'.[65] Pearce has also summed up well this characteristic of Maudling's

> Maudling had a logical mind which worked at very great speed. He solved problems, he was generally cultivated, but, no more than Nigel Lawson a generation later, could he make a big conference speech...Maudling simply lacked the arts of waiting, word-stress, audience-encouragement and pouncing. He sounded like plywood with the gift of speech.[66]

This was also a factor in his failure to gain the leadership in 1965. Maudling was also perceived as being lazy, and taking too relaxed an approach to the campaigning in the 1965 contest with Edward Heath, and did not make any attempt to gain the party's support in that election. This has parallels to Maudling's failure in 1963. Butler noted that he first gained this reputation from his time at the CRD from 1945-50, as he gave the impression 'of being too much at ease and of not straining himself to the same extent as the others'.[67] Butler noted the effect of this reputation

> This is a feature he [Maudling] carried into later life, and in a way it was a pity, because people were to think that he was too

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[65] R. Lamb, The Macmillan Years. The Emerging Truth, (London: John Murray, 1995), p.493
[66] E. Pearce, The Lost Leaders, (London: Little Brown, 1997), p.329
[67] Butler, Art of The Possible, p.140

> easygoing, perhaps too insouciant. In fact he was extremely industrious: able to take jobs in his stride and master them with dispatch. But he struck an attitude that was deceptive to those who knew him less well, and I feel it did not do him justice.[68]

Butler denotes here the obvious importance of reputation in politics, as only close colleagues can deduce a proper assessment of a colleagues character, while those outside that circle rely on a deduction from rumour and reputation. Thorpe has noted that at the time of the 1963 selection, Maudling 'seemed too 'quiet' a figure and some felt him to be indolent, though their numbers did not include those at the Treasury, who knew that Maudling's incisive intellect enabled him to deal with the agenda in half the time it took most people'.[69] Clearly, this was a major disadvantage to his candidacy in October 1963.

Hailsham

A key element of Hailsham's personality was his exuberance and effervescence. This was central to his electability, but he often displayed a poor judgement and over-excitement, and led to a perception that he did not have the right temperament for the leadership of the party. This was perceived by the American government during the negotiations for the Multi-Lateral Test Ban Treaty negotiations in July 1963, in which Hailsham played a crucial role as the government's representative.[70] It was also illustrated by Hailsham's public outbursts on television during the Profumo Crisis. The

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[68] Butler, Art of the Possible, p.140
[69] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.273
[70] The significance of this is considered in detail in chapter seven, pp.262-263

most dominant example, however, came during the Party Conference at Blackpool during the 1963 leadership controversy. His obvious delight at Macmillan's backing for his candidacy for the party leadership led him to promote himself dramatically as the party's prime electoral asset. However, this parading of himself and the campaigning of his supporters led to doubts about his temperament that lost him support after the conference ended and the decision on Macmillan's successor came to be made.

Hailsham's effervescent personality was the prime factor in his attractiveness to Macmillan, and his belief that Hailsham was the party's best electoral asset in 1963. His role as Party Chairman in the 1959 election campaign was central to the effectiveness of the Conservative campaign, and contributed to the massive majority gained in that election. Macmillan appointed Hailsham as 'a flag waving chairman', and he 'devoted his advocate's skills to the presentation of the party's case', and 'revelled in the publicity' that he generated as a necessary means of gaining the public's support. As Ramsden has noted 'He was certainly a natural for this showman's role'.[71] This quality was the reason why he became Macmillan's favourite to succeed him in 1963, and it was only the doubts about Hailsham's judgement and governability that led Macmillan to focus his attention on Home after the party conference.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the party status and the personalities of the candidates were of vast importance in their candidatures in the selections. The role of the party status and the personal characteristics, and how the latter dictated the candidates actions during the selections, in the outcomes of the selections is discussed

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[71] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.49

in later chapters, but key themes are demonstrated in this chapter. It has shown that party status prior to a selection is more important than a candidate's career status. A long career is not seen as a long apprenticeship for the leadership, and the situation and circumstances surrounding a selection determines what aspects of a candidates party status are of most importance in the selection. An attainment of the various stages of 'insider' status is important in leadership selections, but in 1957 and 1963, a move away from the final stage of 'insider' status, the 'great offices of state', detrimentally affected a candidates chances. In the selections of 1957 and 1963, the candidate with the most experience, but nevertheless of less status and influence at the time of the selections, Butler, did not succeed to the leadership.

An occupation of one of the 'great offices of state' at the time of the selections gave a candidate a considerable advantage in the selections. However, the situation and circumstances deemed the exact importance of that status. In 1957 and 1963, Butler had moved away from those positions to less senior posts. In 1963, Maudling was Chancellor of the Exchequer while Home was Foreign Secretary. While the Chancellorship is the more traditional route to the leadership, Home was chosen because he was felt to be the best candidate in the circumstances, and because of the personal characteristics that each had displayed. He was more acceptable because of his image, and Maudling was not felt to be inspiring enough to be a leader to drive the party to victory in the forthcoming election.

Personal characteristics and qualities are of vast significance to a candidate's chances of gaining the leadership. Their actions during their careers, and most importantly, prior to a selection, can demonstrate their political skills, and how they would fulfil the three core criteria of acceptability, electability and governability on

which candidates are judged in the selections. This was important in both the 1957, and 1963 selections as has been summarised here and analysed in greater detail in later chapters. In 1957, Macmillan's inspirational qualities were of great importance in his successful candidature, and in 1963, Home's general acceptability deemed him successful, and Maudling's and Butler's lack of inspirational skills, and Hailsham's questionable temperament for the highest office led to the failure of their candidacies.

Chapter Four

The Suez Crisis and the 1957 Leadership Selection: The Candidates' Actions and Conduct

This chapter assesses the influence of the candidates' conduct and actions during the Suez Crisis on the outcome of the 1957 leadership selection. As demonstrated in the chapter, the key actions came in the latter stages of the crisis and its aftermath, principally in November and December 1956. The analysis on the actions and conduct of Macmillan and Butler before that serve to set the scene and context in which the key actions took place. This acts as an introduction to the complex machinations of the Suez Crisis, which were a central influence on the outcome.

Butler

Butler's Conduct during the Onset of the Crisis: August 1956

Butler was ill with a viral infection during the onset of the Suez Crisis. When he returned to work at the end of July, Butler was excluded from the Egypt Committee that co-ordinated policy during the crisis. Therefore, his initial absence through illness meant he had lost an opportunity to take part in the key decision-making, and Butler did not appear to exercise a significant influence on policy throughout the crisis.[1] Butler always felt that Eden's policy towards Nasser, and particularly his comparison of Nasser to Hitler and Mussolini, was a grave political mistake. For this reason, Eden dubbed Butler one of the 'Weak Sisters' in the Cabinet who opposed the use of force. However, he always remained loyal to Eden, and did not state openly his opposition to government policy during the crisis.

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[1] Howard, RAB, p.231

It has been suggested that Butler just turned up at the meeting of 30 July, the first after his return from illness, and was listed as 'Minister in attendance'. However, this is not a generally accepted view, and there is no evidence in the minutes of the meeting to suggest this took place.[2] Selwyn Lloyd, who succeeded Macmillan as Foreign Secretary, has asserted that Butler attended meetings of the Egypt Committee regularly, but it is an accepted view that he was not at the core of the Egypt Committee.[3] His seniority in the government and his ministerial experience meant he could not be fully excluded, but his role was a peripheral one. Butler seemed to believe that he could be a restraining influence on the aggressiveness of Eden, Macmillan and Salisbury et al., and felt his doubts about the use of force could be expressed more effectively from within the Cabinet, rather than outside it.

The success of this strategy must be assessed. The fact that military action did not start until 30 October, over three months after the onset of the crisis, suggests that Butler's strategy was somewhat successful, but there were many other factors that acted as a restraint on military action. These included the securing of the necessary financial resources for the action, and the international support for an invasion. A particularly important factor was the opposition of the United States government to military action. It is, therefore, impossible to reach a definite conclusion on whether Butler's restraining influence on Eden and Macmillan's aggressive response was successful. The delay in military action was probably due to a combination of all the restraining factors, both economic and political, but Butler's conduct did have the outcome he desired.

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[2] H. Thomas, The Suez Affair, (London: Penguin, 1967), p.50 suggests that Butler just turned up at the meeting; and C. Brady, 'The Cabinet System and Management of the Suez Crisis', Contemporary Record, volume 11, number 2, (Summer 1997), p.67

[3] S. Lloyd, Suez 1956: A Personal View, (London: Cape, 1978), p.85

Two aspects were central to Butler's behaviour on the Egypt Committee. Firstly, he opposed the use of force, and only believed it should be used as a last resort. Secondly, he believed that the dispute should be referred to the United Nations. At the Cabinet meeting of 23 August, Butler stated that the party in the country would support the use of force, 'if all practicable steps had been taken to try to secure a settlement by peaceful means'.[4] At the meeting of the Egypt Committee of 24 August, Macmillan noted Butler's uncertainty about the use of force: 'He wanted more time, so as to show that every possible method had been tried, before the final decision to use force. I argued that if D Day were postponed too often or too late, it would never happen. We must be resolved'.[5] At the Cabinet meeting of 28 August, the members of the Egypt Committee relayed details of developments to the other Cabinet members. Macmillan noted that ministers supported the efforts made by the government, and they particularly stressed that passing the dispute to the United Nations would be advisable. Butler felt this 'would help the Party. We could show that we had tried everything'.[6] His attitude to the crisis during this period had a damaging effect on his reputation within the party. His strategy resulted in him being distrusted. The problem was that Butler was not prepared to stand by his convictions, and state openly his opposition to the use of force. He would support Eden in Cabinet, and then criticise him in the Smoking Room and the Lobby, and this strategy resulted in Butler being distrusted.[7]

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[4] Lloyd, Suez 1956, p.134
[5] Diary entry for 24 August 1956, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.27, (59)
[6] Diary entry for 28 August 1956, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.27, (67-68)
[7] For an analysis of the significance of this point, see chapter five, pp. 169-170

Butler's Reaction to the Invasion of the Suez Canal: 30 October

On 17 October, while the plans for the collusion with France and Israel for the invasion of Egypt were being finalised, Butler attended the opening of the Calder Hall power station in Cumbria as the government's representative. Eden and the party hierarchy wanted him out of the way, because they knew of his opposition to the use of force, and felt he would not react positively to the plan. When Butler returned from Cumbria on 18 October, he was summoned into a meeting with Eden, and was told that it had been suggested in discussions between Pineau, the French President, Mollet, the French Prime Minister, and Eden that in the event of confrontation between Egypt and Israel, British and French forces should intervene in the Canal Zone, and separate the combatants. Butler told Eden of his concerns at the possible public reaction to the plan, and suggested that an agreement with France and Israel to free the Suez Canal, and then internationalise it, would be more advisable. Eden replied that 'things were now moving in the direction he had described', and Butler confirmed he would stand by Eden 'in all circumstances'.[8] The declaration of support 'in all circumstances' was significant, as it tied Butler to the policy, so he could not later claim that he was not privy to the plans of the government. Eden recalled later in his life that Butler 'never once made any criticism of substance at the Cabinet nor even to me privately, as he could have done at any time'.[9]

The question that has to be addressed is why did Butler not state his opposition to the invasion? Howard's analysis of this issue suggests that 'there is always the argument that more can be done to temper a policy from within than by denouncing it

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[8] Butler, Art of The Possible, p.192

[9] Note for Biographer, 9 September 1968, Avon Papers, AP 33/7 in D. Dutton, Anthony Eden. A Life and Reputation, (London: Arnold, 1997), p.399

from without'. He argues that Butler adopted this position in his later life as his explanation of why he did not oppose the use of force, and the invasion of the Canal Zone.[10] However, there is no evidence to support this in Butler's Papers or his memoirs, but the argument does have some plausibility. It does explain his behaviour not just over the question of the invasion, but also his actions in Cabinet and on the Egypt Committee. This analysis must remain as conjecture, as there is no clear evidence for this having been the motive behind his actions, and it could simply have been a lack of courage by Butler to oppose Eden and the 'hawks'.

Butler's Reaction to the Cease-fire: 6 November

Following the cease-fire of 6 November, the need for the British government to rebuild relations with the United States became of paramount importance because of their opposition to the use of force, and Butler played a major role in this. The need for financial assistance became vital, and he used his friendship with George Humphrey, the US Treasury Secretary, in order to secure that assistance. Butler noted in February 1957 that he was telephoned by Humphrey following the cease-fire, and he offered to help the British government, but only if they complied with the UN resolutions, showing the weak bargaining position the government was in.[11] Butler, and Macmillan as the next most senior minister in the government, also maintained contacts with Winthrop Aldrich, the US Ambassador to Britain, after the cease-fire. These contacts were of great significance to the resolution of Anglo-US tension that resulted from the invasion. On 8 November, Butler had spoken to Aldrich privately at an evening

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[10] Howard, RAB, p.232

[11] Notes, February 1957, and 'Reminiscences ending with Suez', undated Butler MSS G31 (70 and 89)

reception at Downing Street, where Butler 'deplored' the current divisions between the British and US governments, and 'he was quite evidently greatly disturbed by the course followed by majority of Cabinet although he did not specifically so state'.[12] Butler told Aldrich that he was the only man who could explain the attitudes of the members of the British government to Eisenhower.

On 21 November, Aldrich informed the State Department in Washington that he had seen Macmillan and Butler at 10 a.m. that morning, and 'they said that the government's policy concerning withdrawal of British troops from Egypt must be determined within the next two days'.[13] Butler believed there was no reason why the Cabinet should not decide on withdrawal, but they were also still anxious that either Macmillan or Butler should see the President as soon as possible, and Aldrich agreed with this proposal. Hoover replied on 21 November that a meeting with President Eisenhower would not be feasible until 'possibly week of December 3', and the withdrawal of the troops must come first.[14] Butler's conduct during the period after the cease-fire was vitally important in the resolution of Anglo-US relations.

Butler's Conduct during the 1922 Committee Meeting of 22 November

Butler's position as a candidate for the party leadership, if Eden was to retire, was severely affected by his conduct at the meeting of the 1922 Committee of Conservative back-benchers on 22 November. He had to address the meeting in the

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[12] N.J. Norris (ed.), Foreign Relations of the United States (hereafter FRUS), Volume XVI 1955-1957 (571), (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1990), Telegram from the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State, London, 12 November 1956, pp.1115-1117

[13] Norris (ed.), FRUS XVI 1955-1957 (598) Telegram from the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State, London, 21 November 1956, pp.1171-1172

[14] Norris (ed.), FRUS XVI 1955-1957 (600) Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, 21 November 1956, p.1173; Butler, Art of the Possible, p.195; and Horne, Macmillan 1894-1956, p.459

aftermath of the decision to cease-fire, and the agreement to withdraw from the Canal Zone. These decisions caused great dissent in the party, and as Eden was incapacitated, Butler took on the responsibility for informing Conservative back-benchers of developments. He had also that day defended the government's actions in the Commons, an unnerving and exhausting experience, which may have contributed to Butler's lacklustre performance in front of the 1922 Committee. He was warned by the Chief Whip, Edward Heath, before the meeting that the Suez Group 'might make trouble', as they were opposed to him for his reputation as an appeaser, and because he was at the forefront of discontent now that Eden's departure for Jamaica for recuperation was imminent.[15]

As Eden appeared to be finished as Conservative leader, it was imperative for his leadership candidacy that Butler delivered a good performance. He addressed the meeting before Macmillan, and gave a speech on a planned overhaul of the Conservative Party's publicity arrangements. He also gave an account of the crisis, and spoke of the uncertainty of the international situation. He noted the bleak state of the party's current electoral prospects, and of the need for the party 'to try to get our message across a bit better'.[16] The speech did not inspire confidence in the party's MPs. Clark has accurately described the task that Butler needed to fulfil at this meeting. 'The problem for the party managers, and particularly for Butler, was how to present the reality of military and economic defeat in such language as would, as might, allow it to be accepted on the Tory back-benches'.[17] This is something Butler failed to do. He had made a 'highly expensive mistake', as he had not given the party

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[15] Clark, The Tories, p.308
[16] P. Goodhart, The 1922. The Story of the 1922 Committee, (London: Macmillan, 1973), p.174; and Clark, The Tories, p.310
[17] Clark, The Tories, p.309

what it wanted to hear, and this damaged his chances of succeeding Eden.[18] His uninspiring performance and major miscalculation in not uplifting the meeting had dire consequences for Butler.

This meeting was a significant factor in the failure of Butler to become leader, but as the choice of Eden's successor was predominantly the Cabinet's, his conduct at this meeting of the 1922 Committee could only have had an indirect, though powerful, influence on his failure. However, junior ministers had been specially invited to the meeting, and Parliamentary Private Secretaries reported the results of the meeting to ministers. The Cabinet was, therefore, fully aware of the nature of the performances of the two candidates, and it can be strongly assumed that their performances did affect the Cabinet's views on who should succeed Eden. This is not the view of Goodhart, one of the secretaries of the 1922 Committee, but this is a naive assumption, as the negative performance of Butler must have confirmed, and even increased, doubts about him in the Cabinet.[19]

Butler's Conduct as Acting Prime Minister: 23 November to 14 December

On 23 November, Eden departed for Jamaica on medical advice to recuperate after the strain of recent months. Butler played a large part in the planning for this, while Macmillan opposed the trip. Butler's papers illustrate this conflict of opinion. He recorded after the crisis and leadership issue had been settled

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[18] Howard, RAB, p.241
[19] Goodhart, The 1922, p.175

I had for some time had very close relations with Horace Evans and the other doctors. Terrible bedroom scenes occurred prior to the decision to send Anthony Eden off to Jamaica. In and during these, Harold Macmillan showed great spirit, and said that the Prime Minister should on no account go to Jamaica as he would never recover. I, on the other hand, having been brought up in a more orthodox school, thought that a change was essential. As I was informed that a clinic was not necessary, I thought a British Colony would do[20]

This account raises some issues of major interest concerning Butler's role in the decision that Eden should recuperate in Jamaica. Firstly, he played a pivotal role in the decision by stressing that a 'change was essential'. Butler may have emphasised this as he felt that Eden needed to be removed from the scene while Butler and Macmillan attempted to rebuild the Anglo-US alliance, as Eisenhower was reluctant even to speak to Eden. Butler may have had his own leadership prospects in mind, but this has been discounted by many people, including Howard, who stress that he was caught unawares by the rapidity of the demise of Eden. This view is confirmed by Butler's papers, which show that he wanted Eden to remain as Prime Minister until at least July 1957. Butler's lack of perception of the state of Eden's position illustrates that he did not see an opportunity to enhance his leadership credentials.

The decline of his reputation in the party during the crisis was compounded when Butler became acting Prime Minister in Eden's absence in November 1956. The

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[20] 'Reminiscences ending with Suez', undated Butler MSS RAB G31 (89)

major consequence of his conduct was that he became the 'scapegoat' for the failure of government policy, which had great significance in the outcome of the leadership selection. Macmillan noted of Butler's new role that, 'the main responsibility fell on Butler, supported by the rest of us, as best we could'.[21] Butler's papers reveal that he received many letters of support from friends and colleagues, though notably not from senior Conservatives.[22] He now had to take on the responsibility for trying to repair the damage that the crisis had caused. The US News and World Report of 14 December ran the following headline: 'RAB BUTLER'S JOB - BAILING BRITAIN OUT', and this sums up the enormity of his task.[23] Butler has recorded the depth of his new responsibilities

> I was left in charge of the government, with the odious duty of withdrawing the troops, re-establishing the pound, salvaging our relations with the U.S. and the U. N., and bearing the brunt of the criticism from private members, constituency worthies and the general public for organising a withdrawal, which was a collective responsibility.[24]

Butler also noted an important consequence of his new role, as 'It was of course unfortunate that I was left as Head of the Government during a period when withdrawal from Suez was imminent'.[25] He was conscious of his scapegoat role, but

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[21] H. Macmillan, Riding The Storm 1956-1959, (London: Macmillan, 1971), p.170
[22] Chuter Ede to Butler, 20.11.56 Butler MSS RAB G30 (63)
[23] US News and World Report, 14 December 1956 Butler MSS G30 (75)
[24] Butler, Art of The Possible, p.194; and 'Reminiscences ending with Suez', undated Butler MSS RAB G31 (89)
[25] Notes, February 1957 Butler MSS RAB G31 (70)

could do nothing to avoid it or mitigate its consequences. Captain 'Cub' Alport, a former colleague of Butler's at the CRD, had warned him of the possibility of this when Eden departed for Jamaica. He told him 'the only thing I would say is that it is vital always to take account of the forces of boldness and resolution which the last few weeks have released in the Parliamentary Party & the country generally'.[26] The Imperialist wing, especially the Suez Group who advocated an aggressive response to Nasser, were the foremost opponents of retreat, and focused their dissent on Butler when he took on the responsibility for that when Eden went to Jamaica.[27] On the same day as Eden's departure, the order was given for the withdrawal of one British battalion from Port Said. On 26 November, Butler spoke to Aldrich prior to the Cabinet meeting of that day. He told him that he believed in the 'ultimate indestructibility' of Anglo-US relations, and that the relationship was essential to Western civilisation.[28] This illustrates that the re-building of the 'special relationship' was deemed to be crucial, and Butler's actions were directed by this objective, alongside the vital need to keep the party together in Parliament.

Aldrich reported to the State Department that he felt it imperative Butler and Macmillan should be invited to Washington, adding that Butler would probably be too busy to go himself, but Macmillan would go. The extent of Butler's new responsibilities meant he was confined to working on regaining some stability on the domestic political scene. This had an important consequence, as it allowed Macmillan to use his contacts with the US government to his advantage in preparing his

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[26] Alport to Butler, 20.11.56, Butler MSS RAB G30 (65)

[27] For a detailed analysis of the views expressed by the Suez Group, and their effect on Butler's position as a leadership candidate, see chapter five, pp.166-169

[28] 'Confidential. The Suez Canal Crisis - Diary of events - 1956' CPA CRD 2/34/28; and Norris (ed.), FRUS XVI 1955-1957 (614) Telegram from the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State, London, 26 November 1956, pp.1196-1197

leadership candidacy. Butler was allowed no such opportunity. On 27 November, Aldrich called Butler, and 'found him considerably encouraged by his talk yesterday with Humphrey'.[29] Butler indicated that his impression of the outcome of the meeting was that 'as soon as the British can announce a definite date for complete withdrawal of forces from Egypt the US door will be open for urgent consideration of the various problems which have arisen between us'.[30] This illustrates the prime need to secure US financial support, and the role of Butler and Macmillan in securing that assistance.

Butler's Conduct during the Withdrawal from the Canal: 3-14 December

On 3 December, Lloyd announced the decision to withdraw British forces 'without delay' in the House of Commons, and on 8 December, the first phase of the Anglo-French withdrawal began.[31] The reaction to the announcement was fierce, and there was clear anger, frustration and division in the party. There was a considerable amount of criticism levelled at Butler for not making the announcement of withdrawal himself. Conservative back-benches felt strongly that he should have taken this role, as Lloyd's standing in the Commons had fallen so low. Butler wound up the debate, and was now in the firing line of Conservative MPs' anger. Patrick Maitland, MP for Lanark, noted that 'The Lord Privy Seal's [Butler's] remark, winding up the debate, that "we intend the arrangements shall be as satisfactory as they can be..." left room for a great deal of doubt'.[32] Butler told the Commons that 'to be obsessed with talk of a

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[29] Norris (ed.), FRUS XVI 1955-1957 (619) Telegram from the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State, London, 27 November 1956, p.1204
[30] Norris (ed.), FRUS XVI 1955-1957 (619) Telegram from the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State, 27 November 1956, p.1204
[31] R. Rhodes-James, Anthony Eden, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986), p.586
[32] 'Confidential. Conservative Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee. Record of a Meeting held in Room 10 at the House of Commons at 4 p.m. on Wednesday 14 November 1956' CPA CRD 2/34/2

stranglehold which one side may exercise over the other gets us nowhere; we must think rather in terms of a partnership in which each side has much to contribute and each can help the other to ever-increasing prosperity'.[33]

Rhodes-James supports the justification for the criticism against Butler, and believes it would have been better for his reputation if he had done so, as 'the decision did Butler much harm, with the Party in such an evil mood, casting around for scapegoats'.[34] This was exacerbated by the fact that there was little criticism of Eden in the constituencies, nor of Macmillan, and 'this left Butler isolated and vulnerable, and his enemies were swift to vent their own emotions upon him. It was very unjust, but justice in politics has an uncomfortable habit of being very rough'.[35] Eden returned from Jamaica on 14 December, but the US government would no longer work with him. The roles Butler and Macmillan played in the partial rejuvenation of the Anglo-US relationship was acknowledged in a letter from Humphrey to Butler, who told him 'I want you both [Butler and Macmillan] to know how very appreciative I am of our relationship and our confidence in each other. I think it has helped matters with both our countries'. On 23 December, the last British and French troops withdrew from Port Said.[36] Butler was now reviled by many in the party because of his conduct during the crisis, and particularly as the acting Prime Minister at the time of retreat and withdrawal.

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[33] 'Notes for Lord Privy Seal's Winding-Up Speech, 6 December 1956' CPA CRD 2/34/29
[34] Rhodes-James, Anthony Eden, p.586
[35] Rhodes-James, Anthony Eden, p.586
[36] Humphrey to Butler, 18 December 1956 Butler MSS RAB G30 (67); and 'Confidential. The Suez Canal Crisis - Diary of events - 1956' CPA CRD 2/34/28

Macmillan

Macmillan's Reaction to the Onset of the Crisis and his Role on the Egypt Committee: August 1956

Macmillan reacted strongly to Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company, and encouraged Eden in his forceful attitude to the crisis. He described Nasser's speech declaring the nationalisation of the Canal Company as, 'very truculent - an Asiatic Mussolini, full of insult and abuse for U.S. and U.K'.[37] Macmillan became one of the most vocal 'hawks' in the Cabinet, and was a key player on the Egypt Committee. He noted on 27 July, 'P.M. has appointed a "Suez" committee of the Cabinet - himself, Salisbury, Home [Commonwealth Secretary] and myself - with other ministers turning up as required. We met for 2 hours, 7.15-9.15 and settled a lot of matters'.[38]

Macmillan's conduct on the Egypt Committee was an important aspect of the British government's response to the crisis, and he also played a key role in informing the US government of the British government's belief in the necessity for the use of force. On 30 July, Macmillan met Robert Murphy, the US Deputy Under-Secretary of State, who had been deployed by President Eisenhower to assess the British Government's attitude to the crisis. Macmillan expressed to Murphy that if Nasser was allowed to get away with this, Britain would be finished as a world power. He declared that the government had decided to remove Nasser from office, and to use force if necessary, and the government saw no alternative.[39] He asked Murphy to make this clear to Eisenhower. Macmillan had worked with Murphy in North Africa during the

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[37] Diary entry for 27 July 1956, Ms. Macmillan, dep. d.27, (9)
[38] Diary entry for 27 July 1956 Ms. Macmillan dep. d.27 (10)
[39] Norris (ed.), FRUS XVI 1955-1957 (33) Telegram from the Embassy in London to the Department of State, 31 July 1956, 2 a.m., pp. 60-62

Second World War when Macmillan was British Minister Resident, and Murphy was his opposite number, fulfilling the same role for the US government. Murphy immediately reported this conversation to Eisenhower via a telegram to the US State Department, and Eisenhower was so alarmed by his account, he promptly despatched Secretary of State Dulles to London.

Macmillan's intention was undoubtedly to frighten Murphy enough for him to inform Eisenhower of the government's intention to use force. As he expressed in his diary entry for that day, 'We did our best to frighten Murphy out of his life. We gave the impression that our military expedition was about to sail (it will take at least 6 weeks to prepare it, in fact)'.[40] Macmillan recorded the following day, 'It seems we have succeeded in thoroughly alarming Murphy. He must have reported in the sense which we wanted, and Foster Dulles is coming over post-haste. This is a very good development'.[41] He continued in the same tone to Dulles as he had expressed to Murphy on 31 July, and talked of the potential loss of the British position in the Middle East, and the need for the British government to act firmly.[42] This illustrates that Macmillan believed that the US government needed to be kept informed of how serious the British government was in its 'hawkish' attitude to the crisis.

Macmillan's role in the planning for government policy far exceeded the parameters of his responsibilities as Chancellor, and illustrates his pivotal role in the Suez Crisis. On 18 August, during the First London Conference, Macmillan dined with Dulles where he restated his view that 'Britain was finished unless Nasser could be brought to accept in some form an effective international participation in the practical

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[40] Diary entry for 30 July 1956, Ms. Macmillan, dep. d.27, (12)
[41] Diary entry for 31 July 1956, Ms. Macmillan, dep. d.27, (13).
[42] Norris (ed.), FRUS XVI 1955-1957 (46) Memorandum of a Conversation, 11 Downing Street, London, 1 August 1956, 6.30 p.m., pp.108-109

operation of the Suez Canal'. He noted of Dulles' attitude that 'I cannot help feeling that he really wants us to "go it alone", and has been trying to help us by creating the right atmosphere'.[43] On 21 August, he had a private conversation with Dulles at Eden's reception for the US officials at Downing Street. Macmillan asked him if he planned to remain as Secretary of State, if Eisenhower was re-elected on 6 November. Macmillan told Dulles that he was thinking of returning to the Foreign Office 'in the reasonably near future', and Dulles' decision would affect this as they had previously worked well together during Macmillan's spell at the Foreign Office. Dulles replied that he had no definite plans, but would probably remain as Secretary of State if Eisenhower was re-elected.[44] It is apparent that Macmillan was trying to gain US support, but the exact motives for his actions remain unclear. Macmillan may have wanted a return to the Foreign Office, or may have been vying for US support for his leadership candidacy, if Eden was forced to resign because of the crisis.

At the Cabinet meeting of 23 August, Macmillan declared that 'if Nasser succeeded, our position in the Middle East would be undermined, our oil supplies in jeopardy, and the stability of our economy gravely threatened'.[45] On 26 August, he submitted his Treasury paper, The Economic Consequences of Colonel Nasser, which stated that if the oil situation was lost, Britain and Europe were finished.[46] In the days prior to the submission of this paper, Macmillan's concern at the oil situation is apparent in his diary entries. On 24 August, he wrote, 'without oil and the profits of oil we could not exist', and the following day noted that the government was faced with a

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[43] Macmillan Diary, 19 August 1956 in Horne, Macmillan 1894-1956, p.417
[44] Norris (ed.), FRUS XVI 1955-1957 (108) Memorandum of a conversation between Secretary of State Dulles and Foreign Secretary Macmillan, 10 Downing Street, London, August 21 1956, pp.248-249
[45] Lloyd, Suez 1956, p.117
[46] Treasury paper, 26 August 1956 in Horne, Macmillan 1894-1956, p.419

terrible dilemma, of taking action with the possible consequence that the Canal would be closed.[47] This would mean that Britain and Europe would have 'had it'. Macmillan, however, believed that force should be used, and hoped that Britain's friends in the Middle East would stand by them.[48]

This led Macmillan to continue the policy of frightening the US government, and making them aware of the seriousness of Britain's problems. He noted on 15 September that 'we must (if we possibly can) keep the Americans with us, or we shall have no chance of getting out of our financial mess. At present, they only want to lend us some money. That isn't really much good to us. We want some contribution to the difference in between'.[49] This was the nature of Macmillan's strategy in dealing with the US government throughout the crisis, and was exacerbated when the extent of Britain's oil problems became apparent.

On 19 September, Douglas Dillon, the US Ambassador to Paris, reported to Dulles the results of conversations he had with Macmillan and Salisbury. He reported that they still held the attitude that military action was the only solution to the problem, and this should begin as soon as was politically feasible. Macmillan also 'repeated his very strong language of a month ago saying that success by Nasser would mean the end of Great Britain and must be opposed at all costs'. Dillon added that this was meant in an economic context, and Macmillan stated 'England was prepared to sell all of her foreign assets, including all her American securities if necessary to gain victory. He said the present affair was a case of all or nothing'. Dillon suggested that if this was the view of the government, military action would probably start in a month.

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[47] Diary entry for 24 August 1956, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.27, (57)
[48] Diary entry for 25 August 1956, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.27, (60-61)
[49] Diary entry for 15 September 1956 Ms. Macmillan dep. d.27 (102)

Macmillan and Salisbury felt two things needed to be achieved. First, a reduction in the opposition of Labour to the use of force, and secondly, closer co-operation with the US.[50] Two characteristics were central to Macmillan's conduct throughout this phase of the crisis: his belief in the need to use force, and the need to gain US support to solve the oil problem that was a major concern for the British government. Macmillan's conduct, however, was not aimed at improving his position as Eden's successor. It was not then clear that Eden would resign as the crisis had not reaped its full consequences, and he had not seen the 'window of opportunity' that came later in the crisis.

Macmillan's Conduct during his Meeting with Eisenhower in Washington: 25 September 1956

From 20 September to 1 October, Macmillan visited the United States to attend the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund. Macmillan's diary note for 24 September illustrates his persistent concern at Britain's financial state, as 'the state of our reserves and the pressure on Sterling make me very anxious. If this situation goes on too long, it may well overcome us, and be driven to devaluation or bankruptcy'.[51] He repeated the fears on 4 October that, 'without oil and the profits from oil, neither U. K. nor Western Europe can survive'.[52] This shows how the oil problem had not lessened, but had escalated during his visit to the US.

Macmillan met Dulles at the State Department in Washington on 25 September at 3.40 p.m., with Sir Roger Makins, the British Ambassador to the US. Their

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[50] Norris (ed.), FRUS XVI 1955-1957 (233) Memorandum from C. Douglas Dillon to the Secretary of State, London, 19 September 1956, pp.521-522
[51] Diary entry for 24 September 1956, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.27, (119)
[52] Diary entry for 4 October 1956, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.27, (18v). Emphasis on original document.

discussion centred around the problem of the payment of dues for the Suez Canal, but Macmillan stressed to him that Middle East oil was vital to the British economy.[53] Macmillan also had a private talk with Dulles, which 'dealt chiefly with Suez'. Dulles expressed to him that he felt economic and political measures could work just as effectively as military action. He replied, 'the present military situation was such that they could without undue expense hold action in abeyance'.[54] Dulles also reminded Macmillan 'frankly of how he and the President had helped us in May 1955. They had an Election now themselves, and like us, were fighting on the cry of "peace and prosperity". He hoped that peace could be kept - at least until November 6th!'.[55] An interesting conundrum is what effect did this declaration have on Macmillan's thinking? This was a clear warning against the use of force until at least 6 November, yet the invasion that began on 30 October suggests that it did not have an effect on his thinking, or at least on Macmillan's influence on government policy. The evidence suggests that Eden was desperate for military action to begin, with or without the support of the US government.

Of greater significance is Macmillan's visit to Eisenhower at the White House the same day. Eisenhower told Dulles afterwards that he and Macmillan did not discuss the crisis in great detail, yet Macmillan informed Eden that the President supported the British Government's wish to 'bring Nasser down', and Eisenhower accepted that Britain must win.[56] Macmillan had told Eisenhower, 'we could not play it long,

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[53] Norris (ed.), FRUS XVI 1955-1957 (263) Memorandum of a conversation, Department of State, Washington, 25 September 1956, 3.40 p.m., pp.577-580

[54] Diary entry for 25 September 1956, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.27, (2v-3v); and Norris (ed.), FRUS XVI 1955-1957 (265) Memorandum of a conversation between Secretary of State Dulles and Chancellor of the Exchequer Macmillan, Department of State Washington, 25 September 1956, pp.580-581

[55] Diary entry for 25 September 1956 Ms. Macmillan dep. d.27 (3v)

[56] Norris (ed.), FRUS XVI 1955-1957 (264) Editorial Note, p.580; Diary entry for 25 September 1956, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.27, folio 121; and Report to Eden, 26 September 1956 in Horne, Macmillan 1894-1956, p.430. This account is also in Lloyd, Suez 1956, p.149

without aid on a very large scale - that is, if playing it long involved buying dollar oil'.[57] Eden had just returned from Paris where he had come under pressure from the French Government to act swiftly, and Macmillan's account had a major effect on his thinking. The account Macmillan gave to Eden starkly contradicts Eisenhower's account of the meeting to Dulles in a telephone conversation soon after the meeting. In his report of the meeting with Eisenhower, Macmillan wrote that Eisenhower accepted that Britain must win, and he felt Eisenhower was 'determined to bring Nasser down'.[58] This is contradictory to the account Eisenhower gave to Dulles

> President said that Mr. Macmillan talked very much more moderately [about the Suez] than he had anticipated. He cheerfully admitted that the issue was Nasser rather than the Canal (said if they closed up the Shell oil refinery, England would have been much worse off). He said that Macmillan was far less bitter than he had been a few weeks ago[59]

It is impossible to determine who was giving the more accurate account, but Macmillan's account was written a day after the meeting, whereas the conversation involving Eisenhower and Dulles took place directly after it, so Macmillan had time to devise an alternative account to deliver to Eden. His diary entry for that day conforms to the account he gave to Eden, in stressing that 'On Suez, he [Eisenhower] was sure

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[57] Diary entry for 25 September 1956, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.27, (121). Emphasis on original document.
[58] Macmillan to Eden, 26 September 1956 in Horne, Macmillan 1894-1956, p.430
[59] Norris (ed.), FRUS 1955-1957 XVI, (264) Editorial Note, p.580

that we must get Nasser down. The only thing was, how to do it'.[60] These contradictory accounts of the meeting suggest that Macmillan was possibly playing a double game with Eden and the American Government, but it could also have been just a misinterpretation by Macmillan of Eisenhower's attitude. He did deceive Eden by not informing him exactly of what had been discussed at the meeting. Nevertheless, Eden as the foreign affairs expert in the Cabinet, would have been fully aware of the nature of the US government's response to the crisis, but he was no doubt encouraged by Macmillan's favourable account of the meeting. Macmillan might have been deliberately deceiving Eden, and it can be assumed that if this was occurring, it was designed to enhance his own prospects as a candidate for the leadership of the party, if Eden was forced to retire. However, Macmillan could also have just misinterpreted Eisenhower's attitude, as Charmley has argued. He explains Macmillan's misinterpretation of the US government's attitude as being determined by the long held belief in the British government that was instituted by Churchill - that the differences between British interests and US intentions did not exist, and Ministers refused to face up to them when they did.

Charmley believes that 'Once in Washington he [Macmillan] continued to interpret what the Americans told him through the star-spangled spectacles customarily donned by Churchillian acolytes when observing America'.[61] He believes that Macmillan did not conspire against Eden in giving him a misleading account of the meeting. He explains the differing accounts by the fact that when Macmillan and Eisenhower worked together in Algiers during the Second World War, he dealt with

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[60] Diary entry for 25 September 1956, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.27, (121)

[61] J. Charmley, Churchill's Grand Alliance. The Anglo-American Special Relationship, 1940-1957, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1995), p.331

Eisenhower by projecting his own views on him, and Eisenhower then usually followed his advice. Macmillan believed this had occurred on 25 September, and gave Eden an optimistic account of the attitude expressed by Eisenhower, which was nevertheless false in expressing the President's commitment to a compliance with the use of force.[62] This argument has a good degree of plausibility, and does help to explain the differing interpretations of the meeting. This charitable interpretation of Macmillan's conduct seems correct. It was too early for him to have seen the 'window of opportunity' to enhance his chances of succeeding Eden, which occurred after the 6 November Cabinet meeting that signalled the cease-fire in the Canal Zone.

Macmillan's Role in the Cease-fire of 6 November: 'The Window of Opportunity'

Following the invasion of the Canal, on 1 November the British Government was warned that the US government was contemplating oil sanctions against Britain and France. Selwyn Lloyd has recorded that at the second meeting of the Egypt Committee that day, 'Macmillan threw his arms into the air and said "Oil sanctions! That finishes it"'.[63] Eden informed Eisenhower on 5 November that 'it is no mere form of words to say that we would be happy to hand over to an international organisation as soon as we possibly can. As you can imagine, no one feels more strongly about this than Harold [Macmillan] who has to provide the money'.[64]

On 6 November, Cabinet discussions continued on whether the military operation against Egypt should continue. Macmillan settled that argument by telling the Cabinet that there had been a severe run on the pound, which had originated in the

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[62] Charmley, Churchill's Grand Alliance, p.333
[63] Lloyd, Suez 1956, p.211
[64] Norris (ed.), FRUS XVI 1955-1957 (499) Message from Prime Minister Eden to President Eisenhower, London, 5 November 1956, pp.984-986

US. He declared that Britain's gold reserves had fallen by £100 million ($280 million) over the last week, and since the start of the crisis they had lost one-eighth of their reserves.[65] He contacted George Humphrey, and was told that the US government would only assist them if they ordered the cease-fire by midnight. Assistance would come via US support for an IMF loan to buttress the pound, and at 5 p.m. (GMT), allied high command ordered the cease-fire. Before the Cabinet meeting, Macmillan had told Lloyd that 'in view of the financial and economic pressures we must stop'.[66] This 'u-turn' by Macmillan, from being the foremost 'hawk' in the Cabinet to being the Minister responsible for signalling the retreat, led to accusations of deceit and betrayal. Harold Wilson, the Shadow Chancellor, described Macmillan's conduct during the crisis as 'first in, first out'.[67]

Macmillan maintained in his memoirs that the losses for the first few days of November were $279 million, and 'was partly due to the effect on Sterling of the clear split between the allies'.[68] The possibility of oil sanctions was a critical factor in his decision, as he believed that Britain could ride the financial crisis but not oil sanctions, indicating the pivotal influence of the oil problem. Kunz has argued convincingly that Macmillan deceived his Cabinet colleagues and Eden by citing 'a clearly erroneous figure.'[69] The evidence she offers for this is that the loss could not have been $280 million for the week ending 6 November, as Macmillan was told by the Treasury on 7 November that the loss for the previous week was only $85 million.[70] She claims

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[65] Horne, Macmillan 1894 -1956, p.448
[66] Lloyd, Suez 1956, p.209
[67] Horne, Macmillan 1984-1956, p.449
[68] Horne, Macmillan 1894-1956, p.448; and Macmillan, Riding The Storm 1956-1959, p.164
[69] D.B. Kunz, The Economic Diplomacy of the Suez Crisis, (London: Univ. of Carolina Press, 1991), p.132
[70] PRO T 236/4189 "Note of a Meeting at 11 Downing Street on Wednesday, 7 November 1956" in Kunz, Economic Diplomacy of the Suez Crisis, p.132

further that he deceived the Cabinet by telling them that the reserve losses had originated in the United States, whereas this was not revealed by the Treasury or Bank of England until 20 November. 'Macmillan knew he was misleading the Cabinet', as the only counter explanation possible is that Macmillan confused pounds with dollars, and this contention is not convincing to any degree.[71] Kunz accounts for Macmillan's actions by his deduction that his cover up would not be easily or quickly discovered, as he had the ultimate responsibility for Britain's finances as Chancellor. Only Butler could have challenged the declaration because of his past experience as Chancellor, but as he was opposed to the invasion in the first place, Butler accepted Macmillan's calculations at 'face value'.[72] Butler noted in February 1957 that 'Harold Macmillan was even clearer in his mind on the need for withdrawal than anyone else. This was because of the great strain on Sterling, our isolation from the Commonwealth and world opinion and the danger of the effect of United Nations sanctions on our economy'.[73]

Macmillan's conduct on 6 November can be accounted for by two alternative explanations. The first is that he knew that it would be pointless to continue the Suez expedition, and the British government needed US financial support because of the oil situation, so he decided to cut the government's losses. The second is that Macmillan had realised that Eden was now finished as Prime Minister, and saw a 'window of opportunity' to press his claim for the party leadership. This is the view of Robert Rhodes-James, who asserts that the 6 November Cabinet meeting was the occasion that led Macmillan to see the 'window of opportunity' that he had previously not

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[71] Kunz, Economic Diplomacy of the Suez Crisis, p.132
[72] Kunz, Economic Diplomacy of the Suez Crisis, p.133
[73] Notes, February 1957 Butler MSS G31 (70)

expected, and had not worked for. Rhodes-James believes the opportunity just came and Macmillan took it.[74] This explains in part why he acted as he did on 6 November. Macmillan's sense of opportunism was important, but the severity of Britain's escalating financial problems must not be discounted as a determining factor in his decision.

A more cynical explanation linked to this is that this was just one of a series of manoeuvres by Macmillan to undermine Eden and force his resignation. There is obviously no direct evidence to substantiate this argument, as Macmillan would not admit to it. However, Nigel Birch, a loyal supporter of Eden's, maintained that Macmillan had pushed 'Eden into Suez in the hope that it would bring about his fall'. Horne has called this the 'pulled-the-carpet-out' thesis, and states that this view was not subscribed to by those who worked closely with Eden and Macmillan, including Philip De Zueleta, who was Private Secretary to both, Lord Blake, who helped Eden write his memoirs, and Lady Avon, Eden's widow.[75] However, Birch became an implacable opponent of Macmillan after his forced resignation from the Treasury in January 1958, and this may explain his view of Macmillan's conduct. This cynical interpretation places a strategy or plan on Macmillan's actions that does not appear to have existed. The oil situation dictated Macmillan's actions, but it is also apparent that he had seen the 'window of opportunity' that the situation presented. Macmillan's actions had the desired outcome as it undermined Eden's position, and improved his position as a candidate for the leadership should Eden retire.

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[74] Interview with Robert Rhodes-James featured in 'Reputations: The Macmillans. Portrait of a Political Marriage'. Blakeway Productions for BBC TV. First shown 14 March 1996.
[75] Horne, Macmillan 1894-1956, p.461

The 'window of opportunity' argument can be further substantiated by Macmillan's actions prior to, and following, Eden's departure for Jamaica on 23 November. These were particularly effective in buttressing his candidacy to succeed Eden. After the 6 November cease-fire, Macmillan persistently attempted to persuade representatives of the US government to allow him to visit the US to negotiate with Eisenhower and Dulles. This could be viewed as part of his plan to press his claim to replace Eden, but could also be accounted for by the urgent need to sort out the oil problem. On 9 November, Macmillan spoke to Aldrich to discuss whether he should ask the US State Department for permission to leave for Washington immediately to consult Humphrey about the question of oil imports to Britain. Aldrich advised Macmillan not to raise this matter, and to wait until Eden could visit the US himself. Aldrich gave this advice as the State Department wanted to deal with the oil problem through the OEEC, rather than directly with the British government, as British troops were still in Egypt.[76]

Macmillan continued his quest to gain US support to help resolve the British government's oil problems. On 16 November, he spoke to Aldrich and said that the OEEC meeting in Paris had gone well, and 'it would not be necessary for Great Britain to make any special representations to the United States in connection with its problems regarding oil'. Aldrich noted that there were two things presently occupying Macmillan's mind: the obtaining of fund available to Britain from the IMF, and 'the possibility of money from the Federal Reserve Bank on the American securities owned by the British Treasury'. Macmillan felt these were worth approximately $900 million,

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[76] Norris (ed.), FRUS XVI 1955-1957 (571) Telegram from Embassy in United Kingdom to Department of State, 12 November 1956, pp.1115-1117

and if the government could obtain two-thirds of the market value of the securities, and $600 million from the IMF fund, that would be sufficient to 'tide Britain over the difficult period ahead'.[77]

Aldrich felt that the British government were now prepared to withdraw from the Canal Zone, and let the UN settle the dispute between Israel and Egypt. Macmillan also discussed the possibility of going to Washington as 'Eden's deputy', to continue negotiations as Eden's health meant he would not be able to undertake such a trip. Aldrich informed the State Department that 'this might be a hint that some movement is on foot in the Cabinet to replace Eden'.[78] The US Government now saw that Eden was in a precarious position, and unlikely to continue as Prime Minister. This was confirmed to Aldrich on 19 November, when Macmillan told him that Eden had had a breakdown and would imminently depart the country to recuperate for a fortnight, and this would be followed by his retirement. Macmillan told Aldrich that Butler would become Prime Minister, Macmillan Foreign Secretary and Lloyd Chancellor, but he also noted 'Possibly Macmillan might be Prime Minister'. Aldrich also informed the State Department that 'Macmillan is desperately anxious to see the President at earliest possible opportunity and apparently consideration being given to appointment of Macmillan as Deputy Prime Minister during Eden's absence in order that such a meeting might take place at once after withdrawal British troops'.[79] This action again followed Macmillan's strategy of gaining the financial support, and also US support for his leadership challenge, if Eden resigned because of the crisis.

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[77] Norris (ed.), FRUS XVI 1955-1957 (583) Telegram from the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State, London, 17 November 1956, pp.1142-1143
[78] Norris (ed.), FRUS 1955 - 1957 XVI (588) Telegram from the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State, London, 19 November 1956, pp.1142-1143
[79] Norris (ed.), FRUS 1955 - 1957 XVI (593) Telegram from the Embassy in United Kingdom to the Department of State, London, 19 November 1956, p.1163

Macmillan again spoke to Aldrich that evening, and confirmed that Eden would be going on holiday for a fortnight, and then he would retire. The first action following Eden's departure would be the withdrawal of British troops from the Canal Zone. Macmillan asked for 'a fig leaf to cover our nakedness', to secure the majority in Cabinet for withdrawal. His actions during this phase of the crisis in negotiating with the US government can be interpreted in two ways. Firstly, Macmillan was chosen by the Cabinet to lead the negotiations with the US government, because of his good relationship with both Dulles and Eisenhower, and it was felt this must be exploited in order to stabilise the Anglo-US alliance. The second explanation is that he was exploiting Eden's health problems to enhance his own leadership credentials, by openly campaigning for the support of the US government. It is impossible to reach a definite conclusion on this issue, but the securing of the financial support was imperative, while Macmillan probably did perceive the benefit of US support for his leadership candidacy. The outcome of these actions was positive for Macmillan. He helped to gain the financial support from the US government, and also promoted his leadership candidacy, with evidence suggesting that Eisenhower favoured him as Eden's successor.

<u>Macmillan's Conduct during the 1922 Committee Meeting of 22 November</u>

Both Macmillan and Butler addressed this meeting with the 1922 Committee, in the aftermath of the decision to accept the cease-fire in the Canal Zone. Butler addressed the meeting as acting head of the government, and there is some dispute over whether Macmillan was invited to speak at this meeting. Alan Clark has argued that he rose to speak during the traditional banging of desks following Butler's speech

and interrupted the proceedings. However, Howard maintains that Butler invited Macmillan to accompany him, as he knew the reception from the committee was going to be hostile, and he needed some support.[80] In his notes on the crisis, Butler states 'Harold [Macmillan] and I went together to the 22 Committee. We could not tell them all the facts'.[81] Butler thus reveals that they went in unison to the meeting, and implies Macmillan was intended to speak to the Committee, in contrast to Clark's assertion. Macmillan was present at the meeting in his capacity as Chancellor to explain the poor state of the economy in the aftermath of the crisis.

Butler addressed the meeting first, and was followed by Macmillan, who delivered a rallying cry to the party's MPs. He invigorated the Committee with a speech that showed impeccable timing, and an acute understanding of political psychology. He appeared to offer hope to the party's MPs, whose spirits were low after the embarrassments of recent months. Conservative MPs were convinced Macmillan was the man to succeed Eden after his performance at the 1922 Committee meeting, illustrating the full effect of the meeting on the outcome of the imminent selection. Macmillan, as one MP present recalled, 'made a bid for the leadership which we knew was coming into question. It was a real leadership speech'.[82] Butler finished his speech, and announced 'now the Chancellor of the Exchequer may care to say a word or two about oil'. Macmillan did much more than this. 'It was rhetoric and it did border on the 'ham', but he contrived to set their [Conservative MPs] troubles in the framework of the long adventure of politics, full of hard knocks but still a game worth

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[80] 'Alan Clark's History of the Tory Party'. Episode two: The Rank Outsider. An Oxford Television Company Production for BBC TV. First broadcast 21 September 1997; and Howard, RAB, p.240
[81] Notes, dated February 1957 Butler MSS RAB G31 (70)
[82] Goodhart, The 1922, p.175

playing more than any other'.[83] This was 'one of the classic confrontations in the history of the 1922 Committee', and it was a confrontation that Macmillan won. A whip present at the meeting recalled that 'Harold [Macmillan] was at his most ebullient and managed to win the day, not only on the merit of what he said (as it seemed to the Committee) but also physically in that his expansive gestures nearly caused poor Rab [Butler] to fall backwards from the adjacent seat'.[84] Macmillan also cunningly conveyed to the party's MPs that he would be willing to serve in a caretaker capacity to allow the party to restore some semblance of stability, by emphasising his age and his 'advancing years'. This, along with his virtuoso performance, served to 'plant the seed' that he would be a viable option as a stop-gap leader, who could restore the party's short-term fortunes, and then hand over to a younger leader.[85]

Clark has noted the effect and the outcome of Macmillan's performance at the meeting, as 'the applause was long and hard, and members left the room with their spirits raised for the first time since the summer'.[86] This was what the party needed at this time, someone to instil confidence and lift the party after the embarrassments that had followed the retreat from Suez. Conservative MPs felt that they needed something exceptional because of the severe trouble that the party found itself in, and this explains Macmillan's attractiveness to MPs, and the party hierarchy. Ramsden has noted an important point about Macmillan's conduct after he became Prime Minister, that relates well to the attitude he expressed to Conservative MPs on 22 November.

'Macmillan had recognised that the best way to deal politically with such a national

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[83] J. Ramsden, 'Rab did sometimes miss tricks which Macmillan managed to take', The Listener, 19 March 1987, p.23
[84] Goodhart, The 1922, p.175
[85] Clark, The Tories, p.311
[86] Clark, The Tories, p.311

humiliation was to refuse all apologies, enquiries and witch-hunts, and then to ignore the issue altogether by highlighting other things in his speeches and in the party's campaigning'.[87] This was the strategy Macmillan adopted at the 1922 Committee meeting, to show the party that the crisis could be quickly forgotten by uniting together, and working to erase the memory of the crisis from the party and the electorate.

Macmillan's actions can be perceived as being aimed at deliberately undermining Butler's claims for the leadership. This is certainly the view of Lady Butler, who believes Macmillan did everything he could to prevent Butler becoming Prime Minister, and that her husband never recognised Macmillan's jealousy and hostility, always taking him at face value.[88] An alternative explanation is that Macmillan merely used the meeting as an opportunity to deliver what the party's MPs wanted to hear, and so demonstrated his political acumen. This is supported by De Zueleta who told Horne that by the 1922 meeting, Macmillan 'saw that Eden could not go on, and Butler could not possibly take over'.[89] This realisation dictated the nature of Macmillan's conduct, not personal spite against Butler. However, when he was chosen to replace Eden on 10 January 1957, the choice was essentially that of the Cabinet, so this meeting could only have had an indirect, yet important influence on his victory, as ministers were fully aware of the outcome of the meeting. The importance of Macmillan's conduct at this meeting in his selection as Eden's successor cannot be understated.

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[87] Ramsden, An Appetite For Power, p.362

[88] Interviews with Lady Butler featured in 'Alan Clark's History of the Tory Party'. Episode three: From Estate Owners to Estate Agents. An Oxford Television Company Production for BBC TV. First broadcast 28 September 1997; and 'Reputations: The Macmillans. Portrait of a Political Marriage'. Blakeway Productions for BBC TV. First broadcast 14 March 1996.

[89] Horne, Macmillan 1894-1956, p.462

Macmillan's Conduct during Eden's Absence: 23 November 1956-9 January 1957

Macmillan left Butler to defend the government's position in the Commons when Eden went to Jamaica, thus exposing him to attacks from both sides of the House. However, Butler was acting head of the government and had the responsibility for explaining and defending government policy in the Commons, so Macmillan was not compelled to support Butler in this task. He only appeared once in the Commons after the cease-fire and only then spoke on economic policy, but was not required to do more.[90] Macmillan once noted that Butler, 'asked me to act as his main confidant, and we laboured together in complete agreement...We made it a rule always to attend [the House of Commons] together and each to speak on the lines we had agreed'.[91] His single appearance in the Commons over this period contradicts this claim, but his conduct as Chancellor in explaining the government's economic position cannot be questioned.

Butler recorded an interesting observation on the attitude of Macmillan during Eden's absence. Butler recalled in February 1957 that 'Macmillan and the younger men showed great determination in their view that the situation could not continue'.[92] This observation illustrates an interesting development in the attitude of Macmillan. Prior to Eden's departure for Jamaica, Macmillan wanted Eden to stay on, but when he returned, he wanted Eden to retire. This could be due to the realisation that Eden was now finished, and that the manoeuvring for the prime position in the emerging new order was beginning. An argument that could be offered to support the theory that Macmillan manipulated Butler's exposed position, is that he already knew of the

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[90] 5s H. C. Debs. Vol.561, 26 November 1956, cols.1050-1066
[91] Macmillan, Riding The Storm, p.170
[92] Notes, February 1957, Butler MSS G31 (70)

opposition to Butler in the party from those MPs opposed to Suez, and exploited it to its full potential. His solitary speech in the Commons during the period after Eden's departure for Jamaica suggests this may have been the case. Butler, however, has asserted that Macmillan did not conspire against him or Eden. He wrote in February 1957

When questioned by historians I should say that there was no great plot at the end of Anthony Eden's Premiership as the newspapers would sometimes suppose. In some ways I have evidence that Harold Macmillan was surprised himself. His behaviour certainly indicated that he deserves every assistance in his heavy responsibilities[93]

Butler's assessment is correct. Macmillan was chosen on merit because of his conduct during the latter stages of the crisis and its aftermath, which displayed the qualities the party needed in this situation. Macmillan noted after the crisis that once Eden had left for Jamaica, 'he could never return and remain as P. M. for long. Apart from the appearance of running away from a battlefield the party had been terribly shattered. It became clear by Christmas that the P.M. was really unable to go on'.[94] This can be interpreted as a further cue for Macmillan's efforts to take the 'window of opportunity', as he knew Eden was finished, and this dictated the nature of his conduct.

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[93] 'Reminiscences ending with Suez', undated Butler MSS RAB G31 (89)
[94] Diary entry for 3 February 1957, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.28*, (3)

Macmillan also noted that 'the only way out was a resignation on the grounds of health. It became clear that Eden was a sick man. The strain of recent weeks and months had told on him terribly. This reason was not a political excuse. This illness was a reality'.[95] The first part of this entry suggests that Eden may have been forced out, and his illness was the cover for the real political reasons behind the party's removal of its leader. The emphasis on the illness being a 'reality' may also be due to Macmillan's efforts to hide the truth. Dorothy Macmillan's nephew, the Duke of Devonshire, made the following statement regarding Macmillan's role in the episode in 1996: 'Uncle Harold's role in it all is extremely interesting. I would only say: it all turned out very well for him in the end, didn't it?'.[96] This illustrates the confusion and ambiguity in interpreting Macmillan's actions during the Suez Crisis, and this is epitomised by his reputation of being 'first in, first out'.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the key actions of the two candidates in the selection of January 1957, Macmillan and Butler, came in November and December 1956. The most important of the actions occurred at the 1922 Committee meeting of 22 November, at which Macmillan convinced the party that he was the stop-gap leader who could re-unite the party and revive its fortunes. Butler did not fulfil this, and was blamed by the party for the failure of the government's policy during the Suez Crisis, as he was head of the government when the policy finally failed. He was the party's

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[95] Diary entry for 3 February 1957, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.28*, (5). Emphasis on original document.
[96] Interview with the Duke of Devonshire featured in 'Reputations: The Macmillans. Portrait of a Political Marriage'. Blakeway Productions for BBC TV. First shown 14 March 1996.

scapegoat, and this was entrenched when he did not make the announcement of the withdrawal from the Canal Zone on 3 December.

The analysis of the candidates' conduct during the early stages of the crisis serves two purposes. Firstly, it demonstrates the complex machinations of the Suez Crisis, and the influence they had on the outcome of the selection. Secondly, it demonstrates that Macmillan did not openly conspire against Eden during September and October 1956, as has been suggested in some existing analysis. It is somewhat debatable that Macmillan conspired against Eden to any extent during the crisis, but it is apparent that he did see the 'window of opportunity' to promote his leadership candidacy that the cease-fire of 6 November presented. Whether his conduct in instigating the cease-fire was an attempt to undermine Eden, or to save the British economy, must remain as conjecture. This chapter has demonstrated that the actions of Macmillan and Butler were central to the outcome of the 1957 leadership selection.

Chapter Five

The Suez Crisis and the 1957 Leadership Selection: The Situational Interpretation

This chapter applies the Situational Interpretation to the 1957 leadership selection. It assesses the influence of the situation that the party found itself in, the formal and informal aspects of the selection procedure, and the candidates' level of acceptability, electability and governability, and their effect on the outcome - the selection of Macmillan and the failure of Butler to attain the leadership.

The Situation and its Requirements

The Core Requirements

The Conservative government had three urgent considerations following the retirement of Eden. The first was to unite the party behind a new leader, the second was to boost party morale and save the party from collapse, and the third was to revive the Anglo-US relationship. The Special Relationship was only of tertiary importance to the party at this time. Unless the party fulfilled the first two objectives, the government was not going to be in a position to even consider reviving the Anglo-US relationship, as the retention of power was unlikely. Pimlott believes that there were three criteria on which the selection of Eden's successor was based. Firstly, the verdict on the crisis, and Pimlott suggests that the need was to sweep the crisis away from the political scene as soon as possible. This was certainly true, and it was necessary for the crisis to be erased from the memories of the electorate, and the new leader had to fulfil this. The second criterion was the appointment of a stop-gap leader to get the party through the current difficulties and restore some stability to the party. This was also a

consideration, and Macmillan's age compared to Butler's suggests this may have occurred, but Macmillan was the better qualified of the candidates for the position. The third was the need for the best candidate to secure re-election for the Conservatives. This was also a highly important consideration, as it was widely expected that the party would fall because of the crisis, bringing about an imminent election. However, the party did have breathing space as a general election did not have to be called until 1960.[1]

The Need for a Stop-gap Leader

The evidence suggests that Eden would not have been accepted by the party to continue as its leader following his departure for Jamaica for recuperation in November 1956. This was because he was widely discredited as leader following the failure of the government's policy towards Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company, and towards the invasion of Egypt on 30 October. Concerns about Eden's health also raised doubts about his position as leader. Macmillan felt that once Eden departed for Jamaica he would not return as Conservative leader for long, and Macmillan was right. As he noted

> For several days past (since Christmas, in fact) many of our colleagues have been very restless. There had been many meetings - no intrigue, but great concern at the apparent inability of the P.M. or anyone else to take hold of the situation. Outside the ranks of the Cabinet, etc., M.P.s have been meeting. There

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[1] Pimlott, The Queen, p.257; and Blake, The Conservative Party, p.279

> has been a general acceptance of the fact that the government could not go on. As soon as Parliament met it would be in trouble; in a few weeks it would fall. At the same time, no one has known what to do[2]

The government's policy during the crisis had caused deep divisions within the party, and Eden could not repair those divisions because he had instigated them in the first place. Once Eden had departed for Jamaica, he no longer had the power base to remain in charge of the party, and it was only a matter of time before he was succeeded by a new leader. The US government was also hostile to the continuation of Eden's Premiership, and 'rumours started to circulate that the United States would never resume normal relations with Britain unless there was a change of leadership'.[3] The US government had been aware since November that the continuation of Eden's leadership was unlikely because of the discredit that was heaped on the party following the failure of the government's policy. Eden's relationship with Eisenhower had also been wrecked by his attitude during the crisis, and there is no doubt that the President was hostile to the continuation of Eden's leadership, and he believed that the 'Special Relationship' could not be restored while Eden was in power. The press in the United States also believed Eden was finished as Prime Minister, and his image also had detrimental effects on Britain's status internationally. 'They presented Britain as 'the sick man of Europe, with the sick man of Britain at its head'. The negative connotations that this inspired contributed to the end of Eden's leadership.[4]

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[2] Diary entry for 3 February 1957, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.28*, (4).
[3] Clark, The Tories, p.311
[4] Clark, The Tories, p.311

Only by convincing the party that it could survive, would the Conservatives have a chance of restoring their fortunes, and this was, therefore, a vital requirement for the new leader to fulfil. This points to the probability that the new leader would be viewed as a stop-gap appointment, to enable the party to re-unite behind the new leader, and recover its short-term fortunes in the aftermath of the crisis. The widely held notion that the party was likely to fall because of the crisis also contributes to the assessment that Macmillan's appointment was as a stop-gap leader. In fact, on his appointment as Prime Minister, Macmillan told the Queen that his government was only likely to survive for six weeks, a comment she reminded him of on his sixth anniversary as Prime Minister.

The Restoration of Party Unity and Morale

This was the most important task for Eden's successor. The Conservative Party was in a considerable state of disunity because of the divisions that were caused by the government's policy during the Suez Crisis, and the new leader would have to unite the whole party, ministers and back-benchers, behind him.[5] The crisis would have to be wiped from the political landscape as soon as possible, so that it no longer caused division, or gave political capital to the Labour Party. Morale needed to be restored, as the party's spirits were low after the embarrassments of recent months, and the humiliation of the retreat from the Canal Zone. The government's policy during the crisis was shown to have been wrong, and costly in both domestic terms, and in the damage it did to the Anglo-US relationship. The need for morale deemed it necessary for a leader with a high degree of electability to be selected, as the party needed to be

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[5] Blake, The Conservative Party, p.278

convinced of its own qualities, much as a leader needs to convince an electorate to vote for their party at a general election. This meant that an inspirational leader was needed to lift the party's spirits.

The Crisis and the Electoral Cycle

An important situational factor was the time that the party had to recover from its present difficulties, as a general election was not due until 1960. This meant that the party, despite the wide belief that the government would fall because of the crisis, did not have to go to the polls for three years. This would allow the new leader time to re-unite the party, and restore its morale in time for the election. This, nevertheless, had to be achieved quickly, for if unity was not restored in a short time, the government would collapse. However, the lack of pressure that the imminence of a general election would put on the situation, eased this concern. It was also important as it would show the party's MPs that if they united behind the new leader, they could still secure another term in office, and this acted as a spur to party unity. This was also important as it gave the opportunity for the Suez Crisis to be wiped from the memories of the electorate before the next election. If this could be achieved by the new leader, success at the next election for the party would still be a possibility.

The Selection Procedure: Formal Aspects and Informal Networks of Communication

Formal Aspects

The Canvass of the Cabinet

The selection procedure used to select Eden's successor followed the traditions of the party, by relying on informal discussions by the party hierarchy with the Cabinet and senior party figures, to determine the best successor to Eden. Before his resignation, Eden had discussed the succession with Sir Michael Adeane, the Queen's Private Secretary. He suggested that 'a senior minister who was not personally involved should be asked to take soundings in the Cabinet', and Lord Salisbury was suggested as a possible minister who could fulfil this task.[6] Lord President of the Council Salisbury and Lord Chancellor Kilmuir, were chosen to represent the party hierarchy by conducting the soundings, as they were senior party figures, members of the Cabinet and were not contenders for the leadership.[7] On 9 January, Eden met Butler, Macmillan and Salisbury, and told them that he would inform the Cabinet, at 5 p.m. that evening, of his decision to resign as party leader.[8] Macmillan first realised something was going to happen when he received a message that morning at the Treasury summoning him to 10 Downing Street at 3 p.m. Eden told him 'there was no way out'.[9] Before the Cabinet meeting, Salisbury, privy to the news of the resignation, spoke to Kilmuir, and advised him that, in this situation, the Queen was entitled to ask advice from anybody she wished about who should replace Eden. He also told Kilmuir that the Queen did not need to wait for a party meeting, as that

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[6] Watkins, The Road To Number Ten, p.63
[7] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.83
[8] Shepherd, The Power Brokers, p.146; and Rhodes-James, Anthony Eden, p.596
[9] Diary entry for 3 February 1957, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.28*, (3).

would have meant abandoning the most important part of the Royal Prerogative. They then agreed on the procedure that should be adopted to select Eden's replacement.

This was for Salisbury and Kilmuir to see each Cabinet Minister individually in Kilmuir's office in the Privy Council Offices. The manner of the consultations followed all precedents of previous selections, except for the selection of Bonar Law in 1922, who insisted on being elected party leader at a party meeting before becoming Prime Minister.[10] This procedure followed the principle of 'you choose, we send for', that characterised this selection, and the selection of Home in 1963. Sir Edward Ford, the Queen's Assistant Private Secretary, told Ben Pimlott 'we took the view that that it was for the Conservative Party to select its leaders, and that the Queen should not do anything until she was sure what the party had decided'.[11] This meant that the party chose the best candidate, and the Queen appointed that nominee. Pimlott has described this selection as 'putting the Prerogative on ice', as it meant that the party chose the successor on this occasion, while allowing the Royal Prerogative to remain in tact. However, Pimlott believes that this selection led to the downfall of the Royal Prerogative, as the selection by the party hierarchy of Eden's successor showed it was a 'doubtful instrument'. In asserting this view, Pimlott ignores the often dominant role of the party hierarchy in the selection of Conservative Party leaders under the 'magic circle' system of selection, and it is apparent that the Monarchy traditionally preferred having the choice made for them by the party hierarchy.[12]

After the Cabinet meeting, Macmillan and Butler, the only two contenders to replace Eden, left Ten Downing Street. The rest of the Cabinet were asked by

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[10] Macmillan, Riding The Storm, p.183; and Rhodes-James, Anthony Eden, p.596
[11] Pimlott, The Queen, p.257
[12] Pimlott, The Queen, p.260

Salisbury and Kilmuir to see them individually in Kilmuir's office, following the procedure they had agreed earlier that day.[13] As Butler recorded, 'Cabinet Ministers were 'corralled' to give an immediate judgement between Harold Macmillan and me as successor'. Macmillan, in contrast, wrote that 'there was no attempt by either Salisbury or Kilmuir to use what one might call a prefect's influence on the opinions of those they interviewed'.[14] Selwyn Lloyd objected to the consultations being conducted by Salisbury and Kilmuir because they were Peers, suggesting a belief that they would not be impartial and neutral canvassers of Cabinet opinion. The Conservative Party hierarchy were central actors in the selection of Macmillan, and he was the choice of the party hierarchy. There is no evidence to suggest that Kilmuir and Salisbury 'fixed' the results of the canvass of the Cabinet, but the fact that they were supporters of Macmillan must have had some influence on their collection of the opinions of their colleagues. Unlike the selection of Home in October 1963, the selection of Macmillan in January 1957 was the choice of the Cabinet. Lord Kilmuir later described the consultations

> To each Bobbety said, 'Well, which is it, Wab or Hawold?' As well as seeing the remainder of the ex-Cabinet, we interviewed the Chief Whip [Edward Heath] and Oliver Poole, the Chairman of the Party. John Morrison, the Chairman of the 1922 Committee, rang me up from Islay the next morning. An

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[13] Diary entry for 3 February 1957, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.28*, (5)
[14] Horne, Macmillan 1894-1956, p.467; Butler, Art of the Possible, p.195; and Macmillan, Riding The Storm, p.183

> overwhelming majority of Cabinet Ministers was in favour of Macmillan[15]

Macmillan noted, 'I heard afterwards that the opinion was particularly unanimous in favour of me, and not Butler'.[16] Kilmuir later told Rhodes-James that only Patrick Buchan-Hepburn had supported Butler. Anthony Head also recalled this as being the case, but Butler believed that Walter Monckton, the Paymaster-General and James Stuart, the Scottish Secretary, also supported him.[17] On 10 January, Salisbury was summoned to the Palace to report the results of the soundings of the Cabinet, and the informal consultations by the Chief Whip, Party Chairman and Chairman of the 1922 Committee, to the Queen. He did this at 11 a.m., and recommended Macmillan as the successor to Eden. Salisbury did not give his own views, only expressing those of the Cabinet, and his assessment of the Cabinet's support for Macmillan was crucial in the selection.

However, Salisbury's role in the selection did arouse controversy, as it appeared that his own views were important in the selection, as he felt Macmillan should succeed Eden. Bogdanor has described the criticisms levelled at the selection. 'The process of consultation enabled critics to caricature the process of selection as one in which the Premiership was being decided by an unrepresentative clique, out of touch with the realities of the second half of the twentieth century'.[18] Macmillan noted in answer to these criticisms that, 'since the Socialists afterwards tried to make out that this was a personal and private effort by the head of the Cecil's, it is important to

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[15] Kilmuir, Political Adventure, p.285
[16] Diary entry for 3 February 1957, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.28*, (6). Emphasis on original document.
[17] Rhodes-James, Anthony Eden p.599; Interview, Lord Head in Horne, Macmillan 1894-1956, p.468; and Howard, RAB, p.247
[18] Bogdanor, The Monarchy and the Constitution, p.95

verify that Lord S[Salisbury] merely acted as a means of conveying to the Queen the general view within the party'.[19] It is clear that Salisbury did convey the views of the Cabinet, but his own support for Macmillan probably also weighed in his favour.

At 12.55 p.m., Macmillan was telephoned by Adeane and was summoned to the Palace at 2 p.m., and was appointed Prime Minister.[20] Butler was informed by Heath that Macmillan was to be Eden's successor. Following this, Butler walked alone along the Embankment. When a cameraman inquired what he was doing, he replied, 'I'm taking a walk - the best thing to do in the circumstances'.[21] Macmillan was endorsed as party leader at the traditional party meeting in these circumstances on 22 January at Church House.[22] Lord Salisbury, as chairman of the meeting, proposed the motion that

> The Right Hon. Harold Macmillan, M.P., be elected Leader of the Conservative and Unionist Party; and that this Meeting, with full appreciation of the great services which he has already rendered to the Nation in many of the highest Offices of State, pledges its loyal support to him in discharging the great responsibilities with which he has now been entrusted[23]

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[19] Diary entry for 3 February 1957, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.28*, (6-7)
[20] Diary entry for 3 February 1957, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.28*, (7)
[21] Macmillan, Riding The Storm, p.184, and Daily Sketch, 11 January 1957 in Howard, RAB, p.247
[22] 'Meetings to Elect the Conservative Leader'. Geoffrey D. M. Block, 3 February 1965 CPA CCO 20/39/3
[23] 'Agenda. Party Meeting in the Assembly Hall, Church House, Westminster, at 12 noon on Tuesday, 22nd January 1957' CPA CCO 4/7/180

In the tradition of previous party meetings to elect new leaders, the defeated candidate had to second this motion, which Butler duly did. Macmillan was thus now confirmed as successor to Eden as party leader and Prime Minister.

Influence on the Outcome

Pimlott noted of the selection that 'the process was not only quick. It was smooth. There was no time for unseemly wrangling - or for second thoughts, either about the decision, or the method of making it. Butler had seemed the likely successor, the next his rival was kissing hands'.[24] The selection was resolved in a rapid manner, as Eden resigned at 5 p.m. on 9 January, and Macmillan became Prime Minister at 2 p.m. on 10 January. Clark has asserted that the selection procedure has 'never been bettered' in terms of 'minimising division and foreshortening the period of uncertainty'. This illustrates one of the 'magic circle' systems attributes: the ease and speed of succession. The speed at which the decision was reached did not allow time for extensive consultations within the party, and the decision of the Cabinet was crucial in the selection of Macmillan. This served to minimise dissent in the party, and paved the way for Macmillan to set about re-building Conservative fortunes.[25]

This is in stark contrast to the selection procedure used to select Home as Macmillan's successor in October 1963. This procedure was far longer, taking eleven days to complete, compared to the twenty-four hours that were needed to complete Macmillan's appointment. The canvass was far more extensive in 1963, but was more complex and the views of certain Conservative Ministers and MPs were misrepresented, unlike the selection of Macmillan. There was also opposition from at

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[24] Pimlott, The Queen, p.258
[25] Clark, The Tories, p.312

least half the Cabinet to Home's appointment, whereas there was only slight dissent to Macmillan's appointment, as only one minister voted for Butler. This ease of the succession, and the lack of opposition to it, suggests this was a far more successful selection procedure than that used in October 1963.

Informal Networks

There were two broad types of informal networks. The first were the informal canvasses of wider party opinion undertaken by Poole, Heath and Morrison. Poole, the Party Chairman, and Heath, the Chief Whip, conducted informal canvasses of wider party opinion, and they affirmed that the greatest support was for Macmillan, and that significantly stronger opinions had been expressed against Butler. Morrison, the Chairman of the 1922 Committee, also recommended Macmillan as the candidate most supported by Conservative back-benchers, despite the fact that he was on holiday on the Isle of Islay off the Scottish coast at the time of the selection.[26] The second set of informal networks were the consultations undertaken by the Palace with other senior party figures, including Churchill, and Lord Chandos (formerly Oliver Lyttelton) and Lord Waverley (formerly Sir John Anderson, the Conservative Chancellor during the war-time coalition government). They affirmed that Macmillan was the party's choice to succeed Eden, and that he was felt by the party's senior statesman to be the most acceptable candidate.

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[26] Shepherd, The Power Brokers, p.147; and Diary entry for 3 February 1957, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.28*, (6)

The Canvasses of Wider Party Opinion

The indirect canvass of back-bench opinion by Heath illustrated that there was a significant 'anti-Butler' faction on the Conservative benches. He also received many letters from Conservative MPs who were opposed to Butler, and he recommended Macmillan.[27] Heath told Geoffrey Hutchinson that 'the outcome was "highly acceptable to a substantial" majority in the House, a majority to which he himself belonged'.[28] Butler acknowledged this 'anti-Butler' faction undermined his prospects of succeeding Eden, illustrating the importance of the informal networks that expressed discontent at his candidacy. 'It was clear from the representations that had been made to the Chief Whip's office that there were many on the back-benches who would oppose my succession; there was no similar anti-Macmillan faction'.[29]

However, a certain number of Conservative back-benchers complained that they had not been consulted, thus questioning the extent of the informal canvassing of back-benchers. Tom Iremonger, the Conservative MP for Ilford, complained in the press that his views had not been asked for, and stated that the canvassing had been conducted on a selective and 'oligarchical' basis. This provoked a response from other Conservative MPs, including Martin Lindsay, the Conservative MP for Solihull, that Iremonger should have informed the party whips of his opinion, as he himself had done. Nigel Fisher, a biographer of Macmillan and then a Conservative MP, stated that he sent his views to the Chief Whip, and believes that 'Edward Heath had ample information on which to base his advice'.[30] However, this must be questioned as there was less than twenty-four hours between Eden's resignation and Macmillan's

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[27] Shepherd, The Power Brokers, p.146
[28] G. Hutchinson, Edward Heath, p.86 in Watkins, The Road to Number Ten, p.66
[29] Butler, Art of the Possible, p.195
[30] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.84

succession. However, Heath could have, and probably did, collect views on Eden's successor before he resigned, as it was clear that he was finished as Conservative leader from late 1956, which would explain the extent of the views gathered so quickly over the period of 9 to 10 January. According to Punnett, many Conservative MPs have acknowledged that this took place, but he offers no evidence for this.[31]

Poole also found opposition to Butler existed in the party in the country. Morrison also recommended Macmillan, and based this on his assessment of back-bench opinion, despite the fact that he was on holiday at the time of the selection.[32] Morrison probably relied on consultations by members of the 1922 Executive Committee with Conservative back-benchers in reaching this decision.

The Consultations of Party Influentials

The Queen also consulted other senior party figures, including Churchill, and Lords Chandos and Waverley. Bogdanor has questioned the qualifications of Chandos and Waverley that entitled them to be consulted, but this can be explained by their former status in the party, and their experience of working with both Macmillan and Butler. This led them to be in a position to offer an opinion on who was the most viable successor to Eden.[33] Churchill's role as the Conservative elder-statesman was influential, and the Queen consulted him as he was the only other Conservative leader still alive, except for Eden, and Churchill told Butler later that he went for the 'older man', and did so because he felt Macmillan was more decisive.[34] However, the Queen

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[31] Punnett, Selecting The Party Leader, p.37

[32] This is argued in Shepherd, The Power Brokers, p.147; Macmillan has asserted that he thought Morrison sent an assessment of back-bench opinion in Diary entry for 3 February 1957, Ms. Macmillan, dep. d.28*, (6)

[33] Bogdanor, The Monarchy and the Constitution, p.95

[34] 'Reminiscences ending with Suez', undated Butler MSS RAB G31 (89); Interview between Howard and Sir John Colville, 4 June 1985 in Howard, RAB, p.247; and Rhodes-James, Anthony Eden, p.600.

consulted Churchill as she was requested to do so by Anthony Montague Brown, Churchill's Private Secretary. He felt that if Churchill's views had not been consulted, it might appear that he disapproved of the choice made by the party and the Queen. Brown then telephoned Adeane who suggested that he should visit Chartwell, Churchill's home, to ascertain his views. However, Brown stated that this would not appear as a thorough consultation and would not satisfy public opinion, as the image of Churchill giving his advice to the Queen at the Palace would add gravitas to the selection of Macmillan.[35]

Beaverbrook suggested to Butler that Churchill was the dominant voice in the selection of Macmillan, and 'Churchill is all powerful at Buckingham Palace. You know how I like him. But I do not agree with his sole right to select his successors in Downing Street'.[36] The suggestion that Churchill's was the dominant voice in the decision that Macmillan was to replace Eden cannot be totally discounted, and illustrates the importance of informal networks of communication in ascertaining the best successor. Butler commented on Beaverbrook's assertion in his private account of the selection of Macmillan. He suggests one of the key reasons why Macmillan was chosen ahead of him was the '"ambience" and connections of the present incumbent of the post at No. 10'.[37] Howard has also argued that Macmillan gained better intelligence of the developments than Butler after the canvass of the Cabinet, and Macmillan was made aware of these views, something he later denied.[38] Butler's notes

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Butler noted that Churchill told him he went for the 'older man', but does not reveal it was because he felt Macmillan was more decisive than Butler.

[35] Watkins, The Road to Number Ten, p.65

[36] Beaverbrook to Butler, 23 January 1957 Butler MSS RAB G31 (47)

[37] Notes, February 1957 Butler MSS RAB G31 (70)

[38] Howard, RAB, p.247

were made in February 1957, so he was referring to Macmillan, and suggests Churchill played a crucial role in the selection of Macmillan.

Some accounts of Macmillan's selection assert that Eden was not consulted by the Queen because he was considered too ill to offer advice. According to Macmillan's diary of 3 February 1957, Eden told him that he had 'neither been asked for his advice nor had volunteered it'. Kilmuir also believed this to have been true.[39] However, a document in Eden's private papers shows that he informed the Queen during their final audience as Queen and Prime Minister, that he felt Butler would be a worthy successor. Eden wrote to Adeane, on 12 January 1957, and stated 'the Queen made no formal request for my advice but enabled me to signify that my debt to Mr. Butler while I have been Prime Minister was very real and that I thought he had discharged his difficult task during the three weeks while I was away in Jamaica very well'.[40] Eden's views were not influential in the selection, illustrating the decline of his reputation in the party.

Influence on the Outcome

The informal networks of communication within the party were of importance in affirming the opposition to Butler, and the support for Macmillan in the party and the party hierarchy. This was because the canvasses of wider party opinion undertaken by Heath, Poole and Morrison, illustrated the existence of an anti-Butler faction in the parliamentary party, while there was no significant section in the party opposed to Macmillan. This meant Macmillan was the most acceptable candidate to unite the

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[39] Macmillan Diary, 3 February 1957 in Macmillan, Riding The Storm, p.184; and Kilmuir, Political Adventure, p.287

[40] AP 20/33/12 Eden to Adeane, 12 January 1957 in Pimlott, The Queen, p.259

party. This opposition to Butler was central to his failure to become leader, as the Conservative Party is reluctant to select leaders who cannot guarantee party unity.

The consultations of party influentials had a great influence on the outcome, as they affirmed that Macmillan was the choice of the party's senior statesman. In particular, the views of Churchill were decisive, as he still held a position of considerable gravitas. No one was still more influential in the Conservative hierarchy than Churchill, and his views were bound to have been influential. The views expressed by Churchill, Chandos and Waverley served to exacerbate party opinion that Macmillan was the right candidate for the dire situation that the party found itself in, which was augmented by the canvass of the Cabinet.

The Core Situational Criteria: Acceptability, Electability, and Governability

Butler

i) Acceptability

Butler was deemed to be unacceptable as successor to Eden for a number of reasons, and the clearest evidence of his unacceptability was the existence of an 'anti-Butler' faction on the Conservative back-benches. This became apparent through letters and conversations received and undertaken by the Chief Whip, Edward Heath as part of the informal networks of the selection procedure. Heath found that many Conservative MPs were opposed to Butler succeeding Eden. Many of Butler's Cabinet colleagues shared the doubts of back-benchers about a Butler leadership. Kilmuir noted that 'party feeling in the House of Commons was running very strongly against Butler at this time', and he believed that the parliamentary party would have

disintegrated, if Butler had been selected as Eden's successor.[41] In February 1957, Butler offered this explanation as to why Macmillan was chosen to replace Eden

> There were three criticisms which went in favour of the choice as finally made by the Queen. The first was the reaction of Conservative MPs, after visiting their constituencies at Christmas time, to the retreat from Suez. The second was the attitude of the younger members of the Cabinet. The third was the "ambience" and connections of the present incumbent of the post at No.10[42]

The first two factors were directly associated with Butler's reputation in the party, and this illustrates the importance of the decline in his reputation that resulted from the crisis. The 'scapegoat factor' was dominant in Butler's unacceptability and his failure to succeed Eden. The reasons for this opposition to him were, firstly, the blame put on him for the failure of the Suez invasion, and the cease-fire and withdrawal from the Canal Zone. When Butler became acting Prime Minister during Eden's convalescence in November 1956, this coincided with the withdrawal from the Canal Zone, and the compliance with US conditions for the rescue-package for the British economy. Butler, as the head of the government at that point, became the scapegoat for the failure of the government's policy during the crisis. This was particularly apparent with the right-wing Suez Group, who were vehemently opposed to withdrawal, before the government had toppled Nasser from power.

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[41] Rhodes-James, Anthony Eden, p.599; and Kilmuir, Political Adventure, p.285
[42] Notes, February 1957 Butler MSS RAB G31 (70)

Butler became symbolic of all that had gone wrong, and for the retreat which was abhorred by many in the party, especially on the Imperialist right wing. The attitudes expressed by many in the party during the crisis illustrated that Butler's acceptability as Eden's successor was going to be seriously affected by his position as acting Prime Minister. Members of the Suez Group expressed these sentiments at the meetings of the Conservative Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee. At the outset of the crisis, Captain Charles Waterhouse, MP for Leicester, South East, warned Nasser's action of 26 July was a 'direct challenge to the British position in the Middle East and Africa, comparable with the situation in 1939'. Robert Boothby, MP for East Aberdeenshire, believed Nasser's action was comparable to Hitler's seizure of the Rhineland. On 31 July, Leonard Ropner spoke against a compromise, and demanded that the nationalisation of the Canal must not be accepted. On 29 October, John Biggs-Davidson, MP for Chigwell, told the Committee that 'if we are not prepared to use force we are finished. This is an issue on which governments should be prepared to fall'.[43] Waterhouse 'asked what is the alternative to force? He foresaw a disastrous situation in which we shall stand absolutely alone and any threat of military action by Nasser or any further aggrandisement should be considered as a casus belli'.[44] On 7 November, Julian Amery, MP for Preston, North,

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[43] 'Confidential. Conservative Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee. Report of a meeting held in Room 11 at the House of Commons at 5.0 p. m. on Monday 30 July 1956.', 'Confidential. Conservative Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee. Record of a meeting held in Room 14 at the House of Commons at 6.30 p. m. on Tuesday 31 July 1956.', and 'Confidential. Conservative Parliamentary Foreign Affairs. Middle East Sub-Committee. Minutes of a meeting held in Room 13 at the House of Commons at 6 p.m. on Monday 29 October 1956' CPA_CRD 2/34/2

[44] 'Confidential. Conservative Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee. Middle East Sub-Committee. Minutes of a meeting held in Room 13 at the House of Commons at 6 p. m. on Monday 29 October 1956' CPA_CRD 2/34/2

Urged that now we had a foot in the door, we should not stop until we had attained three main objectives: a settlement of the Canal question, a settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute, and destruction of Nasser's military junta. At the same time we must stand on the Prime Minister's conditions for a cease-fire: that we must not be excluded from the U.N. force, and must remain until the above settlements could be guaranteed by the U.N.[45]

Sir Ian Horobin, MP for Oldham East, and F.M. Bennett, MP for Torquay, endorsed Amery's view, and Louis Spearman stated his disagreement with government policy. On 14 November, Patrick Maitland, MP for Lanark, 'questioned whether the government had followed the right course in calling a cease-fire before our full objectives were achieved'. Waterhouse followed Maitland's statement by telling the Committee that the government must make it clear that the forces would not be withdrawn until the Canal had been cleared by the UN. Amery 'considered that the way to wreck a rebuilding of relations with America was to go cap in hand'. Waterhouse told the Committee, 'we must make it clear we were not prepared to withdraw our forces until the Canal was cleared by the United Nations'.[46]

At the meeting of 21 November, F.W. Harris, MP for Croydon, North West, expressed 'great anxiety at rumours that the Government was contemplating withdrawal of our forces before the United Nations had implemented the conditions

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[45] 'Confidential. Conservative Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee. Record of a meeting held in Room 10 at the House of Commons at 4 p.m. on Wednesday 7 November' CPA CRD 2/34/2

[46] 'Confidential. Conservative Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee. Record of a meeting held in Room 10 at the House of Commons at 4 p.m. on Wednesday 14 November 1956' CPA CRD 2/34/2

laid down by the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary'.[47] Harris also stated that he could not support the government 'in any premature withdrawal', and at the same meeting, Amery argued British forces should remain in Port Said until the government had 'solid guarantees' about the Canal, and an Arab-Israeli settlement. Dudley Williams stated his opposition to any withdrawal before the government had achieved its objectives, telling the meeting that unless this happened, a general election would be called and the government would lose.[48]

These sentiments show that anyone who led the retreat from Suez would be reviled in some sections of the party, and when Butler was placed in charge of the retreat from the Canal Zone, his standing in the party was severely affected. This decision angered the Imperialist wing of the party, as 'the subsequent cessation of Anglo-French action and the eventual withdrawal were viewed [by the Suez Group] as clear-cut defeats'. The bulk of the party believed in the use of force and this had a major effect on Butler's reputation.[49] This has been confirmed in a letter from Poole, to Heath during the May 1957 controversy over the impending decision by the government to allow British ships to begin re-using the Suez Canal, in accordance with the terms Nasser had laid down. At a meeting with a number of Suez rebels including Viscount Hinchingbrooke, Victor Raikes, and John Biggs-Davidson, who all spoke out against the decision to withdraw troops in December 1956, they told Poole they would resign the party whip. Poole acknowledged, 'there is no doubt that the views they expressed to me are widely held in certain sections of the party'.[50] It can thus be

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[47] 'Confidential. Conservative Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee. Record of a meeting held in Room 10 at the House of Commons at 4 p.m. on Wednesday 21 November 1956' CPA CRD 2/34/2
[48] 'Confidential. Conservative Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee. Record of a meeting held in Room 10 at the House of Commons at 4 p. m. on Wednesday 21 November 1956' CPA CRD 2/34/2
[49] L. P. Epstein, British Politics in the Suez Crisis, (London: Pall Mall, 1964), pp.48 and 65
[50] Poole to Heath, 10 May 1957 CPA CCO 20/1/5

assumed that these sentiments were just as widely held in the party in December 1956 and January 1957, if not in even stronger terms during that immediate fall-out from the crisis. This denotes their significance in Butler's unacceptability to Conservative MPs opposed to the cease-fire and withdrawal.

This decision had a major effect on the outcome of the leadership selection in January 1957, as Butler was deemed to be unacceptable because of the opposition to him from Conservative MPs that this action, and others, aroused. Anthony Nutting, who resigned as Minister of State at the Foreign Office in protest at the invasion of Egypt, has expressed the depth of this opposition to Butler in the party because of his actions during this period. He has stated that Butler was the 'Suez Group's chosen scapegoat', and they saw to it that he could not succeed Eden.[51] Similarly, 'the feeling in the Party was that if he would not take responsibility we could not have him as leader. Afterwards Rab [Butler] was hounded for that very reason, by what I call the 'blue blood and thunder' group, and one or two of them did their best to stop Rab becoming Eden's successor'.[52] Butler revealed his incomprehension towards the party's selection of Macmillan when he told Horne, 'I couldn't understand, when I had done a most wonderful job - picking up the pieces after Suez - that they then chose Harold [Macmillan]'.[53]

When Lord Beaverbrook wrote to Butler following the selection of Macmillan, and told him, 'if the H [House] of C [Commons] had been given the opportunity to decide the leadership your selection was certain', he was incorrect as all evidence suggests that Butler would not have been selected leader by his colleagues in the

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[51] A. Nutting, No End of a Lesson: The Story of Suez, (London: Constable, 1996, 2nd edition), p.159
[52] Maudling, Memoirs, p.64
[53] Maudling, Memoirs, p.64; and Horne, Macmillan 1894-1956, p.465

House of Commons. [54] This was due to a large extent because of Butler's role as the 'man who led the troops out' of the Canal Zone. It is also apparent that Butler's conduct during the crisis did not just offend the Suez Group and the traditionalist right wing. Fisher has argued that 'even those MPs who agreed with him were, though to a lesser extent, critical of his apparent lack of resolution'.[55] This is a correct assumption, as Butler did offend colleagues with similar views to the crisis, by his lack of courage. His criticism of government policy via indirect channels, such as the Commons Smoking Room and the Lobby, also raised doubts about the extent of his resolution. Anthony Head, Minister of Defence in 1956, acknowledged to Horne that this was a major fault of Butler's, and had consequences for the outcome of the leadership selection once Eden resigned

> The whole time he [Butler] was saying 'on the one hand, on the other'. It did him a lot of harm. If Rab [Butler] had been more forceful throughout the period, he could have been Prime Minister. But there was an ambivalence about him all the way - and it did him absolutely no good in the Cabinet[56]

Nigel Nicolson, who resigned as Conservative MP for Bournemouth over the government's actions during the Suez Crisis, also recalled this attitude of Butler's. 'He played a double game, which cost him a lot of backing. He would speak up for the Government in the House, and then go into the Smoking Room and say to everyone

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[54] Beaverbrook to Butler, 23 January 1957 Butler MSS RAB G31 (47)
[55] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.86
[56] Interview, Lord Head in Horne, Macmillan 1894-1956, p.465

how terrible it was. He thought that it would get him support, in fact it did the reverse'.[57] Kilmuir has acknowledged that this behaviour was a major factor in Butler's unacceptability to Conservative MPs

> For this sharp decline in his personal fortunes Rab [Butler] had no one to blame but himself. Many at that time considered that his habit of publicly hedging his political bets was too great a weakness and this accordingly damaged his position both in the Conservative hierarchy and in the Parliamentary party.[58]

It has been argued that the Suez Crisis also re-stirred memories of Butler's reputation as a Munichite during the appeasement era of the 1930s, and that the feeling in the party was that they would not have an 'appeaser' as its leader. It is the case that Butler's conduct during the Suez Crisis did invoke memories of his conduct during the 1930s, and did lead to doubts about his candidacy, but only because of his conduct during the Suez Crisis itself. It is more useful to see these apprehensions as an accumulation of doubts about Butler, that was provoked by his conduct during the Suez Crisis. Thus, his conduct over the second half of 1956 was more important in his unacceptability to certain sections of the party than his conduct during the appeasement era. Memories can be long in politics, but not that long. This is a view that Ramsden concurs with. 'Butler had done enough during the recent Suez Crisis to inspire anew a widespread lack of respect in the party; at the least, recent events had

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[57] Interview, Nigel Nicolson in Horne, Macmillan 1894-1956, p.465
[58] Kilmuir, Political Adventure, p.285

reinforced earlier attitudes, and arguably it was by then the recent events that mattered most'.[59]

The second factor in his unacceptability was Butler's poor performance at the 1922 Committee meeting of 22 November. The weaknesses in his leadership qualities illustrated by his performance, including his inability to uplift the party and invigorate it after the difficulties of the crisis, showed that he was unacceptable as successor to Eden. This performance in front of Conservative MPs confirmed their doubts about Butler's candidacy, and this information filtered through to the Cabinet and the party hierarchy, via the party's informal networks of communication. The letters Heath received opposing Butler's candidacy is evidence of this.

The third factor in Butler's unacceptability was his policy of supporting Eden in Cabinet during the crisis, and then criticising him in the Smoking Room and via other channels to Conservative MPs. It is widely acknowledged that Butler undertook this during the crisis, and his indiscreet criticism of the government's policy provoked distrust of Butler. This contributed to his unacceptability, as he was not seen as a trustworthy colleague, and his hedging of his political bets led to an impression of indecisiveness that damaged his leadership candidacy. The Cabinet were the determining voice in the selection of Eden's successor, and, alongside the doubts that already existed, those expressed by the Conservative back-benches confirmed Butler's unacceptability. 'The question, as so often in Conservative leadership struggles, was not how many people were for you, but how many were against you'.[60] This is a basic rule of politics which Butler did not seem able to grasp. His failure to succeed Eden

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[59] Ramsden, An Appetite For Power, p.329
[60] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home,, p.289

was the result of opposition to his candidacy within his own party, and his consequent inability to unite it.

ii) Electability

Butler was the most unelectable of the two candidates, and this was illustrated by his performance at the 1922 Committee on 22 November. His poor performance showed that he did not have the ability to rise to the occasion, and could not lift the party's morale. This meant that Butler was not perceived as the most electable candidate, because he was not seen as inspiring enough to the party, and would therefore not inspire the electorate at a general election. His failure to make the crisis appear as a victory of sorts, and to place it in 'the long adventure of politics', as Macmillan did, meant Butler was not felt to be enough of an inspirational leader to be selected as Eden's successor. This meant Butler was not victorious on the electability criterion, but his unacceptability to sections of the party, as opposed to his unelectability, was more important than this factor.

iii) Governability

Butler was a minister with a vast experience in government, in the most senior offices of state as Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1951-1955, and therefore was a strong candidate on the governability criterion. However, certain features of Butler's position in the government in January 1957 counted against his governability rating. Firstly, Butler's career since December 1955 had moved away, not towards the 'great offices of state'. He had left the Treasury in December 1955 to become Leader of the Commons and Lord Privy Seal. This move from the most senior domestic position in

the government, to posts with no departmental footing, gave the impression to the party that Butler's career was in decline, away from the leadership.

His temporary position as acting Prime Minister in November 1956 gave the indication that he was in position to succeed Eden, but this position had more disadvantages than advantages. This was particularly the case with Butler's acceptability to the party, as he became the scapegoat for the failure of the government's policy during the crisis. Thus, this acted against not for his candidacy. Butler was a widely experienced Minister in government, but his governability rating was lower than Macmillan's at the time of the selection in January 1957.

Macmillan

i) Acceptability

Macmillan was acceptable to the majority of the party hierarchy, the Cabinet and the party's MPs. He was thus in a position to unite the party, unlike Butler, as he pulled together left and right, ministers and back-benchers. There was no anti-Macmillan faction on the Conservative back-benches, unlike the existence of an anti-Butler faction. Blake has noted that 'what the party needed was decisiveness, vigorous language, and a clear lead. Butler would have been unacceptable to the Suez Group and the Tory Right. Macmillan raised no corresponding antipathy among the Tory Left'.[61] This assurance of Macmillan's was a central factor in his attractiveness to Conservative MPs in the aftermath of the Suez Crisis. Significantly, Bracken wrote, 'The so-called Canal die-hards think better of him [Macmillan] than they do of Eden and Butler'.[62] Fisher has noted that 'although Parliament was in recess at the time of

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[61] Blake, The Conservative Party, p.278
[62] Cockett (ed.), My Dear Max, p.200

Eden's resignation, anyone in close touch with Conservative opinion in the House of Commons should have known that Macmillan was the party's probable choice as his successor'.[63]

Macmillan's acceptability to the party as Eden's successor was due to a number of reasons, but his conduct at the 1922 Committee meeting of 22 November demonstrated the qualities that made him the most acceptable candidate. Firstly, Macmillan's virtuoso performance at the meeting demonstrated that he had the ability to lift the party's morale by his rallying cry to the party's MPs. This also significantly served to unite the party's MPs as it gave them a purpose. He made them believe that the party's difficulties were not insurmountable by placing the crisis in the 'long adventure of politics', and instilled confidence that if the party united behind the new leader then they could revive their fortunes and win the next election. As Campbell has noted, 'the party was determined not to be ashamed of Suez: Macmillan could better brazen it out, while restoring relations with the Americans at the same time'.[64] Charmley concurs with this view, 'as Macmillan had been mounting a decent impersonation of some of Churchill's traits for some time, it was not surprising that the party preferred his up-beat mood to Butler's lugubrious one'.[65]

This ability was crucial, as the party was in a severe state of disunity and the difficulties were mounting. The party hierarchy felt that if the party was to recover from the debacle, it needed a leader with an exceptional ability to instil confidence and lift spirits. Macmillan had demonstrated this with assurance and decisiveness since the cease-fire, and the 1922 Committee meeting gave him the opportunity to convince the

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[63] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.85
[64] Campbell, Edward Heath, p.97
[65] J. Charmley, A History of Conservative Politics 1900-1996, (London: Macmillan, 1996), p.155

Party's MPs that he was the best candidate. A crucial factor in Macmillan's acceptability was the fact that his reputation remained largely untarnished by the Suez Crisis, despite the fact that he was 'first in, first out', and played a large part in the failures of the government's policy. In fact, his reputation was enhanced, as he appeared to rescue the British economy by instigating the cease-fire. This was because Macmillan acted decisively in realising the futility of continuing the operation, and limited the damage that the crisis caused. Butler became the main scapegoat for the failure of the government's policy, as he was head of the government at the time of the admission of defeat, while Macmillan remained in the background, working to save the British economy and revive Anglo-US relations.

A significant factor in Macmillan's acceptability was the manner in which he acted as a rallying point for ministers and MPs who were opposed to the continuation of Eden's leadership. Macmillan told Butler on 15 December that the younger members of the Cabinet, and especially Peter Thorneycroft, did not believe that Eden could continue as Prime Minister.[66] This was of significance in the leadership selection, as he had developed a bedrock of support over that period by acting as a focal point for discontent with Eden's leadership of the party.

Macmillan also noted that Ministers and back-benchers were meeting and discussing the future, and the need for a new leader. It can, therefore, be assumed that he helped to galvanise such opinion. The fact that Butler felt Eden should carry on as leader until at least July 1957, meant that he did not canvass for support in the same way as Macmillan, and gave his rival a head start in the contest for the succession. Turner believes that Macmillan became leader because the party, and especially his

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[66] Notes, February 1957 Butler MSS RAB G31 (70)

Cabinet colleagues, trusted him more than it did Butler. This assessment thus concurs with the correct view that Macmillan was more acceptable as successor to Eden than Butler.[67] As Thorpe has noted, 'there was a groundswell of opinion among back-benchers for Macmillan, and there was a small minority who were opposed to Butler at any price. The combination of these two factors secured the decision for Macmillan.[68]

Another interpretation of Macmillan's acceptability was the perception that he was a stop-gap leader 'to tide the party over the crisis'. Sampson has argued that it was 'widely assumed' in 1957 that Macmillan's leadership was a stop-gap measure.[69] Macmillan was selected as he was acceptable in being able to unite the party, and guide it safely through its immediate difficulties. This explains the appointment of Macmillan, as it was seen as a short-term expedient, dictated by the circumstances that the party found itself in after the Suez Crisis. His age compared to Butler's also suggests this was the case, but Macmillan was more acceptable than Butler to the party as successor to Eden.

ii) Electability

Macmillan was the most electable of the two candidates, as he had an ability to uplift and inspire the party and the public, unlike Butler. The 1922 Committee meeting was important in this, as his invigoration of the party's MPs offered hope for a revival in the party's fortunes. Macmillan's use of this highly effective electioneering ploy, and his physical gestures that exuded confidence and decisiveness, demonstrated that his ability as a public speaker was profound, and Macmillan already had a reputation in the

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[67] J. Turner, Macmillan, (London: Longman, 1994), p.127
[68] D.R. Thorpe, Selwyn Lloyd, (London: Cape, 1989), p.270
[69] Sampson, Macmillan, p.125

party for this. His success as Minister of Housing during the 1951-55 Conservative administration, especially in his public promotion of the housing drive, showed his ability to publicise the government's programme in an important electoral arena. Macmillan's establishment of Premium Bonds as Chancellor in 1956 also confirmed this ability.

Macmillan exuded more confidence in a rejuvenation of the party's success than Butler, and this convinced the Cabinet, the party hierarchy and the party's MPs that he was the most electable candidate. Despite the fact that a general election was not due until 1960, the electability of the candidates was still a vital consideration in the aftermath of the Suez Crisis, because the party was in such a severe state of disunity and low in confidence. The need for a restoration of unity and an increase in morale, meant that the situation that the party was in signalled an urgent need for an increase in public confidence, and this was exacerbated by the fact that it was widely expected that the government would fall because of the crisis. Macmillan fulfilled this, while Butler did not.

iii) Governability

Macmillan was Chancellor in January 1957, and had previously been Foreign Secretary, so had occupied two of the 'great offices of state' in succession. He was thus on a traditional career path to the party leadership by occupying the most senior foreign and domestic briefs in the government prior to the leadership selection. Macmillan was of great status in the government, and his governability was higher than Butler's, as his career was progressing towards the leadership, while Butler's appeared to be moving away from the summit of the government. He had a wide experience of

government since 1951, as Minister of Housing and Local Government, Minister of Defence, Foreign Secretary and Chancellor of the Exchequer, and was on a clear line of progression to the leadership. Ramsden has noted an important aspect of Macmillan's governability that appealed to Conservative voters

> Macmillan [brought] to the task of reviving his party from the trough in which it found itself in January 1957 both a foreign policy record and an aristocratic bearing that appealed to the deferential Tory voter, and an approach to domestic policy which attracted the more pragmatic Conservative who looked for evidence of economic competence and social caring.[70]

The Cabinet felt that Macmillan was a candidate with a high level of governability, and despite the fact that Butler had a wider experience of government, Macmillan was seen as the more effective and decisive minister because of his conduct during the Suez Crisis.[71] His links with the US government also increased Macmillan's reputation for governability, as the rejuvenation of Anglo-US relations was to be of paramount importance for Eden's successor. He thus did not have a significantly higher governability than Butler, but was seen as a more effective minister, and on a progressive career path.

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[70] Ramsden, An Appetite For Power, p.361
[71] Charmley, History of Conservative Politics, p.155

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the Conservative Party had three considerations following the Suez Crisis. The first was to restore party unity. The second was to restore party morale, and the third was to revive the 'special relationship' with the United States government. The appointment of Macmillan was a stop-gap and short-term appointment, as the party's vision for the future was short-term. This was because it was believed that the government would fall because of the crisis. Nevertheless, Macmillan was the best qualified of the candidates. The selection also occurred at a convenient place in the electoral cycle, as it allowed the party time to recover before it had to go to the polls, but the restoration of party unity was an immediate concern.

This selection was the first in the party to have a canvass of the Cabinet, and an assessment of wider party opinion. The selection process was quick and smooth, and resolved the matter without disruption. The informal networks in the party were vital to the selection process, as they confirmed Macmillan's acceptability to the party, and the existence of an anti-Butler faction in the parliamentary party, that deemed Butler unacceptable as party leader. Macmillan fulfilled the core criteria of acceptability, electability, and governability, while Butler did not. This was because of their actions during the Suez Crisis, and Macmillan fulfilled the party's requirements in the aftermath of the Suez Crisis better than Butler.

Chapter Six

The 1963 Leadership Selection: The Candidates' Actions and Conduct

This chapter analyses the candidates' actions during the 1963 selection of Sir Alec Douglas-Home as party leader. The candidates were Butler, Home, Maudling, and Hailsham, and the significance of their actions in the outcome of the selection will be demonstrated.

Butler

Butler's Actions during the Decline of Macmillan's Leadership: July - October 1963

In the summer of 1963, Butler did not know himself if he really wanted to succeed Macmillan because of his previous failure to gain the leadership in January 1957. This was a critical determining factor on his conduct throughout the period from the summer of 1963, to Macmillan's resignation in October. He was also affected by the perception of his prospects of succeeding Macmillan, which seemed slim as party opinion was in favour of a new leader. Butler wrote in a confidential diary note

> My diagnosis shows that there is a very strong movement in favour of somebody not too closely associated with the Establishment. What is really happening in the Party is that the herd instinct is unleashed and that they are tending to attack anybody in authority starting with the Prime Minister, including the Chief Whip and also embracing the leaders of the 1922 Committee, Morrison and Mott-Radclyffe, who are thought to be

> too old world. These in their turn are not making much stand against the herd and are tending to accept the drift[1]

This showed Butler that his chances of gaining the leadership were not high, as the party wanted to move to the next generation of leading Conservatives. This was because the present generation of senior leaders were widely discredited by the allegations, and events of the recent months, principally the Profumo crisis. This continued throughout the summer, and it became clear he did not expect to succeed Macmillan. Butler dined with Macmillan at Chequers on 11 September, where they talked for four hours, with the conversation almost exclusively devoted to Macmillan's future prospects. Butler noted of the end of the evening, 'as we approached my bedroom door, he said that since my own prospects were uncertain in regard to the leadership I should do well as a king-maker. But my own private diagnosis was that at this point he hoped and intended to remain as leader'.[2] This also shows that Macmillan did not feel Butler should succeed him. Macmillan felt he gained a clear impression of his deputy's position

> He would naturally (if I resign) accept the Premiership if there was a general consensus of opinion for him. But he doesn't want another unsuccessful bid. It is clear that in his heart he does <u>not</u> expect any real demand for him. He would prefer to be Warwick

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[1] 'Confidential Note', 12 July 1963. <u>Butler MSS RAB G40 (72-73)</u>.
[2] Butler, <u>Art Of The Possible</u>, p.238

(which he could be) and not try to be King (which he can't be).

On the whole, he is for Hailsham[3]

This quote illustrates that Butler did not expect to gain the leadership in 1963, because the party wanted to choose a new leader from the next generation of leading Conservatives, and this attitude determined his conduct. It also shows that he supported Hailsham as the leader from the next generation, because of his electioneering experience, which was of obvious vital significance because of the impending general election.

Butler's Reaction to Macmillan's illness before the Party Conference: 8 October

At the Cabinet meeting on 8 October, at which Macmillan declared his wish to lead the party into the next election, and during Ministers' discussion on this, Butler wisely did not commit himself to help in any possible consultations to find Macmillan's successor, which as acting Prime Minister he was within his rights to do.[4] This was probably because he did not want to count himself out as a candidate for the leadership, and also he did not want Macmillan to retire, so the discussion was seen as an irrelevant distraction to him. Following the onset of Macmillan's illness on the evening of 8 October, Butler did not like the manner by which Macmillan's resignation was being rushed through by the party managers. He illustrated this discontent at the developing course of events, when he telephoned Timothy Bligh, Macmillan's Private Secretary, just after midnight on 8 October. He told him that it was important to

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[3] Diary entry for 11 September 1963, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.50*, (75). Emphasis on original document. Extracts from this entry are in H. Macmillan, At The End Of The Day: 1961-1963, (London: Macmillan, 1973), p.494

[4] Howard, RAB, p.309

remember that the Conservative Party's conferences were more like rallies, and 'one did not take a serious decision at a rally'.[5] Butler wished this information to be made clear to Macmillan, and offered the following course of action. He argued Macmillan should make it clear that he was not going to give up the leadership of the party, and reserve his position on whether he would be fight the next election as leader.[6] This illustrates two points of significance. Firstly, Butler wanted Macmillan to remain as Conservative leader, and second, he wanted Macmillan to stay on as he did not believe he would succeed him, and feared a move towards the next generation of Conservative leaders. This explains Butler's wish for a cautious approach to be adopted to the situation.

Butler's Conduct at the Party Conference: 9 - 12 October

Butler did not like the atmosphere generated by Home's relaying of Macmillan's intention to resign once a successor had been found. He felt that a cautious and inoffensive approach would be sensible, so as to not appear to be canvassing for the leadership, and ruining any chance he had of succeeding Macmillan. Butler has described his approach: 'I spent most of the time in my room to avoid creating the wrong impression'.[7] Unfortunately for him, this meant he created no impression, and had just an adverse effect on the prospects of his candidacy as Hailsham's effervescent approach.

At lunch on 12 October, the day of the rally at which Butler was to make the Leader's Speech in place of Macmillan, he and his wife dined with Alec and Elizabeth

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[5] Bligh to Macmillan, 8 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (57)
[6] Bligh to Macmillan, 8 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (57)
[7] Butler, Art of the Possible, p.242; 'Alan Clark's History of the Tory Party'. Episode three: From Estate Owners to Estate Agents. An Oxford Television Production for BBC TV. First shown 28 September 1997; and diary note, c.20 October 1963 Butler MSS RAB G40 (5)

Home. Home told Butler he was seeing his doctor in London next week. According to Thorpe, Butler did not grasp what this signified and asked him why, to which Home replied, 'because I have been approached about the possibility of my becoming the Leader of the Conservative Party'. 'It is difficult to imagine a more unsettling piece of news for Butler to receive at what was already a difficult and nervous time for him'.[8] Thorpe is correct in describing the impact of this declaration, and it did affect Butler's performance. Butler's speech was poor, and it did not inspire the conference. He delivered the speech poorly, and it was 'flat and uninspiring'.[9] Butler was delivering a speech that had been prepared for Macmillan, which may explain in part the poor performance, but he still had a history of failures on such occasions, as with the speech to the 1922 Committee in November 1956. The Times noted the main weakness in Butler's candidacy that was revealed by the speech - his failure to inspire the party, which gave the impression that he could not inspire the electorate. 'Had he lived 3,000 years ago he would surely have been conscripted for the Oracle of Delphi. He is not a vote charmer'.[10] The speech was not the uplifting oration that the party needed after the shock of Macmillan's illness. Butler was also heckled by an Empire Loyalist during the speech, and Home, as Conference President, had to intervene to restore order while Butler mopped his brow to compose himself.[11] He had again failed to rise to the occasion, and this exacerbated the doubts about him in the party.

Home recalled of the speech, denoting the impact of Butler's failure. 'It was rather a pity really that he just had this one sort of failure, which anyone can have'.[12]

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[8] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.296; and A. Horne, Macmillan 1957-1986, (London: Macmillan, 1989), p.551
[9] Howard, RAB, p.313
[10] The Times, 11 October 1963
[11] Shepherd, The Power Brokers, p.155
[12] Reputations, 13 July 1983 in Howard, RAB, p.314; and Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.297

Maudling noted of Butler's performance at the Conference, that 'Rab [Butler] was himself, neither more nor less. He had to deputize for Harold [Macmillan] and give the final speech of the Conference, and he did this with great dignity, not trying to seize for himself the opportunity to advance his own ambitions'.[13] This illustrates much about the nature of Butler's actions, and his failure to attain the leadership.

Butler's Reaction to the Canvasses of Party Opinion: 15 - 17 October

At the Cabinet meeting of 15 October, (chaired by Butler), approval was given for the four canvasses of party opinion to take place. The Cabinet considered the procedure as the last item on the agenda, as was usual for 'political' matters, and agreed that it was the right procedure.[14] This followed instructions from Macmillan to Butler in a minute of 14 October, in which he stated that he had been considering 'how best to proceed with the customary processes of consultation'.[15] This demonstrates that Macmillan was fully in control of the consultation process, and Butler announced the plans on 15 October. He reported to Macmillan that 'they all agreed that this was the right procedure'.[16] Ramsden has noted of Butler's conduct over the canvasses

> Butler's acquiescence is not surprising in the light of an *aide-memoire* that he had composed for himself in the previous July; he wrote that in the event of a leadership contest there should *not* be a ballot, and that he preferred the collection of opinions by the whips, the results of which should be 'conveyed to the present

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[13] Maudling, Memoirs, p.126
[14] Butler to Macmillan, 15 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (24); Howard, RAB, p.316; and Diary entry for 15 October 1963, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.51*, (17)
[15] 'Leadership of the Party', 14 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (32) and CPA CCO 20/8/7
[16] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.201

> leader'; he added significantly that 'if there is clearly a big majority for one candidate then I think the rest of us should pull in and help'.[17]

This explains much about Butler's conduct towards the leadership controversy, after the return from the party conference. He felt that party unity was the most important objective, and he would support the candidate who appeared best able to secure party unity. This was also aligned with Butler's belief that he would not succeed Macmillan.

Butler's Reaction to the 'Midnight Meeting' Opposition: 17 October

Ramsden has described the impact that the 'Midnight Meeting' opposition could have had. 'Since this group included the Deputy Prime Minister, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Leaders of both Lords and Commons, and the Party Chairman, they had considerable collective weight as well as numbers'.[18] Edward Boyle, Minister of Education, noted in his record of the meeting, 'RAB [Butler] & RM [Maudling] won't say. QH [Hailsham], IM [Macleod], EP [Powell] - No', and significantly noted they were being 'overtaken by events'. On 17 October, Powell 'appealed to RAB this afternoon not to let us down'.[19] This illustrates some doubt about whether Butler would claim the leadership, as he believed he would not get it. This is an indication of doubts on the part of Butler's fellow opponents of Home as to whether he would demand the leadership.

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[17] Butler note, 12 July 1963, Butler MSS, G40 in Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.202. Emphasis on original.
[18] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.206
[19] Boyle MSS, 5581 in Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.206

The news of Home's lead in the canvasses provoked the other candidates to push their claims for the leadership. They tried to persuade Lord Dilhorne, the Lord President, to agree to a meeting of Ministers to discuss the matter, but this was refused. Much of the blame for the resulting deadlock, according to Shepherd, must go to Butler. As Deputy Prime Minister and acting Prime Minister, he had every right to call a Cabinet meeting, yet failed to do so. This is a failure which suggests a lack of courage by Butler, and is a further indication of why he did not become party leader. Butler felt he had missed his chance, and was not the choice of the party.

On the afternoon of the 17 October, Butler, Macleod and Maudling heard from William Rees-Mogg, the Deputy Editor of The Sunday Times, that Macmillan would advise the Queen to send for Home, and this led to a series of meetings and telephone conversations to try to organise the opposition to him. Macleod has implied that the press were deliberately informed before the Cabinet, to prepare the public for the emergence of Home.[20] Butler, however, remained inactive and only took telephone calls from his supporters. Joint Party Chairman Macleod and Powell, Minister of Health, outraged at the course of events, led the opposition to Home, and they telephoned him that afternoon to inform him of the reasons why they objected to him becoming leader.

Butler telephoned Dilhorne on 18 October to ask him to persuade Macmillan to authorise a meeting of the other three candidates, before a final decision was conveyed to the Queen, but no reply was made to Butler's request.[21] According to Lady Butler, Macmillan refused to talk to Butler while he was in the nursing home, and was

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[20] I. Macleod, 'The Tory Leadership', The Spectator, 17 January 1964, p.66; and R. Shepherd, Iain Macleod, (London: Pimlico, 1995), p.328. Macleod did not reveal it was Rees-Mogg in The Spectator.
[21] Butler, Art Of The Possible, p.248; and Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.109

determined Butler was not going to get a chance to succeed him. Howard, however, found no evidence that Butler made any attempt to contact Macmillan, but states he did telephone Dilhorne to request Macmillan's authorisation of the meeting of the other three candidates. Butler, Hailsham and Maudling did meet, without Dilhorne, at midday, but Macmillan was now set on this course of action and was not to be dissuaded.[22] Butler probably made the request under pressure from his fellow rebels, as he demonstrated diffidence and unease at the opposition to Home's emergence, and did not want to threaten party unity by opposing his succession. The opposition was understandably led by those who felt they had a legitimate claim to the leadership of the party, but in reality did not. Butler's diffidence towards the opposition shows that he believed his emerging as leader was not in the party's best interest, as he knew he was not the choice of the party.

Butler's Reaction to Home's offer of the Foreign Office: 19 October

At his first meeting with Home, Butler reserved his position, and told Home he would give him his decision later that evening, following another discussion. Butler remained the key figure in the opposition, and Home and his opponents knew that if Butler agreed to serve, Home would become party leader. For this reason, the rebels and their supporters urged Butler to hold out. He had been approached having lunch at the Carlton Club on 18 October by Rees-Mogg, and other supporters of Butler, who urged him not to serve.[23] If he refused to serve, Home's chances of forming a government would have been reduced, and his authority severely weakened. Butler

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[22] 'Alan Clark's History of the Tory Party'. Episode three: From Estate Owners to Estate Agents. An Oxford Television Company Production for BBC TV. First shown 28 September 1997; Howard, RAB, pp.318-319; and Shepherd, The Power Brokers, p.157

[23] Shepherd, Iain Macleod, p.333; and Butler, Art Of The Possible, pp.248-249

told Macleod that he would only serve under Home, if he was satisfied that it was 'the only way to unite the party'. Mollie Butler urged her husband not to agree to serve.[24] Butler's emphasis on the importance of party unity was a critical determining factor on his conduct, along with the perception that he would not be offered the opportunity to succeed Macmillan. His own commitment to unity meant that he would not snatch the leadership from Home, and once he perceived that Home was the man the party wanted, he agreed to join his government as Foreign Secretary. His meeting with Home on 18 October suggests this was his most important concern

> I saw Lord Home this afternoon. He said that everything depended upon my decision and that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer...I said that I must reserve my position on two grounds: first, as to whether it was right to go back to a hereditary peer at the present time and second, as to whether he could command enough unity in the Cabinet...The thing had been rushed and there had not been sufficient consideration of the difficulties. It was now up to him to secure the necessary unity...I gave him the particulars of the Ministers who were unwilling to go on and he took down their names and said he would see them.
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> I said that I was honoured by any suggestion he had made for me but would like to see him later in the evening when I had the answer to the question of unity... I was only trying to seek a

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[24] Macleod, 'The Tory Leadership' in Spectator, 17 January 1964, p.66; and Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.110

> solution, which would obtain the maximum unity. We decided to leave the matter until I met him again[25]

Butler's realisation that he could not now become leader, as there was insufficient demand for him, and that Home had the impetus in the selection, led him to agree to serve. The other rebels' desire for Butler to become leader was stronger than his own. He lacked the ruthlessness to take the leadership, and 'this is an endearing characteristic in the man; it was a fatal flaw in the politician'. This was something Powell believed, and expressed a conversation he and the other opposers had with Butler during their opposition to Home, on television in 1983

> We handed him a loaded revolver and told him all he had to do was pull the trigger. He asked if it would make a noise and we said, "That is in the nature of guns, RAB." He asked if it would hurt and we said, "That too is in the nature of guns, RAB," and he said, "I don't think I will. D'you mind?"[26]

Of Butler's conduct, Hailsham commented that 'Ferdinand the Bull had preferred to sniff the flowers rather than take what would have been his if he had wished it'.[27] So, 'the sad truth was that, almost from the beginning, Rab [Butler] succumbed to what appears to have been a fatal intimation of his own ultimate political defeat', and this led to his ineffective opposition to Home's succession.[28] Butler

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[25] 'Secret'. 18 October 1963 Butler MSS RAB G40 (101)
[26] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.110; and Reputations, BBC TV, 13 July 1983 in P. Cosgrave, The Lives of Enoch Powell, (London: Bodley Head, 1989), p.188
[27] Hailsham, A Sparrow's Flight, p.356
[28] Howard, RAB, p.304

himself was drawn to this explanation. 'To sum the whole thing up, it is no good thinking there is no life left if one is not elected Pope. One can always be a respected Cardinal. On the other hand while there is a chance it is a good thing to be in for it'.[29] This clearly illustrates the certainty in Butler's own mind that he would not succeed Macmillan. There appears to have been a desire for the leadership, but not the determination to get it, and a realisation that he could not obtain it. This inaction by Butler severely upset his supporters. Joint Party Chairman Lord Poole told Dennis Walters, who had led the Hailsham camp, 'I tell you if you had seen [Butler] yesterday morning, dithering about in a gutless sort of way, you would not want him to be Prime Minister of this country. I was quite appalled; quite disgusted'.[30]

Butler's decision to serve as Foreign Secretary can be easily explained. Firstly, Butler believed that Home was the man the party wanted, as he could guarantee the unity of the party, and Butler realised that he could not. Secondly, Butler did not really want the leadership as he had already failed once in January 1957, and knew that the party did not want him. Thirdly, Butler did not have the necessary 'killer instinct' to demand the leadership and was not prepared to use the 'loaded revolver' presented to him by Powell, Macleod and Maudling. All three combine together to give the fullest explanation of Butler's actions, or in-actions, during the leadership controversy.

As Ramsden has noted, 'Butler was exactly the wrong man to be placed in this situation. Like Home he wanted to have the Leadership without fighting for it, but unlike Home he had no Macmillan to stage-manage the succession in his favour; without a lead from him the resisters crumbled away'.[31] Butler's conduct meant that

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[29] 'Confidential Note'. 31 July 1963 Butler MSS RAB G40 (83-84)
[30] D. Walters, Not Always, pp.136-18 in Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.207
[31] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.207

nobody but Home would succeed Macmillan. Ramsden has also offered a sympathetic interpretation of Butler's actions

> To be fair to Butler, there was a positive side to the case; unlike the situation in January 1957, he had it entirely within his grasp to become Prime Minister in October 1963, for if he had stood out, several others would have done so too, and Home would have had to report to the Palace his failure to unite the party; but once Home had been given the first try to form a Cabinet, his failure could have been brought about only through a constitutional crisis involving the Monarchy, and with the party split; it is inconceivable that a Butler team formed after Home's public humiliation would have been able to unite the party to win the upcoming election[32]

This illustrates the wider political factors that may have had an influence on Butler's conduct. The implications of opposing Home once he had been offered the chance to form a government were immense, and would have instigated a general political and party crisis, alongside the party's existing difficulties. Once Home occupied Ten Downing Street to conduct his consultations, he had the momentum to become party leader and Prime Minister, and Butler could not have altered the outcome without provoking further political problems for the party. The chances are

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[32] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.207

that this was not a factor in Butler's thinking, as he already knew he could not succeed Macmillan.

Home

Home's Reaction to Macmillan's Inquiries into the Possibility of his Succession: July - September 1963

Macmillan courted both Hailsham and Home during the summer of 1963, to discover the prospects of their succeeding him. Macmillan told Hailsham in June that he was the right man to succeed him, if he decided to quit. Macmillan also approached Home, but his response had been unenthusiastic. This was the pattern of Home's responses to Macmillan's enquiries throughout the summer and autumn of 1963. At the Ministerial meeting on the Denning report, the government's report on the Profumo Affair, on 18 September, Macmillan mentioned to Home that he was considering retirement before the next election, and he responded this would cause disunity in the party, and 'great troubles will follow'. This was Home's biggest fear about the succession, and for this reason he wanted Macmillan to remain as leader. On 6 October, Macmillan discussed the leadership situation with Home, and they outlined their concerns at the proposed plan for Macmillan to announce at the Conference that he would resign in January. On the same day, the two men discussed the situation at Chequers. Before this meeting Macmillan had been undecided, but following it, he had decided to stay on, as there was no agreement on who should be his successor, and his retirement threatened disarray. This shows that Home wanted Macmillan to remain as leader, as he believed there was no successor who could unite the party.

After the Cabinet meeting of 8 October, Dilhorne told the Cabinet that if Macmillan did resign, he would be available to conduct any Cabinet consultations on a possible successor, and Home also declared his readiness to assist, as he was not a candidate.[33] Macleod later alluded to this as a significant factor in the leadership contest, as Home had assured the Cabinet that he was not a candidate, but did not specify whether this ruled him out from the contest under any circumstances. Macleod's accusations are unjustified, as circumstances changed rapidly over the course of the leadership crisis, and Home could not have predicted how circumstances might change in the future. His actions also show that he was not then considered a candidate, and did not consider himself to be a candidate.

Home's Reaction to Macmillan's illness and his Role in the Resignation Statement: 8 - 9 October

Following the onset of Macmillan's illness, Home and Dilhorne visited him in hospital on 9 October, and they together wrote the statement that Home would read to the Party Conference, that made it clear Macmillan would not be continuing as leader. Macmillan discussed the possibility of Home succeeding him, and he did not express any willingness to do so. This led Macmillan to state his preference for Hailsham.[34] Home's reluctance to stand as a candidate is clear from Macmillan's discussions with him, and his illness did not change that. Hailsham's antics at the party conference did, because Home's doubts about Hailsham were confirmed, and he was pressured by the party's senior figures to stand.

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[33] Shepherd, Iain Macleod, p.306; and Howard, RAB, p.309

[34] Diary entry for 9 October 1963, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.51* (9). This is also in Macmillan, At The End of the Day, p.502; Shepherd, The Power Brokers, p.153; Shepherd, Iain Macleod, p.309; Lord Home, The Way The Wind Blows, (London: Collins, 1976), p.181; and Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.104

The exact nature of Home's role in the formulation of the resignation statement is unclear. Butler believed that the party hierarchy forced the resignation statement from Macmillan, and according to Bligh, the resignation statement was due to the pressure put on him by Home (primarily), and Redmayne, the Chief Whip, and Poole.[35] The fact that Macmillan did not mention the statement at the party to celebrate the renovation of 10 Downing Street was evidence of the statement being forced from him.[36] Butler had a considerable amount of disagreement with the party hierarchy over the developing course of events, and this was instigated by Home's role in the resignation statement. He noted in his diary of c.20 October

> I had a certain amount of difference of opinion with the Chief Whip on arrival since he and the hierarchy were particularly keen to hurry on the Prime Minister's retirement - i.e. Macmillan. I was equally keen to give him a chance to recover and not to have to take vital decisions while he was an invalid[37]

Butler was implying that the party hierarchy manipulated Macmillan's current weakness to manoeuvre him into resignation, as they felt he was finished and wanted to install Home as his successor unopposed, and as quickly as possible. As Poole was Joint Party Chairman, it can be assumed that he was representing the wishes of the party hierarchy. Butler felt that Macmillan should not make a hasty decision, and should wait until he knew the full extent of his illness.[38] His advice was ignored,

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[35] 'October 1963'. Butler MSS RAB G40 (103-105)
[36] Howard, RAB, p.310
[37] Diary note, c.20 October 1963 Butler MSS RAB G40 (5)
[38] 'Confidential. Prime Minister'. Signed T. J. B. (Bligh). 8 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (57-58). For details of Butler's displeasure at Macmillan's haste to resign.

testifying to the lack of influence he had with the hierarchy, and that the succession was hurried on to install Home as Macmillan's successor. Dilhorne and Home's offer to help in conducting the canvasses can also be assumed to be evidence of the party hierarchy's natural wish to control matters. The party managers did want Macmillan to retire, but there is little evidence to suggest that Home played a major part in this.

Home's Conduct at the Party Conference and his Reaction to the Pressure to Stand: 9-12 October

Maudling noted of Home's performance at the Conference, 'Alec [Home] presided with discretion and a certain aloofness.'[39] Home played a pivotal role in the Party Conference at Blackpool, as he was President of the National Union that year, and in this capacity made the statement of Macmillan's intention to resign. This speech cast Home into the public eye, and his chances of succeeding Macmillan began to be reported in newspapers, and talked about at the Conference. However, Home made no declarations of his intentions to stand as a candidate, as he probably did not believe himself to be a possible candidate at that time.

Following the resignation statement, Hailsham, obviously concerned about Home's growing prominence, reminded him of their earlier agreement following the institution of the 1963 Peerage Act in July, that 'the field would support only one peer'. He told Home that he did not think he should stand because of his lack of experience of domestic politics. Home told Hailsham that he had served at the Scottish Office for four years and also worked at the Ministry of Labour. Hailsham replied this was not enough, and Home made no indication that he might or might not stand,

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[39] Maudling, Memoirs, p.126

despite declaring he was not a candidate at the Cabinet meeting of 8 October, only two days earlier.

It has been argued that Home's conduct at Blackpool was dominated by the need to act cautiously, and to not be seen to be canvassing for the leadership. 'Alec Home shrewdly weighed his options as the field of front-runners came back towards him'.[40] Home perceived that he could fill the role of stop-gap leader, as Butler was not feasible because of his closeness to the Macmillan regime that was widely discredited in the party. The younger candidates such as Maudling and Macleod were felt to be not yet ready to succeed: the situation proved too late for Butler, and too soon for Maudling and Macleod. Home and Hailsham were seen as possible stop-gap leaders, until one of the younger generation of leading Conservatives was ready to take the leadership, and after the general election had been fought. As Thorpe has correctly argued, 'they [Home and Hailsham] plugged a gap between the Macmillan generation, approaching their seventies, and the 1950 intake, who might block the leadership for too long a period by succeeding to the office of Prime Minister too young'.[41]

Home was only seven months younger than Butler, but did not have the same level of 'guilt by association' with Macmillan that Butler had. Home, it can be assumed, had perceived that he might be called upon as a stop-gap leader, and this dictated his cautious conduct at Blackpool, even when he was under intense pressure to stand. However, an important point must be noted: Home was not widely seen as a candidate before the Blackpool conference, and did not want to be. He only agreed to be a candidate after his perception of the consequences of a Hailsham leadership, following his conduct at Blackpool. Thorpe's analysis is only relevant after Hailsham's

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[40] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.286
[41] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.287

actions made Home decide to stand, and he appears to be implying a plan of action by Home to gain the leadership, which evidence suggests was not the case. Home only agreed to become a candidate after pressure was put on him to keep out Hailsham and Butler, but he probably did perceive that he may be called upon before that point.

Even before his successful performance in the foreign affairs debate, Home found himself under pressure to throw his hat into the ring. Among those to pressurise him was Dilhorne, who had been perturbed by Hailsham's behaviour at Blackpool, Duncan Sandys, John Hare, Sir Anstruther-Gray, Sir Charles Mott-Radclyffe and Nigel Birch. Selwyn Lloyd was also central to the pressure being put on Home. He reacted nonchalantly to this pressure, and 'Home played the part of reluctant candidate to perfection, a fact that key figures in the other camps were beginning to recognise and fear'.[42] Tony Lewis, a correspondent with The New York Times, told Dennis Walters, a supporter of Hailsham, that Home's conduct was similar to that of compromise candidates at American leadership conventions. Thorpe's analysis suggests an element of scheming towards the leadership by Home by playing this role of compromise candidate, and that may or may not have been the case, as Home may not have been consciously striving to create that image. However, the important aspect is the impact of this behaviour, and it was highly beneficial to Home and added positively to his candidacy. Ministers, MPs and party activists liked Home's performance, yet remained unaware of his potential candidacy.

The other candidates' chances were adversely affected by their behaviour at the Conference, and this dissatisfaction with the other candidates improved Home's position, as did his own performance. He made a successful speech on foreign policy,

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[42] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.294; and Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.105

and affirmed his status as an effective Minister. Home told the Conference before beginning his speech: 'I am offering a prize to any newspaperman this morning who can find a clue in my speech that this is Lord Home's bid to take over the leadership of the Conservative Party'. Thorpe has stated that one of the people present on the platform whispered to their neighbour, 'Alec you're lying!'.[43] Home's speech was a great success and was widely applauded, and was popular with the Conference delegates. Punnett has argued, 'in contrast [to Butler's and Maudling's speeches] Lord Home's contribution in the debate on foreign affairs was regarded as a considerable success'.[44] Thorpe noted of Home's speech that 'for those who were close observers of the way things were developing, however, it was yet another example of the reluctant candidate keeping his options open'.[45] This more accurately describes the motives behind Home's conduct than an analysis based on the idea that he pursued a conscious plan to gain the leadership.

There has been a considerable amount of conjecture as to Home's motives behind his conduct at the conference. Was his really just a reluctant candidate, or was he playing the role of compromise candidate to perfection, to improve his prospects of succeeding Macmillan? There does not appear to be a way of attaining a conclusive answer to this, and the most important aspect is the impact of his performance. Compared to Maudling's and Butler's speeches, Home's was a major success which contributed positively to his candidacy, whereas the speeches of Butler and Maudling had a detrimental impact on their candidacies. The effect of Home's conference performance led to his name becoming increasingly prominent in rumours on who

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[43] Private Information in Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, pp.294-295
[44] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.104; and Punnett, Selecting the Party Leader, p.40
[45] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.295

would succeed Macmillan. On the evening after Home's speech, Reggie Bennett, the Conservative MP for Gosport and Fareham, told Macleod that support for Home was growing, to which Macleod replied 'don't be so bloody ridiculous. Alec told us in Cabinet he wasn't a runner'. This illustrates the impact of Home's performance at the Conference, and how he emerged as a candidate, when he was originally felt to have no realistic prospect of becoming leader.[46]

On 12 October, the day of the rally that traditionally followed the Conservative Party Conference, Home told Butler over lunch that he was seeking medical advice about putting his name forward for the leadership.[47] Ramsden has noted that Home's ovation as chairman during the Leader's Rally overshadowed Butler's as the speaker.[48] It can be assumed that this was the key date at which Home's behaviour turned towards striving to gain the leadership, as the conference was over, and the full consequences of Hailsham's antics at the conference became clear. Home felt he would be called upon as the compromise candidate, and he felt he could unite the party better than the other candidates.

Home's Conduct during the Canvasses of Party Opinion: 15-17 October

On his return from Blackpool, Home went to see Macmillan on 15 October at 3.30 p. m. He told Macmillan of the events at Blackpool, and Macmillan asked if he had decided to be a candidate. Home replied he was seeing his doctor that evening, and Macmillan was 'relieved' by this news. Home told Macmillan he had been alarmed by Hailsham's conduct at Blackpool, and Macmillan turned his attention fully to

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[46] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.104

[47] Howard, RAB, p.313. Home sought medical advice because he was unsure whether his poor eyesight would affect his ability to fulfill his duties as Prime Minister; and Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.105

[48] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.200

Home. Home told Macmillan that 'he would be prepared to undertake the task if he was asked by the Prime Minister to do so in order to prevent the party collapsing'.[49] This was a key determinant on Home's behaviour, as he had been convinced by Macmillan and the party's senior figures that his candidacy was the only way to save the party. He appears to have decided to stand on the 15 October. Selwyn Lloyd, in effect Home's campaign manager, noted in his diary, 'Tues. 15 October. Saw Lord Home. He said that he had come to the conclusion that he will accept if the Queen sends for him after all the consultations and it being apparent that most people want him'.[50]

Home was the first Minister to see Macmillan that day, and told him of the concerns towards Hailsham from the US government expressed by David Ormsby-Gore, the Ambassador in Washington. The Americans doubted Hailsham's suitability to be Prime Minister because of his conduct during the Test Ban Treaty negotiations. Home's relaying of this information ruined any chances of the leadership that remained for Hailsham after Blackpool. That evening, he underwent a medical examination that pronounced him fit enough to become Prime Minister, and 'if the party wanted him, he would stand'.[51]

Home's Reaction to his Emergence and the Opposition to Him: 17-19 October

Following the consideration of the results of the canvasses by Macmillan and the party hierarchy, Home was told by Macmillan that he was recommending him to be his successor. Following this news, Home stayed at his London residence, 1 Carlton

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[49] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, pp.298-299
[50] Selwyn Lloyd Diary, 15 October 1963. SELO 61 (211) Selwyn Lloyd Papers, Churchill College, Cambridge in Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.300
[51] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.302

Gardens, and was joined by Lloyd and Redmayne. The opponents of his succession now began to contact him to express their displeasure at the course of events. While Home reacted calmly to the protests, Lloyd told Hailsham it would look like sour grapes if he blocked the emergence of Home. Dilhorne arrived at Carlton Place, and Home told him 'I was quite prepared to come forward as the candidate to unify the party, accepted by everyone; but if it is said that my coming forward would split the party, that is a different proposition'. Dilhorne told him that he 'must pay no attention'.[52] This illustrates the central role of the party hierarchy in buttressing support for Home's succession, and giving him the confidence to obtain the leadership.

Home was invited to the Palace on 18 October at 12.30 p.m., and was asked to see if he could form an administration. The fact that he conducted the consultations with his opponents from Ten Downing Street had a major impact on the effect of his attempts to persuade the dissenters, and the opposition soon collapsed. Home had the momentum and the initiative, and with the strong support of Macmillan and the party's senior figures, used this to secure his position as the incumbent. Maudling and Butler, the key opponents who Home needed to convince to support him, had agreed to serve by the following day, once it became fully apparent that he had the momentum and the apparent support of the party. Home was agitated over the discontent expressed at the 'midnight meeting', but Macmillan characteristically told him, 'look, we can't change our view now. All the troops are on the starting line. Everything is arranged'. Macmillan noted, 'he [Home] felt like withdrawing. I urged him not to do so. If we give in to this intrigue, there would be chaos. Butler would fail to form a government,

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[52] Selwyn Lloyd record of 17 October 1963. SELO 61 (6). Selwyn Lloyd Papers, Churchill College, Cambridge in Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.312; and Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.108

even if given another chance no one else would succeed'.[53] This illustrates that Home's conduct during the final stages of his succession was driven by Macmillan.

Home set about consulting the opponents to his succession in order to persuade them to serve under him. Macmillan was contacted by Home following his audience at the Palace, and Macmillan advised him to see Butler and Maudling immediately, to try to get Butler to accept the Foreign Office, and Maudling the Treasury. Macmillan told Home if he did this 'the game would be in his hands'.[54] Home met Butler, Hailsham, Maudling, Powell, Macleod and Boyle individually that afternoon.[55] Macleod and Powell stated they would not serve, while the rest reserved their position, until they had seen how the situation was developing. That evening, Home again interviewed Maudling, Hailsham and Butler. Maudling, after Hailsham's agreement to serve, now changed his mind and accepted Home's offer of continuing as Chancellor. Following discussions with Home on 18 October, Butler was satisfied that Home's succession was the only way to secure party unity, and accepted the offer of the post of Foreign Secretary.

Maudling

Maudling's Reaction to Support for his Succession: July - September 1963

Support for Maudling to be Macmillan's successor grew after the success of the 1963 Budget, and polls in The Daily Telegraph indicated that he was the favourite with Conservative MPs in the summer of 1963. Maudling reacted to this support for him, by going to see Macmillan to clarify his position. He recorded, 'I thought it right

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[53] R. Churchill, The Fight For the Tory Leadership, (London: Mayflower, 1964), p.137; Macleod, 'The Tory Leadership' in Spectator, 17 January 1964, p.66; and Diary entry for 18 October 1963, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.51*, (24). This entry is also in Macmillan, At The End Of The Day, p.515

[54] Diary entry for 18 October 1963, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.51*, (27)

[55] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.109

to go and see Harold [Macmillan], to assure him that while I should like to be his successor, I would play no part at all in any intrigues to get him to go'. Maudling noted he could not remember the exact details of the conversation, but recalled it was 'an entirely friendly one, and the understanding between us was open and sincere'.[56] Butler has recorded on 31 July 1963 that Maudling asked him if he became Prime Minister, could Maudling stay on at the Treasury, and would he accept the same if the situation was reversed? Maudling was thus trying to ensure the support of Butler, if he was in a position to become leader.[57]

Maudling's Conduct at the Party Conference: 9-12 October

Maudling recalled in his memoirs, 'a lot was bound to depend on how the various candidates performed at the Conference'. He was due to make the Chancellor's speech early in the Conference proceedings, and was told by his supporters that it was vital that he got it right: 'I am afraid I did not'. In his memoirs, Maudling recounts an explanation for his conduct that was given by Wilfred Sendall of The Sunday Express on 4 October 1973, that he believes fully explains his conduct

> Maudling would not wish to frustrate or defeat Rab Butler. His loyalty to his old Research Department chief was too strong. He therefore had to be convinced that Butler had no chance anyway...I pointed out that Maudling had the conference platform reserved for him the next morning, when he was to reply as Chancellor to an important debate. I exhorted him to

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[56] Maudling, Memoirs, p.125
[57] Confidential note, 31st July 1963 Butler MSS G40 (83-84)

believe that this was his moment...On the platform as Maudling rose to speak, Iain Macleod generously whispered to him: 'Go on, Reggie, this is your chance'....Thus Reginald Maudling, at the critical moment in his career, declared his faith. If only the delivery could have matched the words.

But, alas, it fell abysmally below them.

> Handed to Churchill, or to Macmillan or Macleod, this text could have produced a famous speech. Maudling himself wrecked it[58]

This extract makes two significant points in relation to Maudling's conduct and its impact. Firstly, he felt Butler should succeed Macmillan, and he would only challenge for the leadership if it became clear Butler was not in the running. Secondly, his conduct at Blackpool had a detrimental effect on his chances of gaining the leadership, because of the poor delivery of his speech, and unlike Macmillan, he did not have a sense of opportunism in order to 'seize the moment'. Maudling did not give an inspiring performance, and this clearly affected his reputation of whether he could inspire the voters at a general election. Clearly, Maudling's poor speech did have a detrimental effect on his chances for the leadership, and did not make the impact that it might have done, and his sympathy and loyalty to Butler, after their close working relationship during the 1940s and 1950s at the CRD has been widely documented. However, the extent of Maudling's subservience to Butler can be questioned. It must have been apparent to Maudling in 1963, that he was in a far stronger position than Butler to gain the leadership, because he was in a more senior position in the

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[58] The Sunday Express, 4 October 1973 in Maudling, Memoirs, pp.127-128

government, and the party and the public had been pressing for a 'younger man'. Thus, the situation in 1963 was in Maudling's favour, and he could have acted on this. That he did not contributes more to an explanation of his failure to gain the leadership than a subservience to Butler.

A key influence on Maudling's conduct was his view that, 'back in London decisions would be taken by 'deliberation and not by the decibel meter'. This was a correct assumption, but the importance of the candidates' conduct at the Party Conference and it's impact should not be discounted. This may also explain Maudling's lack of impact at the Conference, as he felt his conduct there would not have an important effect on the decision taken. Maudling later admitted to this failing, 'what perhaps I had not realised was how closely those channels [of communication in the party] had been listening to the decibel meter'.[59] Ramsden has noted the significance of Maudling's failure, as he failed 'to raise the conference temperature, [and this] was eagerly contrasted by the press with the success of Macleod, Hailsham and Home'.[60] Maudling and Macleod had a private pact, that whoever was in the strongest position at the time of the selection of Macmillan's successor, would help the other. Macleod, an able public speaker, assisted Maudling with his speech, but this had no effect on it, and his 'performance was pedestrian and his hopes slipped away as the speech sagged heavily to its conclusion'.[61] They all gave powerful performances at the conference, and Home's improved his position as a candidate, while Hailsham's did not. Maudling did not inspire any enthusiasm for his candidacy by his performance and this affected his prospects of succeeding Macmillan.

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[59] Maudling, Memoirs, p.128
[60] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.198
[61] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.104

Maudling's Conduct during the 'Midnight Meeting' Opposition: 17 October

On 17 October, following the emergence of Home, Maudling tried to persuade Dilhorne to summon a meeting of Ministers to discuss the leadership issue, or at least to review the procedures by which the Queen was to be advised, and both these requests were refused.[62] Maudling has noted that the emergence of Home after the party conference gave rise to 'considerable concern and apprehension. There were many of us who felt that Alec [Home], with all his qualities, suffered from a disability in political terms in being the fourteenth Earl of Home'.[63] This was also felt by Macleod and Powell, in particular, and along with the desire to promote their own, and indirectly, Butler's candidacies, these were the two dominant motives behind their conduct after the emergence of Home as the front-runner in the selection.

Maudling, Powell and Macleod felt they were an important part of the Cabinet, and were entitled to express their doubts about Home's potential leadership of the party. On 18 October, Maudling had been dining with the Governor of the Bank of England, and when he arrived home, was told of Home's emergence and that 'several people were deeply concerned'. Maudling was invited to Powell's house in South Eaton Place where the 'Midnight Meeting' began, with Maudling, Powell, Macleod, Erroll and Aldington present. Butler kept in touch with the meeting by telephone. Redmayne, following his discovery that the meeting was taking place, joined them, and 'we made it clear that in our view the choice was a mistake from the party point of view'. Maudling later noted of Macmillan's view that this meeting was 'unseemly behaviour', that 'we all had a strong and genuine feeling: we all thought a mistake was

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[62] Macleod, 'The Tory Leadership' in Spectator, 17 January 1964, p.65
[63] Maudling, Memoirs, p.128

being made. It was not only our right but our duty to say this in the most effective way we could'.[64] Maudling expressed his view that Butler was the best candidate, but if Butler could not serve, his own was a viable candidacy. Maudling, Powell and Macleod wanted Butler to emerge out of self interest, allied with the feeling that he was the man best suited to succeed Macmillan. They all also hoped to be the party's leader after Butler, so supported his candidacy for dual purposes: they all felt Butler should succeed Macmillan, but also wanted to promote their own positions.

Maudling's Reaction to Home's Offer of the Treasury: 19 October

On Friday 19 October, following his audience with the Queen, Home asked Maudling to see him at 10 Downing Street. Home offered him the opportunity to continue as Chancellor, and Maudling 'said that I hoped he would withdraw that question because I would hate to say 'No' to him. Though I was happy to serve under him, I thought he was the wrong choice and Rab [Butler] would be the right one'.[65] Home told Maudling that it was important for him to note that there was great opposition to Butler in the party, and if the opponents to Home prevented him becoming leader, Butler would not succeed because of this opposition, and Maudling would become leader. Maudling told Home that he 'was not trying to play that sort of game at all', and told Home that he would serve under either man, but felt that Butler was the better choice.[66] Maudling came to realise that the opposition to Butler was too strong for him to become leader, and that Home was the choice of the party, and accepted his invitation to serve later that day. This was the reason behind his decision

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[64] Maudling, Memoirs, p.129
[65] Maudling, Memoirs, p.129
[66] Maudling, Memoirs, p.129

to serve, as Maudling saw that Home now had the momentum, and the support for the party's senior figures. That evening, Home again interviewed Maudling, Hailsham and Butler. Maudling, after Hailsham's agreement to serve, now changed his mind and accepted Home's offer of continuing as Chancellor. He told Butler that 'things were closing in'.

Thus, the opposition led by Maudling, Macleod and Powell, and apathetically supported by Butler, dissipated as soon as it became clear that Butler would not be the choice of the party, and that Home was. The impact of this opposition was, therefore, limited, and only served to indicate that Home was the choice of the party, which led to the rapid disintegration of it. Maudling may also have been motivated by a desire to become the 'leader-in-waiting', which would have been improved by his continuation as Chancellor, the most senior domestic position in the government.

Hailsham

Hailsham's Reaction to Macmillan's Inquiries on the Possibility of his Succession: June-October 1963

In June 1963, Hailsham was visited by Oliver Poole, and 'the purpose of his visit was to tell me that I should prepare myself to become the next Leader of the Conservative Party'. Hailsham has noted his surprise at this, as he did not realise he was being considered a candidate, or that Macmillan was on his way out, and did not take Poole's declaration seriously as he regarded Butler as the certain successor, and Macleod as an outsider to Butler.[67]

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[67] Hailsham, A Sparrow's Flight, p.348

Macmillan has noted that he sent Hailsham to Moscow as the government's representative in the Test Ban Treaty negotiations, deliberately to 'test his powers of negotiation'. Macmillan noted, 'he did very well'.[68] However, Hailsham did not impress the US officials during the negotiations, and they had doubts about Hailsham's temperamental suitability for the leadership. Home informed Macmillan on 15 October that he had received a message from David Ormsby-Gore, that the US government felt Hailsham had shown a lack of judgement during the negotiations, and this led the American government to be uneasy at the prospect of Hailsham becoming leader.[69]

On 30 September, Macmillan sent for Hailsham, and told him he was contemplating resignation, and that if he did so, he wanted him to be his successor. On 7 October, Macmillan stated that he wished Hailsham to succeed him after Christmas, when he would retire. 'I remember being almost struck dumb with surprise at the content of our conversation and do not remember a thing that I said'.[70] Julian Amery and Maurice Macmillan arrived in Blackpool on 9 October, and immediately sought out Hailsham with an important message for him from Macmillan, who wanted him to act at once and stake his claim for the leadership. Hailsham was 'flabbergasted' with Macmillan's request but 'once the Prime Minister said something you took it seriously'.[71]

Hailsham's conduct towards the succession was galvanised by this declaration. This was a couple of hours before he was due to give his CPC lecture. Hailsham, 'in all

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[68] Diary entry for 5 September 1963, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.50*, (64). Emphasis on original document.
[69] For a detailed analysis of the significance of this point, see chapter seven, pp.262-263
[70] Hailsham, A Sparrow's Flight, p.350
[71] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.102; Hailsham, A Sparrow's Flight, p.352; and Interview with Lord Hailsham featured in 'Alan Clark's History of the Tory Party'. Episode three: From Estate Owners to Estate Agents. An Oxford Television Company Production for BBC TV. First shown 28 September 1997

loyalty to him', told Butler of his intention to disclaim his peerage, and Butler tried to dissuade him out of this move, but Hailsham had decided to stake his claim after Macmillan's message. On 10 October, he discussed the leadership issue with Home, and Home told him that he was under strong pressure to put himself forward as a candidate. Hailsham has recorded that he was not surprised at this declaration, but did not regard Home as a serious contender, and only saw himself, Butler and Macleod as candidates. This underestimation of Home's candidacy is a common trait to all the candidates, and explains the initial apathy to his threat to their ambitions. On 10 October, Hailsham, in the postscript to his lecture to the Conservative Political Centre at the Pavilion Cinema, announced his intention to disclaim his title and become a contender for the leadership

> It is not always realised that I have been proud of my father's public life. I was proud to succeed to that heritage...I felt it would be contrary both to my duty as a colleague and my duty to the State to do any act which would be interpreted as an act calculated to undermine the authority of the Prime Minister of the day. But it must be obvious to you that that situation no longer exists. I shall continue to try to serve my country honourably but I wish to say tonight that it is my intention to disclaim my peerage. If I can find anyone to receive me as a candidate to stand for Parliament I shall do so[72]

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[72] Churchill, Fight For the Tory Leadership, p.109

Film footage from the time shows an audience shouting and applauding, and Hailsham recalls that he was considerably embarrassed at the scenes, and with being the centre of attention. Others were more condemnatory, and one witness present told Butler he thought it was 'reminiscent of a Nuremberg Rally'. William Deedes, Minister Without Portfolio, on the platform with Redmayne during the lecture, recalled that they knew that Hailsham was going to make this announcement, and decided that as members of the government they could not applaud and had to appear impartial, and just stood on the stage motionless. Young noted that Hailsham left the platform 'with the sort of rapture more often accorded by teenage girls to pop singers than to potential Prime Ministers'.[73] Hailsham made his declaration during the vote of thanks following the lecture, and as he has noted, 'the effect was one of the most dramatic in my lifetime', and he had started the over-enthusiastic and over-indulgent behaviour that cost him support, and lost him a place as a candidate. This had a significant effect on senior party figures, who did not like the image that Hailsham was conveying at Blackpool.

The effect of Hailsham's speech could hardly have been more dramatic, and its impact on the Conference was phenomenal, as 'the whole audience, and the platform, went mad, standing and cheering and waving in the full light of the national television: and, of course, the whole press was full of it the next morning'.[74] Hailsham has stated that he tried to 'keep out of the public eye' for the rest of the Conference, but his flamboyant behaviour, his parading of his baby as a voter-winning exercise (something he later denied), and the behaviour of his supporters, turned Macmillan, the party's

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[73] Hailsham, A Sparrow's Flight, p.353; Interviews with Lord Hailsham and Lord Deedes in 'Alan Clark's History of the Tory Party'. Episode three: From Estate Owners to Estate Agents. An Oxford Television Company Production for BBC TV. First broadcast 28 September 1997; Butler, Art of the Possible, p.243; and Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.103

[74] Hailsham, A Sparrow's Flight, p.353

most senior figures and Conservative MPs away from Hailsham, and they turned towards Home.[75]

Hailsham began a concerted effort to seduce the conference. He was a showman, a rabble rouser, a 'High Church Heseltine'. However, his overt attempt to snatch the leadership, along with Randolph Churchill's distribution of 'Q' badges, only served to alienate many in the party who felt that the leadership issue should not be settled in so vulgar and public a manner. [76] Churchill gave badges to Butler and his wife, which Butler threw away immediately. As Deedes has argued, 'kissing babies while campaigning is one thing, parading your baby while as a candidate for the leadership is another'. To all intents and purposes, Hailsham scuppered his chances. Fisher has noted the effect of Hailsham's antics, as 'in the result, the uninhibited canvassing for Hailsham reacted against him and alienated more support than it attracted'.[77] Macmillan was visited by Dilhorne and Redmayne on their return from the conference. They told him they were upset at Hailsham's and his supporters' behaviour at Blackpool. They said they were supportive of his succession, but felt his open courting of the Conference was 'turning "respectable" people away from Hogg' [Hailsham].[78]

Ramsden has noted, 'Hailsham's campaign seemed to have everything going for it; he was the Prime Minister's candidate, he was anyway the darling of the

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[75] Hailsham denied this charge and stated that his wife and baby were there to support him emotionally, not advertise his candidature. Hailsham has also noted that he disapproved of Randolph Churchill's distribution of 'Q' badges, which made him appear like a candidate in an American leadership convention. This is in Hailsham, A Sparrow's Flight, p.352

[76] 'Alan Clark's History of the Tory Party', Episode three: From Estate Owners to Estate Agents. An Oxford Television Company Production for BBC TV. First Broadcast 28 September 1997 and Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.102

[77] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.103

[78] Diary entry for 14 October 1963, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.51*, (13-14)

conference; he had a team ready to run his campaign'.[79] This explains in part why Hailsham's conduct failed to have the desired impact: the Conservative Party was not used to campaigns for the leadership, and did not find them conducive. Hailsham's enthusiasm for impressing the conference did not appeal to the party. Aggressive campaigning was detrimental to a candidate's chances, and John Boyd-Carpenter, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, has summarised well the party's attitude to campaigning. 'The Conservative Party still then retained the concept that gentlemen don't throw their hats, or their coronets, into the ring. It preferred the convention, however artificial, that leaders come forward in response to the pressure of others'.[80] This not only helps to explain the failure of Hailsham, but the selection of Home. Maudling noted of Hailsham's performances at Blackpool that 'Quintin [Hailsham] was his warm, ebullient, emotional self, commanding the enthusiasm and loyalty of many, but arousing the doubts and apprehensions of many others'.[81]

Hailsham's Reaction to Home's Emergence: 19 October

After Hailsham returned from Blackpool, he tried to arrange a meeting with Butler and Maudling, to make sure they all acted together, as this would prevent Home becoming leader. He managed to do so, but only after Home was on his way to the Palace to be offered the task to see if he could form a government. After Hailsham said they should stick together, Butler 'said he had already given his word to Alec [Home]'. A secret minute from Redmayne to Bligh has illustrated the discontent of Hailsham after the party conference, and the worry this was causing to the party hierarchy. It

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[79] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.198
[80] J. Boyd-Carpenter, Way of Life, (London: Sidgewick and Jackson, 1988), p.177
[81] Maudling, Memoirs, p.126

declared, 'it is most important that we should try to keep Lord Hailsham in the boat...This note must be regarded as of the most urgent importance in order that we do not fail to take action on it at precisely the right moment'.[82]

Maudling and Hailsham telephoned the 'midnight meeting' and stated that they opposed Home, but would serve under Butler. Butler, Hailsham and Maudling met at midday following the 'midnight meeting'. Home met Butler, Hailsham, Maudling, Powell, Macleod and Boyle individually following his meeting with the Queen. Powell, Macleod, Boyle and Maudling all refused to serve immediately, Butler reserved his position as did Hailsham. Hailsham, later that evening, decided to serve. He had been persuaded by Selwyn Lloyd, a strong supporter of Home, who told Hailsham that it would look like sour grapes if he refused to serve. Pressure had also been put on him by Amery, Poole and Thorneycroft.[83] Clearly, after the party conference, Hailsham was in a weakened position, and was not in a position to become leader, and it became clear that Butler had too much opposition in the party to succeed. This explains his decision to agree to serve in a Home administration.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the actions of the candidates at the Party Conference was central to the outcome of the selection. As the conference took place during the selection, it constituted the 'campaign' for the leadership, such as usually occurs in a formal leadership election. Butler and Maudling both gave poor performances at the conference in their speeches, while Hailsham's over-exuberance and obvious excitement at the prospect of becoming party leader, raised doubts about

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[82] 'Secret. Mr. T. J. Bligh'. Signed M. R. (Redmayne). 17 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (8)
[83] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.108

his suitability for the highest office in the government. In contrast, Home's conduct at the party conference demonstrated that he was generally acceptable as a candidate.

Butler's inactive role in the opposition in the Cabinet that emerged to Home becoming party leader demonstrated two important points. Firstly, that he did not believe he could become leader as he was not acceptable to the party, and secondly, that it was not in the interests of party unity for him to prevent Home succeeding Macmillan. Home's delivery of Macmillan's resignation statement to the conference, and his speech as Foreign Secretary were vital to his emerging candidacy, as his competent conduct was in stark contrast to that of the other candidates, whose weaknesses were exposed to the party. The fact that Home was not an expected candidate at the time of the conference meant he was not scrutinised as much as the other candidates, but his conduct nevertheless had a better impact than that of the other candidates. This lead to the pressure that was put on Home during, and after the conference to stand as a candidate. Home only allowed his name to go forward after he saw the weaknesses of the other candidates, and he put himself into the ring in the interests of party unity as the compromise candidate.

Chapter Seven

The 1963 Leadership Selection: The Situational Interpretation

This chapter applies the Situational Interpretation to the 1963 leadership selection. It analyses the influence of the situation and the selection procedure, and the ratings of the candidates' acceptability, electability and governability. The chapter then assesses their effect on the outcome - the selection of Home and the failure of Butler, Maudling and Hailsham to attain the leadership.

The Situation and Its Requirements

The Decline of Macmillan's Government: 1962-63

On 27 April 1962, Macleod distributed a memorandum on the political situation in Spring 1962, and noted 'I am afraid there is no question that the electorate are bored with us as a government. This springs mainly from the fact that we have been in office so long.'[1] The Conservative Party had been in power since 1951, and the second term of Macmillan's government was experiencing the difficulties that a party in power for a long period can experience, in both ideological and governmental terms. Macmillan noted on January 1st 1963

> 1962 is over. It has been a bad year, both in Home and Foreign politics. The government's position is weak and there is a general view that the Socialists will win the next General Election. The country is in a dissatisfied and petulant mood. My own popularity has gone down a lot. There is a wave of anti-

[1] 'The Political Situation, Spring 1962', Iain Macleod, 27 April 1962 CPA CCO 20/8/5

> European and anti-American feeling. There is trouble about growing unemployment. The press is, with scarcely an exception, hostile...Can we recover in 1963 and 1964. I don't know. But I mean to have a good try[2]

Dissatisfaction was being expressed by the public about Macmillan's Edwardian image, and the failure of the government's programme. A memorandum from Paul Bryan, the Party Vice-Chairman, to Macleod and Poole illustrates that 'there is a trace of feeling among the YC's [Young Conservatives] that we are being led by an old man', showing the disadvantages of Macmillan's image.[3] On 15 October 1963, Macmillan noted that policy was not splitting the party, and that the party's difficulties were due to 'boredom with material success', and the apparent inability to harness this to spiritual purposes.[4] The electorate had become bored after many years of Conservative rule, and the party appeared to need to undergo a process of rejuvenation.

The Imminence of the General Election

The leadership struggle came at an inconvenient time for the party in the electoral cycle, as a general election was due in October 1964, at the latest. On 17 February 1963, Macmillan noted, 'faced with Wilson (47 or so) we must have a young man (Heath or Maudling). This line of approach leaves out poor Butler as well as me. Of course, there's something in it'.[5] This shows one of the central requirements in

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[2] Diary entry for 1 January 1963 Ms. Macmillan dep. d.48 (35-36). Emphasis on original.
[3] Bryan to Macleod and Poole, 15th May 1963 CPA CCO 20/8/6
[4] Memorandum by the Prime Minister, 15 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (27)
[5] Diary entry for 17 February 1963 Ms. Macmillan dep. d.48 (79)

1963: a leader with a new image to face Labour leader Harold Wilson, to give the party some chance of winning a fourth successive election victory. As Macmillan noted, this meant a younger leader with an image not closely tied to his, which counted against Butler. Macmillan noted on 5 September 1963

> I cannot go into an Election and lead in it. I am beginning to feel that I haven't the strength and that perhaps another leader could do what I did after Eden left. But it cannot be done by a pedestrian politician: it needs a man with vision and moral strength - Hailsham, not Maudling. Yet the back benchers (poor fools) do not seem to have any idea, except a 'young man'. Admirable as Maudling is, I doubt if he could revive our fortunes as well as Hailsham.[6]

This illustrates the need for a younger leader, and also the divisions of opinion over who should be Macmillan's successor, but it is clear that Macmillan's career as leader was coming to an end, and he had perceived this. On 4 October 1963, Macmillan noted 'my decision to retire before the next General Election is right. The problem is how exactly to announce it and how to get the right successor. Butler would be fatal. Maudling uninspiring. Hailsham, with Maudling and his men in loyal support, might still win.[7] Macmillan thus supported Hailsham as a younger, more electable leader, and it was only doubts about Hailsham that arose after the Blackpool Conference that led him to focus his attention solely on Home.

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[6] Diary entry for 5 September 1963 Ms. Macmillan dep. d.50* (63)
[7] Diary entry for 4 October 1963 Ms. Macmillan dep. d .50* (117)

The Role of the 1963 Peerage Act

The Peerage Act that was passed on 31 July 1963, was a central situational influence on the outcome of the selection. According to Macmillan, without the Act, 'Butler would have succeeded, almost without challenge'. Stark has noted that 'the making of Prime Minister Douglas-Home depended as much on this constitutional reform as it did on the magic circle selection system'. [8] Without the Act, this could not have taken place, as the party would not accept a leader who was not a member of the House of Commons. Home could now become an MP, and was therefore a feasible candidate. The same now also applied to Hailsham.

The Act was passed after the pressure of Viscount Stansgate, who wished to disclaim his peerage and return to the Commons as Anthony Wedgewood-Benn, and he had undertaken a three year campaign to obtain his right to do so. Benn had succeeded to the Viscountcy on his father's death, and tabled a Bill proposing that peers could disclaim their peerage if they so wished. The Bill originally passed by the Commons would have allowed the renunciation of peerages only after the next dissolution of Parliament, which meant that former peers would have been ineligible to be selected as parliamentary candidates for the 1964 general election. However, the Lords amended the Bill to allow renunciation of peerages from the moment the Act went into effect, and this was accepted by the Cabinet on 27 June. It was also decided that 'surrender should not extinguish the Peerage itself', and this was important as if this had occurred, Home would not have allowed his name to go forward for the leadership as he was proud of his family heritage.[9] This constitutional reform,

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[8] Macmillan, At The End Of The Day, p.509; and. Stark, Choosing A Leader, p.134
[9] See Stark, Choosing A Leader, p.88; and Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, pp.259-261

therefore, had a major influence on the outcome, as without it, Home would not have succeeded Macmillan.

The Selection Procedure: Formal Aspects and Informal Networks of Communication

Formal Aspects

The Development of the Procedure: Motives and Effect

The attitude of the Palace to the selection of Macmillan's successor was 'you choose, we send for'.[10] In other words, the party should determine who the best successor was, and the Palace would ask that person to form a government. This led Macmillan and the party hierarchy, because were clear divisions of opinion on who would be the best candidate, to decide to undertake extensive canvasses of party opinion to determine the best successor. This desire lay behind the emphasis in Macmillan's resignation statement at the party conference on the use of the 'customary processes of consultation'. Drafts of this statement in the Public Record Office file on the leadership controversy, show Macmillan took enormous care in his deliberation over the content and phraseology of the message. This is particularly apparent with the key phrase 'customary processes of consultation'. Drafts show that he did not originally intend to use this phrase, and the final version contains the following: 'I hope that it will soon be possible for the customary processes of consultation to be carried out within the party about it's future leadership'.[11] Drafts of the message contain the following crossed out, and replaced with the phrase Macmillan used

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[10] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.292

[11] 'Confidential. Foreign Secretary'. Signed Harold Macmillan. 9 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (36)

I hope that it will soon be possible for the chief figures of the Party to consult together about the future leadership with various individuals and groups in both Houses of Parliament as well as in the Party outside, thus making it possible for Her Majesty to be given any advice which She may seek[12]

This fine-tuning can be interpreted in a number of ways, but the opposition to Butler's succession is clear in the announcement, and in the subsequent canvasses. Macmillan appears to have changed the original phrase because he did not wish to make it explicit that the whole party would be consulted. This was because he and the party hierarchy wanted to consult only those whose opinions were considered to be important, and that agreed Home should succeed Macmillan. If the whole party was consulted, the result may not have been the one that they wanted. This explains the use of the phrase 'customary processes of consultation', as there were no 'customary processes' for this situation, so Macmillan did not make a formal commitment to consult the whole party. The phrase was also ambiguous enough to allow Macmillan and the party hierarchy to conduct the canvasses in the manner they wanted. Macleod was convinced that Macmillan arranged for the canvasses of party opinion to deliberately block Butler from succeeding him, by making the opposition to him in the party fully apparent.[13] However, if there was opposition to Butler's succession, then Macmillan was justified in making the party aware of that fact, as he could not unite the party.

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[12] 'Confidential. Foreign Secretary.' Unsigned. 9 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (38,48,50)
[13] Macleod, 'The Tory Leadership' in Spectator, 17 January 1964, p.65

Two alternative theories can be offered to explain why the procedure was developed. Firstly, the procedure took that form so that the party hierarchy appeared to be consulting the whole party, and justified their selection of Home as Macmillan's successor. Secondly, there were deep divisions of opinion in the party on who should succeed Macmillan, and the canvasses were the best means of finding the candidate most acceptable to the party. The evidence suggests that the party hierarchy wanted Home to become leader as he could best guarantee unity, and because there were divisions of opinion, needed to demonstrate the support for him. By developing this procedure, the stage was set for his emergence, and the procedure played a major part in the selection of Home as Macmillan's successor.

Redmayne's Canvass of MPs: Method, Results, Influence on the Outcome

i) Method

The method used was for the party whips to ask MPs questions on who they felt should succeed Macmillan, who they would least like to succeed Macmillan, and if they felt Home would be an acceptable leader. Ninety per cent of MPs were said to have been interviewed personally by a whip, the rest by telephone, or if abroad by telegram, and some were seen more than once.[14] There appear to have been as many as four questions asked of MPs

1. Who should succeed Macmillan?

2. Who should be the second choice?

3. Who among the candidates would you least like to see as leader?

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[14] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.203

4. If there is deadlock between Rab [Butler] and Quintin [Hailsham], would you accept Alec Home?[15]

The wording of the questions does not appear to have taken a consistent pattern, but the nature and purpose of the questions asked is clear. The second and fourth questions were specifically designed to emphasise Home's candidacy, as the party hierarchy knew he was generally acceptable to most MPs, even if he was not their first choice. The third question was designed to emphasise the opposition to Butler that existed in the Parliamentary party, and thus enhance Home's prospects in the process. As Home was the only candidate who could unite the party, the party hierarchy emphasised his name in the questioning of MPs. Bogdanor has described this procedure of leading questioning as 'guided democracy', or a reliance on the opinions of certain senior and influential figures, over more junior members of the parliamentary party. [16]

Redmayne calculated the first, second and third choices of MPs, and also the definite aversions to candidates. By using this method, Redmayne reduced the field of feasible candidates in this canvass to Home, Butler and Maudling, and eliminated Hailsham, Macleod and Heath. The purpose of this method was to find the compromise candidate who was generally acceptable to the party, and to illustrate the depth of the opposition to candidates. This served to promote Home as the most generally acceptable candidate, and the candidate who aroused the least opposition,

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[15] The Times, 16 January 1987 in Bogdanor, 'The Selection of the Party Leader' in Seldon/ Ball, Conservative Century, p.75

[16] Bogdanor, 'The Selection of the Party Leader' in Seldon/Ball (eds.), Conservative Century, p.75

while emphasising the opposition to Butler and Hailsham that existed among Conservative MPs.

ii) Results

The evidence suggests that Conservative MPs preferred Home to Butler to succeed Macmillan, despite the controversy surrounding the uniformity and impartiality of the canvass. What becomes clear is not a widespread endorsement of Home's candidacy, but a general acceptance of it. Redmayne assessed the opinions of 300 Conservative MPs, and told Macmillan that their views were 'freely given'. His list of the original candidates - Heath, Macleod, Maudling, Hailsham, Butler and Home - was reduced to Butler, Maudling and Home, because the support for Heath and Macleod was negligible, and Hailsham had the largest number of opponents. Redmayne thus re-allocated the first choices for Hailsham, Heath and Macleod by the second choices of those MPs who had put these as their first choice. The votes were re-allocated as follows - Home: 26; Butler: 18; Maudling: 18.[17] Home led on first preferences, but had the clearest lead on the second and third preferences. The first preferences were:

Home: 87; **Butler**: 86; **Hailsham**: 65; **Maudling**: 48; **Macleod**: 12; and **Heath**: 10.

The second and third preferences were:

Home: 89; **Butler**: 69; **Maudling**: 66; **Hailsham**: 39; **Macleod**: 18; and **Heath**: 17.

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[17] 'Prime Minister'. Signed M. R. (Redmayne). 16 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (12)

The recorded definite aversions to the three men were also significant. The results for these were

Home: 30; **Butler**: 48; **Hailsham**: 78; **Maudling**: 6; **Macleod**: 1; and **Heath**: 1.[18]

Home gained support from a wider and more general section of the party, according to Redmayne. He noted of the results

> On every count Lord Home has the advantage even if it is sometimes very narrow...Apart from Home's actual lead I am impressed by the general goodwill shown towards him even by those who give reasons in favour of other candidates, and I cannot fail to come to the conclusion that he would be best able to secure united support[19]

The results illustrated that Butler and Hailsham were opposed by a number of Conservative MPs, as was Home but not to the same extent. Home had a clearer lead on second and third preferences, which Redmayne felt indicated a general acceptance of his candidacy. It is fully apparent from the canvass that Home was not a clear winner, but did arouse the least opposition of the candidates. It is perhaps significant that Redmayne did not differentiate between second and third preferences, as if he did make it clear who emerged as the clear winner on second over third preferences,

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[18] 'Secret. Mr. T. J. Bligh'. Signed M. R. (Redmayne). 18 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (5)
[19] 'Secret. Mr. T. J. Bligh'. Signed M. R. (Redmayne). 18 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (5-6)

Home's lead may not have been as clear as it was. This suggests that Home may only have been the third choice of a number of Conservative MPs, and this may not have promoted his candidacy as strongly.

iii) Influence on the Outcome

The canvasses did not reflect the feelings of the whole party, but were weighted in favour of the party's most senior figures, which kept the selection of Home in the tradition of the party's previous selections of its leaders. The use of multiple questions in a canvass such as this, can be manipulated in favour of a compromise candidate, and this was the outcome of these canvasses. It was also a definite intention in the use of the questions. Ramsden has noted that 'since the whips were counting votes against as well as for each candidate, it is not difficult to see how such discussions appeared to be the 'making' of a majority for Home as the least unpopular candidate'.[20] Butler never saw the canvass of Conservative MPs, which suggests an element of conspiracy by the party hierarchy.[21]

Shepherd believed Redmayne's leading questioning of MPs in Home's favour resulted in an inflation of his support. Fisher has argued that Lord St. Aldwyn suggested to Redmayne that he should stress Home's name to MPs, as the candidate most likely to unite the party.[22] MPs who had supported Home, but not as their first choice, were asked by Redmayne if their preference would be different, if they knew that he was definitely a candidate. This prompted many MPs to review their choice. Redmayne later admitted that MPs opinions were not given equal weight, and that his

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[20] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.205
[21] Butler, Art of the Possible, p.247
[22] Shepherd, The Power Brokers, p.156; and Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.106

conclusion was biased towards 'people on whose opinion one would more strongly rely than on others'.[23] As Ramsden has noted, 'this would mean that the senior backbenchers now backing Home would have a disproportionate effect on the outcome'.[24] Butler was told by MPs that they were contacted by junior whips who stressed that Home was standing, and that each of the interviewers adopted a different approach, so questioning the uniformity and impartiality of the canvass of Conservative MPs. Traditionally, this method was adopted in more informal soundings than this in the party's history, and as such was therefore not unprecedented, but reflected the hierarchy's desire for Home to become leader. This canvass had a major effect on the outcome, as it showed Home was the most acceptable candidate to Conservative MPs.

Dilhorne's Canvass of the Cabinet: Method, Results, Influence on the Outcome

i) Method

Dilhorne's canvass of the Cabinet has provoked even more controversy than Redmayne's canvass of Conservative MPs. This is because of the method used by Dilhorne, and the interpretation he offered of the results. In his record of the canvass that was delivered to Macmillan on 15 October, Dilhorne illustrated that he calculated the first choices of each member of the Cabinet, and treated Butler, Maudling and Hailsham as voting for themselves, but did not include Home's vote for himself. Dilhorne also calculated the number of supporters for each candidate if Home was eliminated from the selection, and then made the same calculation if Home and Maudling were eliminated, and if Home and Hailsham were eliminated. A significant

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[23] Shepherd, The Power Brokers, p.156; and Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.107
[24] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.205

aspect of Dilhorne's canvass is that he does not offer an assessment of what the Cabinet's views were if Butler was not a candidate.[25]

ii) Results

The results were interpreted by Dilhorne as showing the extent to which opinion was split, if Home was not a candidate. The first choices of Ministers were as follows:

Home: 10; **Butler**: 3; **Maudling**: 5; **Hailsham**: 2.

Home was not counted as voting for himself, so his total was 11. If Home was eliminated, the results were:

Butler: 8; **Hailsham**: 5; **Maudling**: 7.

If Home and Maudling were eliminated, the results were:

Butler: 12; **Hailsham**: 7.

If Home and Hailsham were eliminated, the results were:

Butler: 14; **Maudling**: 5.

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[25] Dilhorne to Macmillan, 15 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (18-19)

Dilhorne also attached a break-down of the results, to illustrate which Ministers had voted for each candidate.[26] This list of candidates has raised controversy, as the ten Ministers who voted for Home as their first choice included Macleod and Boyle, who were definite opponents of Home. A variety of arguments have been advanced to explain Macleod's inclusion in the 'Home Ten'. Dilhorne told Horne that 'it is not a thing about which I would make a mistake', and Horne commented that Dilhorne was a lawyer, and trained not to get things wrong. Butler's reaction showed a lack of surprise: 'Macleod was very shifty, much more than you think'. Powell declared that it was a forgery. Macmillan stated 'well, you know...Macleod was a Highlander...!'.[27] Horne's argument that Macleod was being too clever for his own good and playing a devious game is, according to Ramsden, 'hardly convincing', but must nevertheless not be discounted as a possibility.[28] Macleod may have been trying to buttress his own position by voting for Home, as once the opposition to Butler became clear, he would possibly have come into the running as an outside candidate.

As Fisher has noted, 'it is not easy to understand how so large a majority could have been composed'. At least nine of the twenty members of the Cabinet were for Butler - Boyd-Carpenter; Edward Boyle; Henry Brooke, Home Secretary; Butler; Frederick Erroll, President of the Board of Trade; Hailsham, Macleod; Maudling; and Powell. The Cabinet was thus split at the time of the canvass directly between Butler and Home. This explains the use of the canvasses, in showing what the situation was if certain candidates (except Butler) were eliminated. This served to emphasise the opposition to Butler in the Cabinet, that may or may not have really existed, and it in

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[26] Dilhorne to Macmillan, 15 October 1693 PRO PREM 11/5008 (17-19)
[27] Horne, Macmillan 1957-1986, pp.562-563; and Shepherd, Iain Macleod, p.326
[28] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.206

turn inflated the support for Home.[29] The 'Midnight Meeting' opposition suggests that the impression of a Cabinet fully behind Home, to the extent portrayed by Dilhorne, was false.

Macleod claimed that Dilhorne's figures were 'simply impossible', and that expressions of genuine regard for Home were translated into second or even first preferences.[30] Only two Ministers were for Home, and Macleod used as evidence his meeting with five Ministers for lunch on 18 October, where none of those present felt Home was the first choice. Hailsham, Butler and Boyle were also not present at the meeting, which illustrated to Macleod that Dilhorne's results were incorrect.[31] Ramsden has explained Dilhorne's misleading assessment of the Cabinet, as he 'failed to understand the depth of the actual opposition to Home as Prime Minister because there was so little hostility to Home the man, and he too may have misreported some who had acquiesced when his name was mentioned as first preferences for Home'.[32] This genuine regard, rather than an enthusiastic endorsement of Home, resulted in the inflation of support for him in the Cabinet, and the false impression of support that was conveyed by this canvass.

iii) Influence on the Outcome

The mistakes made in both the MPs and the Cabinet canvasses can be put down to misunderstandings due to the use of complex and multiple questioning and conversations, that inflated the support for Home. Alternatively, it could have been the case that the party managers and senior figures had decided Home was the right

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[29] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.107
[30] Macleod, 'The Tory Leadership' in Spectator, 17 January 1964, p.65
[31] Macleod, 'The Tory Leadership' in Spectator, 17 January 1964, p.65
[32] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.205

candidate and manipulated the canvasses to make sure they got the majority for the leader they wanted. They felt it was their duty to do this for the good of the party. This was a view Macleod concurred with in his article in The Spectator of 17 January 1964. He took the view that they had acted 'in accordance with their idea of duty [and] had simply produced the wrong result by asking questions in a particular way'.[33] Dilhorne's canvass was the most significant, as 'no one unacceptable to his colleagues could have become their leader and when Dilhorne reported an overwhelming Cabinet consensus for Home, it was decisive'.[34] This assessment is correct. Dilhorne's canvass was critical to Home's emergence, as it gave the impression that he was generally acceptable to the Cabinet as Macmillan's successor.

The Canvasses of the Lords and the Constituencies

The constituency canvass illustrated that opinion was split between Butler and Hailsham, but most soundings had been taken at Blackpool, before Home was a candidate.[35] On 16 October, Redmayne reported that it was 'clear that the constituencies support Home with Butler a fairly close second; Hailsham is third, and the others nowhere'.[36] Lord St. Aldwyn's canvass of the active Conservative Peers in the Lords reported that the first choices were

Home: 28; **Butler**: 14; **Hailsham**: 10; **Maudling**: 2.

The second choices were:

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[33] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.206
[34] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.107
[35] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.203
[36] Redmayne to Macmillan, 16 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (11)

Home: 12; **Butler**: 13; **Hailsham**: 12; **Maudling**: 8.[37]

However, these canvasses were not as influential as the canvasses of MPs and the Cabinet, but did confirm the impression that Home was the generally acceptable candidate.

Informal Networks

These networks had a major role in the selection of Home. They disseminated and filtered information from the party hierarchy to the candidates, and potential candidates, prior to and during the selection to either buttress a candidate's position, or to dissuade them from being a candidate. They also served as a means of communication between the party and the party managers, and as links to the press. These existed in two forms: those between the party managers and the press to prepare for the emergence of Home, and those between the press and the opponents of Home to buttress their candidacies.

The Party Hierarchy to Candidates Networks: July - October 1963

These played a major role in buttressing candidates, or dissuading them of their prospects for succession. Butler was made aware of his poor chances of succeeding Macmillan by informal discussions with senior figures on the executive of the 1922 Committee. On 18 June 1963, John Morrison advised Butler to take part in the government formed by the next leader, but declared that he would understand if Butler

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[37] St. Aldwyn to Macmillan, 15 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (15-16)

did not wish to serve after having already lost out on the leadership once in 1957.[38] This illustrates two points: that Morrison was convinced that Macmillan was finished, and that Butler was not the man to succeed him. At the end of June 1963, Morrison declared to Butler that 'the chaps won't have you', just prior to him leaving for Rhodesia, to preside over the conference that was to ratify the dissolution of the Central African Federation.[39] The cumulative effect of this and earlier conversations with 1922 Committee officials, caused Butler to inquire about his reputation in the party. Later that week, he was visited by Redmayne and Poole, who wondered whether he would be willing to serve in any new administration that might be formed. They told Butler they wanted to keep the disruption that Macmillan's retirement would cause to a minimum.[40] They were implying that his own chances of succeeding Macmillan were not good, and confirmed Morrison's own assessment. Butler asked two friends on the Executive of the 1922 Committee if Morrison's assessment was correct, and they replied firmly that it was.[41] A confidential note in Butler's papers confirms that the party had a strong desire to skip a generation, and did not want him to succeed Macmillan

> I was visited by John Morrison and Alex Spearman. The burden of their song was that in view of the strong inclination of the younger backbenchers to get somebody of the new age group it was likely that opinion would crystallise like this as representing

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[38] Butler, Art of the Possible, p.236
[39] Goodhart, The 1922, p.191
[40] 'Confidential Note'. 21 June 1963 Butler MSS RAB G40 (68-69)
[41] Goodhart, The 1922, p.191

> the greatest common factor. They were both extremely friendly but seemed quite sure of their diagnosis[42]

Informal networks also served to put pressure on Home at the party conference, to throw his hat into the ring. These networks came from the 1922 Committee and also back-benchers, instigated by Selwyn Lloyd, the most senior back-bencher. Following his sacking as Chancellor in July 1962, Lloyd had acquired prominence as a disseminator of information from the back-benchers to the party managers. The figures who, alongside Lloyd, put pressure on Home, were Sir William Anstruther-Gray, John Morrison, Sir Charles Mott-Radclyffe and Colonel Lancaster of the 1922 Committee, and Duncan Sandys, John Hare, Edward Heath and Nigel Birch, who were ministers and back-benchers who felt Home should succeed Macmillan. [43] Redmayne and senior backbenchers were 'working for several days to influence the votes in favour of Home', but 'they were perfectly entitled to ensure, if they could, the election of the man whom they thought best able to unite the party and best fitted to lead the country'.[44] Fisher supports Bogdanor's view that 'guided democracy' was taking place via these informal networks. Hailsham noted that Home was pressured to become a candidate at Blackpool by senior party figures. On 10 October Home told him that he [Home] 'was under strong pressure to disclaim and throw his hat into the ring'.[45] These networks had a major influence on Home's decision to stand, as he saw that he was the most acceptable candidate to the party through the genuine regard for him.

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[42] 'Confidential Note'. 31 July 1963 Butler MSS RAB G40 (83-84)
[43] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.105; Horne, Macmillan 1957-1986, p.183; and Shepherd, Iain Macleod, p.318
[44] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.106
[45] Hailsham, A Sparrow's Flight, p.351

The Party Hierarchy - Candidates - Palace Circle of Networks during the Selection and Home's emergence

These networks were of major significance during the selection, and served to convey information to buttress support for Home, and express the discontent of the opponents. The Palace was kept in touch with developments during the selection through Sir Michael Adeane, The Queen's Principal Secretary, and Sir Alan Lascelles, the Queen's Private Secretary, by the party managers. Bligh noted to Sir Edward Ford, the Queen's Assistant Private Secretary, on 9 October, that the Queen gave permission for Home to give Macmillan's statement of his intention to resign to the party conference. The Palace was also informed by the opponents' camps of their discontent at Home's succession. Dennis Walters of the Hailsham camp contacted the Palace, and stated that Ministers were unhappy at the consultations, after information of the results had filtered out.[46]

Butler was excluded from the networks during the contest, probably because he was perceived as a threat to Home, and the party hierarchy did not want to keep him up to date with developments. Macmillan did deliberately keep Butler in the dark over critical developments about the procedure to be adopted to install his successor. He failed to inform him of the time the canvasses would take to be completed, while keeping the Queen fully informed, telling her it would only take a couple of days to complete, after the Cabinet had agreed on the procedure Macmillan had determined.[47] Butler was under the impression that the canvasses would take some time to complete, and felt this would work in his favour, as support for him could be consolidated. This

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[46] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.204
[47] Macmillan, At The End Of The Day, p.511

was obviously not Macmillan's intention. He also refused to talk to Butler while he was recovering from his operation in the nursing home, and Lady Butler felt this to be typical of the deviousness of Macmillan.[48] Macmillan did act in a secretive and devious manner towards Butler, but this cannot just be attributed to any personal spite. He believed that Butler was not the right man to succeed him, because of Butler's personal failings which meant he was unable to unite the party.

The Press to Home's opponents during the Selection and Home's Emergence

These played a crucial role in the development of the opposition to Home's emergence. They existed as a two-way movement of communication, and Macleod used the press to galvanise opposition to Home during the Party Conference, and William Rees-Mogg, an opponent of the succession, promoted and galvanised the opposition to Home following his emergence. On the evening of 11 October, Macleod, following rumours of Home's growing prominence as a candidate, gave two respected lobby journalists, David Wood of The Times, and Harry Boyne of The Daily Telegraph, an off-the-record briefing in his room at the Imperial Hotel in the early hours of the morning. He confirmed to them that Home had now emerged as a candidate for the leadership.[49]

On the afternoon of 17 October, Butler, Macleod and Maudling were told by Rees-Mogg, that Macmillan would advise the Queen to send for Home and ask him to discover if he could form a government. This served to further galvanise the opposition to Home, and led to a series of meetings and telephone conversations to organise the

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[48] Interview with Lady Butler in 'Alan Clark's History of The Tory Party'. Episode three: From Estate Owners to Estate Agents. An Oxford Television Company Production for BBC TV. First shown 28 September 1997

[49] Shepherd, The Power Brokers, p.154

opposition. Rees-Mogg continued to play a crucial role in the opposition, and approached Butler while he was having lunch in the Carlton Club, and urged him not to serve.[50]

The Party Hierarchy to the Press after Home's Emergence

These were deemed of particular importance in preparing the country for the emergence of Home. A memorandum from Redmayne to Bligh of 17 October illustrates that great emphasis (with Macmillan's approval) was placed on keeping the field open, and stopping rumours of candidates dropping out, or no longer being considered. This was to be done by Harold Evans, Macmillan's Press Officer, who would prompt the press when the situation was felt to be ready for Home's emergence, and weight could be put behind 'the probable successor'. The document places great emphasis on the need to be certain on how the press are to be 'handled', and Evans, Bligh and Deedes would play the crucial roles on this.[51] These were significant as they eased Home into the public arena as Macmillan's successor and seemed, to some extent, to control opposition to his succession.

The Core Situational Criteria: Acceptability, Electability, and Governability

Butler

i) Acceptability

Butler was deemed to be unacceptable by many sections of the Conservative Party for a variety of reasons. Firstly, his level of acceptability as Macmillan's

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[50] Macleod, 'The Tory Leadership' in Spectator, 17 January 1964, p.66; Shepherd, Iain Macleod, p.328. Macleod did not reveal it was Rees-Mogg in The Spectator; and Butler, Art of the Possible, pp.248-249

[51] Redmayne to Bligh, 17 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (7)

successor, was tarnished by the 'guilt by association' that he had with the discredited Macmillan regime. This meant that, as the party wanted to move to a leader from the next generation of leading Conservatives, Butler was not acceptable to the party. In March 1963, Macmillan warned Butler that criticism of him was also criticism of Butler, as they were seen as inseparable, and 'the combination of the Kennedy image plus Harold Wilson at 46 was a potent force in favour of a younger man'.[52]

Butler's career was now moving away from the 'great offices of state', and he was also more closely tied to Macmillan after he became Deputy Prime Minister. This severely affected his leadership prospects, as Macmillan's reputation was in serious decline, and the party wanted to move to the next generation: 'He [Butler] had the same disadvantage as Macmillan himself - age and length of service'.[53] The decline of the Macmillan government from 1962, and the allegations of sleaze and corruption aroused by the Profumo crisis, was central to Butler's unacceptability, as he was directly associated with that decline as Macmillan's deputy.

Secondly, Butler was not seen as a 'leader'. 'Macmillan's overriding motivation was undoubtedly his determination to block Butler from the succession and his consequent wish was to do all he could to secure the leadership for Hailsham'. Similarly, Fisher believes 'the course of the leadership crisis can only be explained by Macmillan's determination that Butler should not succeed him as Prime Minister'.[54] This determination was based on Macmillan's belief that Butler did not have the necessary 'steel' to be leader. The definition of 'leadership steel' can be taken to mean Butler's indecisiveness, and his perceived inability to lead from the front and direct the

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[52] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.194
[53] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.194
[54] Shepherd, Iain Macleod, , p.307; and Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.102

course of the government. Macmillan felt Butler had certain personality characteristics that meant he should not become leader, much as Churchill had doubts about Eden's temperamental suitability for the Premiership. What Macmillan called Butler's 'vacillations' were significant. Butler could not provide the definite line needed to keep the party together, and both of these are legitimate reasons for Macmillan to oppose his succession. Julian Amery, Macmillan's son-in-law and Minister of Aviation, felt that Butler was not made of 'officer material'.[55] Many in the party, and significantly the party hierarchy, agreed with Macmillan.

Thirdly, Butler was clearly unacceptable to certain influential sections of the Conservative Party, and in particular the right-wing. Butler appeared to be a divisive candidate, and for this reason, the party hierarchy deemed him unable to unite the party. Redmayne informed Macmillan that the opposition to Butler, as expressed in the MPs canvass, was 'personal'.[56] This meant that the opposition to him was for both personal and political reasons, and Redmayne believed this significantly affected his acceptability to the party. Butler traditionally had a capacity for arousing great opposition in the party, as he had done in 1957.

> It was already apparent then [June 1963] that Butler suffered from the same double handicap in 1963 as he had done in 1957: not only were the right implacably opposed to his views, but also there was little enthusiasm for him as a potential leader among centre and left MPs who agreed with his policy views - in

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[55] The Makers of Modern Politics, 3: Rab Butler: Artist of the Possible, BBC Radio Four, 1995
[56] Redmayne to Macmillan, 16 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (12)

> October the One Nation Group was to decide not to support him.[57]

This is significant as it meant the opposition was not just confined to the right, but a wide feeling across the party was that the new leader should come from the next generation of leading Conservatives, like Maudling and Heath. Macmillan was fearful of the split that might appear in the party, if Butler succeeded him because of this opposition to him. Butler was still tarnished by his image as an appeaser, and this was exacerbated by the memories of the Suez Crisis. The party's right wing would not accept him as they saw him as weak and dithering because of his conciliatory stances in both instances. Furthermore, he was seen by many (not just on the right) as a 'milk and water socialist' after his work on the 'New Conservatism' after the 1945 election defeat. [58]

The opposition from the party's 'die hard' Imperialist wing was further increased by his work in Macmillan's governments. His pivotal role in the break-up of the Central African Federation (CAF) severely affected his reputation in this influential section of the party. When Butler addressed the House of Commons on informing them of the agreement for the dissolution of the Federation in July 1963, the opposition benches cheered Butler loudly, and he was congratulated on his success by the Labour spokesman on Commonwealth Affairs. 'It was all, no doubt, good, clean parliamentary fun - but even the amused support of his opponents was a dubious blessing for Rab [Butler], given the reputation he had borne for 'milk and water

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[57] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.194

[58] 'Private and Confidential. (not for publication) "Industrial Charter or Magna Charter?". The Conservative Industrial Charter attacked by Sir Waldron Smithers, JP, MP, to the authors of the Charter. London, July 1947'. Butler MSS RAB H92 (112-145)

socialism' ever since the days of The Industrial Charter'.[59] Howard is correct as the dissolution of the Central African Federation offended the traditionalist right wing of the party, who were opposed to the dissolution of the empire. It exacerbated the doubts about Butler by re-stirring memories of accusations levelled at him during the appeasement era and the Suez Crisis. These accusations of 'wetness' served as a cumulative effect from the three episodes, that severely affected Butler's acceptability in 1963.

The level of Butler's unacceptability was apparent to a large extent among the Cabinet and the party hierarchy, as well as the party's MPs. The opposition to Butler making the Leader's Speech in place of Macmillan is evidence of his unacceptability to some members of the Cabinet, and the party's desire not to promote his candidacy to succeed Macmillan. Butler had to persuade twelve members of the Cabinet to accept his right to make the speech, after he had been warned of the opposition to him making the speech by Lord Aldington and Peter Goldman on his arrival in Blackpool on the evening of 9 October.[60] This was significant, as Butler was the obvious choice to make the speech as acting Prime Minister in Macmillan's absence, and he was also Deputy Prime Minister. Following the warning from Aldington and Goldman, he immediately sought a formal invitation to make the speech from the National Union to buttress his claims to doing so. Butler showed a ruthlessness in persuading the Cabinet to allow him to accept the invitation, which the Cabinet did eventually grant on the evening of 9 October.[61] This opposition illustrates the doubts about certain ministers'

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[59] Howard, RAB, p.301
[60] Butler, Art Of The Possible, p.241
[61] Howard, RAB, p.311; and Butler, Art Of The Possible, p.241

support for Butler's candidacy, and questions the level of his acceptability to the Cabinet.

The party hierarchy were also opposed to Butler's succession, and this is clear from Macmillan's diary notes made during the leadership controversy. The party hierarchy were also influenced by Macmillan's implacable opposition to Butler succeeding him, and most significantly by the fact that their assessment of the growing Home support after Blackpool appeared to be a 'keep out Butler' movement. Macmillan also recorded Butler 'was much disliked by the Party Organisation, especially the women. Why this is so, no one seems to know'.[62]

ii) Electability

There were many reasons, linked to his level of acceptability, why Butler was deemed to have a poor electability rating. Firstly, his image was too close to Macmillan's, and this would affect the party's position at the next general election as the Macmillan regime was now widely discredited. This was a factor in his lack of electoral appeal, as Macmillan's image had been severely tarnished by the events of recent months, including the government's poor handling of the Profumo crisis. If Butler succeeded Macmillan, the new government would be perceived by the public in the same way, and Macmillan had talked of the need for the 'younger men' to emerge in the months preceding.

Macmillan had noted on 15 October that MPs who showed a desire for a move to the next generation over the previous summer 'to help with the election', would support Maudling or Hailsham, 'since Mr. Butler is not so much of a change as all

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[62] Diary entry for 16 October 1963, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.51*, (19)

that'.[63] This confirms the poor position that Butler was in because of his close association with Macmillan. The practical need for a complete change was duly apparent in Macmillan's thinking, and he persuaded Butler that 'they sank or swam together'.[64] This confirms both the closeness of Macmillan and Butler, and also the desperation that the Macmillan regime was in during its final months in office. Macmillan's image was one of the reasons for selecting a new leader, and this counted strongly against Butler. Secondly, Butler was an uninspiring performer on a public platform, and did not appear to be able to lift the party for the next election. A new, vigorous image was seen as essential by many MPs if the Conservatives were to win a fourth successive election victory. Fisher has argued that Macmillan's opposition to Butler was

> No doubt based on the view that Butler lacked the steel necessary for strong leadership and the inspiration needed to pull the Party through a toughly fought election. Many members of the Parliamentary Party shared this opinion. Others took the opposite view. They believed, in the words of Iain Macleod, that Butler had one important asset, apart from his great experience of government - that he could attract 'wide, understanding support from many people outside the Tory Party. And without such an appeal, no general election can be won'.[65]

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[63] Memorandum by the Prime Minister, 15 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (26)
[64] Howard, RAB, p.298
[65] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.102

Evidence suggests that Macleod was wrong, and Macmillan was right, and many Conservative voters did not believe Butler would appeal to the electorate. Macmillan's conviction was that he did not have what it would take to lift the party for the forthcoming election. Macmillan made this point to Lord Swinton, an old friend of Butler's, who nevertheless felt he 'would lose the election disastrously'.[66] Dilhorne and Redmayne were against Butler succeeding Macmillan as they felt 'the Party in the country will find it depressing'.[67] Public correspondence received on the party leadership prior to Macmillan's resignation shows some opposition to Butler for electoral reasons, and little support for him, as he does not appear to have inspired Conservative voters. One concerned Conservative activist wrote

> What strange death wish has seized so many Conservatives that they should contemplate, even for a moment, choosing Rab Butler to lead them into an election? With all the qualities of integrity and ability that would make a good Prime Minister, he is electoral poison! Every time he speaks on the radio he loses us thousands of votes, and when he appears on television, tens of thousands. His voice, manner and looks are against him.[68]

Butler was not a good public performer; he never seemed to rise to the occasion in the same way as Macmillan, so could not rally the party so close to the

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[66] Diary entry for 30 September 1963, Ms. Macmillan, dep. d.50*, (112)
[67] Diary entry for 14 October 1963, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.51*, (14)
[68] Leach to Macleod, 10 October 1963 CPA CCO 20/39/1

election, and for this reason was not seen to be a viable candidate on his electability rating.

iii) Governability

Butler was clearly the most successful candidate in terms of governability, and there was a great deal based on this criterion to suggest that Butler was the most feasible candidate. However, there were also some significant reasons against, alongside the defects in his candidacy for reasons of acceptability and electability. Firstly, in support of his candidacy was his wide governmental experience. Fisher noted 'there is no doubt that Butler was the best qualified of the contenders and none of the younger members of the Cabinet in the House of Commons commanded sufficient support to defeat him'.[69] Macmillan noted on 15 October that those Ministers and MPs who place most emphasis on 'the orderly conduct of government would go for Butler'.[70] Butler had been an effective Minister since Macmillan became Prime Minister in 1957, and his reliance on Butler in times of strain for his government has been well documented. Butler often stood in for the leader when he acted as the international statesman on tours of the Commonwealth and the United States. He was the fixer in Macmillan's governments, and became a source of great strength to him. A secret and personal minute from Macmillan to Butler on 7 May 1963 illustrates this.

> It would be a great help to me if you would be prepared to take on some of my duties, both on the backroom work of running some of the Committees which I have been doing and also on the

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[69] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.102
[70] Memorandum by the Prime Minister, 15 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (26)

> formal or representational side...Anything that you can do to relieve me of some of this necessary and important but time-consuming work will be a great blessing to me[71]

Macmillan's reliance on Butler can be interpreted in two ways. Firstly, he genuinely needed the support of Butler, and it was an essential aspect of the successful operation of his government. Secondly, he was using Butler's dependability to discredit him in the eyes of some sections of the party, for reasons of personal spite. Macmillan's choice of Butler to take on the responsibility for the dissolution of the Central African Federation in March 1962 has been interpreted in this way by Butler's former colleagues and analysts of this period. Turner has described the post as a 'poisoned chalice'.[72] Roy Welensky, the then Prime Minister of the Federation, believed that Macmillan's intention in giving Butler the responsibility for the break-up of CAF, was to discredit him in the eyes of the right-wing of the Conservative Party.

> Now that I am no longer in office I think I can say to you that I, of course, fully realised how difficult was the task that Macmillan gave you and as I said to you in your office I was convinced that he did it in the hope that it would break you[73]

Macmillan recognised full well that the responsibility for the break-up of CAF would discredit Butler in the eyes of the party's imperialist wing, who were already

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[71] 'Secret and Personal. My Dear Rab'. Signed H. M. (Macmillan). 7 May 1963 CPA CCO 20/8/6; and CCO 20/8/7

[72] Turner, Macmillan, p.186

[73] Welensky to Butler, 3 January 1964 Butler MSS RAB G41(36)

hostile because of his behaviour during the Suez Crisis, and for his reputation as a Munichite. However, Macmillan's appointment can be viewed in a more charitable perspective, as his government had been beset by problems with CAF. Butler was viewed by Macmillan as the only Minister capable of solving the problem. The evidence suggests this to have been the case, and the allegations of personal spite can be dismissed.

Butler had illustrated his ability to be a competent minister throughout his career, as President of the Board of Education from 1941-44, as Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1951-1955, and as Home Secretary from 1957-1962. However, in 1963, Butler, in the same way as in 1957, did not occupy a 'great office of state'. He was First Secretary of State and Minister for Central Africa, and this affected his governability rating. Butler, despite being Macmillan's most senior minister, gave the impression of a career in decline, away from and not towards the summit of political office. Alongside a wish widely held in the party for a leader of the next generation of leading Conservatives, this counted strongly against Butler.

<u>Home</u>

i) Acceptability

Home was deemed by the party hierarchy as the candidate most acceptable to the party for a variety of reasons. Firstly, he was acceptable to those sections of the party who were strongly opposed to other candidates. Following his canvass of Conservative MPs, Redmayne informed Macmillan that the opposition to Home expressed in the canvass only arose from his position as a Lord, and was not personal,

as it was for Butler and Hailsham.[74] This was significant, as it illustrated to Redmayne that Home was held in high regard in the party, and was generally acceptable as Macmillan's successor. Macmillan's diary entries during the leadership crisis show that the party hierarchy felt this general acceptability was the most significant feature of support for Home. On 14 October, Macmillan recorded that Dilhorne and Redmayne told him that they supported Home's succession as support for Hailsham, which had evaporated after his flamboyant displays of showmanship at Blackpool, was moving towards Home. Macmillan noted

> The movement against Hogg (on this account) had not gone to Butler or Maudling, but to Home. The "draft" Home movement was in reality a "keep out" Butler movement. I was struck by the fact that both Lord Chancellor and Chief Whip agreed on this analysis and both are, or were supporters of the Hogg succession. Both are against the Butler succession on the grounds that the Party in the country will find it depressing[75]

In other words, Home appeared to unite all sections of party opinion that were against other candidates. This level of general acceptability comes through prominently in the canvasses, and justified the party hierarchy's support for him. This led to the second reason for Home's acceptability. He was the compromise candidate who appeared to unite all sections of party opinion. Even in the constituencies where awareness of Home as a candidate for the leadership was minimal, Lord Chelmer and

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[74] Redmayne to Macmillan, 16 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (12)
[75] Diary note for 14 October 1963, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.51*, (14)

Mrs. Shepherd of the NUCUA 'were certain everyone would rally around Lord Home'.[76] This further galvanised the party hierarchy's certainty that he was the most acceptable candidate, as opinion in the constituencies was split between Butler and Hailsham. Macmillan conveyed this growing certainty among the party hierarchy, and 'the truth is that with the three main "hats" in the ring (Butler, Maudling and Hailsham) and the very strong feeling both for and against each, were excited by their candidature, the only way out was a "compromise" candidate. Lord Home was the only compromise candidate possible'.[77]

Macmillan's diaries illustrate the extent of Conservative MPs' support for Home's succession as the compromise candidate. On 16 October, Macmillan saw Peter Thorneycroft, Minister of Defence; Boyle; Lloyd; Hare; Brooke; and Sir Keith Joseph, Minister of Housing and Local Government. Only Lloyd declared his outright support for Home. However, Macmillan noted, 'practically all of these Ministers, whether Hoggites or Butlerites or Maudlingites, agreed that if Lord Home would undertake the task of P.M. the whole Cabinet and the whole Party would cheerfully unite under him. Sandys (Commonwealth Sec.) feels this especially strongly'.[78] Once the new leader was in place the party would unite around him, and as Home appeared the most acceptable to all sections of party opinion, he was deemed the most acceptable candidate. However, did this general acceptance constitute real support for Home as a leader of the party? In Redmayne's canvass, second and third preferences showed a clear lead for Home over Butler, but a question must be asked: what if most of this

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[76] Diary entry for 17 October 1963, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.51*, (22)
[77] Diary entry for 20 October 1963, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.51*, (33). Emphasis on original document.
[78] Diary entry for 16 October 1963, Ms. Macmillan dep. d.51*, (20)

lead consisted of third preferences, and if this was the case, surely it questions Home's level of acceptability.

The 'Midnight Meeting' opposition established that at least eight members of the Cabinet strongly opposed Home's appointment.[79] This questions Dilhorne's assessment of the extent of Cabinet support for him. It appears to be the case that Macmillan and the party hierarchy felt that the general acceptance for Home was more significant than Cabinet support for Butler, as the Cabinet would unite around Home once he was in place as leader. It is apparent that the factors against Butler counted for Home's acceptability. On 15 October 1963, Macmillan noted that the Cabinet would be universally behind Home as he is popular, and would make 'an effective chief'.[80] Despite the questions that have been asked of the canvasses, the party wanted Home more than Butler, and there was a lack of real opposition from the party as a whole to Home's emergence, reflected in the broad cross section of support for him. Home was also acceptable to the party as a stop-gap leader, as the older, domestic ministers in the Macmillan government, like Butler, were now discredited. The younger, new generation of leading Conservatives, like Maudling and Heath, were also not yet felt to be ready, and would be discredited by leading the party into the next election, which the Conservatives were widely expected to lose. Thus, Home's position was as a stop-gap leader, acceptable as he was Foreign Secretary in Macmillan's government, and not tarnished to the same extent with the domestic failures. This was aligned with his position as the compromise candidate, and galvanised his level of acceptability.

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[79] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.204

[80] Memorandum by the Prime Minister, 15 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (29)

ii) Electability

Home was deemed by the party hierarchy as the candidate with the highest level of electability. This was for two reasons. Firstly, he had a clean reputation, and was untarnished by the scandals that had beset Macmillan's government in recent years. He was seen as enough of a change to mark a clear distinction between Macmillan's government, and any future administration. This would be a clear electoral advantage, as Home was the stop-gap between the discredited senior domestic ministers like Butler, and the next generation of Maudling and Heath, who were felt to be not yet ready for the leadership.

Ramsden has noted that Home had 'few political enemies and hardly anyone suspected him of underhand motives', and that 'after the recent claims against public life, this was Home's strongest suit'.[81] This was true not only in terms of his acceptability, but it also had positive electoral connotations. The party hierarchy felt Home could persuade floating Conservative voters, tempted to vote for Labour, to vote Conservative, as he marked a clear distinction from Macmillan's regime, and did not appear to give offence to any section of the population. However, Home's position as a Lord did not give the Conservatives the new image that the party had hoped for. The party hierarchy do not appear to have been concerned by this, and felt he was a good stop-gap leader, and was not likely to cause grave offence. The fact that the Conservatives were widely expected to lose the election may also have led them not to give too much concern to this matter. The second reason was Home's high profile in the government as Foreign Secretary. As he was not in charge of one of the key domestic posts, Home was not as tarnished with the domestic failures of 1962 and

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[81] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.201

1963 as Butler. Home was also widely known because of his role in the Cuban Missile Crisis, and his growing prominence as a international statesman could be emphasised to the electorate.

iii) Governability

Home was not as prominent as Butler in governability, but had more years of experience than Maudling. However, Home did currently hold one of the 'great offices of state', the Foreign Office. This meant he, despite his position as a Lord, was in one of the traditional avenues to the leadership of the party. His lack of experience in domestic posts obviously counted against his governability, but his position as Foreign Secretary was a positive attribute that contributed to his candidacy. Another significant aspect of his governability was the reputation he gained as Foreign Secretary with leading world statesmen. On 15 October 1963, Macmillan noted that Home represented the 'old governing class at its best', and that he was well liked by President Kennedy, Dean Rusk, the US Secretary of State, and President Gromyko.[82] This was felt by the party hierarchy to be a major attribute to Home's status in the selection, and meant that he could continue the emphasis placed by the Macmillan government on the importance of foreign affairs.

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[82] Memorandum by the Prime Minister, 15 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (28)

Maudling

i) Acceptability

Maudling was deemed to be unacceptable to the party for two main reasons. The first was that he was not inspiring enough to unite it, and lead it to victory in the general election. This was expressed in the canvass of Conservative MPs. Redmayne informed Macmillan that there was little personal opposition to Maudling, but he failed to get 'official positive support'. There was a feeling expressed that Maudling was not ready to be leader, and not inspiring enough.[83] This was confirmed to the party by his poor speech at the Party Conference. This lacklustre performance confirmed that Maudling was not acceptable as an inspirational leader that would be of value at the next election. The second reason why Maudling was unacceptable was that he was not yet felt to be ready for the leadership. This had been expressed in Redmayne's canvass of Conservative MPs, and Maudling was seen as the 'leader-in-waiting', who required more experience in government before becoming leader.

ii) Electability

Maudling was deemed to be unelectable by the party hierarchy for the same reasons that he was unacceptable. These were firstly, that he was an uninspiring performer on a public platform. 'No one felt that he could convert the uncommitted or inspire the faithful to an electoral victory'.[84] This was the view of the party hierarchy, and they felt this most prominently after Maudling's speech as Chancellor in the debate on economic policy at the Party Conference. Maudling's speech, as has been demonstrated, was poor in its delivery, and minimal in its impact on the conference

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[83] Redmayne to Macmillan, 16 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (12)
[84] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.104

delegates. This was felt by the party hierarchy to give an indication of how Maudling would fail to inspire the party and the electorate at the imminent general election.

He was also felt to be not yet ready for the leadership, and was the 'leader-in-waiting'. As noted, this was a view that was confirmed to the party hierarchy in the canvass of Conservative MPs, and they felt this was also a view held among Conservative voters. However, public correspondence received by Conservative Central Office illustrated that Maudling was a popular choice with a number of Conservative voters, from the summer of 1963 to the period of the selection. In July 1963, T. W. Warburton, the President of the Shipley Division Conservative Association, informed Macleod that his executive believed that the Conservatives could still win the next election, but 'the essential prerequisite is youthful, virile and competent leadership, which must not be long delayed and the one who can meet this requirement and restore the party's fortunes is the Rt. Hon. Reg Maudling'. Conservative MP Evelyn Emmet informed Macleod on 4 October that opinion in her constituency felt that Macmillan should retire, and there was ninety per cent support for Maudling to replace him, and this was most prominent amongst the younger voters.[85] This last point is of major significance. The prominence of Maudling's popularity among younger voters was a concern of the party hierarchy, and they believed that older and traditional Conservative voters felt that Home was a better option than Maudling, as a stop-gap leader to get the party through the next election. It was felt that a further period in opposition was needed for Maudling or Heath to prepare them to take over the leadership.

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[85] Ruskin to Poole, 6 October 1963; and Warburton to Poole, 31 July 1963 CPA CCO 20/39/1

iii) Governability

Maudling achieved the governability criterion to some extent, as he was currently in a 'great office of state', as Chancellor of the Exchequer. This was also a traditional avenue to the leadership, and he had been perceived as a success as Chancellor, especially following his 1963 Budget which had coincided with an increase in support for him to succeed Macmillan among Conservative MPs. This suggests there was a clear link between the two. Maudling had also been a successful minister in Macmillan's government, as Colonial Secretary, so had a considerable amount of ministerial experience. However, as with Maudling's acceptability and electability, he was felt to be too inexperienced for the leadership, and needed a further period of consolidation in government or opposition, to prepare him for the leadership. The imminence of the general election was also a factor in this feeling, because if Maudling became leader and was defeated at the election, this would affect his standing and his governability over a longer period past the general election.

<u>Hailsham</u>

i) Acceptability

Hailsham became an unacceptable candidate after his conduct and actions at the Party Conference. Evidence suggests that he was felt to be unacceptable in many quarters of the party and the Conservative voters before then, but his actions at Blackpool confirmed and strengthened these doubts. Hailsham was most unacceptable to the party hierarchy and the more traditional Conservative voters, while he appeared to be acceptable among younger Conservative MPs and voters because of his high profile, and his ability at electioneering and publicity.

The doubts over Hailsham's temperament and judgement were central to this unacceptability, which was impressed on the party after his conduct at the Party Conference. His obvious desire and excitement at the prospect of becoming party leader led to an over-enthusiastic promotion of his candidacy, epitomised by the conduct of his supporters, especially by Randolph Churchill's distribution of 'Q' badges, and Hailsham's parading of his baby daughter at the conference. This offended many of the party's senior figures, and raised doubts about his temperament for high office. On 15 October 1963, Macmillan noted that there were many pro-Hailsham Conservative MPs especially from northern and the most threatened constituencies. They were from the constituencies that could only be won by non-political votes. Macmillan, however, also noted that the senior figures in the constituency associations were alarmed by the 'demonstrations of pro-Hailshamism', but that support for him from the constituencies would still be great.[86] This demonstrates that Hailsham was acceptable to the younger section of the party, but most crucially he was not to the party's senior figures and the party hierarchy, and after the Party Conference, they turned their attention to Home.

ii) Electability

Hailsham was initially seen as the most electable candidate, but as with the decline in his acceptability, his electability fell drastically after the Party Conference. In the summer of 1963, Macmillan believed Hailsham to be the best available successor because of his electability. Hailsham had a high profile in the country, and had demonstrated his electioneering ability in his role as Party Chairman during the 1959

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[86] Memorandum by the Prime Minister, 15 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (30)

election campaign. 'In 1963, he [Macmillan] picked out Hailsham, seeing in him (as he wrote in October), 'what I was like in my stronger period, am to a greater extent than people appreciate behind the scenes, and would like my successor to be'. Macmillan then tried to rise Hailsham's profile further, and all his roles from then on, especially the Test Ban Treaty negotiations, were to raise his profile and widen his Ministerial experience.[87]

Macmillan noted on 15 October 1963, that Hailsham would have a 'mass of feeling' in favour of him as a better opponent to Wilson, 'indeed the only one we have'. He noted that this was a vital consideration in the marginal seats, and the many safe seats under threat.[88] But, following the party conference, the doubts about Hailsham led Macmillan to turn his attention to Home. Dilhorne stated to Macmillan on 8 October 1963 that if he retired 'the only hope is Quintin [Hailsham]', as he was well known throughout the country, and they would have a better chance with him than Maudling in the general election.[89] However, for all the positive effect that Hailsham's electioneering and publicity skills had on his candidacy prior to the Party Conference, the poor temperament and judgement that he displayed there raised doubts about his candidacy, and ended it. Fisher noted

> 'Quintin Hailsham had been a splendid Chairman of the Party. He was uniquely capable of rousing the enthusiasm of the constituency workers and had made a significant contribution to the Conservative victory in 1959...[colleagues] acknowledged

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[87] Ramsden, Winds of Change, p.195
[88] Memorandum by the Prime Minister, 15 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (30)
[89] Dilhorne to Macmillan, 8 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (64)

> that he would make an inspiring leader of the party at a general election, but they questioned his judgement, should the Conservatives win it, as the leader of the nation'.[90]

These doubts over the consequences of a Hailsham leadership were of critical significance in the decline of his candidacy. Another central factor in this decline was his offending of traditional Conservative voters by his actions at the Party Conference, and this loss of a bedrock of Conservative support was seen by the party hierarchy as a major factor against Hailsham's candidacy. Public correspondence on the party leadership prior to Macmillan's resignation illustrate public doubts about Hailsham, that it can be assumed were exacerbated by his behaviour at the Party Conference. One concerned voter wrote to Central Office

> For God sake is no common sense at all left in the leaders of the Party. Hailsham alienated the bulk of the electorate by twice showing himself on television as a man who was unable to control himself, much less control the Tory Party. In fact, you may as well suggest Jack Profumo as your next likely chief; indeed even he to many would be less obnoxious than this wildest paranoiac.[91]

Another voter from Kent declared, 'a Tory representative of cross section of thinking opinion appalled at thought of possibility of a 'ham actor' becoming Prime

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[90] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.102
[91] Ruskin to Poole, 6 October 1963 CPA CCO 20/39/1

Minister. Stop Hailsham at all costs. Anyone else preferable to appeal to logic and not hysterical emotion'.[92] The expression of these types of views all counted against Hailsham's electability.

iii) Governability

The doubts expressed by the party hierarchy and Conservative voters about Hailsham's temperament and judgement meant he had the lowest rating of the candidates in terms of governability. Another factor against Hailsham was his lack of senior ministerial experience, and the fact that he was not in a 'great office of state'. He had been Party Chairman during the 1959 election campaign, and had become Minister of Science following that appointment, and was Leader of the House of Lords. Hailsham was, therefore, not in a traditional avenue to the leadership, and did not have senior government experience. This affected his governability, but his poor temperament and judgement were of more importance to the party hierarchy. As previously stated, this was confirmed by his actions at the party conference, and the doubts expressed by the US government also galvanised this impression. As noted, David Ormsby-Gore informed Home in October 1963 that the US government had doubts about Hailsham's temperamental suitability for the leadership and Prime Ministership, and when Home told Macmillan of these doubts on 15 October, Hailsham's candidacy was finished. The US officials felt Hailsham was 'a difficult partner, unwilling to accept his secondary role, and with his lawyer's instinct for the detail of the small print, dragging out negotiation on minor points and almost losing the backing on major points'.[93] Ormsby-Gore had told Home that 'if Lord Hailsham

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[92] Henson to Macleod, 11 October 1963 CPA CCO 20/39/1
[93] Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, p.267

was made Prime Minister this would be a tremendous blow to Anglo-American relations and would in fact end the special relationship'.[94] The US government had major doubts about Hailsham's governability, and this led to Macmillan's decision to promote Home as his sole preference, especially in conjunction with Hailsham's behaviour at the Party Conference.

Following this revelation, Macmillan noted on 15 October 1963, that Hailsham loses on the governability rating, because of his impulsiveness and arrogant interference.[95] Fisher noted the effect of Hailsham's antics at the Party Conference on perceptions of his ability to govern, as 'his lack of judgement seemed confirmed and his too-evident eagerness for the Premiership ensured that he would not achieve it. His bandwagon came to a halt almost as soon as it had started to roll'.[96] On 16 October, Macmillan noted that Keith Joseph was, 'fearful of Hogg's [Hailsham's] eccentricities, especially in foreign affairs'.[97] These doubts about Hailsham's temperament for the highest office of government were prevalent, and were central to the failure of his candidacy.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the leadership selection occurred at an inconvenient place in the electoral cycle for the party, as a general election was imminent within twelve months. The Peerage Act of 1963 was a vital situational factor as it meant that Home and Hailsham could stand as candidates for the leadership, and without the Act, Butler or Maudling would have succeeded. The selection process was

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[94] 'Top Secret Note for the Record' in the Stockton Papers in Thorpe, Alec Douglas-Home, pp.298-299

[95] Memorandum by the Prime Minister, 15 October 1963 PRO PREM 11/5008 (26)

[96] Fisher, The Tory Leaders, p.103

[97] Diary entry for 16 October 1963 Ms. Macmillan dep. d.51* (20)

the most complex and extensive in the party's history, and it's nature contributed to Home's victory. This was because it demonstrated fully the opposition to the other candidates, and the general acceptability of Home as the stop-gap, compromise candidate. This was especially apparent with Dilhorne's canvass of the Cabinet, which maximised the opposition to the other candidates, that may or may not have existed, and demonstrated Home's acceptability. The informal networks were important in the selection process, as they disseminated information to the candidates on their prospects of succeeding Macmillan, and also prepared the party and the public for the emergence of Home.

Home was deemed to fulfil the core criteria of acceptability, electability, and governability, better than the other candidates because of the opposition to them in the party, and the weaknesses of their performances at the Party Conference. In particular, Butler's weaknesses were fully exposed, and his position in the party was perceived to have fallen away from the summit, and Maudling was not yet felt to be ready to succeed to the leadership. This explains Home's appointment as the stop-gap compromise leader, to take the party through the imminent election.

Conclusion

The Outcomes: Assessment

The conclusion to the study is in three parts. The first is an assessment of the outcome of the 1957 selection of Macmillan. The second is an assessment of the outcome of the 1963 selection of Home as party leader. The third analyses the parallels and distinctions between the two selections, and what the outcomes illustrate about how the Conservative Party selects its leaders in different situations and circumstances.

The 1957 Leadership Selection

Macmillan was chosen to succeed Eden in preference to Butler, as he was the most acceptable candidate to the party. He offered the best prospects of re-uniting the party and restoring its morale. Butler's unacceptability to sections of the party, as illustrated by the existence of a distinct 'anti-Butler' faction among Conservative MPs, showed Macmillan's acceptability, in comparison to the hostility Butler aroused in the party. However, an analysis based solely on Macmillan's ability to unite the party does not fully explain the outcome of the 1957 selection. It does not acknowledge the influence of wider individual and situational criteria on the outcome. The analysis of these criteria has demonstrated that the outcome of the contest is more fully explained by an emphasis on three criteria. These are the actions of the candidates during the Suez Crisis and its aftermath, the situation that the party was in because of the failure of the government's policy during the Suez Crisis, and the selection procedure, particularly the role of informal networks on the outcome. The wider individual and situational criteria determined how the core situational criteria would be judged.

The actions of Macmillan and Butler during the Suez Crisis were of particular importance in the outcome of the selection. This was because Butler's conduct raised doubts about his qualifications for the leadership, and also caused great opposition to him in the Cabinet, and among the party's MPs. Butler's conduct at the 1922 Committee meeting of 22 November 1956 was of massive significance in his failure to succeed Eden, as it constituted the 'campaign' for the party's support in the aftermath of the crisis, because the leadership selection was now widely expected. Butler's poor performance in defending and explaining the government's policy to the Committee, confirmed to the party's MPs that he did not have the necessary qualities to be party leader, while Macmillan showed that he did. Butler's inability to inspire the party, or unite it with hope for Conservative prospects, made him unacceptable to Conservative MPs, and demonstrated that he may not be an electable leader because he could not inspire the electorate. Butler's conduct as acting Prime Minister exacerbated his unacceptability to the party's MPs. The Suez Group of Conservative MPs focused their dissent on Butler after the withdrawal of British troops from the Canal Zone on 3 December 1956. This large group of MPs, who had supported the government's aggressive response to Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company, now opposed Butler as successor to Eden. They constituted a large part of the 'anti-Butler' faction on the Conservative back-benches.

In contrast, Macmillan's conduct during the Suez Crisis and its aftermath, showed he was the most acceptable candidate to the Cabinet and Conservative MPs. The section on Macmillan's conduct during the early stages of the crisis, prior to the invasion, shows that Macmillan cannot be accused of 'conspiring' towards the leadership before the 6 November signal of the cease-fire in the Canal Zone. This is

contrary to some existing analysis that suggests Macmillan deliberately led Eden into the crisis to cause his downfall. Following the cease-fire, Macmillan did see the 'window of opportunity' to stake his claim on the leadership, but an analysis based on Macmillan 'conspiring' against Eden before then, does not contribute to an explanation of the outcome.

Macmillan's conduct at the 1922 Committee meeting of 22 November was central to his acceptability. He invigorated Conservative MPs with a rallying cry that offered hope, and he made the outcome of the crisis appear as a victory of sorts. Macmillan was viewed as the exceptional politician who could save the party from its present difficulties. He also presented himself as a good option as a stop-gap leader, who could restore party unity in the current circumstances. The short-term nature of the vision for the future of the party hierarchy, Cabinet and MPs, contributed to the outcome of the selection, as it was widely expected that the party would fall because of the crisis. Macmillan's actions at that meeting, and during Eden's absence, appeared to unite ministers and back-benchers behind his candidacy, and he became a rallying-point for those MPs opposed to the continuation of Eden's leadership.

The situation that the party was faced with also contributed significantly to the outcome. This was because the state of great division in the party, caused by the government's policy during the crisis, meant that a leader who could unite it was urgently required. Party unity is always a vital consideration in leadership selection, but this becomes of paramount significance in selections when a party is in vast state of disunity. Macmillan's ability to unite the party was vital to the outcome of the selection. The electoral cycle was also in the Conservative's favour as a general election was not imminent, and did not have to be held until May 1960. This meant

that if the party united behind the new leader, it could still be successful at the next election, if the memories of the Suez Crisis had been erased from the minds of the electorate. This contributed to the outcome as Macmillan showed at the 1922 Committee meeting that he may be more able than Butler to eradicate the Suez Crisis from the political landscape. The selection procedure was an influential situational factor, and this was especially the case with the informal networks of the procedure. The formal selection procedure was uncomplicated, and resolved the selection in less than twenty-four hours, and limited possible dissent to Macmillan's appointment. It illustrated that he was by far the most acceptable candidate to the Cabinet.

Macmillan fulfilled the core situational criteria of acceptability, electability and governability, while Butler did not. Butler was unacceptable because of the lack of Cabinet support for him, and the existence of the 'anti-Butler' faction among Conservative MPs. The doubts about his candidacy aroused by the Suez Crisis, re-stirred criticisms levelled at Butler during the appeasement era. His conduct during the Suez Crisis was all important, and served to accumulate and intensify the doubts about his acceptability. Butler was also unelectable because he did not convince the party hierarchy, Cabinet or MPs that he could lift the party at a general election. He did not fulfil the governability criteria, as he was not in a 'great office of state', as Macmillan was, and his career appeared to be moving away from, not towards the leadership.

In contrast, Macmillan fulfilled the three core criteria, as he was acceptable to the party, and demonstrated better prospects of uniting it as there was no anti-Macmillan faction in the party. The vast majority of the Cabinet supported his candidacy because he was best able to fit the requirements of the situation that the party found itself in. The notion of Macmillan as a stop-gap leader also contributed to

his acceptability. Macmillan was the most electable candidate, and he demonstrated this at the 1922 Committee meeting by his ability to uplift the party. This was of vital importance despite the time before an election had to be called, as the party needed to regain public support after the Suez Crisis. Macmillan also fulfilled the governability criterion, as he was in a 'great office of state', and was on a traditional career path towards the leadership. The outcome of the 1957 selection can be easily explained because of Macmillan's acceptability to the party over Butler, but a fuller analysis demonstrates the nature of the influence of individual and situational criteria on the outcome of the selection.

The 1963 Leadership Selection

Bogdanor has argued that 'there is no evidence that the result seriously misrepresented Conservative opinion'.[1] This is a correct assessment in the sense that Home was generally acceptable to the party, and was in a position to unite it, as opinion was divided over the other candidates. However, an analysis based solely on Home's ability to unite the party does not fully explain the outcome of the 1963 selection. The analysis of the individual and situational criteria have shown that Home was selected leader for a variety of reasons. Three criteria appear to be of the most significance: the candidates' actions and conduct during the selection, the situation that the party was in, and the selection procedure that was used to select Home. As with the 1957 selection, these wider individual and situational criteria determined how the core criteria would be judged.

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[1] Bogdanor, 'The Selection of The Party Leader' in Seldon/Ball (eds.), Conservative Century, p.79

The actions of the candidates were of importance as the actions of Butler, Hailsham, and Maudling, allowed Home to emerge as leader. Their 'campaigns' at the Party Conference had a negative effect on their candidacies, while Home conducted himself well, and as he did not appear prominently then as a candidate. Home was pressured to put himself forward by the party's senior figures because of the weaknesses of the other candidates, and his own sound performance at the conference. Butler and Maudling's poor conference speeches, and the over-enthusiasm of Hailsham and his supporters to promote his candidacy offended the party hierarchy. It also raised doubts about his suitability for the leadership, as the party was not then conducive to campaigns for the leadership. Butler and Maudling confirmed what had been suspected by the party hierarchy, that they would not be able to inspire the party to victory at the imminent election.

The broad situational requirements of a leader not directly associated with the domestic failures of the discredited Macmillan regime, and the imminence of a general election, counted against Butler. This was because he was directly associated with Macmillan, and was tarnished by 'guilt by association'. Maudling suffered from this for different reasons. He had shown with his conference speech that he was not a leader who could inspire the party and the electorate at the next election, and he was not yet felt to be ready for the leadership. The broad requirements, therefore, led attention to be focused on Home as a stop-gap, compromise leader who could take the party through the next election. This was felt after his performance at the Party Conference, as it was believed he could attract the electorate as he was inoffensive, was not directly associated with the domestic failures of the last Macmillan government as he was Foreign Secretary, and was a competent minister who could unite the party.

The selection procedure served to enhance and promote Home's candidacy, and emphasise the weaknesses of the other candidates. The use of multiple questions and multiple canvasses, and the nature of the inquiries made, inflated support for Home as the generally acceptable candidate who could unite all sections of the party. Home's position as the compromise candidate, was confirmed by the opposition expressed by significant areas of party opinion to Butler, Maudling and Hailsham. Redmayne's canvass demonstrated that there was opposition to Butler, Hailsham and Maudling in the party, and that Home was held with genuine regard in all sections of the party, and Redmayne interpreted this as an endorsement of his candidacy.

Dilhorne's canvass of the Cabinet inflated the support in the Cabinet for Home. This was illustrated by the 'Midnight Meeting' opposition, and the Cabinet appeared to have been split equally between Home and Butler. However, Dilhorne, like Redmayne, took genuine regard for Home as an endorsement of his candidacy. This canvass was the most significant, as it illustrated to the party hierarchy that Home was most acceptable to his Cabinet colleagues, and galvanised his candidacy. The informal networks of the selection procedure were important, as they informed Butler that he was not a viable candidate to succeed Macmillan, and convinced Home that he was the compromise candidate that the party hierarchy wanted.

The three core criteria of acceptability, electability and governability were determined by the above criteria, and Home fulfilled all three to an extent. The most important were acceptability and electability, but Home also fulfilled governability as he was Foreign Secretary. The other candidates did not fulfil acceptability and electability, and this was crucial to Home's emergence. Butler, Hailsham and Maudling did not fulfil these criteria, because of the opposition that Butler and Hailsham aroused

in the party. Maudling and Butler were not seen as inspiring enough to lift the party for the imminent election, and Hailsham failed both criteria because of the doubts about his temperament and judgement that were caused by his actions at the Blackpool Conference. Butler and Maudling did fulfil the governability criterion, but were judged on the other two. Home became leader because he filled the broad requirements of the situation, his actions at the Party Conference, the crucial role of the selection procedure, and his resultant fulfilment of acceptability, electability, and governability. This confirmed him as the compromise candidate, because of the weaknesses of the other candidates.

The Outcomes: Situational Parallels and Distinctions

The analysis of the two selections demonstrates that there were clear parallels and distinctions in the influence of individual and situational criteria on both selections. However, one aspect is clearly common to both selections. The wider individual and situational criteria set the basic terms of reference on which the core criteria of acceptability, electability, and governability were judged. The individual criteria were of more weight in the 1957 selection because of the longer period involved in influencing the outcome. The 1957 selection was influenced by the six months from the start of the Suez Crisis in July 1956, until the resignation of Eden in January 1957. This has led to, and justifies, the extra weight given to the candidates' actions in the analysis of the 1957 selection, as opposed to the two months of September and October 1963 that influenced the 1963 selection.

It is apparent in both selections that the candidates' actions were central to the outcomes. The main examples of this are Butler and Macmillan's conduct at the 1922

Committee meeting of 22 November 1956, and the conduct of Butler, Home, Maudling and Hailsham at the Party Conference during the 1963 selection. As these constituted the 'campaigns' that are normally evident in formal leadership elections, this points to the importance of candidates' actions in the outcomes of all leadership selections. It also illustrates the need for a full systematic analysis of the candidates' actions, which has been conducted in this study, yet is a feature lacking in existing analyses of leadership selections.

Both selections illustrate that a long career and wide experience as a member of the government do not weigh in a candidates favour, unless they are in a high position in the party at the time of the selection. This usually means being in one of the 'great offices of state', and Butler's move away from the summit of government at the time of both selections contributes to an explanation of why he failed to become party leader in 1957 and 1963. The perception of a career in decline was pivotal to Butler's unattractiveness to the party.

The situations were distinct in 1957 from 1963, as the electoral cycle was in the party's favour in 1957, as an election was not imminent. In 1963, an election was due to held within the next twelve months, and this put pressure on the party to make a choice as leader who could win that election. This is obviously always an important consideration in leadership selection, but the imminence of an election increases the importance of electability. Evidence suggests that the party still chose to make a stop-gap appointment in 1957, as in 1963, and this is indicative of the general manner in which the Conservative Party selects its leaders in situations of domestic crisis.

In 1963, the party was in a more deep-seated spiral of decline than in 1957, as the party had been in power for twelve years, and thus six and a half years more than

they had been in 1957. The decline was also more long-term, and constituted a general domestic political crisis in 1963, while in 1957, the party was in trouble because of one crisis on foreign policy. This distinction between general domestic upheaval, and a specific foreign crisis led to a harsher verdict on the government in 1963, and less optimism for a rejuvenation in fortunes. The party was clearly greatly divided at the time of both selections, but the situation in 1957 led to greater hopes for a recovery, if the crisis could be eradicated quickly from the domestic scene. This was far more difficult to achieve in 1963. The party's recovery in 1957, resulting in the massive 1959 election victory suggests this, when compared to the party's defeat in 1964, despite the closeness of the result of that election.

The informal networks of the selection procedure used in 1957 were of more importance than the formal selection procedure, in contrast to 1963. This was because the formal selection process was far shorter, taking less than twenty-four hours to complete, as compared to the eleven days of the 1963 selection process. The 1957 selection process was also far less complex, as it was predominantly a straight Cabinet choice, as opposed to the multi-faceted canvasses of Cabinet and party opinion used in 1963. The nature of the enquiries made in 1957 was far simpler. This simplicity of the selection process led to the greater importance of the informal networks in 1957, as they served to illustrate the full extent of party opposition to Butler that confirmed, and exacerbated the doubts of the Cabinet, as expressed in the formal selection procedure. This is a clear distinction to that used in 1963, as these doubts from outside the Cabinet were established in the formal selection process by Redmayne's canvass of the party's MPs.

The Cabinet was canvassed for the first time in 1957, and in all previous selections, informal networks had dominated exclusively. Informal networks retained their dominance in 1957, but the consultations of the Cabinet started a trend that was entrenched in 1963, and led towards the more formal procedure that was used to select Home. The fact that there were more candidates, and a less obvious successor, in 1963, also contributed to the formalised procedure. This was the basis for the formal election procedure established to select Home's successor, Edward Heath in 1965. It is clear that the situation and circumstances of both selections were central to the selection procedure that was used, as there was growing pressure for greater accountability in the party.

The informal networks in the party remained of great importance in the selection procedure of 1963, but they took on a different form, in line with the formalised nature of the selection process. The advice of the outgoing leader, a common feature of most selections where there is no heir apparent, took the form of an extensive canvass of party opinion, including the Cabinet, MPs, the Lords and the constituencies. This constituted the advice that Macmillan gave to the Queen, and was pivotal to the outcome. Thus, the traditional informal networks were now part of the formal selection procedure. The other informal networks in the party, such as those that linked the party hierarchy to the candidates before and during the selection, served to buttress the formal selection procedure. They served to pressure candidates into standing (in the case of Home), and persuading candidates of their poor chances of succession (in the case of Butler). No other senior figures were consulted by the Queen in 1963, a clear distinction from the party's previous selections. The 1963

selection signalled the move to formal leadership elections from 1965, and the 1957 selection contributed to setting that trend in motion.

In 1957 and 1963, the core criteria of acceptability, electability, and governability, were determined by the wider individual and situational criteria, in particular the situation, the candidates' actions, and the selection procedure. It is clear that acceptability is the most dominant of the core criteria in both, as the base criterion on which the candidates were judged. Party unity is central to both selections, but this does not fully explain the outcomes. This explains the analysis of the individual and situational criteria which determined the outcomes. In 1957, Macmillan was more enthusiastically endorsed than Home was in 1963, while Home was generally acceptable. Butler's unacceptability to sections of the party in both 1957 and 1963, as determined by his conduct and actions during both selections, explains his failure. Electability and governability were of significance in the outcomes, but acceptability outweighed their importance. This was because of the massive scale of disunity in the party at the time of both selections.

This study has demonstrated the utility of the analytical framework devised and applied to explain the outcomes of both selections, and in particular the extensive analysis of the situations and circumstances, the candidates' actions, and the selection procedure. This is because they are of major significance in determining the outcomes of leadership selections.

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