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Labour and Working-Class Lives: Essays to Celebrate the Life and Work of Chris Wrigley

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## **The disaffiliation crisis of 1932: The Labour Party, the Independent Labour Party and the opinion of ILP members <sup>1</sup>**

**Keith Laybourn**

On the 9th and 10<sup>th</sup> of June 1928 the National Administrative Council of the ILP held a closed meeting to discuss its future relations with the Labour Party. Manny Shinwell, a Clydeside MP, reflected that

In his view the ILP couldn't get a distinctive policy. There was no hope of the ILP setting itself up in opposition to the Labour Party either politically or in organisation. This led him to ask what was the function of the ILP. Was it to become a definitely socialist propaganda body having few if any responsibilities?

Answering this question he favoured a new party organisation 'which had a relatively small effective membership of Socialist missionaries, locally and nationally affiliated to the Labour Party ...becoming a Socialist missionary body cutting loose from its

present political entanglements. He realised that this raised some difficult questions with regard to continued affiliation of the ILP with the Labour Party....<sup>2</sup>

Others at this meeting offered their visions of the ILP's future, ones that largely saw it as remaining within the Labour Party. Oswald Mosley, the future fascist leader and author of the Mosley Memorandum whilst in the Labour government, felt that the ILP had to be built up into an active, rather than academic, body of socialist missionaries within the Labour Party. Fred Jowett, a founder member of the ILP, believed that there was a need to clarify 'the relationship between the Labour Party and the ILP'. E. F. Wise, an economist, felt that the ILP lacked a group in the House of Commons and doubted its future as a distinctive party, whilst John Paton, the Secretary, opposed the abandonment of political activity feeling that the ILP had a distinctive policy that lay in 'the root idea of the Living Income Programme'.

This meeting vitally captured the feeling of the ILP that it had lost its way following the introduction of the Labour Party's socialist constitution in 1918. It had posed a basic question - was the ILP to continue as an affiliated socialist organization to the Labour Party, with its MPs subject to the control of the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP), or should it consider becoming a small independent propaganda group in or outside the Labour Party? Discussions of this type were common in the early 1920s, when ILP membership rose to 55,000 under Clifford Allen's chairmanship. They reached their zenith during the years of the second Labour government (1929-1931) and finally led to the momentous decision to disaffiliate from the Labour Party in July 1932. They further re-emerged in 1939 when the ILP, having seen its membership plummet to fewer than 2,500, considered re-affiliating to the Labour Party.

Discussions were fuelled by the disillusion about the failure to secure socialism. In 1928, James Maxton, chairman of the ILP warned the Labour Party Conference at Birmingham that socialism could be no longer approached by a 'long, slow process of gradualist, peaceful, Parliamentary change' and that under the parliamentary system socialism would still be as far away as ever, that there was criticism of the failure of the first minority Labour government of 1924, and ended with the cry 'let your slogan be, Socialism is the only remedy'.<sup>3</sup> During the next four years the ILP moved to its new revolutionary stance, abandoning 'Socialism in Our Time', and the introduction of the living wage, and looking to trade-union action, rather than parliamentary democracy, to create a socialist workers' commonwealth. Consequently the Labour Party and the ILP were moving apart because their visions of how to secure socialism were different. Whilst many ILP activists felt that parliamentary democracy prevented significant change the Labour Party's vision, perhaps because of its protean nature, was based upon the essentially progressive and liberal conceptions of winning broad support across all social classes for its gradualist moves towards the state control of industry.

This debate has been placed into its wider context by Ross McKibbin, who suggests that the major British political parties accepted a form of parliamentary democracy, based on manhood and part female suffrage, in 1918. This had been by means certain at the end of the Great War and was possibly anathema to the working-class state envisaged by the ILP, because it involved general elections which could return different parties with different objectives.<sup>4</sup> Jon Lawrence's work on the transformation of British public politics after the First World War offers a further clue to the divergence of the Labour Party and the ILP. He observed that the Labour Party championed the more peaceable, rational and unassertive policies that emerged in the

inter-war years with less interaction between the politicians and the people, than the exuberant ‘rowdyism’ that was favoured by the ILP.<sup>5</sup> Lawrence, indeed, reflects that after the criticism of Labour ‘rowdyism’ at the general elections of 1924, particularly in the ILP strongholds of Glasgow and London, there was an increasing tendency for Labour Party leaders to promote discipline. This contrasts with Jimmy Maxton’s penchant for ‘applauding disorder as evidence of working class “self-expression”’, and his disruptive behaviour and that of other ILP MPs in 1922 that led to their suspension from the House of Commons.<sup>6</sup> The Labour Party’s Standing Orders of 1929, the pretext for the ILP’s disaffiliation from the Labour Party, were part of that process of imposing discipline and restricting individual freedom of expression in the parliamentary context which was rejected by many of the ILP membership.

The main argument of this essay is that the Labour Party and ILP disaffiliation debate was a continuing theme throughout the inter-war years and not just confined to the years 1929 to 1932. It was part of the birth pangs of a newly-extended progressive parliamentary democracy that emerged in Britain from 1918. Labour adopted the new parliamentary democracy and the discipline it required. However, this brought with it a slowness of change, dictated by swings resulting from general elections. The ILP could not accept this and the conflict between the two parties reached a new intensity with the launching of the part reformist and part revolutionary ‘Socialism in Our Time’ programme in 1926. The debate grew more fractious during the second Labour Government (1929-1931), as some ILP MPs, critical of Labour’s lack of socialist policy, often voted against the MacDonald administration.

Nevertheless, the enforcement of the new 1929 Standing Orders to maintain PLP unity became the pressing issue by restricting the freedom of action of ILP sponsored MPs. Fundamental differences were also revealed between the ILP and the

Labour Party over the speed and means by which socialism would be secured by adopting the parliamentary route to Westminster. These concerns became major milestones to disaffiliation in 1932 as a prominent minority of the active and rowdier element of the ILP became frustrated with Labour politics.

### **Disaffiliation debate**

The ILP's decision to leave the Labour Party in July 1932 is one of the watersheds in British political history, breaking the link with Labour that had existed since February 1900, and saw the further collapse of ILP membership and led to the complete reshaping of Scottish Labour politics in which the ILP had been the powerful player.<sup>7</sup> ILP strongholds, such as Bradford, were decimated. Though there were temporary rises in ILP membership in Norwich, Glasgow, Nottingham and Derby from the mid 1930s when the ILP was facing rapidly declining membership figures.<sup>8</sup>

The rapidly falling membership figures indicate that disaffiliation was unpopular with the majority of members. There was a brief period in 1932 when it seemed as though the National ILP Affiliation Committee would unite sufficient support to reverse the decision. Such hopes were quickly dashed as the ILP disintegrated and many members opted to leave it to rejoin the Labour Party, often through the newly-created Socialist League.<sup>9</sup> Within a few years some of those who had supported disaffiliation recognized their mistake. Jennie Lee viewed disaffiliation 'as the silliest decision of all made by the ILP' because it meant self-imposed exile, whilst even Brockway concluded that it was a 'stupid and disastrous error' and that 'My support of disaffiliation was the greatest political mistake of my life'.<sup>10</sup>

Analysing the disaffiliation crisis historians are broadly in agreement that the decision was a product of long-term conflict between the Labour Party and the ILP and that the decision probably did not reflect the views of the majority of the ILP

membership.<sup>11</sup> However, considerable academic skirmishing has occurred over conflicting interpretations of whether or not it was a 'deliberate and sensible policy', as Gidon Cohen has suggested, or 'suicide during a fit of insanity', the product of vaunted ambition and political petulance, as argued by both Keith Middlemas and R. E. Dowse.

### **Party tensions and 'Socialism in our Time' 1916-1929**

The first strains in the relationship between the ILP and the Labour Party had emerged during the First World War when the ILP officially opposed war but allowed individual conscience in the face of patriotic Labour. This meant that in Bradford, for instance, 22 conscientious objectors refused army conscription from 1916 onwards whilst over 500 ILP members had already attested their willingness to fight under the pre-conscription Derby Scheme.<sup>12</sup> The strain increased in 1918 when the Labour Party introduced its new Constitution with the socialist clause 4 (3d) and individual membership, which may well have been partly responsible for the increase in the number of constituency Labour parties as rivals to ILP branches.<sup>13</sup> In one fell swoop, the two main distinctions between the ILP and the Labour Party were removed. It now seemed that there was no longer any point in being a member of the ILP and both Philip Snowden and Ramsay MacDonald, two of its main pre-war leaders, had drifted away by 1930.

The ILP was struggling to find a role and it was not until it introduced a new constitution in 1922 that it declared its intent to continue. Although Clifford Allen, Chairman of the ILP in the early 1920s, revived the ILP with his middle-class friends and their money, the dominating force was the Clydeside group of ILP MPs. After the 1922 general election this included 15 MPs from Glasgow and another five from West Scotland. Famously, David Kirkwood exclaimed to cheering crowds at St. Enoch's

Station, in their send off to Westminster, that ‘when we come back, this station, this railway, will belong to the people’!<sup>14</sup> Such optimism, based on working-class commitment to improving domestic conditions contrasted sharply with the more international pacific approach of the ILP leadership under Allen. In fact, it should be recognised that the ILP still held a local and municipal approach to politics in Scotland and in the West Riding of Yorkshire, which contrasted with the much less democratic policy of state socialism, with industries and services run by impartial administrators, favoured by Labour.

Further tensions emerged between Labour and the ILP, and within the ranks of ILP membership, with the advent of the Labour government in January 1924. On the one hand, at the launch of the *New Leader*, which MacDonald attended, H. N. Brailsford, its editor, announced that MacDonald was ‘the only possible leader. His personal distinction, his intellectual power, his stature as a man and a thinker rank him amongst our great assets.’<sup>15</sup> While Allen announced to the ILP Conference at York in April 1924 that the Labour government was preparing the way for future developments in socialism,<sup>16</sup> he later admitted that a minority government was restricted in what it could do, adding that the electorate ‘have not accepted socialism’ and warning ‘of an excess of Parliamentary strategy’.<sup>17</sup> Such ardent support for MacDonald contrasted sharply with the views of Maxton and the Clydesiders who criticised MacDonald’s lethargy as prime minister and the failure of the first Labour government failure to achieve anything other than housing reform.<sup>18</sup>

Divided over the Labour administration’s performance the ILP nevertheless agreed to hold a joint meeting of the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party and the NAC of the ILP, in May 1925, as to its role. Allen was at pains to stress the educational, intellectual and propaganda work of the ILP: ‘It is claimed that it is



the special duty of the ILP to develop in detail the Socialist objectives of the Movement and supplement its general propaganda with the advocacy of fundamental Socialist principles.<sup>19</sup> Arthur Henderson, for the Labour Party, minimized this view warning that 'So long as the two bodies present their individual policies without regard to each other, it is obvious that overlapping and friction will continue....'<sup>20</sup> Unproductive discussions continued through a sub-committee.

Labour and the ILP tensions intensified when Allen and his supporters developed a reformist package of policies - including a minimum living wage, child allowances, and other measures to stimulate consumption - to deliver 'Socialism in Our Time'.<sup>21</sup> Allen, prompted by the impressive speech of Dr. Salter in the House of Commons debate on 'The Living Wage', declared in his presidential address to the 1924 ILP Easter Conference that 'a living wage must be enforced as a national policy'.<sup>22</sup> In the ensuing months ideas on how to achieve this were developed and policy statements drawn up by a number of the Inquiry Commissions into the living wage that had been set up by Allen. The most important of these, whose members included H. N. Brailsford, J. A. Hobson, Frank Wise, and Arthur Creech Jones, Research Officer of the Transport and General Workers' Union, reported on 'The Living Wage'.

The economic theory driving the programme was Hobson's view 'that higher production is in the long run unattainable or at best can be spasmodic and temporary, unless there was a parallel increase in the purchasing power of the mass consumers'.<sup>23</sup> The aim was to increase purchasing power by redistributing wealth and introducing a scheme of family allowances to be paid out of taxation. Further purchasing power would be injected by imposing statutory wage minimums throughout industry to be paid for by printing money. Though this was inflationary the added purchasing power

of the workers would soon absorb industrial output and force a rise in output, thus stimulating industry and reducing unemployment. These actions were to be supported by socialist controls such as the nationalization of the Bank of England, industries and services. There would be public ownership of land, the re-organization and development of agriculture, and a raft of other measures suggesting the need to control imports and exports, designed to end militaristic and imperial wars and to establish friendly relations with Russia.<sup>24</sup>

This ameliorative programme was accepted by the Clydesiders when Allen resigned as Chairman of the ILP, in September 1925, in favour of Jowett and then Maxton. However, the mood of the party changed quickly to the more revolutionary one of bringing about the speedy end of capitalism whilst accepting and adapting Allen's palliatives and reforms. This, as David Howell has rightly argued, proved to be 'a balancing point between the old methods of negotiation and compromise, and a new more confrontational politics'.<sup>25</sup>

The NAC of the ILP issued an interim report, through the *New Leader* in January 1926 stating that 'The Independent Labour Party sets before itself the object of winning Socialism for this generation; and projecting the need for a 'direct attack on poverty'.<sup>26</sup> It was known as the 'Socialism in Our Time' programme. Accepted at the ILP's 1926 Easter Conference at Whitley Bay as the *Living Wage*, which set out 'the object of winning Socialism for this generation', it was published in September 1926.<sup>27</sup> It was clear to all that the new policy represented a symbolic break with MacDonald and Labour for the ILP wanted 'Socialism in Our Time' whilst the Labour Party accepted the more serpentine parliamentary decisions of the electorate by seeking a harmony of class interests. Reflecting this John McNair wrote later that

‘The ILP’s duty is to keep the ultimate ideal clearly before the working-class movement of the country.’<sup>28</sup>

‘Socialism in Our Time’, with its reformist and revolutionary policies, caused confusion within both the Labour Party and the ILP.<sup>29</sup> Whilst offering palliatives for unemployment, the major problem of capitalist society, the preamble to the policy, pushed forward by the Clydesiders presented the view that it had become clear that the ‘old order is breaking down’.<sup>30</sup> Apart from being a contradictory programme it contained inflationary policies to stimulate industry and cure unemployment which were alien to Philip Snowden (MP for Colne Valley and Labour’s Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1924) whose Liberal-economic approach was based upon deflationary policies to strengthen the pound, support for the gold standard and the revival of international free trade as a solution for economic growth and unemployment. Moreover, MacDonald’s antipathy to the ILP ensured that its new campaign would receive short shrift. He wrote in the *Socialist Review* of March 1926, that the ILP’s measures would be a ‘millstone’ around the parliamentary party’s neck and later attacked it as ‘a programme of flashy futilities’.<sup>31</sup>

Although broadly supported by ILP members in Scotland and London, ‘Socialism in Our Time’ proved contentious. The Bradford ILP, for instance, first discussed the ‘living wage’ policy in February 1926, before its official adoption, and voted in its favour after raising a wide range of criticisms. Councillor Brooke was ‘anxious lest trade union powers should be undermined’,<sup>32</sup> whilst others felt that the whole programme would ‘bolster up the whole capitalist system’. One critic felt that the policy was too previous: ‘fathered by Impatience and mothered in Piety’.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, when Brailsford lectured on the policy at St. George’s Hall, Bradford, in September 1926, explaining that it should be seen as a transition stage from capitalism to

socialism, necessary because unemployment and poverty would still persist during the period of redistribution of property and income, he was heckled by a small group who dubbed him a Liberal. Harold Child, an old Bradford stalwart, emphatically demanded the 'immediate nationalization of everything'.<sup>34</sup> There also appears to have been sufficient doubt about the policy to necessitate a very large supportive campaign programme throughout West Yorkshire in 1926 and 1927. Percy Hamer lectured on 'Socialism in Our Time' to the Armley ILP branch, in Leeds, in April 1927, and Jowett felt compelled to explain the policy in four articles for the *Bradford Pioneer* as late in September 1927.

The contentious programme was faltering by January 1927 when Maxton sought to develop an alternative policy which involved building up the industrial power of the trade unions and increasing the economic influence of the Co-operative movement in a form of guild socialism arrangement (where the individual was both a producer and a consumer) which would strengthen the political actions of the ILP.<sup>35</sup> This became the 'revolutionary policy' he later pressed forward which Brockway added might involve something like a Russian five-year plan in which key industries would emerge based upon socialist principles and the control of foreign imports, alongside a dramatic reform of the parliamentary system. Later impetus was given to Maxton's future policy when the 1927 Labour Party Conference debated the 'living wage' and referred it to the executive where MacDonald condemned it to political oblivion.<sup>36</sup>

Relations between the ILP and the Labour Party, as well as within the ILP membership, worsened with the Cook-Maxton Manifesto of June 1928, which criticised Labour and threatened to raise the possibility of establishing a new alliance of the Labour left between trade unions and the ILP.<sup>37</sup> Maxton made the agreement

with A. J. Cook, secretary of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain without previously announcing it to the ILP. Even Paton, his faithful supporter, considered it wrong. The divisions produced by the Manifesto appeared strongly at a mass meeting at Cumnock where Kirkwood supported the manifesto and Dollan, Wise, and Shinwell condemned it.<sup>38</sup> Maxton's action was criticised at an NAC meeting on 30 June 1928 but, by a vote of seven to five, the ILP endorsed it.<sup>39</sup> However, the hostility of the Communist Party, the Labour Party and the trade unions ensured that the Cook-Maxton manifesto was stillborn. At the end of 1928 a meeting of 48 ILP MPs (including those whose election expenses were paid by the ILP and ILP/Labour Party members whose expenses were paid by Labour), met and condemned Maxton's 'reckless leadership'. Dr. Alfred Salter wrote to the *New Leader* that they did not want to see the ILP 'driven to the rocks by the pirate chief who has run the Jolly Roger to the masthead, and who is co-operating with his fellow buccaneer who has already done his best to wreck and shatter another great vessel, the MFGB.'<sup>40</sup>

By 1929 the ILP was fragmenting into three main groups. The first, led by Maxton, Wheatley and the Clydesiders was moving towards disaffiliation with support from some London, Glasgow and Midland branches. A. W. Pugh, of the Bilston branch, supported disaffiliation at the Birmingham ILP Federation meeting on 4 December 1929 and his branch wrote to Maxton and the *New Leader* supporting the policy of encouraging ILP MPs to vote against the second Labour Government on the Unemployment Bill.<sup>41</sup> On 5 October 1930 the Bilston branch further debated disaffiliation from the Labour Party when J.W. Pugh put forward a motion for disaffiliation, raised again in the Birmingham Federation of the ILP, and stated that he felt that the Labour Government's policy on India was deficient and its failure to apply socialist measures was enough justify a decision 'to part with a Labour

Capitalist and Imperialist Party'.<sup>42</sup> A. W. Pugh, Secretary of this branch, and A. Pugh, the Chair, supported the motion which was passed by a vote of 4 to 1. The branch was concerned about the unwillingness of the Labour Government to consider a 'Living Wage Bill'.

The Birmingham Federation's disaffiliation debate of 4 December 1929 was also supported further by the West Bromwich ILP branch on 8 January 1930 and put to the Midlands Conference at Leicester on 28 and 29 January 1930 to the effect 'That the Labour Party having now become in theory and in practice both Capitalist and Imperialist it is now necessary for the Independent Labour Party to cease affiliation to it.'<sup>43</sup>

A second group, led by Dr. Carl Cullen of the Poplar ILP and Jack Gaster of Marleybone ILP, and based in London, favoured Marxism and a closer link with the Communist Party. As a result the Revolutionary Party Committee (RPC) was formed within the ILP in 1930. Its influence was limited and its supporters eventually left the ILP for the Communist Party in 1934.

The third much more important group was led by Dr. Salter of London and Willie Leach of Bradford, and many members of the ILP in Lancashire, Yorkshire and Scotland, formed the basis of a pro-affiliation 'Unity' group. The *Bradford Pioneer* summarized the Unity Group position by stating that 'The ILP is a spiritual endeavour. It must sow and leave others to reap. ILP members should be attracted to all Labour Groups... Their function and duties are not competitive, but complimentary to the functions of the Labour Group.'<sup>44</sup> Angus Cook Livingstone, of Bo'ness ILP branch in Scotland, particularly endorsed this view at the ILP Easter Conference held at Carlisle in 1929, stating that 'The ILP should not compete with the Labour Party. It should remain critical Socialist Party rather than an electoral body.'<sup>45</sup>

### **The Disaffiliation debate 1929-1932**

The policies of the second Labour government further soured relations with the ILP who's MPs voted against the Unemployment Bill, the Anomalies Bill, as well as other measures they considered increased working-class poverty. The ILP had sponsored 37 of the MPs returned in the general election of 1929 (including 17 from Scotland), although there were another 123 non-sponsored card-carrying members of the ILP who were primarily Labour MPs. There was support from the ILP-sponsored MPs for Maxton's policy of voting against unemployment measures but when all the 160 sponsored and unsponsored ILP MPs gathered together there was a different result. Indeed, Maxton was unable to gain a majority of the ILP group meeting to support his opposition to the Labour Government's unemployment measures on 21 October 1929. When another large group of 80 ILP MPs met on 28 October his opposition to the Labour government was once again rejected by 41 votes to 14. However, Maxton was not constrained by this vote, claimed the sovereignty of the ILP Conference, and continued his opposition of the Unemployment Bill. In response, 66 ILP MPs, mainly unsponsored by the ILP, supported MacDonald in an overt condemnation of Maxton's actions.<sup>46</sup>

The PLP responded to the ILP voting by invoking the Standing Orders of 1929 which insisted that no Labour MP could vote in Parliament against a PLP decision, though it allowed abstention on a matter of conscience. It was this move that became a sensitive issue for the ILP and one to which Jowett, Maxton, Brockway were vociferous opponents. Jowett argued that MPs owed allegiance to their electors and to party conference decisions and should not have their views interfered with by the Standing Orders of their party.<sup>47</sup> This was clearly hypocritical since the ILP imposed

its own Standing Orders on ILP MPs in 1929 and 1930 though only 18, of its 37 sponsored, MPs agreed to them at the ILP Conference of April 1930.<sup>48</sup>

The ILP and the Labour Party corresponded in order to resolve their differences well before the collapse of the Labour government in August 1931. Maxton wrote to Henderson on 30 December 1930, accepting the Labour Party constitution but complaining of the restrictive nature of the present rules.<sup>49</sup> On 6 July 1931 Paton's letter to Henderson complained that Standing Orders might prevent ILP MPs honouring the decisions of the Labour Party and may prevent him from introducing the 'Socialist principles he professes'.<sup>50</sup> This ongoing conflict led to the divided ILP and the Labour Party squabbling over the seats that they would contest. In the general election of October 1931, partly as a result of this conflict and partly as a result of the political situation, the ILP was reduced to five sponsored MPs (four from Clydeside) and Labour to 46 MPs.<sup>51</sup>

Following the collapse of the second Labour government the NAC of the ILP raised the issue of its continuing affiliation to Labour in nine divisional conferences in early 1932. Six out of the nine, representing about 80 per cent of the Party's membership, decided that they wished to remain with Labour. The largest support for continued affiliation was found within the Scottish division, with its 250 branches, which feared that disaffiliation would undermine the structure of Scottish Labour politics. Dollan and Kirkwood, from Glasgow, along with Tom Johnson, supported continued affiliation and the Scottish divisional conference voted in favour by 88 votes to 49. Support for affiliation was further endorsed in the Lancashire, the North-East, Yorkshire, and Wales divisions, although many ILPs members were dissatisfied with the Labour Party.<sup>52</sup>



The main support for disaffiliation came from the large ILP division of London and Southern Counties. Here the RPC hoped to push ILP members towards an alliance with the Communist Party. The two small divisions of the South-west and East Anglia also supported disaffiliation, though for different reasons. In 1931 the South-West had 22 branches and East Anglia had merely ten branches. In the South-west there was a narrow victory for disaffiliation encouraged by the RPC supporter Robert Rawlings of Taunton, and the conference favoured ILP affiliation to the Comintern.<sup>53</sup> The problem in East Anglia was that the Norwich branch of the ILP, with more than half the divisional membership, came into conflict with the Labour Party because its candidate, Dorothy Jewson, had not been endorsed as parliamentary candidate by the Labour Party and met with great hostility from W. R. Smith, the endorsed Labour candidate, in the 1931 general election. In the end the division voted 12 to 8 for disaffiliation, eight of the votes in favour coming from the Norwich branch and some from the Yarmouth branch.<sup>54</sup>

By the beginning of 1932 there was clearly rising ILP frustration at the slow pace of moves towards socialism in Britain, the failure of the second Labour government to introduce socialism, and the imposition of Labour's Standing Orders. The Bilston and West Bromwich ILP branches, the Birmingham ILP Federation and the Midlands Federation were moving to support disaffiliation. The Poplar Branch of the ILP, controlled by Dr. Carl Knight Cullen and the RPC, produced its *Memorandum on the present political and economic situation*. It asked whether or not 'democracy can be won over to Socialism' since it was weighted in favour of capitalism.<sup>55</sup> It called for the sweeping away of the capitalist state for a socialist one, ranted against the obvious 'failure of the [second] Labour Government to patch up capitalism', and asserted that 'Industrial upheaval or war must be made the

opportunity for smashing capitalism. Dictatorship will be necessary until the stabilisation of the power of the workers.<sup>56</sup> It argued that the revolutionary situation was ‘more likely to come in the form of an industrial upheaval resulting from waning economic conditions or a general strike’.<sup>57</sup> These views were supported by the Marylebone ILP, where Jack Gaster of the RPC was active. Brockway and Maxton were also attracted to them, although, as Gidon Cohen rightly suggests, Brockway’s meaning of revolutionary socialism proved different and more ephemeral than that of the RPC.<sup>58</sup>

The divisional votes often hid deeper local and personal divisions. In Bradford, the birthplace of the ILP, there were painful differences between Jowett and, his one-time acolyte, Willie Leach, both of whom had been ILP MPs. Jowett believed that the ILP must be free to defend socialist policies, and emphasised the need to fulfil pledges that ‘are in conformity with the Labour Party Conference decisions and, or with, the Labour Party’s own election programme.’<sup>59</sup> Rejecting Standing Orders he stated that ‘The answer to those who demand that it must surrender the freedom of its MPs pledges honestly made in accordance with the principles advocated officially for the Labour Party for election purposes is – NO, NO, NEVER.’<sup>60</sup> In contrast Leach blamed the ILP for weakening the whole Labour movement by its criticism of the second Labour Government and by ‘its continuous assertion of Labour untrustworthiness, and yapping at the heels of the present leaders.’<sup>61</sup> He felt that there was now more need than ever for unity and that the Standing Orders were flexible. The Bradford ILP clearly suffered divided loyalties but, persuaded by Jowett, favoured disaffiliation by 112 votes to 86. Leach accepted that the local branch would vote against him but felt that only a small part of the branch membership would remain with it and ‘It will be regarded as a freak party.’<sup>62</sup>

Throughout the rest of the Yorkshire district there was a mood of general opposition to disaffiliation. In Leeds, for instance, John Arnott called for the Labour Party to avoid the defection and the *Leeds Citizen* agreed and felt that the ILP could be ‘committing suicide in a passion of indignation’.<sup>63</sup>

### **Disaffiliation conferences**

The ILP’s 1932 Easter Conference discussed disaffiliation but delayed making a decision.<sup>64</sup> Cullen and Paton, supported by Poplar and 13 other ILP branches, argued for disaffiliation, Jim Garton of Rugby and the Midlands division spoke in favour of conditional affiliation, and Dollan, Kirkwood and Wise for unconditional affiliation.<sup>65</sup> Wise prophetically reflected that ‘Disaffiliation meant inevitable conflict and they would be out of contact with the mass of trade unions and Labour Party’, adding that ‘They and the whole Labour movement were going to spend their years in futile conflict.’<sup>66</sup> Dollan disparagingly suggested that it was not the industrial areas but the ‘deserts of the far South-West’ that favoured disaffiliation.<sup>67</sup> Nevertheless, voting saw the two extremes of unconditional affiliation rejected by 98 votes to 214 and disaffiliation defeated by 183 to 144 votes. The conference opted for the compromise of conditional affiliation, the ‘Rugby resolution’, by 250 votes to 53 and the re-opening of negotiations with Labour.<sup>68</sup> Once these negotiations proved futile and attention switched to Bradford where a Special Meeting of the ILP was held at Jowett Hall, Bradford, at the end of July 1932.

The Bradford Special Conference opened at 3.0 pm on 30 July 1932, the day after the *Bradford Pioneer*, edited by Frank Betts (father of Barbara Castle) and Willie Leach published an Open Letter imploring delegates not to vote for disaffiliation and stating that ‘The ILP was born in Bradford, Have you come to bury it.’<sup>69</sup> It moved immediately to the issue of disaffiliation. Dollan challenged the

legitimacy of any vote by pointing out that there should be 700 delegates with 1,000 votes present instead of 300 delegate with 400 votes (there had been only 250 delegates and 327 votes at Blackpool) and that ‘It was therefore altogether impossible to get a representative judgement which so vitally affected the whole future’.<sup>70</sup> The major debate took place on the evening of Saturday 30 July when Kirkwood, John Beckett, and Dollan advocated continued affiliation, though Dollan feared that there was a generational impact within the ILP: ‘The young people seemed to have a disposition towards disaffiliation due, he thought, to the lack of experience and knowledge.’ He believed that the vote would represent only 25 per cent of the party, though another estimate suggested 37 per cent of the party.<sup>71</sup> George Buchanan’s riposte for the disaffiliationists was that ‘They [the ILP] had no right to be affiliated to a Party neither working-class nor Socialist.’<sup>72</sup> In advocating disaffiliation, Maxton did not see himself taking the ILP into political oblivion: ‘There was no wilderness where there were 3,000,000 unemployed and where there were millions in poverty’.<sup>73</sup> Shortly afterwards the historic vote for disaffiliation was passed by 241 votes to 142.<sup>74</sup> At 9.30 that night the delegates rose spontaneously and sang ‘The Internationale’ in unison though one account suggests that ‘the singing had more solemnity about it than enthusiasm as the figures of the vote imposed a severe restraint on jubilation’.<sup>75</sup>

The following day, 31 July, the Special Conference reflected upon its rebellion against Standing Orders, its nebulous revolutionary policy and the new revolutionary spirit. It particularly focused upon the practical decisions of ILP members not paying the trade union levy and withdrawing from membership of the Cooperative Party and that its own constitution which it was argued now stood for the ‘complete overthrow

of the economic, political and social organisation of the Capitalist State and its replacement by a Socialist Commonwealth'.<sup>76</sup>

Shortly after the conference, Brockway wrote *Socialism at the Cross-Roads: Why the Labour Party left the Labour Party* and justified the disaffiliation through the failures of Labour: 'We have come to the conclusion that the leadership, policy and organization of the Labour Party are unequal to the needs of the working-class, and that the freedom necessary to transform it into an effective socialist instrument for the present period is now denied to Socialists within the Party.'<sup>77</sup> He maintained that the second Labour government was worse than the first and that it adopted non-Socialist and even anti-Socialist policy and that the ILP, in the assertion of its Socialist convictions, inevitably came into conflict with their Standing Orders.<sup>78</sup> He concluded, that 'We have heard much of loyalty. It was not the ILP which was guilty of disloyalty. It was the Labour Government.'<sup>79</sup> Jowett echoed these sentiments and also blamed disaffiliation on the unwillingness of the Labour Party to leave a 'bridge however narrow' and that 'the jealousy (if that is the right word) of the Trade Union Leaders, against a Socialist organization convinced of the need for a definite Socialist Party made the break inevitable...'<sup>80</sup>

In contrast the *Bradford Pioneer* now reflected upon the 'total sterility of a once great and influential party'.<sup>81</sup> The Leeds Labour Party agreed: 'a small section of the ILP will now re-organise itself on the basis of "the Marxian philosophy of the Class Struggle" to fight the Labour and Trade Union Movement with semi-Communist thunder.'<sup>82</sup> Wise felt that disaffiliation was 'an act of treachery to the Labour Party and suicide for the ILP'.<sup>83</sup>

### **Post-Disaffiliation Division and Decline**

Disaffiliation proved divisive though there was significant support for it in all regions. Councillor George R. Smith, of the Wakefield ILP, wrote to Councillor T. Crowe, Secretary of the Labour Group in Wakefield on 1 August, indicating that he believed in the ILP 'fight against the policies of compromise' and promptly resigned from the Labour Party,<sup>84</sup> as did G. E. Smith, Honorary Secretary of the Wakefield ILP branch.<sup>85</sup> Seven members of the Labour group in Glasgow Town Hall followed suit.<sup>86</sup> Bradford ILPers withdrew from Labour. On the broader front the *New Leader* optimistically claimed that as a result of disaffiliation the ILP 'will gain in membership and branches far more than it will lose'.<sup>87</sup> About 70 of the 90 London branches were reported to be in favour of disaffiliation.<sup>88</sup> There was some support for disaffiliation in the Bilston branch, in the Midlands, where A. W. Pugh and J. W. Pugh led a revolt against the prevailing affiliationist position. The ILP branches in Nottingham and Derby also left the Labour Party, but continued to be active with an increased membership for a number of years.<sup>89</sup>

Yet there remained an overwhelming groundswell of ILP opinion against disaffiliation. The Yorkshire branches were clearly divided, many eventually leaving the ILP to stay within the Labour Party, and in Lancashire a number of the large branches, including Platting, Farnworth, Nelson and Colne, declared themselves anti-disaffiliationists.<sup>90</sup> The Labour correspondent of *The Times* remarked upon 'the intention of its [disaffiliationist] leaders to organise the dissenting branches [in]to a new association maintaining affiliation with the Labour Party and the probability also of a legal battle over the ownership of party property, combined with the spirits of the victors in the debate'.<sup>91</sup> The Bradford ILP lost 31 of its 32 councillors to Labour in August 1932, and more than half of its membership of 750 in 1932.<sup>92</sup>

In August and September 1932 attempts were made to reverse disaffiliation. A group opposed to disaffiliation met at the end of the Bradford Special Conference to form the National Provisional Affiliation Committee and convened in London on 20 August. There were 95 delegates present, more than a third of number who attended the conference,<sup>93</sup> including Wise, Dollan, Brailsford, Dan Griffiths, Creech Jones, Kirkwood MP, Leach, A. Pickles, Ben Riley and F. Wynne Davies. They were largely from Yorkshire, London and Scotland.<sup>94</sup>

There were also many divisional meetings by the anti-disaffiliationists. In the Yorkshire division County Councillor Hyman, Alderman A. Pickles, Councillors J. J. Wilson and Councillor A. W. Brown, all from Bradford, convened a meeting at Jowett Hall on 8 August to help organize support for the re-affiliation campaign and also arranged a Yorkshire Conference of Affiliated ILPers on Saturday, 24 September, at which Leach was present.<sup>95</sup>

There was also deep divisions in Scotland where, within a few months of disaffiliation, 128 of the 275 ILP branches had reverted to Labour.<sup>96</sup> The main forces of disaffiliation seem to have been around Glasgow where three ILP MPs had their seats.<sup>97</sup> Shettleston, Govanhill, Hutchenstown and Queens Cross were amongst the Glasgow branches that favoured disaffiliation, along with Corluke and Lanark.<sup>98</sup> Nevertheless, of the 43 Labour Party representatives on the City 33 of the 40 who identified with the ILP formed their own group against disaffiliation by 16 August 1932.<sup>99</sup> In the wake of this P. J. Dollan's held an Affiliation Conference at Glasgow on 21 August 1932, attracting 500 ILPers from all over Scotland and Dollan defamed Maxton as the 'Robinson Crusoe of working-class politics', resulting in his expulsion from the ILP with 14 other prominent Scottish figures.<sup>100</sup> Subsequently, many ILP branches, such as Bo'ness, fought off attempts at disaffiliation, had their members

expelled from the ILP and, in Glasgow on 11 September 1932, formed the Provisional Committee of the Scottish Socialist Party which remained affiliated to the Labour Party and officially formed on 5 October 1932.<sup>101</sup> The party was led by Dollan, Kirkwood and others and by the end of 1932 had 100 branches and over a 1,000 members

The anti-Disaffiliationist, movement reached the climax of its brief existence on 2 October 1932 when, at a meeting held as a prologue to the Leicester Labour Party Conference, the Socialist League was formed and linked itself with the Scottish Socialist Society, the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda, and other socialist bodies, and affiliated to the Labour Party.<sup>102</sup> Wise chaired the meeting which drew up a draft constitution forming a provisional committee which included many former members of the ILP. Apart from Wise as chairman those present included Brailsford, G. D. H. Cole, Stafford Cripps, J. F. Horrabin, Kirkwood MP, William Mellor, Arthur Pugh, Dr. Salter, Sir Charles P. Trevelyan, and Mrs F. Pethwick Lawrence.<sup>103</sup> The formation of the Socialist League offered alternative membership for many ex-members of the ILP.

Inevitably, ILP membership declined rapidly in the 1930s. Of the 653 ILP branches in February 1932 only 288 had given definite support for disaffiliation, some by very small majorities.<sup>104</sup> By the end of 1932 the ILP was down to 450 branches and had only 284 in 1935. These figures contrast sharply with the pre-war total of 887 in 1909 and an inter-war peak of 1,028 in 1925.<sup>105</sup>

### **Table 7.1**

**Divisional Branch Numbers for the Independent Labour Party at various dates in the 1930s**



	1922	1929	1930	1931	1932	1932	1935
						(Post Disaff.)	
Scotland (and Ireland)158	262	275	273	250	122	91	
North-Eastern Counties	58	64	59	54	49	36	21
Yorkshire	76	65	69	63	63	40	24
Midland Counties	57	58	57	56	45	37	22
Eastern Counties (East Anglia)	11	13	12	10	8	8	5
London and Southern Counties	74	100	107	98	89	88	56
South Western Counties	23	23	23	21	23	19	15
Wales and Monmouth	60	71	53	45	40	28	21
Lancashire	97	90	93	92	86	72	24
Total	614	746	748	712	653	450	284

*Report of the NAC, 1922* (Nottingham), p.3; *Report of the NAC, 1929*, p. 4; *Report of the NAC, 1931*, p. 9; *Report of the NAC, 1932*, p. 18; G. Cohen, *The Failure of a Dream: The Independent Labour Party from Disaffiliation to World War* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2007), p. 33.

In the six of the nine ILP divisions who opposed disaffiliation there was a greater fall in branch and membership numbers than in London, the Eastern Counties, and the South –Western counties where disaffiliation was supported – although membership declined everywhere. The membership of the ILP also dropped from 16,773 at the beginning of 1932 to 11,092 in 1933, 7,166 in 1934, 4,392 in 1935 and to a low of 2,441 in 1939.<sup>106</sup> This suggests that initially about a third of ILP members was prepared to leave the ILP because of disaffiliation. Most of the remainder fell away after the failure of the Unity Group to reverse the decision and as the ILP fragmented in to warring factions.

The Scottish Socialist Society and the Labour Party took over left-wing policies in Scotland. In Lancashire many ILP members moved back into the Labour Party and many members joined the newly-formed Independent Socialist Party, formed to counter the RPC which was drawing support from London, East Anglia and Lancashire - and followed it into the Labour Party in 1934. In London many ILP activists joined the RCP and formed a Third International Group but left for the Communist Party in 1934. In the textile district of the West Riding of Yorkshire the ILP collapsed. Even Jowett failed to win Bradford East in the 1935 General Election. At the municipal level the ILP achieved only patchy success in Nottingham, Derby, Norwich Keighley and Bradford.

Initially, the disaffiliationists were optimistic about their prospects for success. Brockway's chairman's speech at the 1932 Blackpool Conference, published as *The Coming Revolution*, explained the inevitability of disaffiliation and promoted the new, if amorphous, 'revolutionary spirit' to bring about socialism.<sup>107</sup> At the 1933 ILP Derby Conference, Maxton pointed to industrial and class organization, and thus industrial action, as the way to overthrow capitalism but advocated working through Parliament, ' - the instrument of government of the Capitalist state' until class change was achieved.<sup>108</sup> But these views were bullish optimism and even the NAC of the ILP had to admit to failure in its 'Draft Statement of Policy' which suggested 'The results are the reverse of satisfactory.'<sup>109</sup> With declining membership, few lasting results from the *ad hoc* committees, 'very bad' election results, and 'the prestige of the ILP is now at a lower level amongst the workers than ever before'. Evidently, the reason for this failure was that the Labour Party was recovering its vote, 'despite its past', and 'the Labour Party today is the immediate expression of the masses'. It reflected that

All the ILP can claim are isolated individual successes, some dwindling support based upon sentimental regard for our past, occasional large meetings and a weekly paper whose struggle for existence absorbs the major part of the energy of the membership. This is all the past two years 'independent' policy associated with the CP has left us. [...]

Our weaknesses are a lack of programme and of policy, immediate and long-term. [...]<sup>110</sup>

The small rump of the ILP which survived into the late 1930s, shorn of its contending factions, once again discussed the possibility of re-affiliating to the Labour Party at a meeting of the NAC of 5 August 1939 where a vote of 8 to 6 committed the ILP to holding a Special Conference to discuss re-affiliation to Labour<sup>111</sup> A special conference called for 17 September 1939 had to be cancelled because of the outbreak of war.

## Conclusion

Historians have generally agreed that the ILP's disaffiliation in 1932 was a product of the tensions that had been developing since the end of the First World War. The 1918 Labour Party Constitution committing Labour to socialism, 'Socialism in Our Time' and The Living Wage, and personal conflict conspired to ensure that the ILP pushed forward to disaffiliation in its attempt to speed up the move to socialism.

Disaffiliation was a bold move but it failed largely because many of its members did not wish to leave the Labour Party for the amorphous policy of a 'workers' revolution' and the ILP did not provide the effective missionary leadership Shinwell hoped for. Even if disaffiliation had created a significant socialist propagandist party it is highly unlikely that the creation of a permanent socialist state was ever possible

in parliamentary Britain - something which Brockway suggested in his demands for revolutionary change in 1932 and 1933.<sup>112</sup> In *The Next Step* Brockway asked ‘Is there any Socialist today who believes in the policy of administering capitalism and seeking to reform it?’ In his view, the only policy ‘is to pull down its ruins and rebuild upon its foundations. The purpose of socialism became nothing less than ‘revolution’.<sup>113</sup> Yet this was not a view held by most in the Labour Party, or possibly the majority of ILP membership in 1932, which were ready to accept conventional and disciplined politics. In the end petulance, rather than sensible decision making, drove the ILP out of the Labour Party.

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank both Chris Wrigley and John Shepherd for their close friendship, help and advice over more than a quarter of a century.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Summary of discussion on present position of the Party which took place at the NAC Meeting 9 and 10 June 1928.’ Copy in Section 10 of ILP Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science.

<sup>3</sup> W. Knox, *James Maxton* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), pp. 79-80.

<sup>4</sup> R. McKibbin. *Parties and the People: England 1914-1951* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> J. Lawrence. ‘The Transformation of British Public Politics After the First World War’, *Past & Present*. Vol. 190:1 (2006), 185-216.

<sup>6</sup> Lawrence, ‘Transformation’, 200, 211-12.

<sup>7</sup> W.W. Knox and A. MacKinley, ‘The Re-making of Scottish Labour in the 1930s’, *Twentieth Century British History*, vol. 6, no.2, (1995), 174-93.

<sup>8</sup> R. Stevens, ‘“Rapid Demise or Slow Death?”: The Independent Labour Party in Derby, 1932-1945’, *Midland History*, 22 (1997), 113-130.

<sup>9</sup> B. Pimlott, *Labour and the Left in the 1930s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

<sup>10</sup> J. Lee, *My Life with Nye* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1980), pp. 80-81; F. Brockway, *Towards Tomorrow: The Autobiography of Fenner Brockway* (London: Hart-Davis, 1977), p.107.

<sup>11</sup> R. K. Middlemas, *The Clydesiders: A Left-Wing Struggle for Parliamentary Power* (London: Hutchinson, 1965), pp. 295-71; R. E. Dowse, *Left in the Centre: The Independent Labour Party 1893-1940* (London: Longman, 1966), pp. 152-84; G. Cohen, ‘The Independent Labour Party, Disaffiliation,

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Revolution and Standing Orders’, *History*, 86 (282), 180-99; K. Laybourn, “‘Suicide During a Fit of Insanity’ or the Defence of Socialism? The secession of the Independent Labour Party at the special conference at Bradford, July 1932’, *Bradford Antiquary*, 3 (1990), 41-53. See also D. Howell, ‘Traditions, myths and legacies: the ILP and the Labour left’, in *The ILP on Clydeside 1893-1932: from foundation to disintegration* (eds) A. McKinley and R. J. Morris (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), pp. 204-232; A. Marwick, *Clifford Allen: The Open Conspirator* (London: Oliver & Boyd, 1964). Also look at P. Riddell, *Labour in Crisis: The second Labour government, 1929-1931* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999) for the Labour perspective on the Labour Party versus ILP relations. G. Cohen, *The Failure of a Dream: The Independent Labour Party from Disaffiliation to World War* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2007) and D. Howell, *MacDonald’s Party: Labour Identities and Crisis 1922-1932* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>12</sup> T. Jowitt and K. Laybourn, ‘War and Socialism: The Experience of the Independent Labour Party 1914-1918’ *The Journal of Regional and Local Studies* vol. 4, no 2 (autumn 1984). It was re-issued in D. James, T. Jowitt, K. Laybourn (eds), *The Centennial History of the Independent Labour Party* (Halifax: Ryburn, 1992), pp. 163-178.

<sup>13</sup> Arthur Marwick, ‘The Independent Labour Party in the Nineteen-twenties’, *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, xxxv (1962), 62-74.

<sup>14</sup> A. J. P. Taylor, *English History 1914-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 198-9.

<sup>15</sup> F. M. Leventhal, *The Last Dissenter: H. N. Brailsford and His World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 180-1. Brailsford had previously been a critic of MacDonald; A Ponsonby Diary, 11 Dec. 1923 (Bodleian Library).

<sup>16</sup> *Forward*, 26 April 1924.

<sup>17</sup> C. Allen, *Putting Socialism into Politics* (London: ILP, 1924), pp. 6, 9.

<sup>18</sup> *The Independent Labour Party Annual Report held at York 1924* (London: ILP, 1924), p. 9.

<sup>19</sup> NEC Minutes of the Labour Party, Labour Party Archive, 23 May 1925, Joint Meeting of the NEC of the Labour Party and the NAC of the Labour Party.

<sup>20</sup> NAC Minutes of the ILP, 23 May 1925.

<sup>21</sup> Dr. A. Salter, *A Living Wage for All* (London: ILP, 1924), based on his parliamentary speech of 8 March 1923.

<sup>22</sup> Marwick, *Allen*, p. 102.

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- <sup>23</sup> ILP, *The Living Wage* (London: ILP, 1926), p. 8.
- <sup>24</sup> *The Times*, 22 February 1926.
- <sup>25</sup> Howell, *MacDonald's Party*, p.274.
- <sup>26</sup> *Bradford Pioneer*, 1 January 1926.
- <sup>27</sup> *The Times*, 22 February 1926.
- <sup>28</sup> J. McNair, *James Maxton: The Beloved Rebel* (London: 1955), pp. 153-4; G. Brown, *Maxton* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1986).
- <sup>29</sup> D. Howell, 'Beyond the Stereotypes: The Independent Labour Party 1922-1932', *Scottish Labour History Society Journal*, xxix (1994), 16-49.
- <sup>30</sup> *Bradford Pioneer*, 1 January 1926.
- <sup>32</sup> Quoted in D. Marquand, *Ramsay MacDonald* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1977), and p.454.
- <sup>32</sup> *Bradford Pioneer*, 5 February. 1926.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 April 1926.
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 October 1926.
- <sup>35</sup> *The Times*, 7 January 1927.
- <sup>36</sup> Marquand, *MacDonald*, pp. 474-5.
- <sup>37</sup> Taylor, *English History 1914-1945*, pp. 198-9; *The Times*, 8 July 1928 referred to it as a campaign for the re-birth of the Socialist Labour Party.
- <sup>38</sup> *The Times*, 24 June 1928.
- <sup>39</sup> Cohen, 'The Independent Labour Party', 206.
- <sup>40</sup> *The Times*, 7 December 1928.
- <sup>41</sup> Bilston branch minutes, ILP, 9 December 1929 (BLPES).
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 October 1920.
- <sup>43</sup> West Bromwich ILP minute books 1925-1932, General Meeting, 3 September 1929, General Meeting 8 January 1930. These are in the BLPES.
- <sup>44</sup> *Bradford Pioneer*, 12 March 1926.
- <sup>45</sup> *The Report of the Annual Conference held at Carlisle, March and April 1929* (London: ILP, 1929), 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the ILP, Drill Hall, Carlisle, 30 March 1929, p. 62.
- <sup>46</sup> Cohen, 'The Independent Labour Party', 209.
- <sup>47</sup> F. Jowett, *The ILP Says No to the Standing Orders of the Labour Party* (London: ILP, 1932).

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- <sup>48</sup> M. Pugh, *Speak for Britain* (London: Bodley Head, 2010), p.212.
- <sup>49</sup> *Report of the Annual Conference held at Blackpool, March 1932*. Appendix 6, pp. 44-52 give all the correspondence on Standing Orders between the ILP and A. Henderson between December 1930 and July 1931. His letter is on p. 44.
- <sup>50</sup> Pugh, *Speak for Britain*, refers to T. Irwin unsuccessful contesting the Tory seat at East Renfrewshire whilst being unwilling to sign the PLP declaration and selection disputes at Clapham, Kemingrove and Camborne.
- <sup>51</sup> Four Clydeside MPs, J. Maxton, J. McGovern, G. Buchanan, and D. Kirkwood, plus R. C. Wallhead who represented Merthyr.
- <sup>52</sup> *New Leader*, 5 February and 29 January 1932.
- <sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 22 January 1932.
- <sup>54</sup> Division Five Minute Book, Minutes, 10 January 1932, in BLPES, Coll. Misc. 496.
- <sup>55</sup> Poplar Branch of the ILP, *Memorandum on the present political and economic situation of the ILP* (London: Poplar ILP, 1932), p. 4.
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- <sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- <sup>58</sup> Cohen, 'The Independent Labour Party', 203; F. Brockway in the National Archives, KV1, KV2 ,which suggest that Brockway despite his courting of the CPGB was never likely to agree with them on the nature of revolutionary action.
- <sup>59</sup> *Bradford Pioneer*, 17 June 1932.
- <sup>60</sup> F. Brockway, *Socialism over Sixty Years* (London: Allen&Unwin, 1946).
- <sup>61</sup> *Bradford Pioneer*, 8 January 1932.
- <sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 February 1932.
- <sup>63</sup> *Leeds Citizen*, 11 December 1931, 29 January and 1 April 1932.
- <sup>64</sup> *The Report of the Annual Conference held at Blackpool, March 1932* (London: ILP, 1932), p. 48.
- <sup>65</sup> J. Paton, *Left Turn: The autobiography of John Paton* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1936), p. 387.
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.
- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p.48; *The Times*, 29 March 1932.
- <sup>68</sup> *The Times*, 29 March 1932.
- <sup>69</sup> *Bradford Pioneer*, 29 July 1931.

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- <sup>70</sup> *Report of the Special National Conference held at Bradford July 30<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>* (London: ILP, 1932), pp. 4-5.
- <sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18; *The Times*, 1 August 1932.
- <sup>72</sup> *Special National Conference*, p. 18.
- <sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p.18.
- <sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- <sup>75</sup> *The Times*, 1 August 1932.
- <sup>76</sup> *Special National Conference*, pp. 33-5.
- <sup>77</sup> A. F. Brockway, *Socialism at the Cross Roads: Why the ILP Left the Labour Party* (London: ILP, 1932), p. 1.
- <sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- <sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- <sup>80</sup> F. Johnson Collection, ILP Archive, 1933/1, letter from F. W. Jowett to J. H. Bell of Fife, 12 January 1933.
- <sup>81</sup> *Bradford Pioneer*, 5 August 1932.
- <sup>82</sup> *Leeds Citizen*, 5 August 1932.
- <sup>83</sup> *The Times*, 3 October. 1932.
- <sup>84</sup> People's History Museum, Salford, Labour History Archive and Study Centre. letter collection, letter from G. R. Smith to Councillor Crowe, 1 August 1932, 22 July 1927.
- <sup>85</sup> Working-Class Movements' Library, Salford, letter from E. Smith to Mr. J. P. Butterworth, Secretary, Wakefield Labour Party, 9 August 1932.
- <sup>86</sup> *The Times*, 6 August 1932.
- <sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 August 1932.
- <sup>88</sup> *The Times*, 29 August 1932.
- <sup>89</sup> Stevens, 'Rapid Demise or Slow Death?'.  
<sup>90</sup> *The Times*, 29 August 1932.
- <sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 August 1932.
- <sup>92</sup> *Bradford Pioneer*, 5, 12, 26 August and 9 September 1932.
- <sup>93</sup> *The Times*, 2 August 1932.
- <sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 October 1932.



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- <sup>95</sup> *Bradford Pioneer*, 12 August 1930, 30 September 1932.
- <sup>96</sup> Knox and MacKinley, 'Remaking of Scottish Labour', p. 193.
- <sup>97</sup> *The Times*, 29 August 1932.
- <sup>98</sup> Knox and MacKinley, 'Remaking of Scottish Labour', 176.
- <sup>99</sup> *The Times*, 17 August 1932. The report indicates also that the disaffiliationists intended to stand 18 candidates for the November city council elections.
- <sup>100</sup> *Glasgow Herald*, 20 August 1932; *The Times*, 16 August. 1932.
- <sup>101</sup> Minutes of the Bo'ness ILP, 26 August, 11 September 1932.
- <sup>102</sup> Pimlott, *Labour and the Left in the 1930s*.
- <sup>103</sup> *The Times*, 3 October 1932.
- <sup>104</sup> J. Jupp, *Radical Left in Britain 1931-1941* (London: Routledge, 1982), p.39.
- <sup>105</sup> *The Report of the Annual Conference held at Gloucester, April 1925* (London: London, 1925), p. 7.
- <sup>106</sup> Cohen, *The Failure of a Dream*, pp.31, 33.
- <sup>107</sup> A. F. Brockway, *The Coming Revolution* (London: ILP, 1932).
- <sup>108</sup> *Report of the Annual Conference [ILP] held at Derby, April 1933*, p. 18.
- <sup>109</sup> Working-Class Movements' Library, Salford. letters, 'Draft Statement of Policy (H. L.Gearing).
- <sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>111</sup> NAC, Minutes, 5 August 1929. Also McKibbin, *Parties and the People*..
- <sup>112</sup> A. F. Brockway, *The Coming Revolution; Socialism at the Cross-Roads: Why the ILP left the ILP* (London: ILP, 1932); and *The Next Step: Towards Working-Class Unity* (London: ILP, 1933).
- <sup>113</sup> Brockway, *The Next Step*, p. 4.