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An historical study of unofficial parliamentary party groupings in the Conservative Party from 1830

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Abstract

The public face of any organisation may not necessarily reflect the entirety of an organisation. There may be a highly developed infrastructure and knowledge of this infrastructure may be necessary to understand how the organisation actually operates. There may be a formal one and there may be an informal one. Informal groups and norms may develop that impact on the organisation and serve to shape its public face. Understanding an organisation may thus entail looking beyond the public persona and examining not only its formally created component parts but also its unofficial parts.

This is especially so in the case of political parties and the Conservative Party, as the most successful party in British history, is no exception. Such groupings have existed within the Party for as long as the Party itself has been in existence and as such have come into being for a wide range of reasons. While a number have emerged simply as an excuse for a good dinner with like-minded colleagues, others have sought to shape the political agenda and affect outcomes by supporting a specific event, policy or direction of the Party. As a result, unofficial groupings have come to represent a microcosm of not only the chronology of the Conservative Party but also the wider political environment over the last century and more. Thus the introduction of tariff reform, the 1911 Parliament Act, independence for Ireland, India and the countries of Africa, both First and Second World Wars, the Suez Crisis and more recently debate concerning the future direction of Europe and indeed reform of the Party itself have all resulted in the formation of one or more unofficial grouping.

This thesis examines all these, and more, within its three broad aims which are in turn derived largely from the fact that current academic literature on the subject matter is so sparse. The first of these aims is to compile a comprehensive list of such groupings while the second is to provide a broad historical descriptive account of groupings in terms of who they are, what they do and relations between themselves and with others. The third and final aim is itself a tripartite one which undertakes further analysis in terms of, firstly, the roles these groupings fulfil within the Party together with, secondly, an evaluation of their place in history, and where relevant the consequences of this, and, lastly, the devising of a typology within which past, present and future groupings may be placed.

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Abbreviations

CAER	Conservative Action for Electoral Reform
CCO	Conservative Central Office
CPF	Conservative Policy Forum
CPC	Conservative Political Centre
CRD	Conservative Research Department
CAFÉ	Conservatives Against a Federal Europe
EEC	European Economic Community
EP	European Parliament
EU	European Union
IGC Monitoring Group	Inter-Governmental Conference Monitoring Group
LPP	Liberal Parliamentary Party
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MP	Member of Parliament
MSP	Member of the Scottish Parliament
AM	Member of the Welsh Assembly
PCP	Parliamentary Conservative Party
PLP	Parliamentary Labour Party
PPS	Parliamentary Private Secretary
PEST	Pressure for Economic and Social Toryism
PPC	Prospective Parliamentary Candidate
STAG	Social Tory Action Group
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence

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Chapter One: Introduction

'The business of the Tory party could never be conducted but for a whole range of private lunch, dining, even breakfast clubs at which like-minded backbenchers, often with help from ministers, put their heads together regularly to work out where their party was going and what they should do about it' [1]

The public face of an organisation may not necessarily reflect the entirety of an organisation. There may be a highly developed infrastructure and knowledge of this infrastructure may be necessary to understand how the organisation actually operates. There may be a formal infrastructure and there may be an informal one. Informal groups and norms may develop that impact on the organisation and serve to shape its public face. Understanding an organisation may thus entail looking beyond the public persona and examining not only its formally created component parts but also its unofficial parts.

This is especially so in the case of political parties. A political party is created to advance a particular ideology or set of views. To ensure electoral success, they may develop into large, mass membership catch-all bodies. Members who lean towards a particular aspect of the party's ideology may come together to promote that aspect, others may organise in favour of another aspect. Others may simply organise to

[1] George Gardiner, *A Bastard's Tale: The Political Memoirs of George Gardiner,* London, Aurum, 1999, 38

supplement the work of the official party organisation or to form social or support groupings. The operation of these bodies may impact on the party itself, not least in terms of how it sees itself and the policies that it promotes. The public face may be the product of private pressure and intra-party conflict. To understand how a political party operates and faces the world may thus necessitate looking at the unofficial as well as the official elements that combine to make it what it is.

These unofficial elements are evident within both the two main British political parties taking, in part, the form of unofficial parliamentary party groupings. Indeed a number of these groupings have existed over time and include, for example, the December Club, the Bow Group, the Upstairs Club, Blue Chip, Tribune and Campaign to name but a few of many. These groupings are generally specific to a particular political party with the December Club, the Bow Group, the Upstairs Club and Blue Chip all synonymous with the Conservative Party and Tribune and Campaign with the Labour Party.

On occasion a grouping may be cross-party but this is exceptional and is notable as such. Two past groups include the Grillions (established to offset rancour between Whigs and Tories) and the Other Club (similar in purpose but established by Winston Churchill and FE Smith during the 1906 Parliament as a dining club with equal numbers of Conservative and Liberal members). [2] More recent cross-party groups include Britain in Europe and the European Movement. In the case of the latter in 2009, the president was a Member of Parliament (MP) and former party leader for the

[2] Peter Catterall (ed.), *The Macmillan Diaries: The Cabinet Years 1950-1957*, London, Macmillan, 2004, 87. It is interesting that the Other Club has since been the source of inspiration for a US political blogsite, see http://otherclub.blogspot.com/search/label/economics/ (accessed 14 May 2009)

Liberal Democrats (Charles Kennedy) and the two vice presidents were a Conservative MP and former minister (Ken Clarke) and a Labour peer (Baroness Quin). [3] This grouping was also notable for having members from both the Commons and the Lords as most groupings, but not all, tend to be exclusive to one chamber. Overall however the vast majority of unofficial parliamentary party groupings are as stated, groupings of individuals from the same political party.

This thesis will seek to limit the study of unofficial groupings to one political party, namely to the most successful political party in British history, the Conservative Party. [4] It will thus exclude groupings pertaining to the other political parties which operate within the British political system and indeed those groupings, such as the European Movement, which are clearly cross-party.

As the opening quotation suggests, such groupings have existed within the Conservative Party for as long as the Party itself has been in existence and as such have come into being for a wide range of reasons. Thus while a number have emerged simply as an excuse for a good dinner with like-minded colleagues, others have sought to affect political outcomes by supporting or opposing a specific event, policy or direction of the Party. As a result unofficial groupings, taken in their entirety, represent a microcosm of not only the chronology of the Party but also of the wider political environment of the last hundred years and more.

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[3] http://www.euromove.org.uk/index.php?id=6329 (accessed 14 May 2009). For further information regarding Britain in Europe, see, for example, Tim Bale, *The Conservative Party: From Thatcher to Cameron,* Cambridge, Polity Press, 2010, 98, 105 and for the European Movement, see, for example, http://www.euromove.org.uk/ (accessed 14 May 2009)

[4] Philip Norton (ed.), *The Conservative Party,* Hemel Hempstead, Prentice Hall, 1996, 1 and Bale op. cit., 3-4

Indeed not only do such groupings reflect both British political history and the history of the Conservative Party itself but they have become synonymous with the Party to an extent not seen with other parties and indeed the reasons for this will be examined in greater depth within the thesis. Certainly a number of Conservative MPs have over time, and some intakes seem particularly predisposed to this aspect of parliamentary life, devoted as much if not more time to this unofficial aspect of their parliamentary work as they have to the more official aspects such as their work on standing and select committees for example.

Defining unofficial parliamentary party groupings

It is essential to establish from the outset a clear working definition of the term 'unofficial parliamentary party grouping' and indeed all subsequent references to the term 'grouping' in this thesis should be interpreted as such unless stated otherwise.

Certainly as already indicated, a plethora of groups associated with, and allied to, the Conservative Party have existed and indeed continue to exist over time and as such it is important that the term 'unofficial parliamentary party grouping' is a clearly defined one so as to establish which of these will be included in this study. As will become evident as the thesis progresses, there exists very little published, and indeed unpublished, research pertaining to this subject and as such no definition of this specific term currently exists. While a small number of texts relating to the Conservative Party discuss these groupings, none provide a definitive definition. As such, for the purposes of this study, an 'unofficial parliamentary party grouping' will be taken as a self-defined group which exists within a particular political parliamentary party but without any

formal linkage to that party organisation and thus an organisational structure that exists outside the formal party but with a core membership, governance or focus derived primarily from the parliamentary party.

From this then, any grouping must be self-defined if it exists with a membership, governance or focus, however informal, that it has defined for itself. Thus those with membership defined by others, such as political commentators, rather than by the group itself will be excluded. Groups such as, for example, the 92 Group, Guy Fawkes and Cornerstone would all be included as each are self-defined whereas those such as, for example, the 'Die-hards', the 'Hedgers, Ditchers and Rats' and the 'Notting Hill set' would all be excluded as they have all been defined by those outside their own circle.

Certainly the term 'die-hard' is a generic name applied by politicians and political commentators alike to a certain type of parliamentarian rather than to a specific grouping as such; it usually refers to a right-wing Conservative especially committed to a specific cause which is more usually one in favour of the status quo. [5] Certainly some groupings can be deemed to be 'die-hard' but the term does not represent a specific grouping in its own right. Thus the Halsbury, which was formed by Conservative parliamentarians in part as a reaction to the introduction of the 1911 Parliament Act, was widely considered 'die-hard' in nature. [6] Similarly a grouping

[5] See, for example, EHH Green, *The Crisis of Conservatism*, London, Routledge, 1996, 271-74, NJ Crowson, *The Longman Companion to the Conservative Party Since 1830,* London, Pearson, 2001, 231 and John Ramsden, *An Appetite for Power: A History of the Conservative Party Since 1830,* London, HarperCollins, 1999, 530

[6] The Halsbury emerged in mid 1911 as a reaction to the Liberal Government's determination to curb the powers of the House of Lords through the Parliament Bill, later 1911 Parliament Act. Led by an octogenarian previous Lord Chancellor, Lord Halsbury, the Halsbury was notable for its support from both MPs and peers on and off the frontbenches

formed a few years later in July 1916 by MPs and peers opposed to a general movement at the time towards Irish independence is usually referred to as 'die-hard'. [7]

In the same way, the 'Hedgers, Ditchers and Rats', again in relation to the 1911 Parliament Act, were those individuals who favoured abstention, those who wanted to reject the Bill (similar to 'die-hard') and those who were prepared to acquiesce respectively. [8] These same generic terms are still used today for those MPs who may abstain, fight for the status quo or give up on a fight respectively.

Similarly, the 'Notting Hill set' is a nomenclature ascribed to a number of named MPs but again by others. Thus those MPs who supported Michael Howard as leader, and subsequently David Cameron in his bid for the leadership, were known as the 'Notting Hill set' simply because they lived within a particular area of London and not because they met and operated as a specific grouping. [9]

The second determining criterion is that the grouping must be 'unofficial'; that is it must exist independently from the formal party organisation and thus its own organisational structure must exist beyond the official structure of the Conservative Party. Thus 'official' groupings such as the Conservative Research Department (CRD) and the Conservative Policy Forum (CPF) would be excluded from study. The

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[7] Philip Norton, 'The Organisation of Parliamentary Parties' in Stuart Walkland (ed.), *The House of Commons in the Twentieth Century: Essays by members of the Study of Parliament Group,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1979, 33

[8] Green (1996) op. cit., 271

[9] The name 'Notting Hill set' was allegedly derived from Derek Conway MP who launched a verbal attack on Michael Howard's young lieutenants after they had accused a number of older MPs of 'bed blocking' before the 2005 General Election. See Francis Elliott and James Hanning, *Cameron: The Rise of the New Conservative*, London, Fourth Estate, 2007, 247-48 and Bale op. cit., 225-26, 284, 302

predecessor of the CPF, the Conservative Political Centre (CPC), would similarly be excluded as would the 1922 Committee. [10] The latter, although initially unofficial, has now become so fully integrated into the Party structure that while it would be included in its early form, it would subsequently be excluded as indeed is discussed in greater detail later in the thesis. [11]

The third and final defining criterion of unofficial groupings is that core membership, governance or focus must be primarily, but not exclusively, provided by the parliamentary party, in this instance the Parliamentary Conservative Party (PCP). This may be from the PCP in either parliamentary chamber. Thus groupings such as the July 4th and Blue Chip, for which membership, governance and focus is exclusively drawn from the PCP would be included as would others such as Better Off Out, whose governance and focus are primarily, but not exclusively, provided by the PCP and whose membership is drawn from both within and beyond parliament.

Groupings which do not fulfil these criteria would include those with essentially grass root membership and 'bottom up' governance, and indeed some such groups may not always be welcomed by the PCP. Examples in this instance would include the Vermin Club and the British Housewives League which will be excluded from the

[10] For an informative discussion regarding the CPC, see, for example, Philip Norton, 'The Role of the Conservative Political Centre, 1945-98', in Stuart Ball and Ian Holliday (ed.), *Mass Conservatism: the Conservatives and the Public since the 1980s,* London, Frank Cass, 2002, 183-99 and for the 1922 Committee, see, for example, Philip Norton, 'The Parliamentary Party and the Party Committees' in Anthony Seldon and Stuart Ball (ed.), *Conservative Century: The Conservative Party since 1900,* Oxford. Oxford University Press, 1994b, 105-13, Philip Goodhart, *The 1922: The Story of the Conservative Backbenchers' Parliamentary Committee,* London, Macmillan, 1973 and Stuart Ball, 'The 1922 Committee: The Formative Years 1922-1945', *Parliamentary History,* vol.9 no.1 (1990), 129-57

[11] The chairman of the 1922 Committee has a seat on the Board of the Conservative Party. The Board is the ultimate decision making body of the Party and is responsible for all operational matters. It is made up from each section of the Party – the voluntary, political and professional. See http://www.conservatives.com/People/Members_of_the_Board.aspx (accessed 28 April 2009)

study. [12] More recent examples would include the Freedom Association, the Democracy Movement and the Bruges Group although its parliamentary off-shoot, Friends of Bruges, does fulfil the necessary criteria and would be included. [13] Other groupings excluded on this account would include many Conservative think-tanks and pressure groups which again do not fulfil the determining criteria. Thus a large and diverse number of pressure groups such as the Conservative Animal Welfare Group, the Conservative Christian Fellowship and the Conservative Rural Action Group, which although allied to the Conservative Party fall beyond the remit of this paper as do a large number of think-tanks such as Policy Exchange, the Adam Smith Institute and Politeia. [14]

Before closing discussion regarding definition, it is important at this conjuncture to draw attention to the work of other academics regarding factions and tendencies and to emphasise that this thesis is concerned with a more broad ranging focus. Certainly most existing academic analysis pertaining to unofficial groupings, in so far as it exists, has historically been included within a discussion of factions and tendencies within political parties and which groupings, if any, can be defined as either. Academic debate had already taken place on this subject within a range of doctoral theses

[12] For an informative discussion regarding the Vermin Club and the British Housewives League, see Paul Martin, 'Echoes in the Wilderness: British Popular Conservatism, 1945-51' in Ball and Holliday op. cit., 120-38

[13] For further information regarding the Freedom Association, see, for example, http://www.tfa.net/, for the Democracy Movement, see, for example, http://www.democracymovement.org.uk/ and for the Bruges Group, see, for example, http://www.brugesgroup.com/ (all accessed 28 April 2009)

[14] For further information regarding the Conservative Animal Welfare Group, see, for example, http://www.cawg.org.uk/, for the Conservative Christian Fellowship, see, for example, http://www.ccfwebsite.com/, for the Conservative Rural Action Group, see, for example, http://www.ruralactiongroup.com/, for Policy Exchange, see, for example, http://www.policyexchange.org.uk, for the Adam Smith Institute, see, for example, http://www.adamsmith.org, and for Politeia, see, for example, http://www.politeia.co.uk (all accessed 28 April 2009 and 22 April 2010)

examining all three main political parties within the British political system and indeed beyond. [15] Similarly a number of periodical articles and indeed a range of publications, either stand alone or as chapters within books, have covered similar ground over many years. [16] Indeed a limited number of more recent academic works regarding factions have centred specifically on the Conservative Party. [17] It is however the aim of this paper to study groupings from a broader perspective with, for example, chapter six specifically addressing this by examining groups from an historical perspective.

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[15] For theses, see, for example, Françoise Boucek, *The Growth and Management of Factionalism in long-lived Dominant Parties: Comparing Britain, Italy, Canada and Japan*, PhD thesis submitted at the London School of Economics and Political Science, London, 2002, Lisa Mason, *The Development of the Monday Club and its Contribution to the Conservative Party and the Modern British Right 1961 to 1990*, PhD thesis submitted at the University of Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton, 2004, Vincent McKee, *British Social Democratic Factionalism 1981-1996: Case Studies of the SDP 1981-88 and Liberal Democrats 1988-96,* PhD thesis submitted at the London Guildhall University, London, 1996, Vincent McKee, *Right-wing Factionalism in the British Labour Party 1977-1987,* thesis submitted at the City of Birmingham Polytechnic, Birmingham, 1987, CP Seyd, *The Labour Left*, PhD thesis submitted at the University of Sheffield, Sheffield, 1987, CP Seyd, *Factionalism within the Labour Party – a case study of the campaign for democratic socialism,* MPhil thesis submitted to the University of Southampton, Southampton, 1968, Philippa Smedley, *Factionalism in the Conservative Parliamentary Party: The 'Anti-Europeans' since 1970,* PhD thesis submitted at the University of Leeds, Leeds, 1998, and Ross Young, *The Labour Party and the Labour Left: Party Transformation and the Decline of Factionalism 1979-97*, PhD thesis submitted at the University of Oxford, Oxford, 2000

[16] For periodical articles, see, for example, Jack Brand, 'Faction as its own reward: Groups in the British Parliament 1945-1986', *Parliamentary Affairs,* vol.42 no.2 (1989), 148-64, Robert Harmel and Alexander Tan, 'Party Actors and Party Change: Does Factional Dominance Matter?, *European Journal of Political Research*, vol.42 no.3 (2003), 409-24 , David Hine, 'Factionalism in Western European Parties: A Framework for Analysis', *Journal of West European Politics*, vol.5 no.1 (1982), 36-53, Vincent McKee, 'Factions and Tendencies in the Conservative Party since 1945', *Politics Review*, vol.5 no.4 (1996), 29-33, Vincent McKee, 'Factionalism in the SDP, 1981-1987', *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol.42 no.2 (1989a), 165-79, Vincent McKee, 'Conservative Factions', *Contemporary Record*, vol.3 no.1 (1989b), 30-32, Jorgen Rasmussen, 'Government and Intra-Party Opposition: Dissent within the Conservative Parliamentary Party in the 1930s', *Political Studies,* vol. 19, no.2 (1971), 172-83, Richard Rose, 'Parties, Factions and Tendencies in Britain', *Political Studies*, vol.12 no.1 (1964), 33-46 and Pat Seyd, 'Factionalism within the Conservative Party: The Monday Club', *Government and Opposition*, vol.7 no.4 (1972), 464-87. For books and chapters in books, see, for example, Frank P Belloni and Dennis C Beller (ed.), *Faction Politics: Political Parties and Factionalism in Comparative Perspective,* Santa Barbara, ABC-Clio, 1978 esp. Arthur Cyr, 'Cleavages in British Politics', 287-303, Zig Layton-Henry (ed.), *Conservative Party Politics*, London, Macmillan, 1980 esp. Patrick Seyd, 'Factionalism in the 1970s' and Seldon and Ball op. cit., esp. John Barnes, 'Ideology and Factions', 315-45

[17] See, for example, Timothy Heppell, 'The ideological composition of the Parliamentary Conservative Party 1992-1997', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, vol.4 no.2 (2002), 299-324 and Philip Cowley and Philip Norton, 'What a ridiculous thing to say! (which is why we didn't say it): a response to Timothy Heppell', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, vol.4 no.2 (2002), 325-29

It is also interesting here to note that a third sub-party grouping, in addition to faction and tendency, has been identified and discussed, namely the single-issue alliance or group. Although this is distinct from faction and tendency in terms of the scope and duration of its activities, the use of this term is again not singularly relevant to this study. Certainly some informal groupings do constitute a single-issue alliance where their focus is tightly homed, such as on Europe, but many groupings within the study do have a wider focus. [18] As David Hine rightly indicates, factions and tendencies, and indeed single-issue groups, are not exhaustive categories on the scale of groupings. [19]

These existing discussions, taken together, while valuable are often placed within the contextual framework of intra-party dissent and as such analysis concerning groupings is often subjugated to the negative role that the groups play in orchestrating or participating in such dissent. While they may have a role to play in this respect, it is the aim of this paper to take discussion to a broader level and to analyse groupings as an integral part of a wider parliamentary and party setting in their own right rather than simply as instigators of, or participants in, intra-party conflict.

Reasons for study

The reasons for studying this particular topic are fourfold. First and foremost the Conservative Party is the most successful political party in British history. As Philip Norton indicates, it has been an important force in British politics for more than a century and a half, it has been the 'in' party in British politics for more than a century, it

[18] Hine op. cit., 39-41
[19] Ibid., 39

has outlived the collapse of the other leading non socialist party, the Liberal Party, and it predates the formation of its contemporary rival, the Labour Party, by more than sixty years. While some would go so far as to argue that the Party has been one of the world's most successful political organisations, there is no doubt that it has the greatest endurance of any other within the British political system. Certainly no party in Britain, or Western Europe, can match its record. Moreover when appearing to be in terminal decline, in 1906, in 1945 and indeed in 1997, it has successfully returned to a position of political strength. [20] It is hardly surprising that such success should attract academic attention.

The second reason for study is derived from a long-term interest in the workings of unofficial parliamentary party groupings. Certainly anyone with an interest in legislatures, at any level, will be familiar with the well known elements of the British parliamentary system such as select and standing committees. Similarly, although perhaps to a lesser extent, they will be familiar with elements such as the party backbench committees (which historically have mirrored major government departments and met to listen to invited speakers, discuss forthcoming business and to question ministers or, in opposition, opposition frontbenchers) and indeed all-party committees (which meet to promote cross-party support for a specific purpose such as, for example, the All-Party South American Committee which seeks to promote links between the UK and South America). However, informal groupings remain one of the lesser known elements of our parliamentary, and party, system and as such constitute a fascinating topic for study. Indeed one of the reasons why they remain elusive is very

[20] Norton (1996) op. cit., 1-2

often their own reluctance to make public their business. This in itself only serves to heighten interest.

As a result many questions remain unanswered. Who are these groups? What are they? Where and how do they meet? What is the purpose of their existence? How are they funded? What functions, if any, do they fulfil within not only their own party but also within the parliamentary sphere within which they operate? While numerous roles have, over time, been ascribed to legislatures themselves and to a lesser extent the more formal elements of political parties, comparable discussion regarding the more informal elements is minimal.

Certainly in terms of legislatures, Walter Bagehot, writing in 1867, devised a list of functions in relation to the British legislature and similarly, just over one hundred years later in 1970, Robert Packenham devised a similar list in relation to the Brazilian legislature. [21] More recently Norton, building on earlier work, has published a new listing on the same theme although making a valuable distinction between the functions in relation to parliament and government and parliament and citizen. [22] Similarly Norton has also ascribed a number of roles to the more formal elements of the Conservative Party such as the CPC. [23] However no comparable work has been conducted on the more informal elements. By examining a wide selection of groups, is it possible to derive a similar list for informal groupings? If it is possible to derive such a list, how meaningful are these functions?

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[21] Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution*, Brighton, Sussex Academic Press, 1997, 73-75 and Robert Packenham 'Legislatures and Political Development' in Allan Kornberg and Lloyd Daryl Musolf (ed.), *Legislatures in Developmental Perspective*, Durham NC, Duke University Press, 1970

[22] See Philip Norton, *Parliament in British Politics*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, 249

[23] See footnote 11

Along similar lines, is it possible to examine groupings from an historical perspective and if so what, if any, are the historical consequences of these functions for the Party within which they operate? Was George Gardiner correct, as the opening quote to this chapter suggests, in believing that the business of the Tory Party could never be conducted without them?

In turn, from this, is it possible to devise a typology of groupings within which all groups may be comfortably positioned? Again notable others have produced successful typologies in relation to other aspects of legislative studies. Michael Mezey in 1979, for example, produced excellent work on the classification of legislatures. [24] Yet again, no comparable broad ranging typology has been devised for informal groupings themselves. The possibility of being able to answer all these questions is an exciting prospect.

The third reason for study is largely derived from the preceding two, namely a wish to continue earlier, unpublished, research undertaken in relation to informal groupings in the Conservative Party. This has included two written papers examining one specific grouping, namely the 92 Group, which both provided a fascinating insight into not only the *modus operandi* of the group itself but also of the Party, and indeed parliament. Earlier research also included a presentation for peer review examining groupings in general terms in the context of political parties. [25] From this research, it was evident

[24] Michael Mezey, *Comparative Legislatures*, Durham NC, Duke University Press, 1979, passim
[25] Lucy Grant, 'The *6.28 from Brighton'. An historical study of the 92 Group 1964-1984'*, MA dissertation submitted to the University of Hull, Hull, 2000 (unpublished), Lucy Grant, *''Clear Blue Water: Secrets from the Deep'. A Study of the 92 Group'*, University of Hull, MA Research Paper, 1998 (unpublished) and Lucy Grant, *'Unofficial Party Groups in Parliament: A Case Study of the Conservative Party'*, Presentation to the Centre for Legislative Studies, University of Hull, 2006

that very little material has been published in relation to unofficial groupings.

This provides the fourth and final reason for study; namely that with minimal published academic literature in the field, the possibility of making a small contribution towards rectifying this situation is an enticing prospect. Previous research has revealed that existing literature in relation to unofficial groupings is, in so far as it exists, comprised of one of two types; namely either a limited descriptive, often historic, account of one individual group or a few named groups detailing who the members are, why they are so named and so on or a critical account of a number of groups taken together and often centred around whether they constitute a faction or tendency.

Considering the success of the Party outlined above, it is surprising that so little systemic research has been undertaken regarding unofficial groupings. This is particularly so as the research experience of this author indicates that such groupings are more prevalent within British political parties than elsewhere and as such it is expected that they would be the subject of greater academic attention. This is not to say they are an exclusively British phenomenon; there are notable exceptions such as the Republican Ripon Society and the Wednesday Group, again Republican, in the US. [26] Indeed it is interesting to note that the former was conceived as a result of a periodical article written concerning a particular British grouping, the Bow Group, by the American academic Richard Rose who was at the time based at Manchester

[26] For further information regarding the Ripon Society, see, for example, http://www.riponsociety.org/ (accessed 29 April 2009) and Andrew Adonis and Tim Hames (ed.), *A Conservative Revolution? The Thatcher-Reagan Decade in Perspective*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1994, 205 and for the Wednesday Group, see, for example, Adonis and Hames op. cit.,209

University. [27] The periodical article was published in an American academic journal, *The Western Political Quarterly*, in 1961 and read by an American student, Emil Frankel, studying at Manchester who on his return to the US subsequently set up the Ripon Society. [28]

Also on a comparative note, it is interesting that unofficial party groupings are not unknown within the European Parliament (EP). Certainly from correspondence between the author and one Member of the European Parliament (MEP), it would appear that a number of Conservative MEPs are members of dining groups which meet while sitting at Strasbourg. These groups are made up of like-minded MEPs and are based on either positive or anti-Europeanism. [29]

Thus having examined the four principal reasons for embarking upon this thesis, attention will now focus on the aims of the paper.

Aims

The aims of this thesis are fivefold and it is these same five aims which will subsequently be evaluated in chapter eight, the concluding chapter of the thesis.

While it is more usual for the aim of a doctoral thesis to include the testing of a hypothesis or hypotheses and to confirm, or as Karl Popper would have preferred to

[27] Richard Rose, 'The Bow Group's role in British politics', *The Western Political Quarterly*, vol.14 no.4 (1961), 865-78
[28] James Barr, *The Bow Group: A History*, London, Politicos, 2001, 51-52
[29] Correspondence with Mr John Bowis MEP: February 2008

falsify, these same statements, this will not be the case in this instance as can be seen from discussion below. [30] Because existing literature is so limited, and where it does exist it is so disparate, this work seeks to generate material and a basic understanding that will lend itself to theory building.

The first half of the paper will aim to not only bring together existing literature regarding unofficial groupings, albeit limited and disparate in nature, but to also add to this with additional material obtained from original and primary research, including that from both interviews and political archives. This will for the first time provide a more complete picture of unofficial groupings in their entirety within the Conservative Party over time than has hitherto been provided. Once this material has been brought together, it will then be used for further analysis in the second half of the paper.

In more detailed terms, the first of the five aims, and upon which all others are largely dependent, is to compile an up to date comprehensive list of groupings within the Conservative Party from 1830. This list will be included as an appendix to the thesis and will be the first time that this information has been brought together and presented in this way and, as such, it is hoped that it will provide a valuable contribution to literature in the field in its own right. More immediate value will be in its providing a definitive starting point for the thesis with all subsequent research and analysis based upon the groups contained within it. Groups will be listed in alphabetical order as the most effective manner in which to present the information. Once completed, a glossary of groupings will subsequently be produced which will, in effect, provide a brief

[30] Karl R Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge*, London, Routledge, 1989, passim

résumé of each of the groupings. This glossary will also be included as an appendix to the thesis. Although a small number of academic texts relating to both political parties in general and the Conservative Party in particular have attempted such a résumé, none have been as all-encompassing. [31]

This is not to say that the groups included in both the list and the glossary cannot subsequently be subdivided or rearranged into specified categories or cohorts. Indeed it is anticipated that post-doctoral research will be conducted on specific topics in relation to the Conservative Party, whether it be internal affairs such as party reform or foreign affairs such as Europe (and indeed there have been many groups relating to both these particular areas), and the range of groupings which have existed over time on these same issues.

From this, the second aim of the thesis is to bring together existing material from a wide range of disparate sources relating to the unofficial groupings listed to produce a bank of information pertaining to unofficial parliamentary party groupings in the Conservative Party. Again, it is hoped this will be of value in its own right in terms of the original contribution it will make to literature in the field.

While it is anticipated that this bank of information will provide a focus for post-doctoral research by examining further individual or cohorts of groupings, it will however in the first instance provide the basis for analysis in the second half of this thesis regarding the functions and typology as previously outlined.

[31] See, for example, Crowson op. cit., 227-40, Alan R Ball, *British Political Parties: The Emergence of a Modern Party System,* Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1981, 269-76 and Ramsden (1999) op. cit., 525-39

From this, the third, fourth and fifth aims of the thesis are more analytical in nature. The third involves the compilation of a table of functions ascribable to unofficial groupings and will draw, where appropriate, from the existing theoretical work of others such as Walter Bagehot, Robert Packenham and notably Philip Norton. The fourth aim will be to assess groupings in an historical context by examining the period from 1830 and where appropriate discuss the historical consequences, if any, for the Conservative Party over time. In order to make this assessment, a chronology of groupings will be utilised and examined in relation to major historical events within both the Conservative Party and the wider political arena. The fifth and final aim involves the devising of a typology of groupings within which all past, current and future groupings may be placed. It will be the first time that information related to unofficial groupings will have been analysed in this way.

Chapter plan

In order to fulfil these aims, this thesis is arranged into two distinct halves which although inter-related will be clearly distinguishable. Thus the first will explore the first two aims of that paper indicated above, namely the compilation of a list of groupings and, using this as a basis for all further study, a bank of information relating to these same groups. This first part will comprise four chapters of which this chapter is one.

Thus this first chapter, the introduction, will provide a contextual framework within which the thesis will develop whilst also providing a valuable opportunity to introduce a range of theoretical, historical and methodological issues. It will be subdivided into six

sections. The first four sections, which have already been detailed on earlier pages, will firstly open discussion before proceeding to define the term 'unofficial parliamentary party grouping' and then set out the reasons for study of this particular topic before finally detailing the aims of the thesis. The fifth, namely current discussion, will provide an outline of the arrangement of the paper in terms of a chapter plan before moving on finally to the sixth and last section of the introduction, namely a discussion of the methodology utilised together with any related difficulties. Within these six sections discussion will explore the criteria utilised to decide which groupings will be studied and indeed discuss those groupings excluded together with the reasons for the choices made. It will also draw attention to the fact that unofficial groupings represent relatively uncharted water in terms of political research with little published material pertaining to them which is in itself both opportunistic and problematic. This said, attention will be drawn to the published information that is available and indeed to how this will be utilised and developed through original research.

The second, third and fourth chapters will aim to collate and, through original and primary research, build upon existing information related to groupings so that taken together they will, for the first time, provide a comprehensive bank of information relating to unofficial groupings within the Conservative Party. Chapter two will detail the complete list of unofficial groupings within the Conservative Party over time and then proceed to examine a number of elements relevant to the groups which together ask the question 'who are these groups?' It will incorporate elements such as, for example, the origins and nomenclatures of the groupings, structures and governances, office arrangements, funding and membership. Chapter three will, in the same way, address the question 'what do they do?' through its examination of activities such as meetings

and dinners, debates and discussions, party conferences and general elections and include additional activities such as publications and use of internet. Chapter four, again in a similar vein, will examine relations both within groups and with other constituent parts of the Party and parliament. These will include other groupings, MPs, ministers, party leaders and prime ministers in addition to committees such as select committees and, before their cessation, party backbench committees.

Certainly previous research by this author conducted from archive material relating to one specific group, the 92 Group, has revealed this area, especially that relating to party leaders, to be of particular interest. Here, although relations with the 92 Group vary with each Party leader from Alec Douglas-Home to Edward Heath and Margaret Thatcher, they provide an original and valuable insight into the period of leadership of each. Thus, for example, despite the fact Douglas-Home had become leader in contentious circumstances, inherited a Party doing badly in the country and had to contend with a leader of the opposition, in the form of Harold Wilson, who was generally perceived as more dynamic than himself, relations with backbench members of the 92 Group were warm with genuine kindness expressed from one to the other. Relations with Edward Heath were, by comparison, a direct contrast which vividly supports claims of Heath's autocratic style of leadership providing little time for backbenchers. [32]

The second half of the thesis, namely chapters five to eight, will seek to utilise further the material in the preceding chapters. Thus chapter five will develop a table

[32] Grant (2000) op. cit., 41-46

of functions which can be ascribed to unofficial groupings within the period studied and from this to subsequent groupings which will inevitably emerge in future years. As already indicated, a number of notable academics have developed a similar listing of functions in relation to legislatures, and to a lesser extent more formal elements of political parties, and it is hoped that in the same way a listing of functions can be devised for unofficial groupings.

From this, chapter six will seek to provide an historical perspective and, where applicable, assess the consequences of unofficial groupings over time, by examining both British political history and the history of the Conservative Party and relate major events in both instances to the formation and activity of groupings and thus provide an indication of the inter-relationship, and consequences of, one upon the other.

Chapter seven will subsequently seek to develop a typology of groupings within which all past, present and future groups can be placed. No research has been undertaken to date in this area so it is hoped that the resultant typology will provide a valuable contribution to literature in the field of legislative studies. Finally, chapter eight will draw together the findings of the preceding chapters and assess the fulfilment or otherwise of the initial aims in relation to these findings.

Methodology

The paper combines a qualitative and quantitative approach, both of which have a role to play and by so doing it is hoped to increase the validity of the research. Certainly the study draws from a wide range of disparate sources which include

original, primary and secondary material with, overall, interviews and documentary analysis providing the greatest portion of material utilised in the study.

The research was conducted in two stages. The first stage was an information gathering exercise which included the perusal of books, particularly political diaries, memoirs and biographies, periodicals and newspapers together with other unpublished work such as theses, other unpublished research papers and archive papers. It also included, where they existed, the websites of relevant groupings. Certainly from the experience of previous research, it was anticipated that websites of certain current groupings which adopt a 'look at me' philosophy would prove to be especially valuable for research in this instance and indeed this was proved correct.

It is worth stressing that books relating specifically to the topic were notable only for their absence. One exception to this, certainly in terms of descriptive accounts, was James Barr's book on the Bow Group published by Politicos in 2001. (The Bow Group also provides the thinly veiled basis for the novel, *The Short List,* published in 1964 which was written about the fictitious 'Stepney Group' by the then Conservative MP David Walder). [33] While many unofficial groupings have themselves published many journals, pamphlets and leaflets and indeed books detailing their policy ideas, as indeed is discussed in chapter three, academic literature relating specifically to unofficial groupings was generally limited to a few sentences and at most a few pages within historical accounts of the Conservative Party. Similarly the political memoirs and biographies of key figures within the groups themselves detail often no more than a few

[33] David Walder, *The Short List*, London, Hutchinson, 1964

pages at most relating to any one or more specific group. The employment of a rigorous system for sifting through all possible sources for each group was a time consuming one as was the collating of each item of information gleaned. Many hours were spent repeatedly perusing indexes of books and search engines of periodical databases; a process which then had to be repeated for each group studied.

This is not to say that books of a more general nature were not helpful. Certainly a number of notable historical accounts of the Conservative Party by, amongst others, Philip Norton, Robert Blake, John Charmley, Anthony Seldon and Stuart Ball all proved invaluable as a starting point for a number of groups, especially the better known ones. [34] Similarly the political biographies and memoirs of, amongst many others, Cub Alport, George Gardiner, Geoffrey Howe and John Major proved especially valuable for their contributions to literature on the One Nation Group, the 92 Group, the Bow Group and Guy Fawkes as each were active, if not key, members in the development of the respective groupings. [35]

In the same way a limited number of periodical articles written over a period of time provided a small but valuable pool of additional material. These articles have been written either specifically in relation to named groups such as the Monday Club, the

[34] See, for example, Norton (1996) op. cit., Robert Blake, The *Conservative Party from Peel to Thatcher*, London, Fontana, 1985, John Charmley, *A History of Conservative Party Politics since 1830*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2008, John Charmley, *A History of Conservative Politics 1900-1996*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1998 and Seldon and Ball op. cit.,

[35] See, for example, Mark Garnett, *Alport: A Study in Loyalty*, Teddington, Acumen, 1999, Gardiner op. cit., Geoffrey Howe, *Conflict of Loyalty*, London, Macmillan, 1994, Bruce Anderson, *John Major: The Making of the Prime Minister*, London, Fourth Estate, 1991, John Major, *John Major: The Autobiography*, London, HarperCollins, 2000 and Anthony Seldon, *Major: A Political Life*, London, Phoenix, 1998. With particular thanks to Mr Ian Taylor MBE MP for signalling the value of *Alport: A Study in Loyalty* in relation to the One Nation Group

One Nation Group, Conservative Centre Forward and, again, the Bow Group or in relation to a specific event which has precipitated the formation of a group such as the Suez crisis in 1965 and the Suez Group and the Hoare-Laval Agreement (concerning the conflict between Italy and Abyssinia) in 1935 and the subsequent formation of the December Club. [36] Alternatively they relate to a more general discussion on factions and tendencies where a descriptive account of a group or groupings is more a by-product of a wider discussion relating to the aforementioned two terms. [37]

Similarly newspaper articles provided a valuable pool of material. It was not uncommon for a group to be mentioned in over a hundred quality newspaper articles and while not all proved directly relevant, many were. This was especially true for those earliest groups when fewer alternative sources of political communication existed. Details of group meetings which, for example, are today emailed to members were regularly advertised in *The Times* providing a wealth of information as to when and where meetings were held, who attended and the agenda for discussion.

From this, three difficulties emerged within this first stage of research. Although none were considered fatal to the final success of the paper, they were relevant and as such are worthy of mention as failure to have addressed them could have materially

[36] For the Monday Club, see, for example, Seyd (1972) op. cit., for the One Nation Group, see, for example, Robert Walsha, 'The One Nation Group: A Tory Approach to Backbench Politics and Organisation, 1950-1955', *Twentieth Century British History,* vol.11 no. 2 (2000), for Conservative Centre Forward, see Stephen Evans, ''A Tiny Little Footnote in History': Conservative Centre Forward', *Parliamentary History,* vol.29 no.2 (2010), 208-228, for the Bow Group, see, for example, Rose (1961) op. cit., for the Suez Group, see, for example, Leon D Epstein, 'British MPs and their Local Parties: The Suez Crisis', *The American Political Science Review,* vol.54 no.2 (1960) and for the December Club, see, for example, Rasmussen op. cit.,

[37] See, for example, Brand op. cit., Hine op. cit., McKee (1996) op. cit., McKee (1989a) op. cit., McKee (1989b) op. cit., and Rose (1964) op. cit.,

affected the outcome of the research. In the first instance, it was very time consuming, more so than anticipated, to examine the range and breadth of potential sources which existed in relation to so many groups but considering the known scarcity of material each source had to be viewed as a potential one. This in itself caused other minor difficulties in that a number of the sources changed as the research progressed. Thus, for example, the website of the Bow Group was redesigned towards the latter stages of the thesis and similarly Direct Democracy, and its website, disappeared off the political radar midway through the thesis only to later reappear with a new website in the closing weeks. However as all internet references were access dated to reflect their content at the time of access then this was not found to materially affect the quality of the research.

In a similar vein, a second difficulty emerged as it became clear that the final number of groups was greater than initially anticipated and, although additional research proved not all were relevant, this did serve to further increase pressure on time. This said, the prospect of collating for the first time a comprehensive list of groupings was an exciting one and without doubt this overshadowed the additional work involved resulting from a significant increase in the projected total number. From this, while it is hoped that the list compiled included the great majority of groupings, and every endeavour was made to this end, there is the possibility that a number of smaller, lesser known groups may have been omitted, particularly from the early years of the Party's history. This is to be regretted but considering the size and scope of the research and the time and cost limitations it is to be expected although it is not envisaged that this will materially affect outcomes.

A third difficulty arose in deciding which unofficial groupings to study. As already indicated when discussing the definition of the term 'unofficial parliamentary party groups', earlier research had already revealed a plethora of groups associated with and allied to the Conservative Party. Thus it was crucial from the outset that a clear definition of the term be derived so that the remit of the research was clear. However even though this was laid down in the early stages of the thesis it was on occasion problematic in deciding the relevance of a grouping to the study and at times frustrating when two or three weeks work had to be undertaken in order to ascertain that a particular group was perhaps cross-party or that its organisational structure was sponsored by the formal party to an extent which necessitated exclusion from study.

The second stage of the research involved the conducting of interviews and in this instance these were sought from within three subsets of the PCP. Firstly, it became evident from stage one above that it was possible to isolate named individuals who had played or who continue to play a key role in each group and it was hoped that further information could be obtained from them specifically. This proved to be correct and a small number of key individuals of certain groups were extremely generous with their time and knowledge in this respect.

Interviews were also sought by writing to all MPs from the 2005 intake and to all female MPs. As above, it was evident from the first stage of research that very little information was available in respect of the most recent groupings, if indeed any new ones existed, and also in respect of the role of women in unofficial groupings. The interview success rate of both these sections of the parliamentary party was positive (35% for female MPs and 31% for the 2005 intake) and again certain MPs gave very

generously of their time and knowledge.

The final avenue for seeking interviews was through the selection of a random sample of the remaining MPs picking out every twentieth MP from an alphabetical list of the parliamentary party although no interviews were conducted as a result in this instance.

A standardised question format was utilised for all interviews of the above cohorts and, where relevant, a key individual of a particular group. The questions were divided into two parts and have been reproduced in Appendix 1 (2005 intake), Appendix 2 (female MPs) and Appendix 3 (all other MPs) for interest. The questions were adapted according to the MP interviewed to take account, for example, of the fact they may also be a shadow minister or chairman of a particular group. Interviews were, in the main, conducted over a three month period from April to June 2008. Each interview was conducted at Westminster and lasted approximately thirty minutes. Each interview was recorded.

The difficulties of interviewing were mostly general ones experienced by any researcher rather than being specific to this particular study and as such are not worth more than a passing mention. This is not to say however that the process was without any difficulty. Certainly although the close, often symbiotic, relationship between certain individuals and certain groups is beneficial in terms of the potentially valuable information available from key players, it did pose a very real problem if they refused to co-operate. Similarly as unofficial groups are by definition 'unofficial', confidentiality was an issue especially salient in this instance. While this was less relevant for the

groups which follow a 'look at me' philosophy and readily advertise their membership and activities accordingly, it was more relevant to those groups which pursue a 'hide away' philosophy and guard membership and activity more closely. Again, these difficulties were not insurmountable and certainly a prior awareness of them was especially helpful in formulating approaches for interview and indeed during the interview process itself. Supervisory discussion, conversations with other doctoral candidates who had already undertaken research interviews and advice drawn from a number of written sources were all helpful in this respect. [38]

A final point worthy of mention in this context was that because of the above symbiosis between certain MPs and certain groups, the need for cross-referencing of facts was especially salient. This was particularly so in determining the consequences that a group may have upon the Conservative Party as there was a concern that a small number of MPs had a tendency to overestimate the consequences of their own grouping upon the Party. Certainly interviewee bias and unwillingness to discuss problematical periods of a group's history were areas of sensitivity on occasion and not only for the research conducted for this thesis but also for earlier research. One former MP was a notable example in this respect in repeatedly telephoning to ensure material utilised from discussions with the author was sympathetic to his own view that one particular grouping exerted considerable influence upon Party policy throughout his tenure as chairman of it. [39]

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[38] See, for example, Hilary Arksey and Peter Knight, *Interviewing for Social Scientists,* London, Sage, 1999, Nigel Fielding (ed.), *Interviewing,* London, Sage, 2003, Bill Gillham, *Research Interviewing,* Maidenhead, Open University Press, 2005 and David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (ed.) *Theory and Methods in Political Science,* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2002

[39] Interviews, discussions and conversations with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000

Thus having defined unofficial parliamentary party groupings and the reasons for study together with the aims of the paper and how these aims are to be addressed both in terms of chapter layout and methodology, and indeed the difficulties experienced with `the methodology, attention will now focus on the unofficial groupings themselves.

Chapter Two: Who are they?

'At the beginning of the century the parliamentary party was organised in terms of leadership but not in terms of a backbench infrastructure. Today MPs have a plethora of groups, both official and unofficial, that they can join (or in some cases be invited to join) ... The result is a more active body of MPs and one more organised to ensure that the views of MPs can be conveyed to party leaders'. [1]

Who then are the unofficial parliamentary party groupings? In order to answer the question, this chapter will firstly bring together a list of the relevant groupings and then subsequently draw out information relevant to their origins, their organisation and, finally, their membership.

A list of groupings

As indicated in the previous chapter, some attempts have been made by others to provide a list of groupings but these have been found to be piecemeal; they detail only the most well known or combine the same with summarised political biographies and terminology within a general glossary. In order to improve on these, the starting point in this instance was a chronological list of groups compiled by the author for an earlier M.A degree which examined the history of one particular grouping, namely the 92 Group. [2] This list aimed to provide a contextual background for the study, albeit a limited one, and comprised forty groups derived principally from a relatively small

[1] Norton (1996) op. cit., 135
[2] Grant (2000) op. cit., 3

number of secondary sources. [3]

Additional research for this thesis resulted in an expanded list of potential groupings in a relatively short space of time. Each group on this revised list was subsequently researched further to ascertain whether or not it could be correctly defined as an unofficial parliamentary party grouping, as defined in the previous chapter. As research progressed it became necessary both to remove some groups which were found not to fulfil the necessary criteria, the core of their membership was drawn from outside the parliamentary party or they were found to be officially or even semi-officially linked to the Party for example, but also to add others which were found and hitherto unrecorded.

Overall, a number of sources contributed equally to the final list with political histories, memoirs and biographies proving as valuable as periodical and newspaper articles and indeed interviews. Certainly in the case of the last of these, one of the most recent groupings, Green Chip, was initially sourced unexpectedly during one of the first interviews conducted. [4] Additional information pertaining to this group was then gleaned from subsequent interviews and research of newspaper articles. Similarly, the existence of the Agricultural Dining Club emerged only during general discussions with another MP. [5]

The list thus developed with the final result detailed in Appendix 4. Whereas the earlier list had been arranged in approximate chronological order, it was found that this

[3] Gardiner op. cit., Stephen Ingle, *The British Party System*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1989, Layton-Henry op. cit., Norton (1996) op. cit., Norton (1979) op. cit., Seldon and Ball op. cit. and Nicholas Ridley, *My Style of Government: The Thatcher Years,* London, Fontana, 1992
[4] Interview with Mrs Anne Milton MP: 22 April 2008
[5] Interview with Mr Philip Dunne MP: 24 April 2008

arrangement lacked clarity when a greater number of groups were concerned, not least as a number wax and wane over time. The final list is thus arranged in alphabetical order and despite being greater in number than originally anticipated, which placed pressure on the project to be completed on time, it is historically fascinating to see the groups in their relative entirety.

This said, while the thesis would very much like to claim to have produced a definitive list of all the unofficial groupings which have ever existed within the Conservative Party, in reality this is not likely to be a truism. Many groups have a relatively short life span and it is therefore very likely that a number of groups, especially those from the earliest years of the period studied, have simply faded into obscurity over time with their work left unrecorded as key players have been promoted or retired from parliamentary life. It was, for example, only by chance that the existence of the Privy Council came to light in conversation with Richard Body about another grouping, the Anti-Common Market League. [6] However, this list does claim to be more comprehensive than any which has previously existed.

One of the most problematic areas of the thesis was the compilation of the list and deciding which groups should be included and which groups should not. In a number of cases the irrelevance of a potential group was immediately obvious and it could thus be discounted relatively quickly. Thus the Blue Ribbon Club and Coningsby Club, for example, were excluded as core membership was not drawn primarily from the PCP. [7] Similarly perusal of the website for the European Movement, as identified in chapter

[6] Interview with Sir Richard Body: 26 February 2008

[7] For further details regarding the Blue Ribbon Club, see, for example, Julian Critchley, *A Bag of Boiled Sweets*, London, Faber and Faber, 1995, 51, 65, 200 and Michael Heseltine, *Life in the Jungle: My Autobiography*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 2000, 30 and for the Coningsby Club, see, for example, Heseltine op. cit., 48

one, made it immediately apparent that its governance and membership were cross-party so it too was quickly excluded. In the same way, other groups were excluded as soon as research revealed a cross-party composition such as, for example, the Next Five Years Group. [8] However for others it was not possible to make the decision with the same degree of immediacy. In a number of instances, considerable time had to be taken in researching a group only to find that it did not comply with the original selection material. The Salisbury Group was one such example which initially appeared to be easily characterised as an unofficial parliamentary party grouping but only after closer examination of newspaper articles from the relevant periods did it become clear that this was not the case.

Other exclusions were those groups, as identified in chapter one, which were part of the formal Party such as, for example, the CRD and CPF. Also excluded were a number of semi-formal groupings such as the sectional or regional committees and backbench subject committees as identified by Philip Norton. [9]

In terms of backbench subject committees, the one exception to this was the Unionist Agricultural Committee which, in effect, operated as an unofficial grouping as it initially operated before the First World War and thus before backbench subject committees came into existence. [10] With the assistance of many sub-committees, it was actively engaged in many areas which impacted on agricultural policy and which included, for example, agricultural trading with the US, cottage holdings, the impact of mass education and Poor Law reform on agriculture, the marking of imported eggs, lobbying for an increase to road funds in rural areas and implications of the production

[8] Harold Macmillan, *Winds of Change 1914-1939*, London, Macmillan, 1966, 373-78
[9] Norton (1979) op. cit., 32
[10] Peter Richards, *The Backbenchers*, London, Faber and Faber, 1972, 45

of 'power alcohol' from sugar beet. Membership was comprised of a number of peers who were 'practical agriculturists' and all those Conservative MPs who represented agricultural constituencies with overall membership totalling approximately two hundred. [11] With no agricultural subject committee yet established, many of the functions it later went on to perform were fulfilled at this point in time by this particular unofficial grouping.

In terms of semi-formal groupings, exclusion included all those which aimed to recruit a specific section of society to join the Party. Thus Young Britons, the Junior Imperial League, Young Conservatives and latterly Conservative Future, which all sought to recruit younger members of society, were excluded. Similarly excluded were the Unionist Labour Movement, which aimed to increase the number of working class Conservative MPs, and more recently women2win which aims to increase the number of women elected to represent the Conservative Party in parliament. Women2win was initially included in the study but interviews with its co-chairmen Brooks Newmark and Theresa May revealed that it was to some degree semi-official as it was housed at Millbank and therefore had the official blessing of the Party (although not the blessing of all MPs interviewed). Certainly Theresa May did not view the group as an unofficial parliamentary party grouping although she did believe it had autonomy from the official Party. [12]

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[11] See, for example, 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 5 May 1896, 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 9 December 1924, 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 26 June 1925, 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 9 July 1925, 'Cottage Holdings', *The Times,* 14 September 1925, 'Unionist Agricultural Committee', *The Times,* 10 March 1927, 'Safeguarding of Agriculture', *The Times,* 20 May 1927, 'Farming and Protection', *The Times,* 30 May 1927, 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 1 December 1927, 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 8 December 1927 and 'U.S. and British Agriculture', *The Times,* 8 December 1937

[12] Interviews with Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP: 29 April 2008 and Mr Brooks Newmark MP: 30 April 2008. Further information regarding women2win can be found at http://www.women2win.com/ (accessed 14 May 2009)

An interesting parallel to women2win was the Primrose League which was established in 1883 (1884 in Scotland) and existed very successfully until its decline after the end of the First World War. In a number of respects, like women2win, it could be considered an unofficial parliamentary party grouping. It was certainly self-defined, taking its name from the supposed favourite flower and colour of Benjamin Disraeli. Like women2win it existed within the Conservative Party and proved essential for the modernisation and reorganisation of the Party at the time at which it existed. The League was, rather neatly, categorised by Philip Norton and Arthur Aughey, as a semi-official supporting group, and a similar categorisation can in many ways be applied to women2win. Both received and receive the official blessing of the Party and were and are housed in Party headquarters. Both had and have a mass membership but not a core membership drawn from the parliamentary party. [13] Both were excluded from study.

Also excluded were pressure groups and think-tanks such as the Adam Smith Institute and Politeia as indeed were identified in chapter one. Certainly a great many think-tanks and pressure groups allied to the Conservative Party were evident from the research and while many of the more recent and well publicised ones immediately stand out as not being relevant to study, their historic counterparts were not so easy to differentiate. The Round Table Movement which was one such group, intent on furthering a federal constitution for the countries of the Empire during the first two decades of the twentieth century, was initially believed to be an unofficial grouping although research subsequently revealed it not to be so. [14]

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[13] Philip Norton and Arthur Aughey, *Conservatives and Conservatism*, London, Temple Smith, 1981, 232-34

[14] See, for example, John Kendle, 'The Round Table Movement and 'Home Rule All Round'', *The Historical Journal,* vol.11 no.2 (1968), 332-53

On a final note, the difficulties of definition were further compounded by the fact that some groups began life as an unofficial parliamentary party grouping but then metamorphosed into an official or semi-official group with more formal links to the Conservative Party and which subsequently placed it outside the confines of this study. One interesting example of this, and indeed one which has already been alluded to in chapter one, was the 1922 Committee which although began life as an unofficial parliamentary party grouping rapidly developed to take its present format, namely the official backbench committee of the parliamentary party with a seat on the Board for its chairman although technically it remained an unofficial body until the reforms introduced under William Hague. This said, it is interesting that the 1922 was and is distinguishable from all other groups in that once the decision was made in 1926 to open membership to all private members (rather than simply those elected in the November 1922 and subsequent General Elections), and that when membership subsequently comprised all Conservative MPs (other than the leader) in opposition, that it was not so much a group within the parliamentary party but rather was the parliamentary party. [15]

Similarly, some groupings began life as an unofficial party grouping but then broadened their appeal so that they could no longer be so called. Thus one grouping, Sane Planning, began life as a parliamentary grouping in the 1980s with a core parliamentary membership derived from over ninety Conservative MPs drawn largely from the south east. The group, which was for some years led by Jerry Wiggin, actively lobbied against the planning policies of Nicholas Ridley to build on green belt sites. It later developed however to become a more general pressure group comprised

[15] For the widening of the 1922 Committee membership in the early years see, for example, Ball (1990) op. cit., 138

of party members and the general public which lobbied against subsequent rural developments. In this instance the grouping was included as a significant part of its life was spent in its early format. [16]

Thus having compiled the list of groups it was then possible from this to produce an alphabetical glossary of those same groups which summarised the activities of each and indeed this can be found in Appendix 5. As for Appendix 4, this is the first time that a comprehensive summary has been produced.

Having discussed then the compilation of both the listing of groups in Appendix 4 and the glossary of groups in Appendix 5, attention will now focus on these same groups in more detail by examining their origins; that is why and by whom they were formed and why they have the nomenclatures they do.

Origins: reasons for formation

Certainly there is no doubt that such groups are prevalent within the Conservative Party to an extent not seen within the other main political parties. The reason for this can be explained in both general and specific terms. In general terms, the length of tenure of the Party itself must be one of the key determining factors. As the Party has existed in its current recognisable form since the 1830s it has thus outlived all other main political parties in the UK in terms of longevity and as the development of informal aspects of an organisation are usually subsequent to the formal aspects, this

[16] For further information regarding Sane Planning, see, for example, Martin Fletcher, 'Young draws backbench fire; DTI backs new town developers', *The Times,* 2 June 1988, Alan Travis, 'The Day in Politics: Heseltine's new model army lacks solid foundation', *The Guardian,* 18 May 1988, John Ardill, 'Ridley 'losing' housing battle', *The Guardian,* 18 May 1988 and John Carvel, 'Backbench anger as Ridley insists on extra housing', *The Guardian,* 11 May 1988

could in part explain the unique prevalence of groupings in the Conservative Party over time.

A second explanation can be derived from the size of the parliamentary party. As the most successful political party, the number of Conservative MPs has over time exceeded the other main political parties. As Philip Norton has indicated, a parliamentary party needs a substantial number of MPs before it can form effective sub-groupings and certainly during the first four decades of the twentieth century, when many groupings came into being, the PCP was the only parliamentary party to have more than 100 MPs. The Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) was too small a parliamentary party to form any effective committees during the first two decades of the century (though it apparently tried), while the Liberal Parliamentary Party (LPP) started its rapid decline before it had time to experience more than a few unofficial attitude groups and one regional group. [17]

A third explanation for their prevalence, at least in terms of those groups which centre activity around evening dining, can be seen in the historical links between Conservative MPs and club dining which has set a precedent which continues, although to a lesser extent, to this day. Certainly it is interesting to note the nineteenth century origins of the Party as a period when holding private parties was common among the social circles from which Tory MPs were drawn. This said, it is also interesting to note that a number of MPs interviewed for this thesis believed that the reduction in frequency of evening sittings of parliament, and indeed the increasing costs associated with dining in central London, had seen a related reduction in group dining and indeed both these are explored later in the thesis.

[17] Norton (1979) op. cit., 32

Whatever the exact explanation for their prevalence within the Party, the studying of groups in their entirety has revealed the existence of peaks and troughs over time which would suggest that their origins are derived to some extent from common factors; the Edwardian period, for example, saw the development of a significant number of groups. [18] Indeed the extent of this particular development was such that it was exasperation at the ever increasing number of groupings which led one senior parliamentarian, Lord Milner, to refuse outright to extend his support to any more groups when asked by Walter Long to support an embryonic Union Defence League. [19] Certainly a number of letters to *The Times* over this period reflected a growing irritation amongst its readers at the increasing number of parliamentary groupings seeking support outside parliament. [20]

In more specific terms, a number of shared explanations for why these groups are formed can be seen. This is perhaps surprising considering the number and diversity of the groups detailed in Appendix 4. Certainly a number of groups have come into being as a direct counter response to a pre-existing Conservative grouping. Thus at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Unionist Free Food League counteracted the Tariff Reform Group and, later, the Positive European Group and Action Centre for Europe came into being to counteract the parliamentary activity of a significant range of anti-European groups. [21]

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[18] A number of groupings came into being during this period and included, amongst others, the Unionist Free Food League, the Union Defence League, the Unionist Social Reform Committee and the YMCA. Certainly the period before the First World War saw the dominance of three such groupings, namely the Confederacy, the Halsbury and the Unionist Social Reform Committee

[19] John Kendle, *Walter Long, Ireland and the Union 1905-1920,* Dublin, Glendale, 1992, 44

[20] See, for example, 'Letter to the Editor: Protest of a 'Die-Hard'', *The Times,* 20 October 1911

[21] For the Unionist Free Food League, see Blake op. cit., 181, for the Progress Trust, see Crowson op. cit., 237, for the Positive European Group, see Steve Ludlam and Martin J Smith (ed.), *Contemporary British Conservatism*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1996, 115 and for Action Centre for Europe, see Patrick Wintour, 'Tory think tanks joins battle over Europe', *The Guardian,* 1 March 1995

Similarly the India Defence Committee was formed in response not to another unofficial grouping but to the perceived failure of a backbench subject committee, namely the India Committee, to assimilate the views of a certain section of the parliamentary party. [22] The Bow Group was in part established to provide an intellectual forum for Conservative thinking to match that provided by the Fabian Society for the Labour Party. [23]

In some cases it was events on the international political agenda which precipitated the formation of a group. Thus the Danish 'No' vote in a referendum on the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 was the stimulus behind the 'Fresh Start' EDM (signed by some eighty six MPs) organised by Michael Spicer and the subsequent formation of Fresh Start and similarly the impending Inter-Governmental Conference in 1996 prompted the formation of the Inter-Governmental Conference Monitoring Group (IGC Monitoring Group). [24]

In other instances it was specific items on the domestic political agenda, and often proposed constitutional change, which precipitated, either entirely or in part, the formation of a group. Thus the second Reform Bill introduced in 1867 (the Peacock's Tail), [25] the Parliament Bill introduced in 1910 (the Halsbury), [26] attempts to introduce an Irish settlement (the Union Defence League in 1907 and the Imperial Unionist Association in 1916), [27] the Hoare-Laval pact between Britain and France

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[22] Seldon and Ball op. cit., 114-15
[23] Barr op. cit., 3-4
[24] For Fresh Start, see Gardiner op. cit., 11 and for the IGC Monitoring Group, see Seldon (1998) op. cit., 641 and Nicholas Wood, 'Tory Eurosceptics gather for assault', *The Times,* 23 March 1996
[25] Crowson op. cit., 236
[26] Seldon and Ball op. cit., 103
[27] For the Union Defence League, see 'The fight against Home Rule: New League formed', '*The Times,* 25 January 1907 and 'The highly important statement made by MR', *The Times,* 26 January 1907 and for the Imperial Unionist Association, see John Stubbs, 'The Unionists and Ireland 1914-1918', *The Historical Journal,* vol.33 no.4 (1990) 883-84 and Norton (1979) op. cit., 33

over Abyssinia in December 1935 (the December Club), [28] independence for India (the India Defence Committee), [29] the UK's application to join the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1961 (the Anti-Common Market League), [30] proposed Scottish devolution (the Scottish Thistle Group) [31] and subsequent proposed devolution for Scotland and Wales (the Union Flag Group) [32] and, unsurprisingly, the Maastricht Treaty (the European Foundation and Whipless Nine) [33] all resulted in the formation of at least one unofficial parliamentary grouping. Perhaps more surprising is that even war has resulted in the formation of a number of groups with the Unionist Business Committee and the Unionist War Committee both formed to press for a more vigorous war effort. [34]

Thus while it can be seen how a variety of events, both domestic and international, have created a significant number of groupings, other groups have however been created in protest against a particular leader and the direction in which he or she was taking the Party. Thus the Selsdon Group, for example, was formed in response to Edward Heath's economic U turn in 1973 and the movement of the Party to the left and Blue Chip to help consolidate the left who were faced with a leader, Margaret Thatcher, intent on following a more right-wing agenda. [35]

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[28] Rasmussen op. cit., 173-74
[29] Seldon and Ball op. cit., 114-15
[30] Interview with Sir Richard Body: 26 February 2008 and Anthony Forster, *Euroscepticism in Contemporary British Politics: Opposition to Europe in the British Conservative and Labour Parties since 1945,* London, Routledge, 2002, 15
[31] 'Devolution White Paper: How views can change', *The Independent,* 25 July 1997
[32] Gardiner op. cit., 119-20 and 'Obituary: Ian Grist', *The Independent,* 8 April 2002
[33] For the European Foundation, see http://www.europeanfoundation.org/mission.html (accessed 14 May 2009) and for the Whipless Nine, see Major op. cit., 602-3, Teresa Gorman, *No, Prime Minister,* London, John Blake, 2001, 252-56 and Hywel Williams, *Guilty Men: Conservative Decline and Fall 1992-1997,* London, Aurum, 1998, 72
[34] For the Unionist Business Committee, see 'Demand for Tonnage', *The Times,* 9 February 1916 and for the Unionist War Committee, see David Close, 'The Growth of Backbench Organisation in the Conservative Party', *Parliamentary Affairs,* vol.27 no.4 (1974), 376-79
[35] For the Selsdon Group, see http://www.selsdongroup.co.uk/aboutus.htm (accessed 14 May 2009) and 'Selsdon man resurrected', *The Times,* 20 September 1973 and for Blue Chip, see Anderson op. cit., 251-52, 273 and Alan Watkins, 'If you want to get ahead, get a sobriquet', *Independent on Sunday,* 1 August 2004

One group was formed as a reaction to the policies of, not a leader, but of a specific minister. Thus Sane Planning was established by MPs who, as already indicated, were unhappy with proposals by Nicholas Ridley, as Secretary of State for the Environment, to build on green belt sites in the south east.

On a more general level, it was a common interest amongst a group of MPs in a specific policy area which led to a grouping being formed. Thus the No Turning Back Group, the Economic Dining Club and the Pudding Club were all formed as a forum for general economic discussion, the Industrial Group as a forum for discussion of industrial protectionism, the Unionist Social Reform Committee to promote social and economic reform and the Young England Movement to promote Tory paternalism. [36] (While the above remains true, Richard Shepherd suggests, in his biography of Enoch Powell, that Nicholas Ridley established the Economic Dining Club as much to prevent Powell leaving the Party over British membership of the EEC as to provide a general forum for discussion of economic policy). [37] Similarly the Unionist Agricultural Committee and the Agricultural Dining Club were, and are, concerned with agricultural matters although the latter, still in existence today, is more concerned with general discussion over dinner than impacting on the policy process as indeed was the case with the former. [38]

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[36] For the No Turning Back Group, see interview with Mrs Angela Watkinson MP: 8 May 2008, for the Economic Dining Club, see Ridley (1992) op. cit., 20, for the Pudding Club, see Colin Brown, 'Westminster clubs where MPs gather food for thought', *The Independent*, 3 April 1991 and Michael White, 'Policy and politics: plotters merely paper tigers in balkanised Tory politics', *The Guardian*, 1 February 1994, for the Industrial Group, see Seldon and Ball op. cit., 104 and Crowson op. cit., 232-33, for the Unionist Social Reform Committee, see Jane Ridley, 'The Unionist Social Reform Committee 1911-1914: Wets before the Deluge', *The Historical Journal*, vol.30 no.2 (1987), 391 and Joseph Starr, 'Research Activities of British Political Parties', *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol.1 no.4 (1937), 105 and for the Young England Movement, see Blake op. cit., 55-57

[37] Robert Shepherd, *Enoch Powell: A Biography*, London, Pimlico, 1997, 422. See also Ridley (1992) op. cit., 20

[38] Interview with Mr Philip Dunne MP: 24 April 2008

Elsewhere it was a common interest amongst a specific intake of MPs after a general election which resulted in the formation of a group. Thus the Reveille was formed by the 1910 intake out of a discontent with communication and process with the parliamentary party, the One Nation Group by the 1950 intake in order to develop a new direction for the Party and Blue Chip and Guy Fawkes from the 1979 intake to consolidate the centre-left of the Party at a time when it was moving to the right. [39] This is not to say that all intakes establish groupings within their cohort. Certainly no specific groupings were formed by the 2001 intake, for example, although they did meet early on in the 2001 Parliament for an occasional dinner and indeed have done so again more recently, marking the occasion with a group photograph. Individuals from this particular intake were simply assimilated into other existing groups. [40] The 2005 intake were interesting in that, unlike their immediate predecessors, they did establish a grouping although this group did not last beyond its first few meetings. Although the group was never known as such by the majority of those who attended, its founders had, according to one, discussed the 'Picadors' as the most likely nomenclature and it will thus hereafter be referred to as such. Indeed it was interesting that many of its members went on to form the majority within another group, namely Green Chip, although several of those from the 2001 intake joined them as members. [41]

From this it is interesting that as groups from either the right or left-wing of the Party have waxed and waned over time, particularly but not always when the general direction of the Party is opposite to their own, that a number of umbrella groups have been formed. These serve to incorporate and consolidate a number of like-minded groups,

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[39] For the Reveille, see Ridley (1987) op. cit., 392, for the One Nation Group, see Walsha (2000) op. cit., 187 and Edward Heath, *The Autobiography of Edward Heath: The Course of My Life*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1998, 140-41, for Blue Chip, see Anderson op. cit., 251-52 and for Guy Fawkes, see Norton (1996) op. cit., 134

[40] Interview with Mrs Angela Watkinson MP: 8 May 2008

[41] Interview with Mr Graham Stuart MP: 29 April 2008 and Mr Stephen Hammond MP: 7 May 2008

although not always permanently, which have found it difficult to operate meaningfully at an independent level but which desire to keep their own identity. Thus over time Mainstream, Action Centre for Europe and the 92 Group have all acted as a general aegis for other centre-left, pro-European and right-wing groups respectively. [42]

It is also interesting that during the lifespan of backbench subject committees, a number of groups have existed with the self-assigned specific purpose of organising the slate for each element of the parliamentary party with, for example, the Lollards having existed to run the left-wing slate and the 92 Group to run the right-wing slate. [43]

Finally, others were formed with no specific purpose other than, in the case of the Wednesday Club, for a gossip, (the Wednesday Club according to Gyles Brandreth met on a Monday), [44] or to simply spend time with colleagues as indeed was the case for the female Conservative MPs who have recently met for dinner for the first time as a cohort. Although not all female MPs wanted to participate, and there were no plans to establish a named grouping as such, those who did meet were keen to continue to do so on this basis. [45]

Origins: founding fathers

It is possible to be able to discern a number of subsets of MPs within the PCP which have over time been responsible for the formation of unofficial groupings and, as above,

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[42] For Mainstream, see James Landale, 'Centre-left Tories urged to unite', *The Times*, 29 May 1996, for Action Centre for Europe, see Wintour (1 March 1995) op. cit. and for the 92 Group, see interview with Mr Philip Davies MP: 6 May 2008

[43] For the Lollards, see Peter Riddell, 'The Conservatives after 1992', *The Political Quarterly*, vol.63 no.4 (1992), 431 and for the 92 Group, see interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000

[44] Gyles Brandreth, *Breaking the Code: Westminster Diaries May 1990-May 1997*, London, Phoenix, 2000, 322-23

[45] Interviews with female Conservative MPs: April – June 2008

there is no one category more prevalent than others. While one MP interviewed stated that she had no interest in, nor any wish to participate in, any groups or indeed believed groupings had any significance whatsoever within the PCP (although she did admit to having attended Green Chip dinners), [46] certain individuals have emerged over time to play a significant role in the formation, or resurrection, of one or more groups. Indeed some MPs have either formed a grouping or, as a formative member of a group, become involved with its activities to such a degree that the group has subsequently become synonymous with their name. Indeed on occasion, association with that group has gone on to define their parliamentary career.

While many examples exist to illustrate this symbiosis, a few notable instances include Randolph Churchill who was closely allied with the Fourth Party, Walter Long with the Unionist Defence League, Edward Carson with the Unionist War Committee, William van Straubenzee with the Lollards, Nicholas Ridley with the Economic Dining Club, Patrick Wall and George Gardiner with the 92 Group, Tristan Garel-Jones with Blue Chip (he even commissioned an oil painting of himself and the group at his house where they would meet), Bill Cash with the European Foundation, Philip Davies with Better Off Out and Edward Leigh with Cornerstone. [47]

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[46] Interview with Mrs Anne Milton MP: 22 April 2008

[47] For Randolph Churchill, see Norton (1996) op. cit., 31, for Walter Long, see Green (1996) op. cit., 301-2, for Edward Carson, see Close (1974) op. cit., 376-78, for William van Straubenzee, see Riddell (1992) op. cit., 431 and 'Obituary: Sir William van Straubenzee', *The Times*, 5 November 1999, for Nicholas Ridley, see Ridley (1992) op. cit., 20 and 'Obituary: Lord Ridley', *The Guardian*, 6 March 1993, for Pat Wall, see, for example, DPW/37/22 (Summary 1964-1984): various papers, for George Gardiner, see interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000 and Norman Fowler, *A Political Suicide: The Conservatives' voyage into the wilderness*, London, Politicos, 2008, 78-79, for Tristan Garel-Jones, see Seldon (1998) op. cit., 60 and Alan Clark, *Alan Clark Diaries 1983-1991*, London, Phoenix, 1997, 170, for Bill Cash, see Forster (2002a) op. cit., 88, for Philip Davies, see interview with Mr Philip Davies MP: 6 May 2008 and Brendan Carlin and Jonathan Isaby, 'No place for Eurosceptic MPs in my team, warns Cameron', *The Daily Telegraph*, 26 April 2006 and for Edward Leigh, see http://cornerstonegroup.wordpress.com/ especially http://cornerstonegroup.wordpress.com/about/ and http://cornerstonegroup.wordpress.com/press-release/the-strange-desertion-of-tory-britain/ (all accessed 15 May 2009)

On other occasions it was, as indicated in the previous section, a concerted combined attempt by members of a new intake who were responsible for forming a new group. Thus the 1910 intake and the Reveille, the 1950 intake and the One Nation Group and the 1979 intake and Blue Chip and Guy Fawkes for example. Certainly more recently, and again as mentioned previously, the 2005 intake met initially to socialise and offer mutual support in unfamiliar surroundings although this particular group soon faded as the logistical difficulties of getting all members of the intake together proved too problematic and MPs interested in group membership instead gravitated towards an existing group or groups or became one of the early members of Green Chip. This said, while a significant number of Green Chip members are from the 2005 intake, they are not exclusively so and members of the group are indeed also drawn from other intakes. [48]

If not formed by a specific intake, a number of groupings have been formed by other sections of MPs. Thus younger MPs have formed groups such as the Active Backbenchers Committee and the Scottish Thistle Group and older parliamentarians groups such as the Halsbury. [49] Similarly some groups have been formed predominantly by backbenchers such as, again, the Active Backbenchers Committee and the Industrial Group, while others, but more unusually, by disproportionate numbers of ministers or even ex-ministers as illustrated by the Suez Group. [50] Some

[48] Interviews with 2005 intake MPs: April-June 2008. See also Francis Elliott, 'Tory divisions over traditional values revived as Cameron sets off for Africa', *The Times,* 23 July 2007 and Simon McGee, 'The Green Club; In Dave's groovy new Tories, you're no one if you're not in...', *Mail on Sunday,* 9 March 2008

[49] For the Active Backbenchers Committee, see 'Obituary: Sir Charles Taylor', *The Times,* 30 March 1989, for the Scottish Thistle Group, see Peter Barberis, John McHugh and Mike Tyldesley, *Encyclopaedia of British and Irish Political Organizations: Parties, Groups and Movements of the Twentieth Century,* London, Pinter, 2000, 409 and for the Halsbury, see Charmley (1998) op. cit., 43

[50] For the Active Backbenchers Committee, see Philip Norton, *The Commons in Perspective*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1985, 203, for the Industrial Group, see Crowson op. cit., 232, 233 and for the Suez Group, see Keith Alderman and JA Cross, 'The Reluctant Knife: Reflections on the Prime Minister's Power of Dismissal', *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol.38 no.4 (1985), 396

have even been formed by prospective parliamentary candidates (PPCs) and these include the Anti-Common Market League, Everest and the Standard Bearers, and another, the Bow Group, by MPs who were friends while at university. [51] Finally, another group, the Double-Eight, was formed by parliamentarians from both Westminster and the European parliament in order to facilitate relations between pro-Europeans in the Party. [52]

Origins: nomenclatures

The names of many groupings are derived from functions while others are named after names, dates, events or places. Thus the names of the Unionist Free Food League, the India Defence Committee, the Anti-Common Market League, the Union Flag Group and the IGC Monitoring Group, for example, are all straight forward reflections of their central purpose. In the same way, CChange was so named after its desire to seek a change for the Party with a new direction after its election defeat in 1997 and the No Turning Back Group after its continued commitment to a Thatcherite economic agenda after Margaret Thatcher stood down as leader in 1990. [53]

Similarly a number of unofficial sectional groupings already discussed, have been named after their particular area of interest. These include the Unionist Agricultural Committee, the Agricultural Dining Club, the Economic Dining Club, the Industrial Group and the Unionist Social Reform Committee.

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[51] For the Anti-Common Market League, see 'Obituary: Mr John Paul', *The Times*, 7 June 1969, for Everest, see interview with Mr Stephen Hammond MP: 7 May 2008, for the Standard Bearers, see Riddell (1992) op. cit., 430-31, Edward Pilkington, 'Here beginneth opportunism', *The Guardian*, 20 March 1992 and 'Atticus', *Sunday Times*, 15 September 1991 and for the Bow Group, see Howe (1995) op. cit., 20

[52] Interview with Mr Ian Taylor MBE MP: 24 April 2008

[53] For CChange see, for example, http://www.cchange.org.uk/ (accessed 18 May 2009) and for the No Turning Back Group, see Norton (1996) op. cit., 134 and interview Mrs Angela Watkinson MP: 8 May 2008

Alternatively others have been named after their founding member, thus the Halsbury was named after Lord Halsbury and Nick's Diner after Nicholas Scott. [54] One group, which technically falls outside the remit of this paper as it was comprised of (the Eurosceptic) members of the European PCP, was named H-bloc after the initial letter of the surnames of a number of its members and particularly two of its leading members, Roger Helmer and Chris Heaton-Harris. [55] Similarly the Active Backbenchers Committee was named after its generic membership, active backbenchers, and Blue Chip, after MPs who were drawn from predominantly aristocratic families. In the case of the last of these, it was the whips' office which named this particular grouping soon after its members started to meet at Westminster in 1979. [56] Another group, the YMCA, were likened by their opponents to the Young Mens' Christian Association, for their mixture of 'social concern and sanctimoniousness'. [57]

In the same vein, a small number have been named not after a founder but a political hero. Thus the Burke Club (Edmund Burke) and the Bonar Law Club (Andrew Bonar Law) were named accordingly. Another, the One Nation Group, was derived from *Sybil*, a book written by Benjamin Disraeli who warned that 'this country was dividing into two nations between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy', namely the rich and the poor. Similarly Fresh Start was named after the Early Day Motion which resulted in its formation. [58]

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[54] For the Halsbury, see Charmley (1998) op. cit., 43 and for Nick's Diner, see interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008
[55] Interview with Mr Robert Goodwill MP: 4 June 2008
[56] Anderson op. cit., 252 and Gorman op. cit., 242
[57] Seldon and Ball op. cit., 326
[58] For the One Nation Group, see Benjamin Disraeli, *Sybil*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998 and for Fresh Start, see Gardiner op. cit., 11

Some groups have been so called after the number of its members hence the Whipless Nine and the Double-Eight. [59] Other groups have drawn inspiration from significant locations, often the place where they initially, or subsequently, met. Thus the Bow Group from the Bow and Bromley Constitutional Club on the Bow Road where it held its first meetings, the 92 Group from the London home of its founding member Pat Wall at 92 Cheyne Walk, the Lollards from the home of one of its key members William van Straubenzee at the Lollards Tower at Lambeth Palace (where he was a Church Estates Commissioner), the Upstairs Club from the upstairs at Gran Paradiso restaurant where it used to meet and the Selsdon Group from the Selsdon Park Hotel near Croydon in Surrey where Edward Heath had convened his shadow cabinet three years earlier for a brainstorming session. [60]

Similarly, others have been named after the date on which they first met; thus the December Club, self-evidently, from events which took place in December 1935 and Guy Fawkes from 5 November 1979. [61] In the case of the first of these it is interesting that the December Club was only so named some time after the events which precipitated its formation and similarly the One Nation Group was only so named after its eponymous publication. Indeed it is interesting, as detailed by Mark Garnett in the biography of one of its founding members, that the One Nation Group was initially called the 'Strong and the Weak Group' after a recent speech by Anthony Eden. (It is doubtful, as indeed Garnett indicates, whether it would have achieved the prominence it

[59] The 'Whipless Nine' was comprised of nine MPs (Teddy Taylor, Teresa Gorman, Richard Shepherd, Christopher Gill, John Wilkinson, Tony Marlow, Nicholas Budgen, Michael Carttiss and Richard Body), see Major op. cit., 602-3 and the Double-Eight is comprised of eight MPs and eight MEPs, see interview with Mr Ian Taylor MBE MP: 24 April 2008

[60] For the Bow Group, see Howe (1995) op. cit., 24, for the 92 Group, see Grant (2000) op. cit., 16, for the Lollards, see interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000 and Seldon and Ball op. cit., 118, for the Upstairs Club, see interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000 and Gardiner op. cit., 38-39 and for the Selsdon Group, see http://www.selsdongroup.co.uk/aboutus.htm (accessed 19 May 2009)

[61] For Guy Fawkes, see Norton (1996) op. cit., 134

did had it adhered to its first name). [62] Similarly, the Third Term Group was set up by MPs at the start of the 1983 Parliament and, although cross-party, the Next Five Years Group first met in 1934 to underline short-term rather than long-term theories in two policy areas critical for the first half of the 1930s, namely economic policy and international relations. [63] In the case of another grouping, the Dresden, its members allegedly decided to continue a friendship cemented while on a trip to Dresden. [64]

Less straight forward are those groups which have drawn either from obvious symbolism, hence the Scottish Thistle Group advocating Scottish devolution, or from the names of others. Thus Green Chip appears to reflect the Blue Chip of the 1980s but also the movement towards environmental politics in the twenty first century although members who had attended recent meetings had little recollection of green issues being discussed. [65] One group, the Fourth Party, was named after a parliamentary exchange and another, the Snakes and Ladders, because politics 'is all about snakes and ladders' while the name Everest was devised by a group of PPCs daunted by the task of securing election as a Conservative MP in 1997. [66]

Some have sought to change their name over time, the Anti-Common Market League evolved latterly to become Get Britain Out for example, and some groups have even been known by two different names. Thus the December Club was also known as the 1936 Club and Fresh Start also known as the Jay Group. [67]

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[62] Garnett op. cit., 103

[63] For the Third Term Group, see Tom Baldwin, 'Knives are being sharpened in Tory dining clubs', *The Times*, 18 January 2003 and for the Next Five Years Group, see Macmillan (1966) op. cit., 373-74

[64] Brown (3 April 1991) op. cit.,

[65] Interviews with MPs: April–June 2008

[66] For the Fourth Party, see Blake op. cit., 135, for the Snakes and Ladders, see Brown (3 April 1991) op. cit., and for Everest, see interview with Mr Stephen Hammond MP: 7 May 2008

[67] For the Anti-Common Market League/ Get Britain Out, see http://www.bullen.demon.co.uk/ (accessed 14 May 2009), for the December Club/ 1936 Club, see Rasmussen op. cit., 174 and for Fresh Start / Jay Group, see interview with Sir Richard Body: 26 February 2008

Finally, it is interesting that some groups have, over time, acquired nicknames. Thus the 92 Group has been nicknamed 'the Black Hand Gang', the Lollards has been called 'the Bollards', for 'always being in the middle of the road', the One Nation Group has been nicknamed 'One Notion', the notion being its 'members desire for their own political advancement', the Bow Group at one time was known as the 'Beau Group' after Michael Heseltine's editorial changes to *Crossbow* while the Industrial Group was nicknamed the 'Forty Thieves' after the hard-line economic reputation of its members. Similarly the Amery-Eden Group was also known as the cognominal 'Glamour Boys' by the press as a reflection of the good looks of its members. [68]

Thus having examined the origins of the groups it can be seen that a disparate and wide range of reasons exist which have determined why the groups were formed and that a similar diversity can be seen both in the range of parliamentarians who were responsible for founding the groups and in the nomenclatures assigned to those groups. In order to answer the question 'who are these groups?' attention will now focus on, first, their organisation and then subsequently, their membership.

Organisation: structure and governance

In order to discuss organisation of the groupings, three specific aspects will be examined namely structure and governance, office and administrative arrangements and lastly, where relevant, funding.

[68] For the 92 Group, see Grant (2000) op. cit., 1 and Fowler (2008) op. cit.,78, for the Lollards, see 'Atticus', *Sunday Times,* 3 December 1989, for the One Nation Group, see Walsha (2000) op. cit., 199, for the Bow Group, see Barr op. cit., 37, for the Industrial Group, see Crowson op. cit., 232, 233 and for the Amery-Eden Group, see Rasmussen op. cit., 176

Certainly the structure and governance of the groups are notable in that while some similarities exist, no two groups are constituted in exactly the same way. Thus some groups appear to have no formal structure whilst others have a full organising committee, with annual elections reported to the public, a high profile president and often an additional advisory or executive council to govern the group. Before discussing this further, it is interesting to observe that the extent to which a grouping is structured is generally, but not always, found to be linked to two factors.

Firstly, and perhaps unsurprisingly, it is linked to the size of the group in that the smaller the group, the less formal its structure. Secondly, there is frequently, but not always, a direct correlation between the extent of formal organisation within the group and the degree to which the group adopts a 'look at me' approach, that is the extent to which it seeks publicity for itself both within and beyond the parliamentary arena. Hence those groups which wish operations to remain private generally have a less defined organisational structure and those which seek publicity to any meaningful degree tend to have a more defined organisational structure.

Thus at one end of the scale some groups have very little structure in that only one person is associated with organising and indeed governing the group. The No Turning Back Group, for example, has a chairman but no other organisational structure and thus all arrangements for dinners are made by that person; both Angela Watkinson and John Redwood have fulfilled the position in this instance. [69] In other cases the chairman may also be the founding member as was the case with George Gardiner and the Upstairs Club with Gardiner also organising all Club dinners. Along similar lines, Bill Cash fulfilled an all-encompassing role for the Burke Club and Tristan Garel-Jones

[69] Interview with Mrs Angela Watkinson MP: 8 May 2008

for Blue Chip, with the latter even hosting (and paying) for dinners at his home in Catherine Place, Victoria. [70] In the case of both the Upstairs Club and Blue Chip, the group essentially ceased to exist after the respective individual was no longer involved.

Conversely, other groups can be seen to have a number of clearly defined chairmen over time as above although, in these cases, a loosely banded committee was also evident. Thus the Lollards were a loosely organised grouping led, over time, by a number of chairmen who included William van Straubenzee, Peter Temple-Morris and Fred Silvester. [71]

In contrast, others have a clearly defined chairman *and* well organised and defined committee, even if only compiled of three or four key members such as vice chairman, secretary and treasurer. Thus the Scottish Thistle Group was at one time led by Michael Ancram as chairman and supported by a small committee which included a treasurer and the Union Flag Group was led jointly by three MPs again supported by a small committee which included three secretaries; one each for England, Wales and Scotland. [72] (It is interesting that on more than one occasion the existence of a specific committee position only became apparent from a letter signed by the holder to a national newspaper).

Certainly the existence of an organised committee is not a new one. The Unionist Free Food League, the Unionist War Committee and the Unionist Agricultural Committee, for example, all had clearly defined traditional organising committees.

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[70] For the Burke Club, see Brown (3 April 1991) op. cit., and for Blue Chip, see Seldon (1998) op. cit., 60
[71] Philip Webster, 'Left seeks backbench coup', *The Times,* 26 November 1986, Nicholas Wood, 'Major caught in crossfire of Tory civil war', *The Times,* 9 November 1992 and Crowson op. cit., 234
[72] For the Scottish Thistle Group, see 'Letter to the Editor', *The Times,* 16 February 1968 and 'Berwick and East Lothian', *The Times*, 27 September 1974 and for the Union Flag Group, see Gardiner op. cit., 119-20 and 'Obituary: Ian Grist', *The Independent,* 8 April 2002

Indeed the appointment of a president, vice presidents, treasurer and secretary for the Unionist Free Food League were all announced in *The Times* as were a chairman, vice chairman and joint secretaries for the Unionist War Committee and a chairman, vice chairman, treasurer and joint secretaries for the Unionist Agricultural Committee. [73]

While the above represent archetypal committees, positions on other committees have evolved over time in response to the needs of a changing external political environment. Thus the Bow Group sought to appoint not only a chairman at its 2009 AGM but also a political officer, a research secretary, a membership secretary, a social secretary, a commercial secretary and a treasurer. Further positions of editor and assistant editor for its magazine, *Crossbow,* and an additional on-line editor were also appointed. [74] Similarly the Anti-Common Market League introduced a new position, a membership secretary, and both A Better Choice and Better Off Out appointed a campaign director. [75]

It is, furthermore, notable that those groups which most actively demonstrate a 'look at me' approach also tend to have further structural tiers. Thus the Bow Group has a governing body, its Council, to which it seeks to appoint eight members in addition to its organising committee as indicated above. [76] Historically, a similar picture can be seen with, for example, both the Unionist Free Food League and the Unionist Free

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[73] For the Unionist Free Food League, see 'Fiscal Policy', *The Times,* 24 October 1903, for the Unionist War Committee, see 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 20 June 1917 and for the Unionist Agricultural Committee, see 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 11 February 1926

[74] Correspondence from Mr Annesley Abercorn: May 2009

[75] For the Anti-Common Market League, see http://www.bullen.demon.co.uk/cibacml.htm (accessed 23 January 2008), for A Better Choice, see Tim Shipman, 'A boost for Ken as the Tories kick out rule change', *Daily Mail,* 28 September 2005 and for Better Off Out, see http://www.tfa.net/betteroffout/ (accessed 19 May 2009)

[76] See http://www.bowgroup.org/content.asp?pageid=9 (accessed 19 May 2009) and correspondence from Mr Annesley Abercorn: May 2009

Trade Club which both possessed an executive council. [77]

It is notable that this additional tier is often filled by well known parliamentarians whose association with a group brings welcome publicity. Thus, in addition to its organising committee, the Selsdon Group in 2009 had a patron (Norman Tebbit), a president (John Redwood) and fifteen high profile vice presidents including three Conservative MPs (John Whittingale, Christopher Chope and Bernard Jenkin) in addition to two Conservative MEPs (Martin Callanan and Dan Hannan). [78] Likewise Action Centre for Europe was notable for having a patron, (Willie Whitelaw), a president (Geoffrey Howe), a director (former MEP Michael Welsh) and an advisory council (which included Ken Clarke and David Hunt). One group even counted three Party leaders and two ex-prime ministers amongst its number; in 1969 the European Forum cited Edward Heath, then leader of the Party, as its president along with Alec Douglas-Home and Harold Macmillan as patrons. [79] Another group, the European Foundation, is notable for having all the above with not only a patron (Margaret Thatcher), a chairman (Bill Cash), an international director (Andrew Rosindell), a European director, a head of research, an editor of its publication, *The European Journal*, a UK Advisory Board but also an International Advisory Board. [80]

In addition to those higher echelons indicated above, a significant minority of groupings were also found to have an array of sub-committees. Again, these are not a new development and have existed for as long as the groups themselves have been in

[77] For the Unionist Free Food League, see 'Political Notes', *The Times*, 24 March 1904 and for the Unionist Free Trade Club, see 'Political Notes', *The Times*, 7 June 1905
[78] http://www.selsdongroup.co.uk/officers.htm (accessed 20 May 2009)
[79] For Action Centre for Europe, see Ludlam and Smith op. cit., 116-17, Paul Wallace, 'Major says 'maybe never' for single currency', *The Independent*, 9 June 1995 and Kirsty Milne and Richard Cockett, 'Who'll do Blair's thinking', *Sunday Times*, 18 May 1997 and for the European Forum, see David Wood, 'New pro-Market group sponsored by Tories', *The Times*, 16 August 1969
[80] http://www.europeanfoundation.org/personnel.html (accessed 20 May 2009)

existence. Thus, for example, the Unionist Free Food League formed a sub-committee for Lancashire in 1903 to undertake plans for an extensive Autumn campaign, the Unionist Social Reform Committee established a sub-committee to examine industrial unrest, the Unionist Agricultural Committee had a great number of such committees which included those for Cottage Holdings and Small Holdings, Power Alcohol and the National Health Insurance Scheme, the European Forum established an agricultural study group and, more recently, in 2009 the Bow Group had seven sub-committees namely Culture, Media and Sport, Economic Policy, Education and Social Policy, Energy and Transport, Foreign Affairs and Security, Health and, lastly, Home Affairs. [81]

One group, Better Off Out (which lies within the remit of this paper), is even itself a sub-group of another broader extra-parliamentary organisation, The Freedom Association (which does not lie within the remit of this paper). [82]

In the same way, a small number of groups have established a number of national branches although this practice was found to have declined significantly over time; probably largely explained by not only the increased use of both the mass media and email to carry the political message of a group but also the general decline in traditional means of grass roots political participation. Thus, for instance, the Unionist Free Trade League had a branch in Liverpool, the Unionist Free Trade Club had a branch in Glasgow and West of Scotland, the Union Defence League in Edinburgh and Lancashire and Cheshire and the Bow Group in, amongst others, Birmingham,

[81] For the Unionist Free Food League, see 'Preferential Tariffs', *The Times,* 5 August 1903, for the Unionist Social Reform Committee, see Green (1996) op. cit., 297, for the Unionist Agricultural Committee, see 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 15 July 1926, 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 26 June 1925 and 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 25 June 1925, for the European Forum, see Wood (16 August 1969) op. cit. and for the Bow Group, see correspondence from Mr Annesley Abercorn: May 2009

[82] http://www.tfa.net/ and http://www.tfa.net/betteroffout/ (accessed 21 May 2009)

Liverpool, Manchester and Newcastle, including at a number of universities. [83] The last of these was notable for also establishing a small number of international branches in Paris, Bonn and Brussels. The most successful of these was the Paris Bow Group, les Bowistes. [84]

In all these cases those holding positions of governance were either appointed or elected although in general terms, little detailed information could be found relating to this aspect of the groups. This said, in one instance, again in the case of the Bow Group, no initial elections were held with the first chairmanship being decided by the toss of a coin between Peter Emery and Bruce Griffiths, with the latter winning. [85] In another instance, in early meetings of the One Nation Group, the chairmanship was rotated between all members at the start of each meeting. [86]

Similarly on one other occasion, elections were loosely reported in the national press thus giving some idea as to who was elected and how elections were held. Thus the inaugural meeting and election of the first organising committee of Friends of Bruges was reported in *The Times* with Bill Cash announced as chairman. [87] Whereas in this case, elections were revealed after the event, a small number of groups, notably and hardly surprisingly those employing a 'look at me' philosophy, regularly publicise the holding of annual elections at an AGM prior to them taking place; one obvious example in this instance is the Bow Group which provides further information on its website.

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[83] For the Unionist Free Trade League, see 'Fiscal Policy', *The Times,* 4 December 1903, for the Unionist Free Trade Club, see 'The Policy of the Unionist Party', *The Times,* 29 January 1909, for the Union Defence League, see 'Funeral of Mr Butcher', *The Times,* 4 January 1911 and 'The Campaign Against Home Rule', *The Times,* 4 December 1911 and for the Bow Group, see Barr op. cit. 10-11, 44

[84] Barr op. cit., 121

[85] Ibid., 5

[86] Walsha (2000) op. cit., 196

[87] John Lewis, 'Tory MPs to fight EEC federalism', *The Times,* 21 March 1989

It is interesting that while some groups have enthusiastically established a successful structure and governance for their group, they have not always been as enthusiastic in sharing their knowledge and experience. Michael Spicer, who formed an embryonic Pressure for Economic and Social Toryism (PEST) whilst at university in the 1960s, wrote to the Bow Group asking for advice in setting up an unofficial grouping although they in turn, decided not to help him out. [88]

Organisation: offices and administration

While a small number of groups are notable for having a dedicated office and administrative support, it is also notable that in the majority of instances this is not the case. Certainly in terms of offices, only a few groups were found either to own or rent their own office. A small number of these groups have been positioned within the official Party headquarters and thus in general terms excluded from study. Certainly by seeking the covert support from the Party in this way, and indeed for a number of other reasons, they have been deemed to be either official or semi-official bodies and thus outside the remit of this study. One group however is an exception in this respect. Although the Unionist Social Reform Committee was housed at Party headquarters, and indeed employed a full time staff, it did retain its unofficial status and thus constitute an unofficial grouping. [89] Certainly the grouping proved a useful asset to the Party in terms of generating policy ideas for social reform at a time when positive policies in this area were lacking within the Party.

Other groups which made the decision to maintain an official base looked elsewhere. Thus the Union Defence League had its own offices at 25 Victoria Street and likewise

[88] Barr op. cit., 228
[89] DJ Dutton, 'The Unionist Party and Social Policy 1906-1914', *The Historical Journal*, vol.24 no.4 (1981), 881

the Unionist Free Food League at 15 and, then subsequently, 36 Victoria Street. The European Foundation resided at 83 Victoria Street while the Anti-Common Market League cited a shared address in Park Lane and the Selsdon Group resided in Sloane Street before moving to Brompton Road. [90]

A number of other groups were also seen to have a publicly available address over time and indeed would move office as their fortunes rose or fell. Thus the Bow Group has resided, amongst others, in a dedicated office within Hampstead Conservative Association, at premises in Loman Street and more recently in offices at Willesden Green. [91] By way of contrast, some groups prefer not to broadcast their location and instead utilise a PO Box rather than give a specified address. [92]

Other groups, and in the majority of instances this is the case, have no dedicated office but rely on the resources of their chairman and or secretary or other committee members in this respect although on occasion will openly use a parliamentary office address. Thus the European Research Group, at one time, provided a parliamentary address for those wishing to obtain copies of its most recent pamphlet. [93]

Similarly most groups do not employ any staff, again relying on the resources of the chairman or those involved on the committee. In many instances it was found from

[90] For the Union Defence League, see 'The fight against Home Rule: New League formed', *The Times*, 25 January1907, for the Unionist Free Food League, see 'Fiscal Policy', *The Times*, 21 December 1903, for the European Foundation, see http://www.europeanfoundation.org/contactus.html (accessed 22 May 2009), for the Anti-Common Market League, see 'Anti-EEC bodies forge links to reduce costs', *The Times*, 20 March 1973 and for the Selsdon Group, see 'Voucher scheme advocated for schools', *The Times*, 6 October 1977, 'Letter to the Editor', *The Times*, 7 March 1981 and http://www.selsdongroup.co.uk/ (accessed 23 May 2009)

[91] See, for example, Barr op. cit., 223, correspondence from Mr Annesley Abercorn: May 2009 and 'Chairman's message', *Crossbow*, Spring Edition 2010, 3

[92] http://www.tfa.net/betteroffout/contactus.html (accessed 25 May 2009)

[93] Nicholas Wood, 'Major woos sceptics in effort to win Europe vote', *The Times*, 27 February 1995

interview that it will be the secretary or researcher of a parliamentarian who is on the committee of a group who will be assigned the administrative tasks, or even research, for the group. One group which was an exception in this respect was the European Research Group which employed a researcher jointly funded by members although it did acknowledge that this arrangement deterred a number of potential members. [94] This said, a small number of other groups have also employed a dedicated member of staff and perhaps unsurprisingly it is these same groups which have maintained an office. The Bow Group for example, once again, stands out for employing its own secretary and indeed recently reported the appointment of a 'new Administrator'. [95]

Certainly it was evident from interviews that there is no doubt that for those groups which do not employ dedicated staff, the evolution of email has revolutionised operations as many groups now rely entirely on this means of communication as the most time and cost efficient way of organising their activities. From a research perspective this is to be lamented as much information can be gained from traditional correspondence and certainly emails are rarely retained in the same way that letters are. Many of the letters and even jottings on the back of envelopes held in Pat Wall's papers for instance contained a wealth of information that the future comparable archives of today's politicians will not.

Organisation: funding

In the same way that very few groups have ever been officially housed by the Party, very few groups have ever acquired any form of official funding from the Party and indeed it is this self-sufficiency which determines in large part an unofficial status.

[94] Interview with Mr David Gauke MP: 22 April 2008
[95] Correspondence from Mr Annesley Abercorn: May 2009 and 'Chairman's message', *Crossbow*, Spring Edition 2010

This lack of financial support however has not always been as a result of not asking. Walter Long, for example, attempted to secure funding of £10 000 for the Union Defence League in its early years. Although his request was turned down, some linkage, albeit informal, was subsequently established with the Party as Steel-Maitland and John Boraston (the Party's principal agent) were both appointed to the group's executive committee. [96]

Other requests for financial support have however been met with approval. The Bow Group in 1981, for example, found itself having to ask the then deputy chairman of the Party, Alan Howarth, out to lunch in Pimlico in order to secure £5 000 from Party funds for the group although its financial subservience to the Conservative Party was not a positive experience. As James Barr indicates, begging funds from Conservative Central Office (CCO) gave rise to a 'very uncomfortable relationship' which the chairman, Nirj Deva, believed affected the group's intellectual independence. [97]

Certainly financial dependence has not always been without controversy and can indeed bring into question a group's unofficial status as was vividly illustrated by the internal battle within the Party over independence for India. This came to a head during 1933 when a bitter war was waged between the die-hard India Defence Committee and the more moderate Union for Britain and India, with the die-hards constantly complaining that the Party organisation was taking sides quite unfairly. Finally in July 1933 the chairman of the Party had to deny that the Union for Britain and India was financially supported by CCO (which was only half true) and the Party magazine *Home and Empire* had to accept a reply from the India Defence Committee to

[96] Kendle (1992) op. cit., 68
[97] Barr op. cit., 175

an article from the Union for Britain and India. [98]

In the vast majority of cases however funding has been derived from outside the official Party organisation. At one level, for the smaller groups and for those which wish to remain relatively anonymous, operational costs are fairly minimal and therefore little funding is required beyond administrative help in arranging meetings, speakers and or dinners. In such instances, as indicated previously, either a parliamentarian or their staff will make the necessary arrangements themselves thus in effect funding the group through staffing allowances. Where it is necessary to complete research, again either the parliamentarian themselves or a parliamentary researcher may undertake the necessary work.

For other groups, and this is often the case for larger campaigning groups, funding is sought or offered from other sources. This may be a donor who makes a private contribution and in many such cases very few details are available although on occasion some information may be revealed at a later date. Thus Jim Miller, for example, was reported in his obituary as having donated to various bodies including the European Foundation and the European Research Group. [99] By comparison, in other cases, an individual donor's contribution may be well known at the time of giving as illustrated by Margaret Thatcher and the financial assistance given by her to Bill Cash for the European Foundation. [100]

Certainly the funding of groups by individual donors is not without controversy. In this same instance, Bill Cash was severely reprimanded by John Major for accepting

[98] John Ramsden, *The Age of Balfour and Baldwin 1902-1940,* New York, Longman, 1978, 333
[99] 'Obituary: Jim Miller', *The Times,* 28 November 1997
[100] Seldon (1998) op. cit, 651

funding from James Goldsmith and told that he must step down as chairman of the group unless the money was returned. It was only after this, and only twenty four hours after, that alternative funding was then subsequently offered and accepted from Margaret Thatcher. Although John Major was furious at the actions of his predecessor, Bill Cash did subsequently remain as chairman of the European Foundation. [101]

In other cases funding is provided by businesses sympathetic to the *raison d'être* of the grouping or in some cases by a mixture of individual Conservative supporters and business donors. Action Centre for Europe is an example of one group where financial support was provided from both of these sources and indeed it was able to fund a £40 000 research project as a result. [102] A similar amount was raised by A Better Choice although this was not all utilised for its intended purpose of fighting to retain the election of the Party leader by grass root members. It was suggested in this instance that the monies left over from the initial campaign would, instead, be used to help fund legal challenges against those rejected as a result of David Cameron's A-list policy. [103]

Finally by way of funding, other groups rely on alternative sources such as membership and journal subscriptions, sale of other publications, general sponsorship, advertising and revenue generated from the organisation of conferences. The Selsdon Group, for example, details funding from 'membership, subscriptions, donations and sponsorship' on its website while the Bow Group charges an annual membership subscription rate of £40.00 with a reduced rate of £20.00 for concessionaries. [104]

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[101] Brandreth op. cit., 411
[102] Wintour (1 March 1995) op. cit.,
[103] Helen Rumbelow, 'Tory activists campaign for grassroots vote on leadership', *The Times*, 28 July 2005 and Brendan Carlin and Jonathan Isaby, 'Cameron's A-list for candidates 'unenforceable'', *The Daily Telegraph*, 16 May 2006
[104] For the Selsdon Group, see http://www.selsdongroup.co.uk/aboutus.htm (accessed 25 May 2009) and for the Bow Group, see 'Subscriptions Advertisement', *Crossbow*, Spring Edition 2010

Membership: joining and leaving

Having discussed both the origins and organisation of groups, attention will now focus on the last section in this chapter, namely membership, and will examine how and why members join, and indeed leave, the numbers of members and, where relevant, membership overlap with other groups.

Certainly a number of methods by which members were able to join a group were evident from the research. The method or methods used by each group again reflect to some extent the degree to which a group seeks to operate not only within, but also beyond, the parliamentary boundaries. Thus in the first instance a number of groups have sought to recruit extra-parliamentary membership in addition to a core parliamentary membership, and have done so through the national media or latterly, on-line.

Certainly more recent years have seen those such as the Selsdon Group inviting interested parties to apply for membership on-line. Membership in this instance, and which according to its website may not necessarily be accepted, can be applied for by completing a form available on-line and then submitting it for approval by post. All potential members, it states, must also subscribe to the principles stated in the Selsdon Declaration (available for viewing on its website). Questions on the application form include, amongst others, the name of the applicant's constituency and the length of Conservative Party membership. [105] Other comparable groups recruit similarly. Thus the Bow Group seeks to also recruit a wider membership on-line although membership here is concomitant with 'holding Conservative views' and members 'are expected to

[105] For membership of the Selsdon Group, see http://www.selsdongroup.co.uk/joinus.htm and for the Selsdon Declaration, see http://www.selsdongroup.co.uk/index.htm (accessed 25 May 2009)

resign if they cease to support a Conservative viewpoint'. [106]

Although more recent groups have been able to utilise the internet, historically other analogous groupings have sought to use comparable contemporary recruitment tools for extra-parliamentary membership. Thus the Anti-Common Market League sought a wider membership from amongst 'Conservatives and former supporters of the Conservative Party' at the time of its formation in 1962 through the columns of *The Times*. [107] Similarly the Unionist Free Trade Committee sought a wider membership in 1904, again through *The Times,* by seeking to recruit 'any Liberal Unionist or Conservative Free Trader' wishing to join its new organisation. In the case of the latter, the names of members and a copy of a letter sent to all members were subsequently also published in *The Times.* [108]

It is interesting that in these cases, some groups, whilst retaining a core membership, governance or focus from within the parliamentary party, do seek to extend operations to some degree beyond the PCP and indeed do so from either national or ex-members of the Conservative Party and or sympathetic members of the public. The important point here for the purpose of this study is that where a group does seek *extra*-parliamentary membership, its core membership, governance or focus remain *within* the parliamentary party or else it will no longer constitute an unofficial parliamentary party grouping and thus fall beyond the remit of this paper. Certainly for those groups discussed, this has remained the case.

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[106] http://www.bowgroup.org/content.asp?pageid=2 (accessed 25 May 2009)
[107] See, for example, Personal Column, *The Times,* 24 January 1962
[108] See, for example, 'Liberal Union Club', *The Times,* 30 June 1904, 'Fiscal Policy. Unionist Free Trade Club', *The Times,* 4 July 1904 and 'Fiscal Policy. Unionist Free Trade Club', *The Times,* 14 July 1904

Other groups too have sought members from outside the parliamentary arena but in so doing have cast the net slightly less wide. Thus the 92 Group has in the past sought to recruit from amongst parliamentary candidates and indeed has done so largely at party conference and certainly one MP interviewed gave an account as to how he was approached by the 92 Group at a party conference prior to his election in 2005. [109] By assimilating like-minded candidates into their midst in this way, the intention was for their membership to be secured for the group once elected as an MP. Indeed at one time, the same group also sought to recruit undercover members in the same way for its competitor, the Lollards, thus securing a useful advantage in order to outperform the left of the Party in the organisation of the slate for Party backbench committees. [110]

Other groups have however preferred to either wait until candidates have become elected and become solidly embedded into parliamentary life before membership is considered. Thus the One Nation Group has sought to draw from each new intake after a general election (not least to ensure its own prosperity but also in the early years to prevent any rival groupings emerging in any one intake) while *The Times* reports that an internal memo was sent between members of the Burke Club after the 2005 General Election indicating that two new female MPs from the 2005 intake, namely Justine Greening and Nadine Dorries, would have 'consideration of their membership deferred for about six months to give them time to settle in to the House'. [111]

In terms of parliamentary membership, each group is generally self-selecting in that potential new members are identified by the organising committee and or existing

[109] Interview with Mr Stephen Hammond MP: 7 May 2008
[110] Interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000
[111] For the One Nation Group, see Robert Walsha, 'The One Nation Group and One Nation Conservatism, 1950-2002', *Contemporary British History,* vol.17 no.2 (2003a), 77 and for the Burke Club, see Hugo Rifkind, 'Tories' new golden girls', *The Times,* 1 December 2005

members and must then be agreed by the same before the person or persons concerned are approached. Certainly this system worked well for most of the groups where the relevant information was available; the One Nation Group and Nick's Diner, for example, both found this relatively informal self-selection process to be successful for group stability and continuity and in both these cases no MP interviewed who had a knowledge of these two could remember any instance of a potential member being 'blackballed' in recent years. [112]

This said, the process is not always a smooth one and on occasion a potential member may be 'blackballed' by another member in which case membership can proceed no further. Indeed it was interesting than one long serving MP interviewed who has been a member of the 92 Group for some years, remembers several occasions when the word of one member against a proposal for a potential new member was sufficient for it to be abandoned. [113]

Although this is not the case now and indeed has not been for some time, discussions with George Gardiner, an ex-chairman of the same group, revealed that they could never admit women members in its early years as one member, Ronald Bell, repeatedly 'blackballed' any potential member if she were female. Certainly the archive papers of Pat Wall which included typed and handwritten lists of members from its early years would appear to support this as no women are included on these lists. The first woman to appear on a membership list was Jill Knight whose name appeared in 1978 with a

[112] For the One Nation Group, see interview with Mrs Angela Watkinson MP: 8 May 2008 and for Nick's Diner, see interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008
[113] Interview with Lady Ann Winterton MP: 29 April 2008

note from Wall indicating 'the election of Jill Knight, Ronnie Bell having died'. [114] Other groups, although not discriminating against individuals on the basis of their sex, have retained the ability to refuse membership. Thus the Progress Trust and the One Nation Group both retained capacity to 'blackball' potential members. [115]

It is interesting that from the reverse perspective, from the pool of parliamentarians from which members may be drawn, all those MPs interviewed for this paper from the 2005 intake (with the exception of one) felt that membership of such groupings was overall an integral part of their life as an MP and accepted membership by their colleagues of any one or more of these groups, even if they were not of a like-mind in terms of political beliefs. [116] This said, two MPs from the 2005 intake who were interviewed said that they had resented being cited as a member by one group, namely Cornerstone (with one having asked for his name to be removed from the group's website), when they clearly did not view themselves as a member. [117]

This is not to say that when members are selected by a group for membership that ultimately all appointments are considered successful. Certainly Robert Walsha, in his study of the One Nation Group, indicates that a number of members felt that Edward Heath's membership had been a disappointment to them not least as he was invited to join by those who had heard he was a Balliol scholar. It was only after he had become

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[114] Grant (2000) op. cit., 23 and DPW/ 37/ 22 (Summary 1964-1984): typed summary of the 92 prepared by Pat Wall entitled 'The 92 Committee 1964-1984', dated 1984. There is however an anomaly here in that Ronald Bell did not die until 1982, whilst a sitting MP, and indeed his name remained on the membership list until this time thus he was still technically a member at the same time as Jill Knight. This said, there is no mention of his active involvement in the group from the files at this time and certainly Gardiner suggests he was a sleeping member during his later years and does not remember his attendance at any dinners from 1980 onwards

[115] For the Progress Trust, see Anthony Bevins, 'Plot to oust Maastricht rebels in Right's bid for Tory unity', *The Observer*, 24 October 1993 and for the One Nation Group, see Walsha (2003a), op. cit., 77

[116] For the one exception, see interview with Mrs Anne Milton MP: 22 April 2008,

[117] Interviews with Mr Stephen Hammond MP: 7 May 2008 and Mr Stephen Crabb MP: 6 May 2008

a member that it had become evident that he was an organ, and not an academic, scholar with relatively little to contribute to general debate. [118] Certainly Heath was asked to leave the group after he was promoted to the whips' office in October 1951 and indeed from November of the same year the group decreed that frontbenchers would be excluded from membership. [119] Certainly it was normal procedure in the vast majority of other groups studied for members to stand down from a group, albeit sometimes only temporarily, if they were promoted to the frontbench.

On other occasions (although these were rare) a member may leave a group as a result of resignation if a disagreement arose; Anthony Meyer, for example, resigned his membership of the Bow Group after an attack on Edward Heath in its magazine *Crossbow* and Cub Alport resigned from the One Nation Group after an inability to locate common ground on colonial affairs, although he did later rejoin. [120] More commonly, members would generally leave a group if they lost their seat at a general election as, for example, happened with one time leader of the Lollards, Fred Silvester.

Certainly the number of members in a grouping could alter dramatically after a general election. Guy Fawkes, for example, lost three of its eleven members after the 1992 General Election. Similarly for the 92 Group, from both discussions with ex-chairman George Gardiner and the archive papers of Pat Wall, a number of instances are evident where members were lost in this way, particularly after the 1997 General Election. It is however interesting that in the case of the 92 Group that ex-members

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[118] Walsha (2000) op. cit., 201

[119] Ibid., 206 and Garnett op. cit., 107

[120] Garnett op. cit., 117-18. Minutes of a meeting of the One Nation Group dated 12 February 1953 record that 'to the grief of his colleagues Cub Alport announced his intention to withdraw from the Group forthwith for purely private personal reasons. He had no disagreement on policy or otherwise with the rest of the 'Nation' although it was agreed that he would be invited to rejoin if the 'Nation' remembered the empire'. It was subsequently, at a meeting on 14 December 1954, decided to invite him to rejoin and indeed he reappeared at the next meeting

were still invited to attend meetings (and in one case to host a dinner) in part to maintain friendships established over many years but also in order to retain a respectable membership base. [121]

From this it was also interesting that a number of groups were very aware of their own mortality and took precautions to ensure a certain level of membership was retained by inviting at least one, and in a number of cases more, suitable member from each intake. Thus the Third Term Group, the 4th July and Nick's Diner were all found to recruit from subsequent intakes for their own self-preservation. [122]

A final reason for leaving a group, in addition to those already discussed, is illustrated by the experience of the Bow Group (which charges a subscription to members) when it experienced a mass resignation of two hundred members in one instance after increased subscriptions came into effect at the beginning of 1972. [123]

Having examined how members join, and indeed how and why they leave, it is interesting now to assess why members want to join a specific group. The motivation for this is similar to why groups were formed thus in many respects have already been discussed and as such will only be touched upon in this instance.

Thus at one level, a parliamentarian from a particular parliamentary intake may wish

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[121] For Guy Fawkes, see 'Atticus', *Sunday Times,* 26 April 1992 and for the 92 Group, see interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000 and, for example, DPW/ 37/ 11 (1974): confidential internal memo from 92 leadership dated 13 March 1974 recording the discussion of membership retention at a group meeting on 12 March 1974, handwritten correspondence from one ex-member to Wall dated 5 March 1974, typed membership list dated May 1974 and correspondence between one ex-member hosting a dinner and Pat Wall

[122] For the Third Term Group and the 4th July, see interviews with Mr Stephen Hammond MP: 7 May 2008 and Mrs Eleanor Laing MP: 24 April 2008 and for Nick's Diner, see interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008

[123] Barr op. cit., 125

to join with like-minded colleagues for reassurance, advice and friendship or even combined action for internal Party reform (Reveille Group and 1910 intake) or more generally, may wish to have ready access to an arena within which to meet colleagues, of any intake, for relaxation and social contact (Third Term Group).

Alternatively they may wish to pursue further an interest in either a specific (Sane Planning and planning in the south east) or general (Economic Dining Club and general economic discussion) policy area or even to meet with ideologically like-minded colleagues from a particular wing of the Party (Nick's Diner on the left or 92 Group on the right). They may wish to further their own political ambitions to help secure selection for a parliamentary seat (Bow Group) or to begin to formulate policy after selection but before being elected into parliament (Standard Bearers). They may wish to try to enhance the likelihood of being promoted once elected (Glamour Boys, Blue Chip and Guy Fawkes) or to find a niche for their parliamentary career if they neither seek nor receive promotion (Philip Davies and Better Off Out).

Similarly, they may wish to find a resting place between promotions (Anthony Eden and the Suez Group) or pursue a commitment to a particular ideological direction for the Party (Edward Leigh and Cornerstone). Some may, through their membership of a specific group, wish to show support for a Party leader and the general direction in which he or she is taking the Party (Green Chip and David Cameron) or as a protest against (Fourth Party and H Stafford Northcote) or even on occasion to monitor, as a quasi-opposition, a particular area of policy when in government (December Club and foreign policy). It was interesting that a member of the shadow whips' office in 2008 revealed that a small number of MPs even adopt a pragmatic approach and join two or more different, but not necessarily opposing, groups such as Green Chip and the No

Turning Back Group, in order to maintain a political profile amongst different sections of the parliamentary party. [124]

Membership: number of members

As information relating to each group studied is varied and often incomplete, it is difficult to ascertain exact numbers of members for all groupings not least as the total for any one group can vary considerably over time. This said, where information is available it was possible to ascertain an approximate average number of members over time for a sizeable number of the groups listed in Appendix 4. From this, it was possible to classify a number of these groups within one of three sized bands, namely small, medium or large, although it should be emphasised that these classifications are an approximation and to some extent arbitrary as the numbers of members of some groups do vary considerably over time.

The smaller groupings generally consisted of between four and nineteen members, most commonly between ten and twelve, and usually, but not always, constitute a dining club. Certainly the small numbers involved would fit easily around a dining table. Groupings classified within this smallest band, and which do largely constitute dining clubs, include Guy Fawkes, Blue Chip, the Economic Dining Club and the Upstairs Club, although the last of these would on occasion meet as a group of twenty two. Certainly in the early days of the One Nation Group it was decided, in 1951 after the group had moved its meetings into the dining rooms of the House of Commons, to restrict membership to twelve and similarly (and more recently) the Double-Eight, which would also meet generally for dinner, was comprised initially of sixteen

[124] Interview with Mr Brooks Newmark MP: 30 April 2008

members. [125] It is interesting that one of the reasons put forward for the formation of Guy Fawkes is that no more members could be admitted by its contemporary, Blue Chip, due to the fact there were no more spaces at Tristan Garel-Jones' dining room table. [126]

This is not to say that all groups of this size were exclusively dining clubs as those such as the Whipless Nine, the Scottish Thistle Group and the Standard Bearers illustrate. One of the smallest groups found, and again not exclusively a dining club, was the Fourth Party with a total of four members. Despite its small size, the group succeeded in its aim of bringing about the downfall of the leader of the Party in the Commons, H Stafford Northcote, as indeed is discussed later in chapter six. [127]

The second band of groups was comprised of those with an average membership ranging from twenty to fifty nine members, although again membership of any one group would and did vary considerably over time. Groups in this instance have included the December Club, the Glamour Boys, the European Research Group, Fresh Start, the IGC Monitoring Group, the Progress Trust, the Positive European Group, the Confederacy, the Selsdon and the Tory Reform Committee. [128]

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[125] For Guy Fawkes, see Norton (1985) op. cit., 36, for Blue Chip, see Norton (1985) op. cit., 36, for the Economic Dining Club, see Ridley (1992) op. cit., 20, for the Upstairs Club, see Gardiner op. cit., 38-39, for the One Nation Group, see Garnett op. cit., 107 and for the Double-Eight, see interview with Mr Ian Taylor MBE MP: 24 April 2008

[126] Anderson op. cit., 253

[127] The four members were Arthur Balfour, Henry Drummond Wolff, JE Gorst and Randolph Churchill, with the last of these leading the group. For further details, see, for example, Norton (1996) op. cit., 102-3

[128] For the December Club, see Seldon and Ball op. cit., 115, for the Glamour Boys, see Rasmussen op. cit., 176, for the European Research Group, see Norton (1996) op. cit., 135, for Fresh Start, see Norton (1996) op. cit., 135, for the IGC Monitoring Group, see Gardiner op. cit., 52, for the Progress Trust, see Brand op. cit., 153, for the Positive European Group, see Jill Sherman and Nicholas Wood, 'Tory MPs condemn Portillo speech', *The Times,* 18 October 1995, for the Confederacy, see Ramsden (1978) op. cit., 39, for the Selsdon Group, see 'State rescue of Leyland attacked by Tory MPs', *The Times,* 26 July 1975 and for the Tory Reform Committee, see Brand op. cit., 153

A third and final band of groupings included those with an average membership of sixty or more. This band generally, but not always, included those groups which have recruited an additional extra-parliamentary membership. Groups in this instance include the Bow Group, the India Defence Committee, the Imperial Unionist Association, Sane Planning, the Unionist Agricultural Committee, the Unionist Free Food League, Unionist Free Trade Club, the Unionist Social Reform Committee and the Unionist War Committee. [129] It is noteworthy that these larger groups more often than not are those same groups which have adopted a 'look at me' approach to group activities by seeking to maximise their exposure both within and beyond the parliamentary boundaries.

Membership: overlap with other groups

Although each group studied was found to have its own identity which differentiates it from its peers, and indeed those that have gone before, there was a surprising overlap between individual members in a number of instances. Certainly it is understandable that a number of MPs make the conscious decision to join two or more different groups in order to maintain a political profile within different sections of the parliamentary party as indeed discussed previously.

Similarly a number of MPs make the decision to join two or more groups from within the same wing of the Party. Thus, for example, George Gardiner was a member

[129] For the Bow Group, see Barr op. cit., 106, 222, 223, for the India Defence Committee, see Seldon and Ball op. cit., 115, for the Imperial Unionist Association, see Stubbs (1990) op. cit., 884, for Sane Planning, see David Nicholson-Lord, 'Green-within reason; New-town challenge facing Ridley', *The Times,* 13 May 1989 and Richard Ford, 'Tories say DTI new town support 'deplorable'; Hampshire', *The Times,* 3 June 1988, for the Unionist Agricultural Committee, see 'Safeguarding of Agriculture', *The Times,* 20 May 1927 and 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 1 December 1927, for the Unionist Free Food League, see 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 14 July 1903, for the Unionist Free Trade Club, see 'Letter to the Editor', *The Times,* 29 January 1909, for the Unionist Social Reform Committee, see Norton (1979) op. cit., 33 and for the Unionist War Committee, see 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 14 January 1916

of a number of groups on the right of the political spectrum, although not all simultaneously, which included the Monday Club, the Upstairs Club, the 92 Group, the Union Flag Group and Fresh Start. Similarly John Major was a member of both Blue Chip and Guy Fawkes, both on the centre left of the Party. [130] This overlap was by no means found to be an exclusively recent occurrence. It is interesting that in his study of dissent in the parliamentary party in the 1930s, Jorgen Rasmussen found an overlap of membership between the Glamour Boys, the December Club and the India Defence Committee, although also, simultaneously, found autonomy to a significant degree. [131]

An overlap of membership was also found to exist in instances where one group wound down its operation from its original format and evolved over time to form, or contribute to, another separate grouping with, on occasion, a considerable number of the members being carried over from one to another. Thus members of Reveille were strongly represented on the Unionist Organisation Committee and Fresh Start evolved to form the IGC Monitoring Group and in both instances many members simply transferred their membership from one to the other. [132]

An overlap was also found where one group emerged from another and operated simultaneously to its parent grouping. Thus Better Off Out emerged as a parliamentary offshoot to the Freedom Association and indeed continues to exist as such. [133] Similarly when a number of smaller groups decide to join together under the protection of one larger grouping then members become an integral part of not only their original grouping but also of the parent group. Thus, over time, members of the Macleod

[130] Anderson op. cit., 273
[131] Rasmussen op. cit., 178
[132] For the Reveille and the Unionist Organisation Committee, see Ridley (1987) op. cit., 392 and for Fresh Start and the IGC Monitoring Group, see Gardiner op. cit., 52
[133] Carlin and Isaby (26 April 2006) op. cit. and http://www.tfa.net/ (accessed 29 May 2009)

Group, Nick's Diner and the Tory Reform Group, amongst others, have all been members of the umbrella grouping, Mainstream. [134]

Finally, in some instances, an overlap exists in that, on occasion, members from one group attend dinners and or meetings of others as happened, for example, between the European Foundation and Conservatives Against a Federal Europe (CAFÉ) at the 1999 Party Conference. [135]

Thus having set out to answer the question, who are these groups? this chapter has sought to explore further a number of aspects of groupings which have together provided the answer. By bringing together so many groups, it has been possible to begin to explore further the nature of these groups. While each group is a distinct entity in its own right, common themes have unfolded and a picture has materialized of how and why the groups have emerged, who has been responsible for establishing them in the first place and why they have been allocated the names they have. This information, taken together with details relating to their structure and governance, their offices, administration and funding and indeed their membership, has produced a significant first step towards the provision of a bank of information. This will now be expanded further in the next chapter which will seek to explore group activities.

[134] See, for example, Michael Gove, 'How big beasts from the past staged their roar of defiance', *The Times,* 1 November 1997 and Landale (29 May 1996) op. cit.,
[135] See, for example, James Landale, 'Politics of fringe threaten to steal Hague's thunder', *The Times,* 4 October 1999

Chapter Three: What do they do?

'I like the House of Commons and I like all the people in it. They say it's the best club in the world, and I think that this is true.'

A Knight of the Shire [1]

What then do unofficial parliamentary party groups do? If the House of Commons is the best club in the world as the opening quotation suggests, and certainly historically this view was held by a number of MPs, are unofficial parliamentary party groupings simply part of this 'club scene', an historical relic, meeting only for a good dinner and a gossip? This chapter will seek to address this question by examining three areas of group activity. The first of these will be a study of group gatherings, which will include dinners, the second, of publications and the third, a consideration of additional activities not covered in the above.

Group gatherings: meetings

Attention will initially focus on group gatherings by examining in turn meetings, dinners and other similar events. Certainly having first studied the meetings of each group, it was found that these could be subdivided into one of four types, namely inaugural meetings, private meetings, public meetings and meetings held jointly with others, and that each of these in turn provided a useful basis for further study.

[1] Donald Searing, *Westminster's World: Understanding Political Roles*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1994, 161

While a number of inaugural meetings went unrecorded, other, recorded, meetings were significant for a variety of reasons. As already indicated in the preceding chapter, a number of group nomenclatures were taken from various features of these first meetings such as, for example, the date and location held. Other inaugural meetings were however significant for different reasons. Those Conservative MPs who attended the first meeting of Better Off Out, for example, were warned by David Cameron that if they continued their support of the group, they would not be considered for promotion. [2]

On a less overtly political level, the founding members of the Economic Dining Club, for example, found themselves locked in at a Mayfair Club after being entertained by Peter Hordern at one of their first meetings with the only viable escape route out of an upstairs window and down a drainpipe. [3]

Other inaugural meetings, and often those of groups which adopted a 'look at me' approach, were equally high profile although less controversial. Thus Mainstream, which was launched in 1996 at St. Stephen's Club, aimed to maximise media coverage with Douglas Hurd as a key speaker. [4] In contrast, those groups which have adopted a more 'hide away' operational approach held their first meetings in secret; the IGC Monitoring Group was one such example although in this particular instance events were subsequently reported to the press. [5]

In terms of subsequent meetings, group activities were very often based solely around private meetings, especially those groups which adopted a 'hide away'

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[2] Interview with Mr Philip Davies MP: 6 May 2008, Carlin and Isaby (26 April 2006) op. cit. and Celia Walden, 'United they stand', *The Daily Telegraph*, 8 September 2006
[3] Ridley (1992) op. cit., 20
[4] Mark Stuart, *Douglas Hurd: The Public Servant*, Edinburgh, Mainstream, 1998, 435-37
[5] Wood (23 March 1996) op. cit.,

philosophy although, as above, events were sometimes reported by the media afterwards. Again, as above, these were often not without controversy. Certainly, to draw from one of many examples, meetings of the Bow Group have not been without contention. In one instance the chairman was reprimanded for inviting the Liberal Jo Grimond to speak to the group at a meeting held at the Conservative Carlton Club, on another occasion civil servants were warned not to attend and on another, John Redwood was taped by infiltrators. More recently, and again at a Bow Club meeting, Norman Tebbit launched the first serious polemic attack on David Cameron since the latter won the leadership. [6]

Although the functions fulfilled by these groups will be examined in greater detail in chapter five, it is interesting to note here that from an historical perspective, private group meetings have played a key role in facilitating, if not determining, outcomes when either the Party leadership is being challenged or after the resignation of an existing leader. Indeed when challengers to the Party leader emerge, it is often after a private meeting of one grouping or another. Anthony Meyer's challenge to Margaret Thatcher, to cite one example, came shortly after a private meeting of the Lollards. Although at the time this was pitched as much as a shot across the bows than as a serious challenge, it was nevertheless the first and therefore significant step towards her downfall. [7] Other groups have taken on a facilitator role and provided a private arena in which MPs can listen to and question leadership candidates. Certainly both the Bow

[6] For reprimands, see Critchley (1995) op. cit., 97, for civil servants, see Richard Norton-Taylor, 'Ministers 'abusing' Whitehall neutrality', *The Guardian*, 10 October 1995, for secret recordings, see Charlie Methven, 'Labour taps in to Bow Group Tories', *The Daily Telegraph*, 29 October 2004 and for David Cameron, see Rosemary Bennett, 'Cameron's approach mocked by Tebbit', *The Times*, 1 February 2006

[7] Philip Webster and Nicholas Wood, 'Gilmour was the 'standby' stalking horse', *The Times*, 30 November 1989

Group and indeed the 92 Group have in the past fulfilled this role. [8]

In terms of frequency of private meetings, each group is different and indeed varies over time. Some groups meet weekly and on the same night each week, others monthly or simply when the need arises. Some groups have begun life with regular meetings which have then changed to dinners over time while others have held both meetings and dinners. The One Nation Group for example has, over time, met on a Tuesday, a Wednesday and a Thursday and subsequently grown into a dining club at various points in its history. [9]

In addition to private meetings, a number of groups have held public meetings and the frequency of these often relate directly to the extent to which the group adopts an outward looking approach to group activities. The One Nation Group, for example, at one point in its history organised a series of public meetings across the country while others such as the Unionist Free Food League, the Unionist Free Trade Club and the Anti-Common Market League (both on their own and with other groups) have all organised a significant number of public meetings in one format or another and indeed were often advertised in *The Times*. [10]

It is interesting but not unsurprising that the vast majority of such public meetings were held in the earlier parts of the last century and certainly both the last decade of the

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[8] For the Bow Group, see Bow Group Annual Report and Accounts available online from http://www.bowgroup.org (accessed 26 October 2006) and for the 92 Group, see interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000 and Major op. cit., 640-41

[9] Walsha (2003a) op. cit., 76-77

[10] For the One Nation Group, see Walsha (2000) op. cit., 205, for the Unionist Free Food League, see 'Fiscal Policy', *The Times*, 21 November 1903, 'Fiscal Policy', *The Times*, 23 November 1903 and 'Duke of Devonshire in Liverpool', *The Times*, 20 January 1904, for the Unionist Free Trade Club, see 'Free Trade Union', *The Times*, 20 February 1909 and 'Tariff Reform and Agriculture', *The Times*, 23 February 1909 and for the Anti-Common Market League, see 'Anti-Market groups unite to stage October rally', *The Times*, 18 August 1971 and Personal Column, *The Times*, 6 July 1962

same and the first decade of the twenty first century have seen very few. This is due largely no doubt to the development of, firstly, the mass media and, subsequently, the more recent development of the internet which together have provided alternative channels of communication for those groups wishing to reach out to an extra-parliamentary audience.

In terms of joint meetings with others, these were notable largely for their absence although a few exceptions did emerge from the research. One such exception was a joint meeting between the Bow Group and its equivalent within the Labour Party, the Fabian Society. [11] Other exceptions include a number of joint meetings between those holding a broadly similar ideological outlook for the Party faithful at conference (which will be examined later in this chapter) and also those organised more generally for the interested public. [12] One notable example of the last of these was a joint meeting held in the Albert Hall between the Union Defence League, the Unionist Associations of Ireland and the Conservative and Unionist Associations of Great Britain. [13]

On occasion a number of like-minded groupings have taken the decision to hold joint meetings together under one umbrella organisation as indeed happened with the merger of amongst others the Tory Reform Group and the Macleod Group which subsequently operated together as Mainstream. [14] A final observation regarding joint meetings was the very small number of occasions when a chairman of one group, although not necessarily other group members, would be invited to attend another group meeting as

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[11] Chairman of the Bow Group (1956-7, 1957-8) and founding member, James Lemkin, had developed a strong belief in decolonisation having spent time in Africa during his National Service with the Royal Navy. He organised a joint meeting with the Fabian Society on 20 May 1957 on a 'bipartisan approach in Britain to African colonial problems'. For further details see Barr op. cit., 54-55, 235

[12] For joint meetings at party conference, see, for example, Landale (4 October 1999) op. cit.,

[13] 'The Albert Hall Meeting', *The Times*, 15 June 1912 and 'Campaign Against Home Rule', *The Times*, 15 June 1912

[14] Stuart (1998) op. cit., 435-36

guest speaker. One such example was George Courthope who as chairman of the Unionist Agricultural Committee addressed a meeting of the 1912 Dining Club. [15]

Group gatherings: dinners

As for meetings, it was possible to also distinguish differing categories of dinners; in this case inaugural, regular other and annual and again these will be the basis of further discussion.

Certainly a number of groups came into being over dinner. The Selsdon Group, to name but one, launched itself over a dinner held at the Selsdon Park Hotel as a reminder of the initial meeting from which it drew its name, as indeed was discussed in chapter two. Similarly, the Halsbury was effectively born at a dinner given for Lord Halsbury on 26 July 1910 by a number of peers and MPs as a protest against the impending Parliament Bill. This dinner was seen as a deliberate attack on Arthur Balfour who only the day before had announced that the Lords would be advised to pass the Bill. [16]

Once launched and fully operational, a number of groups have, over time, held a great many other dinners throughout the parliamentary year. Indeed as already indicated, a number of groupings have operated primarily as dining clubs; the 1912 Dining Club, the December Club, the One Nation Group, the Double-Eight, the Economic Dining Club, Blue Chip, Guy Fawkes, Nick's Diner, the 4th July, the Burke Club, Everest, the Third Term Group and Green Chip are a few of many.

A number of these groups have organised an annual dinner and even on occasion

[15] 'Safeguarding for Farmers', *The Times*, 6 April 1927
[16] For the Selsdon Group, see 'Selsdon man resurrected', *The Times*, 20 September 1973 and for the Halsbury, see Ramsden (1978) op. cit., 38

combined this with an anniversary dinner and these include a range of groups from, for example, the Unionist Free Trade Club to the Bow Group to the Selsdon Group. [17] Some groups do not hold an annual dinner but will arrange a special dinner for a significant anniversary. Nick's Diner, for example, does not hold an annual dinner but does propose to hold a thirty fifth anniversary dinner to which as many former members as it is possible to trace will be invited. [18]

As was the case for meetings, the frequency of dinners varies enormously and no two groups replicate the same pattern in this respect. Some such as the 4th July and the Double-Eight would have no pre-ordained programme of dinners, meeting only as time and diaries allowed. Some change their pattern over time; the 92 Group, for example, used to meet at least quarterly but latterly have met less frequently. Others however would generally dine regularly on a quarterly basis (the Selsdon Group), every two months (Cornerstone), every month (the No Turning Back Group, the Economic Dining Club and the Burke Club), once every two weeks (Blue Chip, Nick's Diner and Mainstream) or once a week (the One Nation Group). [19]

As a final observation regarding both dinners, and indeed meetings, it is interesting

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[17] For the Unionist Free Trade Club, see 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 9 July 1907, for the Bow Group, see 'Court and Social: Dinners', *The Times*, 27 February 1987 and James Naughtie, 'Baker stands up for Thatcherism', *The Guardian*, 28 April 1988 and for the Selsdon Group, see ''Let the dead bury the dead' – Mr Powell', *The Times*, 1 February 1975 and 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 1 February 1975

[18] Interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008

[19] For the 4th July, see interview with Mrs Eleanor Laing MP: 24 April 2008, for the Double-Eight, see interview with Mr Ian Taylor MBE MP: 24 April 2008, for the 92 Group, see interview with Mrs Angela Watkinson MP: 8 May 2008, for the Selsdon Group, see, for example, 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 19 June 1974, 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 6 March 1975, 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 19 June 1975, 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 17 December 1975, 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 10 March 1976 and 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 7 June 1976, for Cornerstone, see interview with Mr Charles Walker MP: 7 May 2008, for the No Turning Back Group, see interview with Mr Greg Hands MP: 15 May 2008, for the Economic Dining Club, see Shepherd op. cit., 422 and Ridley (1992) op. cit., 20, for the Burke Club, see 'Even a Burke can see that Hague's a loser', *Mail on Sunday*, 22 April 2001, for Blue Chip, see Norton (1985) op. cit., 36, for Nick's Diner, see interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008 and 'Profile: Hunting tigers out in Peking; Chris Patten, Hong Kong's pugnacious Governor', *The Independent*, 22 January 1994, for Mainstream, see interview with Mr Stephen Hammond MP: 7 May 2008 and for the One Nation Group, see Walsha (2003a) op. cit., 76-77

to note the wide range of locations at which both are held and indeed the range of speakers invited. Certainly some groupings have met consistently and often exclusively at private houses. Blue Chip for instance would always meet at the home of Tristan Garel-Jones whether for a meeting or dinner and similarly the Lollards at the home of William van Straubenzee at Lollards Tower at Lambeth Palace, the Standard Bearers at the home of Alan Duncan, the Conservative Philosophy Group at the home of Jonathan Aitken and the Pudding Club, the Economic Dining Club and Everest at each others houses by rotation. [20]

Other groups have preferred to meet within the Palace of Westminster. Thus those such as, for example, the One Nation Group, Nick's Diner and the Burke Club would meet generally in a Commons Dining Room while many other such as the Union Flag Group, the European Reform Group, Fresh Start and the Forward Look Committee to name but a few have met in a Commons meeting or conference room. One group, the Wednesday Club, allegedly met in the Home Secretary's room behind the Speaker's chair although it was interesting that this was felt by at least one attendee to be 'inhibiting' to discussion. [21] Another group, the No Turning Back Group, used to meet outside parliament but got fed up with having to disrupt dinner in order to return to the House to vote so moved to Parliament Street. [22] Similarly, Mainstream used to meet in

[20] For Blue Chip, see Seldon (1998) op. cit., 60 and Gorman op. cit., 242, for the Lollards, see Gardiner op. cit., 134, for the Standard Bearers, see 'Atticus', *Sunday Times*, 15 September 1991, for the Conservative Philosophy Group, see Michael White and Will Hutton, 'Major's reshuffle: swift rise and slow climb up the slippery pole', *The Guardian*, 21 July 1994, for the Pudding Club, see Brown (3 April 1991) op. cit., for the Economic Dining Club, see Ridley (1992) op. cit., 20 and for Everest, see interview with Mr Stephen Hammond MP: 7 May 2008

[21] For the One Nation Group, see Walsha (2000) op. cit., 195, for Nick's Diner, see interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008, for the Burke Club, see 'Even a Burke can see that Hague's a loser', *Mail on Sunday*, 22 April 2001, for the Union Flag Group, see Gardiner op. cit., 119, for the European Reform Group, see Philip Webster, 'Rebels to press for referendum', *The Times*, 19 November 1991, for Fresh Start, see Gardiner op. cit., 41, for the Forward Look Committee, see Alan Clark, *The Last Diaries 1991-1999*, London, Phoenix, 2003, 411 and for the Wednesday Club, see Brandreth op. cit., 322

[22] Interview with Mrs Angela Watkinson MP: 8 May 2008

Tufton Street but has more recently moved to the House of Commons although in this instance one MP interviewed felt that the change had not been a positive one as he felt that attendance had been better at the original location, possibly as MPs had to make more of an effort to attend. [23]

In contrast, some groups, despite the inconvenience of disrupting dinner, have preferred a meeting place beyond the parliamentary boundaries, preferring comparative anonymity yet still near to the Palace on the division bell. Thus some groupings would generally meet at a favourite restaurant; the Upstairs Club preferred Gran Paradiso and both Guy Fawkes and the Double-Eight opted for L'Amico's on Horseferry Road. [24]

Others would favour a preferred hotel, the Unionist Free Trade Club, the Unionist Free Food League and the Unionist War Committee met at Hotel Cecil and the Westminster Palace Hotel, while others a preferred dining club, the 92 Group for instance would often meet at St. Stephens or on occasion at the Farmers Club. In the case of the last of these groups, one early black tie dinner of the 92 Group was held at the country home of Godman Irvine, Great Ote Hall, for which considerable preparations were made including instructions for members 'to take the 6.28 from Brighton' and that while wives were invited, there was to be a 'separate supper for the girls'. [25]

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[23] Interview with Mr Stephen Hammond MP: 7 May 2008

[24] For the Upstairs Club, see Gardiner op. cit., 39, for Guy Fawkes, see Anderson op. cit., 253 and for the Double-Eight, see interview with Mr Ian Taylor MBE MP: 24 April 2008 and Brown (3 April 1991) op. cit.,

[25] For the Unionist Free Trade Club, see 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 2 June 1906, 'The Duke of Devonshire and Unionist Free Traders', *The Times*, 13 June 1906, 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 9 March 1907, 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 19 May 1908 and 'The Unionist Free Trade Club', *The Times*, 14 May 1909, for the Unionist Free Food League, see 'Fiscal Policy', *The Times*, 26 September 1903, 'Fiscal Policy', *The Times*, 9 October 1903 , 'Unionist Free Food League: Letter from The Duke of Devonshire', *The Times*, 17 October 1903, 'Fiscal Policy', *The Times*, 24 October 1903, 'Fiscal Policy', *The Times*, 9 November 1903, for the Unionist War Committee, see 'Political Notes', *The Times*, 4 May 1916 and 'A Call for Action', *The Times*, 5 May 1916, for the 92 Group, see Grant (2000) op. cit., 34-35

More recently, the Selsdon Group preferred the Carlton Club but also dined at the Selsdon Park Hotel, the Royal Automobile Club and the Cavalry Club with the 2009 annual dinner held at Champagne Charlie's. [26]

As a final note regarding the location of group gatherings, a number of both meetings and dinners are held each year at Party conference and, again, these will be discussed subsequently when examining additional group activities.

A similar broad range of speakers was seen over the years to have been invited to attend both meetings and dinners with even Party leaders on occasion having been invited to speak to group members. Certainly groups such as the 92 Group both in its early and later years have hosted a number of dinners attended by Party leaders. [27] More usual however was an invitation to a minister to attend to discuss both their own portfolios and the general political situation. Certainly a number of instances were found of such meetings which included amongst others, Douglas Hurd as Foreign Secretary speaking to the Positive European Group in 1994. Such meetings were not always without controversy and on this particular occasion, many Eurosceptic members of the PCP were angered when it emerged that Douglas Hurd had addressed the meeting. [28] Certainly from an historical perspective, the same was found to be true. In one instance the Duke of Devonshire was criticised in a 1907 edition of *The Times* following a speaking engagement for the Unionist Free Trade Club. [29]

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[26] For the Selsdon Group, see 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 19 June 1974, 'Selsdon man resurrected', *The Times*, 20 September 1973, 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 7 June 1976, 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 13 January 1978 and http://www.selsdongroup.co.uk/events.asp (accessed 17 September 2009)
[27] See Grant (2000) op. cit., 41-46
[28] Barberis, McHugh and Tyldesley op. cit., 50 and Philip Webster, Nicholas Wood and Roger Boyes, 'Clarke attempts to mend Community fences in Bonn', *The Times*, 30 June 1994
[29] 'Letter to the Editor', *The Times*, 29 March 1907

On other occasions, ex-ministers are invited to speak to a group. Both Nicholas Ridley and Norman Lamont addressed meetings of the Selsdon Group for example. In the case of the latter, it is interesting that Lamont allegedly approached the Bow Group Council to request a platform to speak at Party conference but having been turned down, he wrote a 'stinking' letter, resigned from the group and subsequently addressed the Selsdon. [30] Similarly, a range of shadow ministers have spoken to a number of groups. Often having more time for speaking engagements, their attendance at group meetings tends to be more prevalent than when in office. One notable example of this is the Bow Group which listed a significant number of the shadow team in its '2009/10 Programme of Events'. [31]

A small number of groups would on occasion invite less overtly political but still influential public figures to speak. The One Nation Group for example invited, amongst others, Edward George, Governor of the Bank of England and George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury. [32] Similarly the December Club, which in one stroke of brilliant timing, had arranged for the Polish Ambassador to speak at its meeting in August 1939. [33]

Finally, while meetings and dinners held in the evening provided the forums at which most group activity took place, some groups have organised predominantly over a working breakfast or lunch. Thus, for example, the members of Mainstream meet regularly for lunch (although they do also meet for two dinners each year) while the European Research Group tend to meet similarly for a working breakfast although they

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[30] For Ridley, see 'Selsdon man resurrected', *The Times*, 20 September 1973 and for Lamont, see Barr op. cit., 215-16
[31] Correspondence from Mr Annesley Abercorn: May 2009
[32] Walsha (2003a) op. cit., 78
[33] Rasmussen op. cit., 174

have on occasion met John Major for lunch. [34] Likewise, during one interview conducted for this thesis, it was revealed that an ex-minister holds periodic breakfast meetings with respected colleagues although these colleagues are not necessarily from the same wing of the Party. Although the gatherings are irregular, participants do come together at significant pressure points in the Party's history such as, for example, at the time of a leadership election. Although attendees are members of other groupings, they do not see themselves as an unofficial parliamentary party grouping in this context and as such have no name. [35]

The concept of meeting for breakfast and lunch rather than dinner is an increasingly popular one and worth a brief mention as such as it was touched upon by a number of MPs interviewed. One MP in particular stressed this growth in part in relation to the decline in opportunity for evening club dining. With recent changes to parliamentary sitting arrangements, he believed that as most parliamentary business was now conducted on a Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, only Monday and Tuesday evenings were realistically free for dining, possibly Wednesday for those MPs who lived beyond commuter distance of London.

This lack of time for evening dining was compounded by the fact that often Monday evening would only be a one-line whip so MPs were not compelled to attend which further reduced the number of evenings free for MPs to dine with each other. Thus whereas MPs used to have four evenings away from their partners and families to fill, they would often now only have one or two. This was again compounded, at least for

[34] For Mainstream, see interview with Mr Stephen Hammond MP: 7 May 2008 and for the European Research Group, see James Blitz, 'Federalism angers MPs across EU', *Financial Times*, 27 February 1995 and interview with Mr David Gauke MP: 22 April 2008

[35] Interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008

the MP interviewed, by the fact that as a shadow minister he also received valuable invitations for briefing dinners, for which he did not have to pay (club dinning would by comparison generally be at least £35.00 a head on each occasion), from lobby groups for the one or two evenings in question. [36]

This viewpoint was supported by another MP interviewed who said that while he used to try to attend every Cornerstone dinner, he had found that over time both the cost and the timing (Cornerstone dinners would usually be held on a Wednesday or Thursday evening) were prohibitive and that he now attended less than he used to for these reasons. [37] Indeed it was interesting that both the issue of time and cost are by no means issues exclusive to current MPs with the very same issues being cited as part reasons for Cub Alport's departure from the One Nation Group in 1953. [38]

Group gatherings: other

Thus while the majority of group gatherings take the format of meetings and dinners, a lesser number of other gatherings were also found to be organised, particularly by those which adhere to a 'look at me' philosophy. These included other social activities, lectures, conferences and seminars and gatherings at Party conference. In terms of all these, the majority of groups, but by no means all, were found to have neither the impetus or time to make the necessary arrangements; certainly this was true for both those groups which simply preferred dining as the basis for activity (the No Turning Back Group for example) and for those groups which adopted a 'hideaway' philosophy (Nick's Diner for example). [39]

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[36] Interview with Mr Robert Goodwill MP: 4 June 2008
[37] Interview with Mr Charles Walker MP: 7 May 2008
[38] Garnett op. cit., 117
[39] For the No Turning Back Group, see interview with Mrs Angela Watkinson MP: 8 May 2008 and for Nick's Diner, see interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008

This said, a number of groups were found to organise events beyond a core of meetings and dinners and this has remained the case throughout the period studied. Certainly a range of other social activities have been organised. Perhaps the most extraordinary of these was that reported in *The Times* in 1910, namely the organisation of mass railway excursions by the Young Unionist Group, with '20 000 tickets being disposed of' in 'the towns and county divisions surrounding Manchester'. [40] Less dramatically, and more recently, other social activities have tended to be organised for members only around parliament itself. These are typified by, for example, a summer reception held in the House of Commons by the One Nation Group and a number of Christmas and other drinks parties and terrace receptions organised by the Bow Group. [41]

A small number of groupings, and again often those seeking to reach an extra-parliamentary audience, have organised either a series of lectures or, on occasion, an annual lecture; 2005 for example saw the inaugural Bow Group annual lecture being addressed by John Major. [42] From an historical perspective, the Union Defence League, for example, organised a number of 'lantern lectures' across the country on the question of Irish separatism with a travelling photographic exhibit, poster and motor van campaign and an early use of cinematography as well as lantern slides. Those interested in organising their own lecture on behalf of the Union Defence League, with or without an official lecturer being provided, were offered the use of a pre-prepared slide show. Details of the lecture were advertised in *The Times* in 1912 and offered

[40] 'The Political Situation', *The Times*, 4 August 1910
[41] For the One Nation Group, see, for example, Michael Jones, 'Mein Gott! Why did I say that?', *Sunday Times*, 15 July 1990 and for the Bow Group, see, for example, 'Giving a Bow', *Evening Standard*, 6 June 2000 and http://www.bowgroup.org/ (accessed 13 November 2006 and 21 September 2009)
[42] Celia Walden, 'Busy retirement for John Major', *The Daily Telegraph*, 3 March 2005 and http://www.bowgroup.org/ (accessed 13 November 2006)

'slides including pictures of Sunday school children who were attacked at Castledawson and photographs of Ulstermen preparing for resistance to Home Rule'. [43]

In terms of conferences and seminars, a few groups have over time arranged a number of conferences although these were found to be, in the main, a more recent development in group activities. A few have co-organised a conference with another like-minded group and these include, amongst others, one pro-European event organised by the Conservative Group for Europe and the Positive European Group. [44] More usually however groups have made the necessary arrangements without the partnership of a like-minded group. As above, the vast majority of these were centred on the issue of Europe. These were exemplified by the European Forum which organised a four day conference in Sussex in 1969 on the future of the EEC and which sought to bring together Conservative MPs and their opposite numbers from the French National Assembly and, likewise, the European Foundation which hosted a conference held in Prague attended by over four hundred people which, according to their website, 'included ambassadors, politicians, journalists and students'. [45] On a more regular basis, the European Research Group has organised a number of conferences entitled 'Congress for Democracy' and, with frontbench speakers having included William Hague, have received ongoing national press coverage. [46] In terms of seminars, a few were found to have taken place such as those organised by the Selsdon Group but these were noticeable for their rarity. [47]

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[43] 'Home Rule Lantern Lectures', *The Times*, 24 September 1912 and Kendle (1992) op. cit., 68
[44] Roland Watson and James Landale, 'Rebel Tories threaten to contest by-election', *The Times*, 23 March 1999
[45] For the European Forum, see 'Nothing to fear over Common Market', *The Times*, 19 September 1969 and for the European Foundation, see http://www.europeanfoundation.org/news.html (accessed 8 March 2007)
[46] See, for example, Sarah Schaefer, 'Hague inveighs against the 'undemocratic' Euro', *The Independent*, 10 July 1999 and Diane Taylor, 'Swastikas and strawberry jam', *The Guardian*, 17 December 1998
[47] See, for example, Jim Congdon, 'Selsdon Group calls for expenditure cuts', *The Times*, 17 June 1976

In a similar vein, and in addition to the above, a small number of groups have organised a number of debates which again tended, although not exclusively so, to reflect the general debate over Europe which has taken place within both the parliamentary and national party over many years. The European Foundation, for example, hosted a debate between Eurosceptics and Europhiles in Dublin in 2004 entitled 'The European Constitutions and a New Economic Dynamic for the EU'. [48]

More prevalent however are group gatherings at Party conference although it is a small number which are especially active in this respect and indeed it is the same groupings which tend to attend annually. Although these vary to a degree over time, those such as the One Nation Group, the European Foundation, the Bow Group, the Tory Reform Group, Cornerstone and Conservative Way Forward have all been notable for their regular attendance. The groups which do attend tend to be those which adopt a 'look at me' philosophy in terms of relations with the parliamentary and national party rather than those which seek to reach a wider audience amongst the general public. [49] By way of illustration, Appendix 6 details the programme of events for the 2009 Party Conference in respect of unofficial parliamentary groupings and which is, in the experience of the author, a typical one.

As can be seen from Appendix 6, conference activities tend to fall into one of three types, namely fringe meetings, drinks receptions and dinners and certainly it is the first of these which tend to dominate on a year on year basis. Some groups do, in addition, take a conference stand where they may sell recent publications although on occasion a grouping may be barred from doing so. Certainly both the Selsdon Group and Better

[48] http://www.europeanfoundation.org/news.html (accessed 8 March 2007)
[49] Observation of author

Off Out were, allegedly, banned in 1975 and 2006 respectively when both their messages were perceived as being out of line with the general direction of the official policy of the Party at the time. [50]

For those which have attended conference, the opportunity has often been taken to publicise a recently launched book or pamphlet at one of the fringe meetings which are organised by groupings. A marked example of this was at the 1950 Party Conference when the One Nation Group took the opportunity to launch their much lauded pamphlet, *One Nation*, where it contributed significantly to the housing debate. Similarly, the Selsdon Group used a fringe meeting at the 1973 Party Conference to launch a policy document highly critical of the government. More recently John Major's rebels on Europe used the opportunity provided by a fringe meeting organised by the European Foundation in 1993 to launch a book about their rebellion while fringe meetings of the same were used to launch the publication of their own pamphlets in both 2003 and 2004. [51]

Fringe meetings, receptions and dinners have all also been used as not only a joint platform between like-minded groups as has already been discussed earlier but also to invite high profile speakers, both non-parliamentary and parliamentary (and not always from the Conservative Party) in order to raise the profile of the group concerned. Thus for example the Bow Group invited the Chairman and Chief Executive of ASDA, Archie Norman, to talk to a fringe meeting in 1998 and the Angolan leader of the

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[50] For the Selsdon Group, see 'Stonehouse speech at Conservative meeting', *The Times*, 7 October 1975 and for Better Off Out, see Jonathan Isaby, 'Conference Spy', *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 October 2006

[51] For the One Nation Group, see Walsha (2000) op. cit., 190, for the Selsdon Group, see 'Tory conference will reassure doubters that policies are working', *The Times*, 8 October 1973 and for the European Foundation, see Ludlam and Smith op. cit., 114, William Rees-Mogg, 'Tories may not love IDS, but they hate treachery', *The Times*, 13 October 2003 and http://europeanfoundation.org/news.html (accessed 8 March 2007)

UNITA rebels to talk to the same at the 1989 Party Conference. [52]

Similarly from Appendix 6 it can be seen that speakers invited to address the various group gatherings organised at the 2009 Party Conference included not only a diverse range of peers and MPs but also those from outside parliament. Together these included Rt. Hon the Lord Stern, Rt. Hon the Lord Hunt, Damian Green MP, Rt. Hon Sir Malcolm Rifkind QC, MP, Rt. Hon David Davis MP, David Willetts MP, Eleanor Laing MP, Rt. Hon Oliver Letwin MP, Dr Liam Fox MP, Rt. Hon Kenneth Clarke QC MP, the Bishop of Liverpool, Andrew Gimson (parliamentary sketch writer from *The Daily Telegraph)* and Michael White (from *The Guardian*).

It is interesting to note at this point that conference gatherings serve not only to raise the profile of the group but also that of the speaker and indeed a number of MPs over time have consciously utilised this opportunity in an attempt to enhance their own gravitas with the parliamentary and national party or to make clear to colleagues their own stance on a specific issue which represents a political pressure point. Thus, for example, Michael Portillo utilised his speech to a conference fringe meeting of the One Nation Group in 2001 to make clear his newly found centralist position within the Party and a similar meeting of the Bow Group was used by Geoffrey Howe in 1989 as a warning to Margaret Thatcher to soften her political message. [53] Indeed as group gatherings such as these are often controversial, they are frequently the best attended of all fringe meetings. [54] Certainly many journalists often spend more time covering them

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[52] 'Tory Conference', *Evening Standard*, 8 October 1998 and John Bulloch, 'Britain to hold first talks with Savimbi', *The Independent*, 13 October 1989

[53] For Portillo, see 'Portillo set for hero's welcome in Blackpool', *Bath Chronicle*, 5 October 1999 and for Howe, see Patrick Wintour, 'Howe urges softer, 'listening' party' *The Guardian* 12 October 1989

[54] Observation of author. For European Foundation, see, for example, 'Atticus is off to Bournemouth', *Sunday Times,* 9 October 1994 and for Better Off Out, see, for example, Roger Helmer, 'Better Off Out – The Fringe Meeting', *Straight Talking Newsletter,* October 2006

than they do other aspects of the Party conference. [55]

Publications: books

One significant aspect of research undertaken for this thesis was the aggregate volume of publications associated over time with unofficial parliamentary party groupings and often, but not always, the quality of the research which was undertaken in order to produce these same publications. Certainly it was, in most instances, those groups which tended both towards a more formalised group structure and to be more outward looking in terms of both membership and focus which were the most prolific publishers. In contrast, those groups where membership and focus were exclusively parliamentary and which believed all group activities should be kept confidential, were often vehemently opposed to any form of group publication and thus in general terms they published very little. [56] For those groups however which did assume a more positive stance towards publications, a range of books, journals, magazines, newsletters, pamphlets and reports were evident and thus attention will now focus on each of these in turn.

In the first instance a small number of books have, over time, been published (and not by the groups themselves but by others) as a parody or thinly veiled disguise of a particular group. Thus elements of Benjamin Disraeli's *Coningsby* bore a remarkable similarity to the Young England Movement of the 1840s of which Disraeli himself was leader and more recently, as discussed earlier, David Walder's *The Short List* published in 1964 appears to draw directly from the experiences of Bow Group members around

[55] Observation of author and Seldon and Ball op. cit., 253
[56] See, for example, interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008 regarding Nick's Diner

the time of publication. [57]

Again as discussed earlier, very few books have been published about specific groupings themselves; Harold Gorst's book *The Fourth Party* published in 1906 and almost one hundred years later in 2001, James Barr's book *The Bow Group* are two notable exceptions in this respect. [58]

Certainly some groups have themselves published a range of books and even those published some time ago and now out of print are in a number of instances still available today. The Anti-Common Market League, for example, published at least three books; *Britain, not Europe: Commonwealth before the Common Market* published in 1961, *Joining the Common Market* published in 1970 and *Bound to Fail: Britain's membership of the Common Market* published in 1987. [59] Similarly the Bow Group has over time produced a number of books, each written or edited by a named member, with new additions available to purchase from their website. Three recent books which received press coverage when launched include *The Ideas Book* published in 2000, *from the Ashes... the future of the Conservative Party* published in 2005 and *Conservative Revival: Blueprint for a Better Britain* published in 2006. [60]

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[57] For the Young England Movement, see Benjamin Disraeli, *Coningsby,* London, Dent, 1911, Kieron O'Hara, *After Blair: Conservatism Beyond Thatcher*, Cambridge, Icon, 2005, 72 and Blake op. cit., 55-56 and for the Bow Group, see Walder op. cit.

[58] For the Fourth Party, see Harold Gorst, *The Fourth Party,* 1906 as cited in Blake op. cit., 374 and for the Bow Group, see Barr op. cit.

[59] Richard Corbet (ed.) *Britain, not Europe: Commonwealth before Common Market* , London, Anti Common Market League, 1961, Anti Common Market League, *Joining the Common Market,* London, Anti Common Market League, 1970 and Derek James, *Bound to Fail: Britain's Membership of the Common Market,* London, Anti Common Market League, 1987

[60] Damian Hinds (ed.), *The Bow Group's Ideas Book 2000: Policy Ideas for the Conservative Party,* London, The Bow Group, 2000 and Julia Hartley-Brewer, 'Hague given book of ideas for manifesto', *The Guardian,* 2 September 2000, Sam Gyimah (ed.), *from the Ashes ... the future of the Conservative Party,* London, Politicos, 2005 and Chris Philp (ed.), *Conservative Revival: Blueprint for a Better Britain,* London, Politicos, 2006 and Chris Philp, 'Fairer taxes, better public services and real choice for all: Chris Philp has a blueprint for David Cameron', *Sunday Telegraph,* 26 March 2006. For publications available to purchase online, see http://www.bowgroup.org/ (accessed 23 September 2009)

Amongst the most recent books published by groups are those by Direct Democracy, namely *Direct Democracy: an Agenda for a New Model Party* published in 2005 and *The Plan: Twelve Months to Renew Britain* published in 2008. [61] The latter was notable for its co-author, Douglas Carswell, having negotiated a deal with Amazon whereby after a minimal initial print run, subsequent copies were printed on demand. [62]

In contrast, other groups have produced just one book which has received public recognition. The YMCA, for example, produced one publication entitled *Industry and the State* which was published in 1927 and which urged greater state intervention in the economy and in social policy. In this particular case, the book was a collective effort by members and included Harold Macmillan, Oliver Stanley, Robert Boothby, Gerald Loder, Anthony Eden, Alfred Duff Cooper and Noel Skelton (the last of whom is said to have coined the expression, 'property owning democracy'). [63]

It is interesting that even when a book is written by a key member of a grouping, even though not written in the name of that group, that the same group still receives publicity as a result. Thus Macmillan's *The Middle Way* although not written by the YMCA was seen as supportive of the group's ideas for greater state intervention which were propagated within it. [64] Similarly David Willetts' *Middle Conservatism*, published in 1992, resulted in media coverage for a group of which he was a member, namely the Standard Bearers, even though the book was not produced by that grouping

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[61] Douglas Carswell, *Direct Democracy: An Agenda for a New Model Party*, London, Direct Democracy, 2005 and Douglas Carswell and Daniel Hannan, *The Plan: Twelve Months to Renew Britain*, London, Direct Democracy, 2008

[62] Interview with Mr Douglas Carswell MP: 14 May 2008

[63] See Richard Boothby, John Loder, Harold Macmillan and Oliver Stanley, *Industry and the State: A Conservative View*, London, Macmillan, 1927 in addition to Barberis, McHugh and Tyldesley op. cit., 69, Crowson op. cit., 239, Ramsden (1999) op. cit., 539 and Seldon and Ball op. cit., 335

[64] Harold Macmillan, *The Middle Way* , London, Macmillan, 1938

and indeed other members were allegedly concerned that its softer focus was an anathema to the Thatcherite stance on which they were founded. [65] This is not to say that every group has successfully achieved its desire to produce and publish a book. The One Nation Group, for example, had plans to write a 'One Nation' book on Conservative philosophy although it was never produced after the idea was sidelined in the early stages of planning. [66]

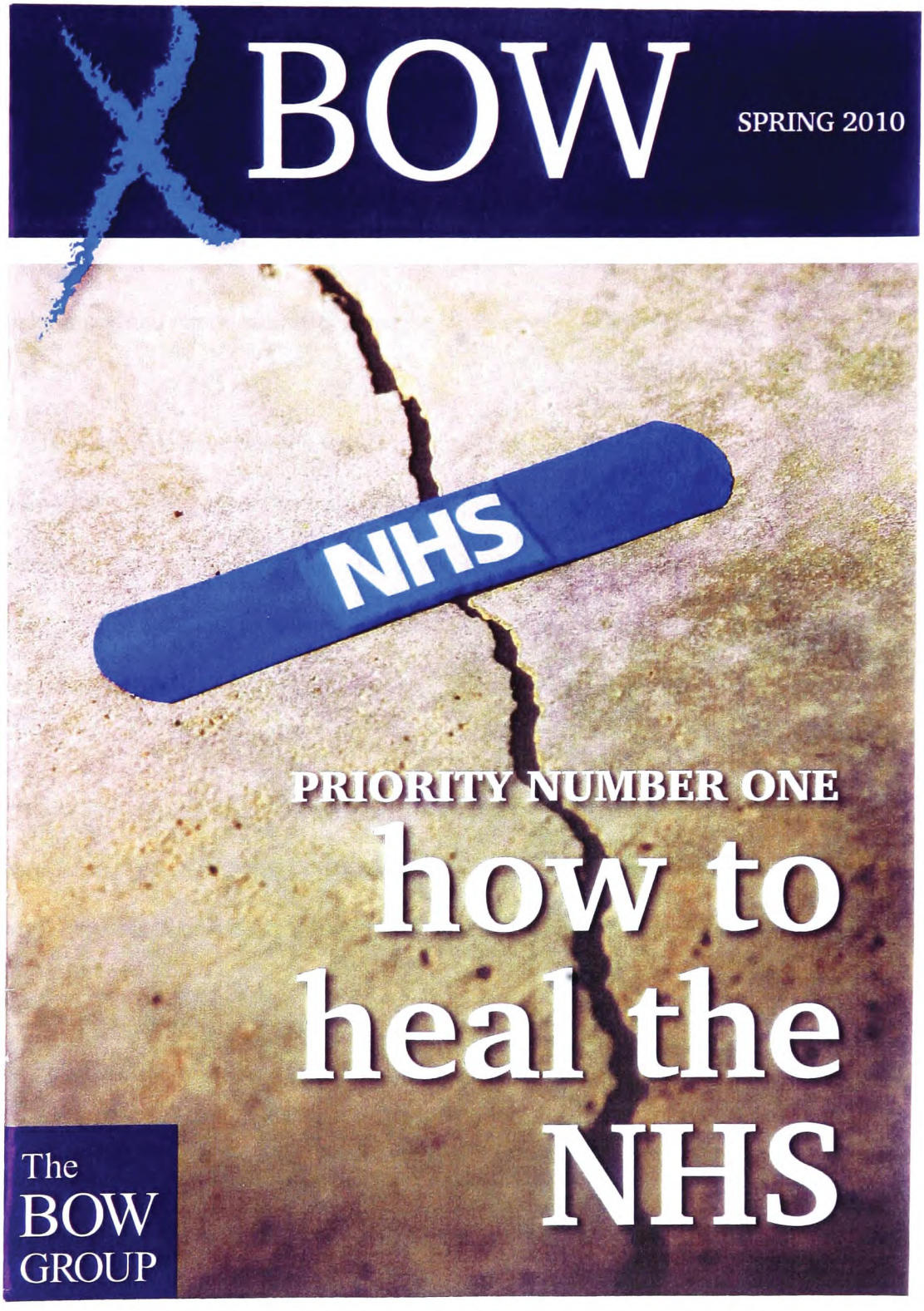
Publications: journals, magazines and newsletters

A very small number of groups have produced a regular journal, magazine or newsletter and although this number is small, the publications in this respect form a significant element of group activity for those concerned. As the examples are so few, discussion will examine the most significant of these in turn.

Probably the most well known is that produced by the Bow Group, namely *Crossbow* magazine. The magazine is distributed quarterly (although this has varied over time) to all members of the Bow Group with recent editions available through their website. [67] The front page of the most recent of these, the Spring Edition 2010, can be seen in Figure 1 by way of illustration. Although originally nearly entitled, *Bow-Beep*, the magazine has become a familiar part of Bow Group activities to all those associated with the group. [68] As an integral part of the re-launch of the Bow Group in 1957, *Crossbow* itself was launched by Harold Macmillan in that same year which played an important role in increasing membership and heightening awareness of group activities

[65] See David Willetts, *Middle Conservatism*, London, Penguin, 1992 in addition to Riddell (1992) op. cit., 430-31, Roy Hattersley, 'The Observer profile: a big future behind him: David Willetts, everybody's fool', *The Observer*, 17 November 1996 and Pilkington (20 March 1992) op. cit.,
[66] Walsha (2000) op. cit., 207
[67] http://www.bowgroup.org/content.asp?pageid=6 (accessed 24 September 2009)
[68] Barr op. cit., 28

Figure 1:
Front Page of 'Crossbow', Spring Edition 2010



in the early years thus enabling it to lay foundations which have seen it succeed for well over half a century. [69] Indeed even today the group refers to this link with pride. [70]

This particular magazine has its own governing board which has provided a number of Conservative ministers, which include Michael Heseltine and Norman Fowler, with an opportunity to gain valuable political experience at the early stages of their careers. [71] Certainly a great number of Conservative ministers have over time contributed articles and on occasion have utilised the forum offered by the magazine to make both policy declarations and announcements regarding their own political comeback. [72]

The magazine has not been without controversy, on all levels. To cite just a few examples of many, the inclusion of a 'cover girl' in 1967 and, on a more serious note, criticisms aimed at the governments of Alec Douglas-Home and Margaret Thatcher ensured the profile of the Bow Group has been maintained with those within the parliamentary arena and indeed with those other members outside. [73]

Less well known than *Crossbow* is the magazine produced by Conservative Way Forward, namely *Forward!* Like the former it too is a glossy publication to which members of the Conservative frontbench, and members of Conservative Way Forward,

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[69] Barr op. cit., viii and Geoffrey Howe, 'Bolts out of the Tory Blue – Crossbow was the Conservative party magazine that shaped the party's future and present Government's policies', *The Guardian*, 31 July 1989

[70] 'Editor's note', *Crossbow,* Spring Edition 2010

[71] For Heseltine, see Barr op. cit., 37 and for Fowler, see Norman Fowler, *Ministers Decide: A Memoir of the Thatcher Years,* London, Chapmans, 1991, 64-65

[72] For example, Ken Clarke was seen in some quarters as having used *Crossbow* to announce that he was prepared to relax some controls over the Treasury's control of the Bank of England and Malcolm Rifkind was seen in some quarters as having utilised *Crossbow* to confirm he would try to stand again and thus launch his comeback – see Peter Riddell, 'Controls on Bank may be relaxed', *The Times,*6 October 1993 and Catherine Macleod, 'Rifkind raises party hackles', *The Glasgow Herald*, 7 October 1999

[73] Sam Leith, 'All is revealed', *The Daily Telegraph*, 7 February 2001, Barr op. cit., 89, Graham Searjeant, 'Bow Group attacks Young on bid policy', *The Times*, 8 August 1988 and Patrick Wintour, 'Tories question poll tax wisdom', *The Guardian*, 8 August 1988

contribute. Renamed *fastForward* in 1997, but re-launched to its original namesake in 2001, it is distributed to group members, all Conservative MPs, MEPs, Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) and Welsh Assembly (AMs) and available to others through its website. [74] Similar to this is *Reformer,* the magazine of the Tory Reform Group, and indeed its latest edition from summer 2009 is also available from the group's website. The magazine has, according to its website, been in print in its present format since 1977. [75]

One of the most prolific publishers in terms of the volume of journals, magazines and newsletters produced has been the European Foundation run by Bill Cash which has produced almost monthly editions of its journal, *The European Journal,* in addition to a series of fortnightly newsletters entitled the *Intelligence Digest* although the most recent of the journals available on the group's website is dated May 2009 and the most recent of the newsletters, dated March 2007. As above, editions are available to view online.[76]

A few other groups have at various points in their history produced a regular newsletter depending on time and available manpower. One notable example in this respect was the Anti-Common Market League which at one time published a regular newsletter entitled *Britain* which was available until recently on the group's website. [77]

Publications: pamphlets and reports

As indicated earlier in relation to publications, one noteworthy aspect of research

[74] http://www.conwayfor.org/forward-magazine.aspx (accessed 24 September 2009)
[75] http://www.trg.org.uk/index.php/reformer (accessed 4 May 2010)
[76] http://www.europeanfoundation.org/publications.html (accessed 24 September 2009)
[77] http://www.bullen.demon.co.uk/cibacml.htm (accessed 23 January 2008)

undertaken for this thesis was the aggregate volume of publications associated over time with unofficial parliamentary party groupings and without doubt those groupings which were and are active in this respect have been, and still are, often at their most active in respect of the publication of pamphlets and reports. This has remained a truism for the entire period studied.

Certainly various groups have between them published copious numbers of publications and amongst the most notable of these, although there are many others, are the Bow Group, the Selsdon Group and from an historical perspective, the Unionist Defence League and the Unionist Social Reform Committee. By comparison others, which include Blue Chip, the Scottish Thistle Group and the Standard Bearers, although also having published a number of pamphlets, have done so to a far lesser degree than those above. [78] The One Nation Group, for example, would fall into the latter camp; although its first pamphlet, *One Nation,* sold 8 500 copies within a few weeks, its successor *Change is our Ally* sold only 5 200 copies. [79]

A wide range of topics have, over the years, been covered by such pamphlets and reports and certainly an examination of the four examples of prolific publishers cited above vividly illustrates this diversity. Certainly the Bow Group has, over time, published pamphlets on a wide and diverse range of subjects as indeed Table 1 illustrates. While this list does not profess to being all encompassing (no one definitive list has been compiled and retained by the group), it has, at the suggestion of the

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[78] For Blue Chip, see *Changing Gear* as cited in Anderson op. cit., 252, Riddell (1992) op. cit., 430 and Donald Macintyre, 'Not the type to box himself out', *The Independent*, 27 December 1992, for the Scottish Thistle Group, see *Devolution: A New Appraisal* as cited in Barberis, McHugh and Tyldesley, op. cit., 409 and for the Standard Bearers, see *Bearing the Standard* as cited in Riddell (1992) op. cit., 430 and 'Atticus', *Sunday Times,* 15 September 1991

[79] For the One Nation Group, see *One Nation* (published in 1950) and *Change is our Ally* (published in 1954) as cited in Walsha (2000) op. cit., 212 and Margaret Thatcher, *The Path to Power*, London, HarperCollins, 1995, 86

chairman of the group, drawn from the archives of the Bodleian Library which he believes to be the best available source in this instance. [80]

Table 1:
List of Bow Group pamphlets 1952-2004

Go zones: policies for the places politics forgot (c2004)
A radical alternative to Wanless: lessons for the Lion City (2004)
A fair deal for students (2001)
Who really governs Britain? (2001)
Welfare that works (c2001)
Eighteen plus: the politics of a new generation (2001)
The Bow Group's Ideas Book 2000: Policy Ideas for the Conservative Party (2000)
Access to government: genuine freedom of information for the UK (2000)
The worst parent in Britain: proposals for reforms in institutionalised childcare (c2000)
What gets measured gets done: making charities accountable (1999)
Putting our house in order: 'untying bicameralism's Gordian Knot' or How to elect a Second Chamber, and avoid it clashing with the first (1998)
Equal balance: electing more women MPs for the Conservative Party (c1999)
Education, education, education (c1999)
Lifting the shadow: why Conservatives must reclaim human rights (c1999)
An English Parliament: a proposal for fairness and transparency in a new constitutional settlement for Britain (c1999)
Looking over your opponent's shoulder: an analysis of New Labour's political strategy and a proposal for defeating it (1998)
Labour's multiplying mandarins: why a Labour government would mean more bureaucrats (1997)
Members' rights: a blueprint for transforming the Conservative Party into a mass membership organisation capable of winning the next election (1997)
Bringing order to the law (1997)
Devolution or evolution? (1996)
Rethinking regulation (1996)
Loan trusts for small and medium sized enterprises in the UK (1996)
Institutional reform and the IGC (1996)
Privatising the state pension: secure funded provision for all (1996)
Politics and the Internet (1995)
Audio visual conferencing: rationalising Parliament (c1995)
The Conservative Party for the twenty first century (1995)
Schools: the way forward (c1995)
Finding the right way: the future of local government finance in the 1990s (c1995)
Bosnia: why the Americans are right (1995)
The third culture: education for effective living (1995)
How to reduce the burden of taxation for small businesses (c1995)
Executive pay: putting shareholders back in control (1995)
Energy: the new priorities (1995)
Bosnia: the national interest (1995)
The urgency of Europe's eastern enlargement; the case for Poland (1995)
Housing co-operatives: a next step for council tenants (c1995)
The reform of capital gains tax (1995)
A tax stimulus for corporate venturing: a catalyst for British enterprise (c1995)
Yugoslavia: the case for intervention (1995)
Supporting excellence: a national policy for funding dance and drama training (1995)
Survival of the fattest: the need for reform of UK competition policy (c1995)
Child abuse: the case for reform (1995)

[80] Discussions with Mr Annesley Abercorn: May 2010

The savings trap (c1995)
No referenda please – we're British (1994)
Promoting rail investment (1994)
The state, the party and the people (1993)
'A marriage of convenience' as a suggestion for the reform of local government finance (1993)
Nuclear electric and the energy review – the road to privatisation (1993)
What is to be done? A blueprint for Russia and the new republics (1992)
A community of employee shareholders (1992)
A sane local union in a mad NUS: a students charter (1992)
Maastricht and the post-1992 European agenda (1992)
Financing public transport: how does Britain compare (1992)
Conservatism in danger (1991)
Freeing Europe: a blueprint for Central and Eastern Europe (c1991)
The Conservative Party and agriculture: a new agenda: a green and pleasant land (1991)
The Whitehall wall: barriers between industry and government and how to eliminate them (1990)
Reunited kingdom (1990)
A democratic way towards European unity in the 1990s: arguments against federalism (1990)
To no man will we deny: restoring access to justice (1990)
Less people, less pollution: an answer to environmental decline caused by the world's population explosion (c1990)
1992: the single market in insurance (1990)
Widening share ownership: the future for democratic capitalism (1990)
London's transport crisis (1990)
Hong Kong's future: a time for commitment (1990)
Community care: the need for action (1989)
We're just in time: AIDS, brain damage and psychiatric hospital closures: a policy rethink (1989)
The green Conservatives: a manifesto for the environment (1989)
The incentive society and the supportive state (c1988)
The nation's treasures: a programme for our national museums and galleries (c1988)
Housing policy: unfinished business (1988)
Defence procurement 1986 (c1986)
Hong Kong's future: countdown to communism? (1984)
Playing at peace: a study of the peace movement in GB and the Federal Republic of Germany (c1983)
The elected members' guide to reducing public expenditure (1980)
Can you read this?: three areas for improvement in the state education system (1976)
Governing London (1974)
Bricks and mortgages: proposals for reform of the building societies (c1973)
Up, up and away: the political implications of vertical take-off passenger aircraft (1973)
Accessories to apartheid: the responsibilities of British investors in South Africa (1973)
Alternative manifesto (1973)
Picketing: the law of violence (c1972)
Passing on: taxation of capital transfers (a response to the proposals on taxation of capital on death: a possible inheritance tax in place of estate duty) (c1972)
An ocean of waste: some proposals for clearing the seas around Britain (1972)
Under one law?: a criticism of the Immigration Bill (c1971)
Putting the goats with the sheep: a future for the direct grant schools (1969)
Local Government in Ulster: a new organisation structure (1969)
The treatment of offenders (1968)
The confidence trick (1965)
The Conservative Opportunity: Fifteen Bow Group essays on tomorrows Toryism (1965)
Strategy for schools (1964)
Imperial postscript: a new era for the smaller territories (1962)
A new Africa (1962)
Scales of justice (1962)
The Maldive Islands: a neglected responsibility (1960)
Africa – new year 1960 (1960)
Willingly to school (1959)
Patronage and the arts (1959)
Challenge from Europe: Britain, the Commonwealth and the free trade area (1957)
Crisis over Central Africa: the future of the Federation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland and the Federal Constitutional Amendment Bill and the Federal Electoral Bill (1957)
Whose public schools? (1957)

Advertising on trial: the case of the consumer (1956)
Race and power: studies of leadership in five British dependencies (1956)
Non specialist graduates in industry (1955)
National wages policy (1955)
The life-blood of liberty; some proposals for local government reform (1954)
Industry and the property owning democracy (1954)
But it's ''Saviour of 'is country'' when the guns begin to shoot: a reply to the Bett Report with some wider observations on today's armed forces (1953)
The university vote (1953)
Coloured people in Britain (1952)

Source: Bodleian Library: http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk (accessed 5 May 2010)

As indicated, the Bow Group is not alone in having produced a number of pamphlets and certainly the Selsdon Group have published literature on a similar range of subjects; these include the health service, denationalisation, food policy, the public sector and the arts. [81]

From an historical perspective, the two remaining groups previously cited also between them covered a wide range of topics. Certainly the Union Defence League produced a number of pamphlets and reports which provided information on, for example, both the Home Rule Bill itself and the financial implications of Irish separatism together with a collection of speeches on the same topics. An ongoing series of articles in *The Times* from between 1907 and 1912, when coverage appears to be at its most prolific, mention one publication in particular, namely *Irish Facts for British Platforms*. This appears to be a regular pamphlet (at times monthly) published by the League which is frequently cited and discussed in *The Times* thus providing a continuous supply of material to support the Unionist stance through the pages of the

[81] For health, see *Public and Private Provision for Medical Care in Great Britain* as cited in 'Concern over state monopoly in medicine', *The Times,* 10 September 1975, for denationalisation, see *Conservatives and the Public Sector – Next time, Denationalize* as cited in 'Stonehouse speech at Conservative meeting', *The Times,* 7 October 1975, for food policy, see *No Way to Feed a Nation* as cited in 'Tory group criticizes plans to enlarge farm output', *The Times,* 10 January 1976, for the public sector, see *A Smaller Public Sector –The Priority for a Free Society* as cited in 'Pamphlet reopens Thatcher-Heath wound', *The Times,* 4 October 1976 and for the arts, see *A Policy for the Arts: Just Cut Taxes* as cited in Kenneth Gosling, 'Tax cuts 'best policy for the arts'', *The Times,* 19 July 1978

newspaper. The same articles also provide details of an address in Victoria at which the office for the Union Defence League is based and from where additional material to promote the Unionist cause can be obtained. [82]

Similarly, the Unionist Social Reform Committee has produced a number of pamphlets and reports concerned largely with six areas of social policy namely poor law, agriculture, education, housing, industrial unrest and health. Amongst the most widely read of these was *Industrial Unrest, a Practical Solution* which was published in 1914, just prior to the outbreak of the First World War. [83]

While such pamphlets were generally published, and received, without furore, this was not always the case as was vividly illustrated by the experience of the Unionist Free Food League. Here, a number of complaints were made through *The Times,* regarding the distribution of unsolicited and unwanted leaflets, including those from Unionist MPs unhappy that such literature was being delivered in their constituencies without it being so requested. [84]

In addition to the diverse range of topics, an equally diverse range of authors of pamphlets and reports was evident from the research. Certainly many ordinary group

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[82] For *Irish Facts for British Platforms* see, for example, 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 27 April 1907, 'Law and Lawlessness in Ireland', *The Times,* 26 October 1907, 'Ireland', *The Times,* 16 January 1912, 'The Campaign Against Home Rule', *The Times,* 14 March 1912, 'News in Brief', *The Times,* 3 May 1912 and 'The Campaign Against the Bill', *The Times,* 10 June 1912. For other pamphlets see, for example, *A Record of Disloyal Speeches, Resolutions etc in Ireland and America* as cited in 'Classified Advertising: Publications', *The Times,* 24 July 1912 and 'Classified Advertising: Publications', *The Times,* 21 August 1912

[83] For *Industrial Unrest, a Practical Solution,* see, for example, Green (1996) op. cit., 285-86 and Starr op. cit., 105. For other pamphlets, see, for example, *The Schools and Social Reform* as cited in Starr op. cit., 105 and *The little book on Poor Law Reform* as cited in 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 16 December 1912

[84] See, for example, 'Letter to the Editor', *The Times,* 28 July 1903, 'Editorial', *The Times,* 28 July 1903, 'Preferential Tariffs', *The Times,* 29 July 1903, 'Letter to the Editor', *The Times,* 1 August 1903 and 'Mr Chaplin and the Free Food League', *The Times,* 3 August 1903

members, some MPs, some peers and some not, have over time penned many a volume and on occasion joined with members of another group to co-publish; the European Foundation, to cite one of a few examples, released a pamphlet with the No Turning Back Group in 1994 entitled *A Conservative Europe: 1994 and beyond* arguing that a single currency would signal the end of the UK as a nation state. [85]

In a number of other instances a foreword has been written by an ex or current minister or on occasion by the Party leader and or prime minister. On two notable occasions, John Major signed a foreword for pamphlets by arch opponents, the European Research Group and Action Centre for Europe. [86] Certainly in the case of the former, his actions appeared to be part of an attempt by him to pacify Euro-sceptics within the PCP during the 1990s, and indeed it appeared to succeed in this respect although by so doing it also served to anger pro-European elements of the Party and thus further hamper efforts by him to reconcile the two inimical factions within the Conservative Party. [87]

Additional activities: in parliament

A number of other activities in addition to those already discussed were noteworthy from the research, namely those which took place firstly within the parliamentary chamber, secondly through the use of the internet, thirdly through letter writing and fourthly, and finally, other miscellaneous activities which did not fit into any of the

[85] As cited in David Owen, 'Chairman of Tory group under fire', *Financial Times*, 3 February 1994
[86] For the European Research Group, see *A Europe of Nations* cited in Blitz (27 February 1995) op. cit., Wood (27 February 1995) op. cit, Woodrow Wyatt, 'Why we must back Major', *The Times*, 28 February 1995 and Patricia Wynn Davies, 'Euro-rebels may split in key debate', *The Independent*, 28 February 1995 and for Action Centre for Europe, see pamphlet (no title given) cited in Nicholas Watt, 'Major warns Tories against US trade ties', *The Guardian*, 12 September 2000
[87] Nicholas Wood, 'Britain's veto 'will not stop' federalists', *The Times*, 28 February 1995

above. Discussion will now examine each of these in turn.

Certainly a number of groups were found to organise activities on the floor of the House and as the majority of such groups were focused on the House of Commons rather than the House of Lords, it is these groups which will be discussed here. In the first instance, a number of groups provided information to MPs and or ministers on a particular subject to be debated on the floor of the House. Certainly from an historical perspective, the Union Defence League was one example in this respect in that it served to act as a 'Bureau of Information for Conservative MPs' seeking information on the issue of Irish separation. [88]

A more recent example cited by one MP interviewed for the thesis was the information provided by Cornerstone relating to the 2007 Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill to some MPs seeking background knowledge on the range of issues addressed within the Bill. Although he acknowledged that the group was active as a caucus in trying to persuade MPs to vote a certain way on the Bill to support its own traditional values, the interviewee did believed that the group's value in providing general background information on the topic was on this occasion significant and moreover increased by the fact the Bill was a free vote. He believed that with no formal whipping to determine outcomes, MPs were more motivated to understand the detail in order to make up their own minds on each clause. This value he believed was compounded by the fact that while some elements of the Bill, such as abortion, were familiar and well versed in political discourse, other elements, such as saviour siblings, were not and as such a number of MPs sought advice and more information from senior

[88] Richard Murphy, 'Faction in the Conservative Party and the Home Rule Crisis, 1912-1914', *History*, vol.71 no.232 (1986), 223

Cornerstone members who were perceived by some to be well informed on the subject. [89]

Other groups rather than seeking to provide information to others for use on the floor, have undertaken to orchestrate a parliamentary campaign on the floor of the House themselves. A vast array of parliamentary 'tools' were found to have been used by such groups and these included scrutinising proposed legislation and on occasion tabling amendments, tabling and or supporting backbench motions, questions to ministers and tabling Private Members' Bills, including Ten Minute Rule Bills.

It was notable from the research that while some groups chose to focus their activity on perhaps one or possibly two of the above (Bill Cash from the European Foundation, for example, allegedly tabled two hundred and forty amendments to the Maastricht Bill [90]) other groups would undertake all of the above as part of a highly organised and concerted parliamentary campaign in an attempt to affect outcomes. Although chapter five will discuss this parliamentary activity in terms of the function groups fulfil as part of the policy making process, it is interesting at this point in the thesis simply to note the diverse nature of the parliamentary activity undertaken by groups in this respect.

Certainly those groups which did organise a concerted parliamentary campaign have more often than not done so by scrutinising proposed legislation, with some even being formed for the specific purpose of rallying against one specific Bill, as indeed was discussed previously. Certainly parliamentary scrutiny of legislation has formed a key

[89] Interview with Mr Greg Hands MP: 15 May 2008. For full details regarding the 2008 Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act, see http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2008/pdf/ukpga_20080022_en.pdf (accessed 2 October 2009)
[90] Nigel Morris, 'Eurosceptic MP Cash given law post in new Tory team', *The Independent*, 18 September 2001

element of group activity for a number of groups throughout the entire period studied. Thus to cite a few of many possible examples, Sane Planning undertook a parliamentary campaign of questions and speeches against Nicholas Ridley's planning proposals for additional housing to be built on green belt in the 1980s, the Privy Council undertook a similar mission against Edward Heath's move towards further integration into the EEC in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Active Backbenchers Committee sought to scrutinise proposed legislation in general terms and the Peacock's Tail fought against the 1867 Representation of the People's Act. [91]

One particularly lucid account of a parliamentary campaign against proposed devolution legislation was that detailed by George Gardiner of the Union Flag Group. In this instance the 1976 Scotland and Wales Bill, as a constitutional Bill, had its committee stage taken on the floor of the House which enabled the group to utilise a range of parliamentary tools to make its passage as difficult as possible. These included filibustering and organising a small amendment drafting committee to draft a series of amendments and then, once they knew which amendments had been accepted by the Speaker, ringing round to ensure there was never a shortage of speakers on the floor from the group. Gardiner would also provide briefing notes for those speaking to assist with their delivery and even when the government moved a closure motion on an amendment, it could be tested in a division which served to delay passage even longer. Gardiner also revealed that he worked together with similar groups from across the floor of the House to provide additional support for each others' campaigns whether supporting amendments or signing early day motions, all of which were designed to

[91] For Sane Planning, see Carvel (11 May 1988) op. cit., for the Privy Council, see interview with Sir Richard Body: 26 February 2008, for the Active Backbenchers Committee, see Barberis, McHugh and Tyldesley op. cit., 44 and for the Peacock's Tail, see Crowson op. cit., 236

drag attempts at devolution to a faltering halt which is indeed what happened. [92]

Other groups have, over time, employed a number of these parliamentary campaigning techniques at various points in their history. The One Nation Group, for example, has at various times put forward questions to ministers, tabled motions and signed other people's motions, orchestrated adjournment debates, co-ordinated members to speak on an agreed line and engineered the slate for backbench party committees. Although the actual impact of the last of these is hard to quantify, the group did without doubt have success in securing a number of its members in key positions on these committees in its early days. [93] It is worth emphasising that such activity was found to vary over time within groupings and certainly in this instance that the One Nation Group, while proactive along the above lines in its earlier years, was less active as a parliamentary campaigning group as time passed. [94] Certainly Mark Garnett, in his biography of Cub Alport details the 'harassing' of the Labour government as a result of weekly discussion regarding the forthcoming week's business in the House by the group in its very early years with subsequent action including the 'identification of opportunities for holding the late-night debates which Labour ministers found so irksome' and that 'any proposals for coalition be attacked and denounced'. [95]

Additional activities: use of internet

There is no doubt that the development of the internet, particularly over the last decade, has proffered a significant window of opportunity for some, but by no means

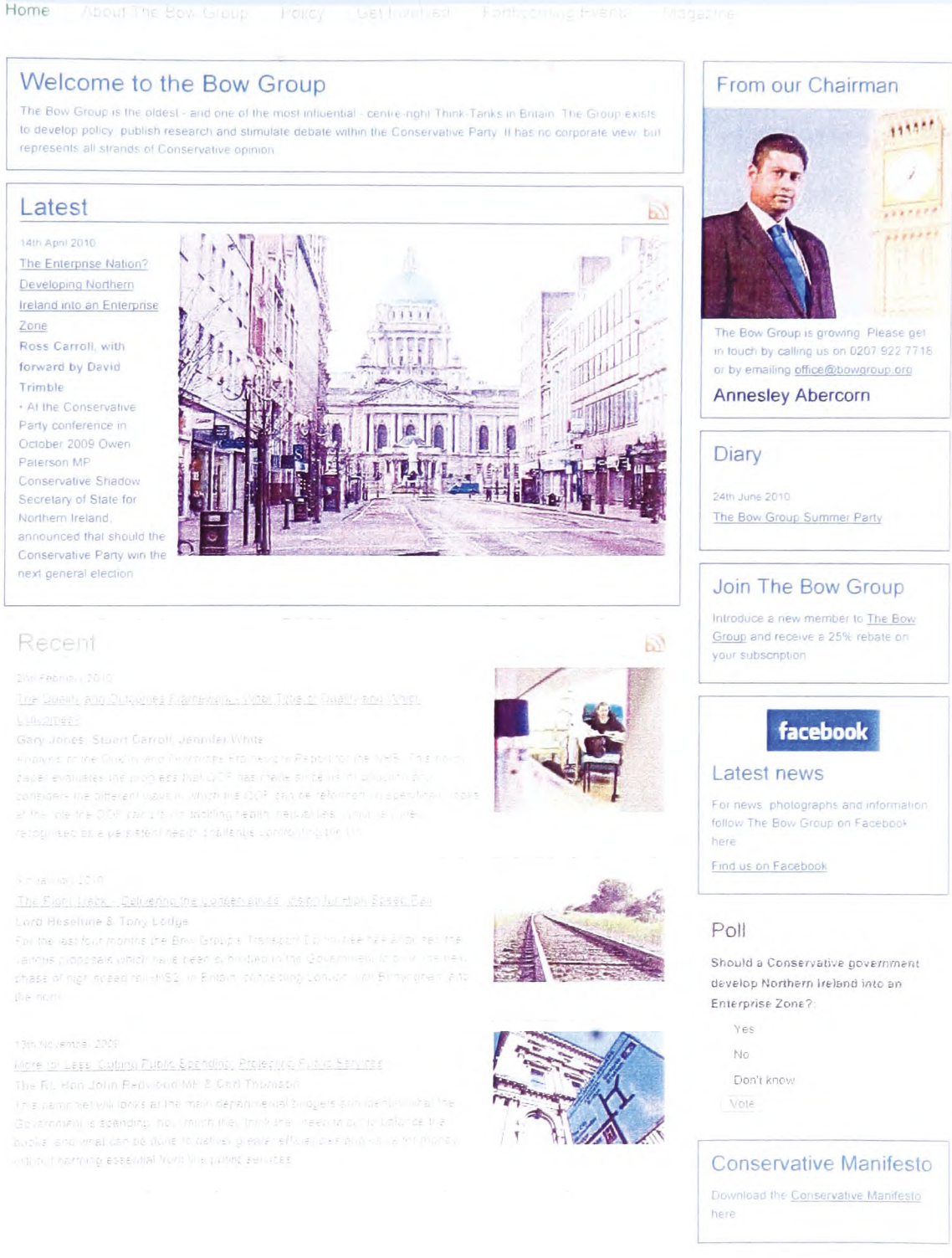
[92] Interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000 and Gardiner op. cit., 119-25
[93] Walsha (2000) op. cit., 197-99
[94] Walsha (2003a) op. cit., 89-90
[95] Garnett op. cit., 106-7

all, unofficial parliamentary party groupings. It is perhaps unsurprising that those groups which have adopted a 'look at me' philosophy are those same groups which have utilised and developed this opportunity to a far greater extent than others. Thus groups such as the No Turning Back Group which do not adopt an overtly 'look at me' approach to activities, have no website. In comparison, a number of other more outward looking groupings were found to be especially active in terms of their usage of the internet and these included those such as the Bow Group, Conservative Way Forward, Cornerstone, the European Foundation and the Tory Reform Group. By way of illustration, the home page of the Bow Group website can be seen in Figure 2.

Although their historical counterparts did not have access to the internet, it is easy to visualise them making similar use of these same opportunities if they were in existence today. Certainly those groups which were found to have a high profile in *The Times* in the last two centuries, such as the Union Defence League, the Unionist Free Food League and the Unionist Social Reform Committee, would undoubtedly have published impressive websites, maximised the same opportunities for email updates and set up similar facebook pages. No doubt the political adversaries of those such as Randolph Churchill of the Fourth Party (and other groups) and George Gardiner of the 92 Group (and others) would undoubtedly have found themselves at the centre of attention on many a political blog site if such tools had been available to them in the 1890s and 1980s respectively.

What was notable from the research was the *pace* at which the internet has become an integral part of activity for many of these 'look at me' groups and certainly this was especially true even during the period within which this thesis was being researched.

Figure 2:
Home page of the Bow Group website



Source: http://www.bowgroup.org: (accessed 21 May 2010)

Thus groups which were investigated early on during this period would at the very most have had a basic website, CChange and the Anti-Common Market League for example, whereas those examined towards the end of the research stage, especially those which came to light during the interview process itself such as Direct Democracy, were found to have, for example, not only impressive websites but also their own email mailing lists and pages on facebook, developments which would have been unheard of at the beginning of the research. [96] What is also indicative of the speed of change is that from this random selection of the three websites cited in the previous sentence, one (namely the Anti-Common Market League) was no longer live at the time of writing up.

As the use of the internet was found to revolve around three principal aspects, namely email, websites and other relevant areas, discussion will focus on these. Certainly from an historical perspective, the development of email has probably had the greatest single influence on group operations in terms of practical organisation. As discussed previously, email has without doubt revolutionised communication between group members and supporters and many groups now rely entirely on this means of communication as the most time and cost efficient way of organising activities. For some groups this has meant that it is now possible to maintain a database of supporters and communicate with them in a way which would have been unconceivable to their historic counterparts.

One notable example of this is Direct Democracy, which after the publication of its six *Localist Papers* written by founding member Douglas Carswell in *The Daily*

[96] For CChange, see http://www.cchange.org.uk/ (accessed 22 September 2006 and 29 September 2009), for the Anti-Common Market League, see http://www.bullen.demon.co.uk/cibacml.htm (accessed 22 February 2006) and for Direct Democracy, see http://www.direct-democracy.co.uk/ (accessed 23 February 2008)

Telegraph, resulted in the group obtaining the email addresses of over fifteen thousand supporters. These same supporters were subsequently kept updated of group activities and emailed e-copies of the group's regular bulletin. [97] Indeed Direct Democracy stood out amongst all those groups researched as an example of a 'next generation' grouping in that it has a core (small) parliamentary membership, governance and focus yet an unbridled embracing of modern communications through the internet enabled it to reach out beyond the parliamentary arena in a way unseen amongst any other group. Certainly the agreement reached between Carswell and Amazon, as discussed earlier, over the printing of its second book, *The Plan: Twelve Months to renew Britain* supported this view.

However, as also discussed earlier, the emergence of email from a research perspective is in some respects to be lamented as much information can be gained from traditional correspondence and emails are rarely retained in the same way that letters are. Certainly the chairman of one group, Nick's Diner, was aware of the value of all correspondence in this respect and during his interview with the author stated that his group were considering donating their papers to the Bodleian. [98]

Email aside, a number of groups have established and maintained an impressive array of websites as indeed was indicated in the opening paragraph of this section. In addition to those already mentioned, namely the Bow Group, Conservative Way Forward, Cornerstone, the European Foundation and the Tory Reform Group, Better

[97] Interview with Mr Douglas Carswell MP: 14 May 2008
[98] Interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008

Off Out and the Selsdon Group have also published their own websites. [99]

Further examination of a number of these websites reveal the opportunity for interested members to register as supporters, vote on-line and sign up for email updates in addition to also providing an opportunity for supporters, or otherwise, for interactive contact through their website. [100] Other groups provide the opportunity to access other resources through their home page; the European Foundation, for example, provides free copies of all its journals, Cornerstone provides access to a number of articles and speeches by key group members and the Tory Reform Group, at the time of writing, sold literature reflecting its political stance on its on-line shop. [101]

Although, taken together, email and websites represent the greatest use of the internet, a small number of groups were also found to use the internet in other capacities. Thus Direct Democracy, the Tory Reform Group, Conservative Way Forward, Better Off Out, the Bow Group and the Selsdon Group were all, at the time of writing, found to utilise Facebook [102] while those such as the European Foundation, the

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[99] For the Bow Group, see http://www.bowgroup.org/, for Conservative Way Forward, see http://www.conwayfor.org.uk/, for Cornerstone, see http://cornerstonegroup.wordpress.com/, for the European Foundation, see http://www.europeanfoundation.org/, for the Tory Reform Group, see http://www.trg.org.uk/, for Better Off Out, see http://www.tfa.net/betteroffout/ and for the Selsdon Group, see http://www.selsdongroup.co.uk/ (all accessed 29 September 2009)

[100] See, for example, http://www.tfa.net/betteroffout/, http://www.bowgroup.org/, http://cornerstonegroup.wordpress.com/ and http://www.trg.org.uk/ (all accessed 29 September 2009)

[101] For the European Foundation, see http://www.europeanfoundation.org/journals.html, for Cornerstone, see http://cornerstonegroup.wordpress.com/articles/ and http://cornerstonegroup.wordpress.com/speeches/ and for the Tory Reform Group, see http://www.trg.org.uk/aaa/shop.php (all accessed 29 September 2009)

[102] For facebook, see http://www.facebook.com/search/?q=Direct+Democracy&init=quick#/group.php?gid=2231730005&ref=search&sid=1263450857.1560377415..1 , http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2221110124, http://www.facebook.com/search/?q=Conservative+Way+Forward&init=quick#/group.php?gid=2391273482&ref=search&sid=1263450857.351457147..1, http://www.facebook.com/search/?q=Better+Off+Out&init=quick#/group.php?gid=2211414274&ref=search&sid=1263450857.3215116402..1, http://www.facebook.com/search/?q=Bow+Group&init=quick#/group.php?gid=4094506935&ref=search&sid=1263450857.1541864055..1 and http://www.facebook.com/search/?q=Selsdon&init=quick#/group.php?gid=66699765199&ref=search&sid=1263450857.4119953224..1 (all accessed 29 September 2009)

Tory Reform Group and Cornerstone were found to host a number of blogs. [103]

Additional activities: letter writing

A further activity associated with groupings which was notable from the research was letter writing. Certainly in terms of writing letters to national papers, a number of groups were markedly active. Seeking to both address issues of the day relevant to their own agenda and to broadcast their own existence, a significant number of such letters were found throughout the entire period studied although the majority of these were in the earlier years before the development of the mass media and certainly before the development of the internet. Correspondents unsurprisingly appear to name their own groupings, their own positions within it and, where relevant, their office addresses in order to ensure maximum exposure. A small number of groups were found to be especially active in this respect and from an historical perspective these included the Unionist Free Food League, the Tariff Reform League and the Unionist Social Reform Committee. [104]

More recent examples of groupings which included letter writing amongst its activities include the Scottish Thistle Group, the Selsdon Group (especially prolific), the European Foundation and Better Off Out. In certain cases, and the Selsdon and Better Off Out were noteworthy in this respect, there was one particularly enthusiastic member of the group who would write repeatedly. [105]

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[103] For blogs, see http://europeanfoundation.blogspot.com/, http://toryreformgroup.wordpress.com/ and http://cornerstonegroup.wordpress.com/ (all accessed 29 September 2009)

[104] For example, for the Unionist Free Food League, see 'Unionist Free Food League: Letter from The Duke of Devonshire', *The Times,* 17 October 1903, for the Tariff Reform League, see 'Letter to the Editor', *The Times,* 12 May 1917 and for the Unionist Social Reform Committee, see 'Letter to the Editor', *The Times,* 3 July 1912

[105] For example, for Scottish Thistle Group, see 'Letter to the Editor', *The Times,* 16 February 1968, for the Selsdon Group, see 'Letter to the Editor', *The Times,* 1 October 1975, for the European Foundation, see 'Letter to the Editor', *The Times,* 15 October 1999 and for Better Off Out, see 'Letter to the Editor', *The Times,* 9 September 2006

Letter writing activity associated with groups was not always in relation to letters sent from the groups themselves and not always on a positive note. Indeed in one instance, from an historical perspective, in October 1911 a letter was written to *The Times* from a member of the general public complaining about the excessive number of groupings and how their activities overlapped to such an extent that it rendered many of them surplus to requirements. [106] On another occasion a letter was written lambasting a certain group, namely the Unionist Free Food League, for what was perceived to be a ridiculous name by insinuating that free food would be distributed. From a more recent perspective, similar letters were also in evidence. One example, of many, was that written by a deputy chairman of a constituency association deriding the Whipless Nine for causing untold damage to the electability of the Party. [107]

Newspapers aside, on occasion a grouping would send an open letter directly to a minister or even the prime minister or leader of the Party; one example of the last of these was that sent from the Positive European Group to John Major in protest at the continual failure by a small group of Euro-sceptic MPs to support the official party line on the subject of Europe. [108] The same group was also one of a small number who on occasion would write to all Conservative MPs. [109]

Finally in respect of letters, groups were on occasion found to correspond with each other and in one notable incidence, as illustrated previously, PEST wrote to the Bow Group requesting advice on how to succeed as an unofficial grouping. In this case,

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[106] 'Letter to the Editor: Protest of a 'Die-Hard'', *The Times,* 20 October 1911
[107] For the Unionist Free Food League, see 'Letter to the Editor', *The Times,* 23 October 1903 and for the Whipless Nine, see 'Letter to the Editor, *The Times*, 13 April 1995
[108] Anthony Bevins, 'Mitterrand and Heath add to Major's woes', *The Independent,* 27 July 1993
[109] Stephen Bates and Patrick Wintour, 'Government is forced to drop vote on Maastricht Bill', *The Guardian,* 12 March 1993

the request for help was refused. [110]

Additional activities: miscellaneous

While the majority of group activities have been discussed in previous sections, a small but significant number of groups have undertaken a number of other activities which it was not possible to incorporate into the above. One of these was group undertakings in relation to elections. While the majority of groups, and these included dining groups such as Nick's Diner and the Double-Eight and policy groups such as Cornerstone and Direct Democracy, sought no operational involvement with elections at any level (whether general elections, by-elections, local elections or even European elections), a small number of other groups have taken a different view. [111]

Whilst at one level, one group, namely the Burke Club, organised a meeting to discuss the likely outcome of the 2001 General Election (they concluded that whatever William Hague did he would not win anyway), on another level other groups have been more pro-active. The Bow Group, for example, has provided introductions between group members and candidates (Geoffrey Howe met Ian Gow in this way), personal assistants for MPs, election hit squads for marginal seats during general election campaigns and even some assistance during European election campaigns. [112] The Bow Group is also noted for providing a steady stream of approved candidates to constituency associations for selection prior to general elections with nine PPCs put

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[110] Barr op. cit., 228

[111] For Nick's Diner, see interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008, for the Double-Eight, see interview with Mr Ian Taylor MBE MP: 24 April 2008, for Cornerstone, see interview with Mr Greg Hands MP: 15 May 2008 and for Direct Democracy, see interview with Mr Douglas Carswell MP: 14 May 2008

[112] For the Burke Club, see 'Even a Burke can see that Hague's a loser', *Mail on Sunday*, 22 April 2001. For the Bow Group general election campaigns, see Howe (1995) op. cit., 28, Barr op. cit., 137-38, 195, Bow Group Annual Report and Accounts 2004-5 from http://www.bowgroup.org/ (accessed 21 October 2006) and for the Bow Group European election campaigns, see John Lewis, 'Tories could lose a most marginal seat', *The Times*, 3 June 1989

forward by the group for the 2010 General Election. [113] Certainly the Bow Group is not alone in this respect. A small number of groups such as Conservative Way Forward currently offer assistance to those who wish to become candidates thus fulfilling a similar nurturing role to that played by the 92 Group during the 1980s. [114]

Indeed from this, a few groups have, over time, gone so far as to threaten to provide break-away candidates, and indeed have on occasion carried out their threat, at both general and by-elections. The Positive European Group, to cite one example, threatened to put up its own breakaway pro-European candidate in Newark in 1999 if William Hague fielded a Europe-sceptic candidate. [115]

Certainly from an historical vantage point, such threats are not without precedent; the Party has seen both noticeable election activity and threatened breakaway candidates put forward not only during times of internal dissent over Europe but also at two other key pressure points in its history, namely Irish separatism and tariff reform. In terms of Irish separatism, the Unionist Defence League was very active in producing material, such as *Irish Facts For British Platforms* as detailed previously, to support Unionist candidates whilst also providing those same candidates with every possible assistance at election time. [116]

With regard to tariff reform, a number of groupings were similarly if not more active

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[113] See, for example, Bow Group Annual Report and Accounts 2004-5 as above which cites 12 recent Bow Group Council members as having stood for Parliament, 3 of whom were elected and author's own experiences as a Party activist. See also, 'Chairman's message', *Crossbow,* Spring Edition 2010

[114] For Conservative Way Forward, see http://www.conwayfor.org/about-us/becoming-a-candidate.aspx (accessed 1 October 2009) and for the 92 Group, see interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000

[115] Watson and Landale (23 March 1999) op. cit.,

[116] See, for example, 'Law and Lawlessness in Ireland', *The Times,* 26 October 1907, 'Political Notes', *The Times,* 9 May 1908, 'Election Intelligence', *The Times,* 9 June 1908, 'Election Intelligence', *The Times,* 19 March 1909 and 'Election Intelligence', *The Times,* 15 December 1909

with reformers represented in both the Tariff Reform League and the more militant Confederacy and free fooders represented firstly in the Unionist Free Food League and then, after 1905, in the Unionist Free Trade Club. [117] In the case of the first of these, both the Tariff Reform League and, more dramatically, the Confederacy mounted what can only be seen as an assault on free food MPs during the first decade of the twentieth century but particularly in the run up to the 1906 General Election when a number of tariff reform candidates were organised to stand against free trade candidates.

Indeed in 1905 when an incensed Robert Cecil compiled a list of seats targeted in this way for Arthur Balfour, entitled *The Attack on Unionist Free Trade Seats,* he found twenty five, and probably more, with an additional four seats left alone only after the sitting free food MP agreed to stand down at the forthcoming election. [118] Despite some action taken earlier by the Unionist Free Food League to publicly disassociate themselves from tariff reform candidates, [119] the tariff reformers won outright after the 1906 General Election when the number of free trade MPs dropped to sixteen from twenty seven the year before with even Balfour loosing his seat. [120] The Unionist Free Trade Club was no match for the tariff reformers of the Confederacy. Certainly by December 1909 *The Times* was reporting that the Unionist Free Trade Club had 'difficulty coming to a common view as to what stance to take at the forthcoming election and will thus take no part as a body in that election'. [121] By January 1910 the only free fooder MP remaining was Hugh Cecil and even he subsequently re-directed

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[117] Richard Rempel, 'Lord Hugh Cecil's Parliamentary Career 1900-1914: Promise Unfulfilled', *The Journal of British Studies,* vol.25 no.4 (1972), 122
[118] Alan Sykes, 'The Confederacy and the Purge of the Unionist Free Traders 1906-1910', *The Historical Journal,* vol.18 no.2 (1975), 359
[119] See, for example, 'Fiscal Policy', *The Times,* 12 December 1903
[120] Peter Fraser, 'Unionism and Tariff Reform: The Crisis of 1906', *The Historical Journal,* vol.5 no.2 (1962), 155
[121] 'The Crisis', *The Times,* 10 December 1909

his political energies against the Parliament Bill. [122]

Elections aside, and from a more contemporary perspective, groups have also periodically undertaken specific research for MPs and ministers. The Bow Group was one such group which has helped up to nineteen MPs by pairing a group member with an individual MP for research purposes and, on occasion, assisting with the drafting of parliamentary questions. Certainly when Keith Joseph requested assistance for research on foreign aid expenditure, help from the group was forthcoming although his request for additional help with a report on the Post Office monopoly was referred to the Selsdon Group.[123]

On a different note, two groups, namely the 92 Group and the Lollards, have in the past been noted for their active organisation of the right and left-wing slate for the 1922 Committee and the now defunct backbench subject committees with varying levels of success at different times in their history. [124]

In addition to both research and the organisation of the slate, other activities undertaken by groupings include the organisation of petitions. Although a number of such petitions were found over the period studied, one of the most remarkable was that organised by the Union Defence League. Entitled the *Ulster Covenant*, many copies

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[122] Rempel op. cit., 127

[123] Barr op. cit., 147, 154

[124] The Lollards was generally perceived as the most effective up to the beginning of the 1980s after which the 92 Group was generally perceived as having achieved the best success rates. For more background on the Lollards in this respect, see, for example, interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000, Fowler (2008) op. cit., 78-79, Gardiner op. cit., 38, 134-35, Julian Critchley, *Westminster Blues*, London, Elm Tree Books, 1985, 133, Riddell (1992) op. cit., 431 and for more background on the 92 Group, see, again, interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000, Grant (2000) op. cit, passim, Gardiner op. cit., 164-65, Michael Jones, 'Tories' Black Hand Gang strikes again', *Sunday Times*, 18 December 1988 and Patricia Wynn Davies and Colin Brown, 'Disillusion rife among 'wets' Tory left, *The Independent*, 9 October 1995

were available for signature in shops and offices in the largest towns around the country in addition to the Union Defence League's own office in Westminster with *The Times* reporting 'up to 30 000 pouring in to UDL offices each day'. [125]

Finally, in relation to other activities, groups have on occasion organised fact finding trips abroad (the Dresden and the Unionist Social Reform Committee), organised the delivery of leaflets (Better Off Out), supported the campaigns of others (the Bow Group and the film industry), organised national polling and focus groups (the European Foundation and the European Research Group), given evidence to investigative committees (the Selsdon Group and the Plowden Report), assisted in 'winning' partners for marriage (Geoffrey and Elspeth Howe and Michael and Anne Heseltine), commissioned a group oil painting (Blue Chip) and even, on one occasion, pulled the carriage of their group's 'leading light' after election to parliament (Young Unionist Group and Robert Cecil). [126]

Thus having answered the question, who are these groups? in the previous chapter, this chapter has sought to examine the question, what do these groups do? Taken together, these two chapters have enabled considerable strides to be made in putting

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[125] 'The League of British Covenanters', *The Times*, 4 April 1914. For other newspaper reports of the petition, see, for example, 'The Home Rule Bill', *The Times*, 3 October 1912, 'The British Covenant', *The Times*, 4 March 1914, 'Coercion of Ulster', *The Times*, 5 March 1914 and 'Home Rule in the By-Election', *The Times*, 9 May 1914

[126] For fact finding trips abroad, see Brown (3 April 1991) op. cit. and Dutton op. cit., 881, for delivery of leaflets, see http://www.betteroffout.co.uk (accessed 27 November 2006), for supporting campaigns of others, see David Lister, 'Film-makers set scene for revival', *The Independent*, 17 March 1994, for national polling, see Philip Webster and David Charter, 'Ignoring EU lost us seats, say sceptics', *The Times*, 10 May 2005, for focus groups, see Mary Ann Sieghart, 'Provincial populism or grubby racism?', *The Times*, 9 March 2001, for evidence to investigative committees, see 'Power ownership', *The Times*, 6 September 1975, for partners for marriage, (Howe) see Ivan Fallon, 'Political wife with a mind of her own', *Sunday Times*, 4 November 1990 and (Heseltine) Heseltine op. cit., 48, for group painting, see Michael White, 'Profile: The abominable no-man', *The Guardian*, 28 November 1995 and Major op. cit., 68 and for carriage pulling, see 'Lord Robert Cecil's Victory', *The Times*, 25 November 1911

together a bank of information relating to unofficial parliamentary party groupings. In order to complete this bank, chapter four will now focus on how these groups relate, firstly, to each other and then, subsequently, to the wider environment in which they operate.

Chapter Four: Networking

'The groups … can be binding. They can be a very good way of getting to know colleagues within the party and establishing informal networks.'

Brooks Newmark MP [1]

This chapter will seek to examine groups in terms of their relationships with both each other and others. In order to explore further this aspect of unofficial parliamentary party groupings, attention will focus firstly, on relations within the groups themselves, secondly, on their relations with others within the parliamentary arena and thirdly, on their relations with a number of bodies which lie outside the parliamentary arena.

Within groups: existing members

In terms of the first of these, that is between members of the same group, relations were, in general terms, very harmonious and this applied equally to current members of the same group and, where applicable, to relations between current members and previous members of the same group. As such, each will now be discussed in turn.

With interviews from MPs proving to be the most valuable source of information regarding relationships within groups, it was interesting that all those MPs interviewed who were members of a group or indeed groups, stated that in their experience members of the same group always had very good relationships with each other and although they

[1] Interview with Mr Brooks Newmark MP: 30 April 2008

acknowledged that they could not speak for all groupings, this clearly was the case for those of which they were a member.

As members were generally drawn together in the first instance through shared experience (they were perhaps all members of the same parliamentary intake), a shared belief and commitment to a particular direction for the Party or even a shared interest in one particular aspect of Party policy, this in itself was found to have provided a solid and binding foundation on which further relations could and were built. One MP in particular stressed that it was because of this empathy amongst like-minded group members, that the role which groups were able to play for new MPs in helping them to get to know and network with their parliamentary colleagues more quickly than they would otherwise have been able to have done was a significant one and as such very welcome for a new MP. The same MP, drawing from her own past experiences as a new parliamentarian, believed that her first months in parliament would have been much more difficult without the common bonding and friendship extended to her through such groupings, not least as without such groups it would have taken her longer to ascertain which colleagues were of a like-mind on certain subjects and moreover to have found the opportunity of meeting up and spending time with them. [2]

Another MP interviewed discussed that considering the cut-throat environment of parliamentary politics, group dinners were viewed by him as both a welcome interlude for relaxation and an opportunity to meet with a relatively small number of like-minded friends who could be trusted. [3] Certainly this element of good relations amongst group members in terms of providing an environment of trust amongst parliamentary

[2] Interview with Mrs Angela Watkinson MP: 8 May 2008
[3] Interview with Mr Charles Walker MP: 7 May 2008

colleagues was mentioned by several other MPs and indeed emphasised in particular by one group chairman. [4]

The same group chairman, and indeed a number of other MPs interviewed for this thesis, also stressed that while relations between members of the same group were good, this did not preclude lively debate during which members often disagreed with each other and moreover, often quite vehemently. The value of being able to discuss with trustworthy and like-minded colleagues either the general political situation or specific policy issues was invaluable not only as an arena in which to voice one's own views but also to test these same views on colleagues and, when one's own views were incomplete, to help formulate a definitive stance. Certainly he believed that such discussions were very often instrumental and significant in providing MPs with the opportunity to develop and mature as parliamentarians by allowing polices to be developed and mistakes made without fear of any recriminations from either Party or public along the way. Indeed vigorous debate was viewed by this particular group chairman as strengthening rather than weakening both individual and group relations and indeed his views in this respect were mirrored by a significant number of other MPs interviewed.

Certainly evidence drawn from elsewhere in addition to that gained from interviews indicated that a large number of the groups studied were found to have taken part in lively debate, and often failed to reach a consensus, on a range of issues and this was found to be true throughout the entire period studied. While the list of examples in this instance is considerable and to cite just a few of many, former groups such as the

[4] Interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008, chairman of Nick's Diner

Unionist War Committee experienced a degree of disagreement over universal recruitment to the war effort while, more recently, members of the Bow Group were found to disagree over time on a whole raft of diverse issues which included those of Africa and decolonisation, Europe, a mailshot aimed to increase readership of *Crossbow*, the succession of group chairmen and the commercialism of their conferences harming the integrity of the group. [5]

One particular subject of internal debate, and this was true for many groups, was that which occurred at the time of a change in Party leadership when many group members could not agree amongst themselves as to who the successor to the incumbent should be and this remained true whether or not the succession involved some degree of crisis, which it usually did, within the PCP. This was perhaps surprising to some extent considering the degree to which groupings were more often than not composed of parliamentary colleagues who in general terms would agree on the general direction in which they felt the Party should follow and therefore by inference would agree on who they wished to lead them. Thus as discussed earlier, Michael Portillo allegedly threatened to walk out of a Burke Club gathering if talk turned to the leadership contest while George Gardiner details 'disagreements' over the 'leadership candidates' at meetings of the Upstairs Club and that the 92 Group was 'split down the middle' following John Redwood's leadership challenge in June 1995. More recently, one MP discussed private 'fragmentation' amongst members of one group, namely Cornerstone, during the leadership election campaign in 2005. [6]

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[5] For the Unionist War Committee, see 'The New Bill', *The Times*, 27 April 1916 and for the Bow Group, for Africa, see Barr op. cit., 58-59, for Europe, see Barr op. cit., 74, for mailshot, see Barr op. cit., 65, for succession, see Barr op. cit., 71-72 and for commercialism of conferences, see Barr op. cit., 191-92

[6] For the Burke Club, see Rachel Sylvester, 'Tories in trauma: Why Portillo outed himself', *The Independent*, 12 September 1999, for the Upstairs Club, see Gardiner op. cit., 46, for the 92 Group, see Gardiner op. cit., 45 and for Cornerstone, see interview with Mr Stephen Hammond MP: 7 May 2008

While these discussions, and others, were usually kept strictly private within the group, disagreements within a group would on occasion spill into the public domain. One example of this, from an historical perspective, was that which occurred in relation to the Unionist Agricultural Committee when it found itself having a public disagreement regarding the 1921 Safeguarding of Industries Act. On other occasions, disagreements, and in these cases largely not in the public domain, have resulted in the formation of a separate group with Guy Fawkes, for example, being formed as an extension of Blue Chip. [7]

Within groups: former members

In the vast majority of instances, links between an MP and a grouping ceased when an MP left the group and this was true whether the MP concerned lost his or her seat at a general election and therefore left parliament, or whether they exited a group as a result of promotion or a change in beliefs yet still remained within parliament. This said, and generally in the case of the latter, there were found to be a small number of exceptions to this with the Bow Group being the most notable. Certainly its website emphasises that even today relations with former members are very strong and indeed this is supported from the research with a range of former members such as Michael Howard and Geoffrey Howe retaining definitive links with the group. [8]

In the case of the former, that is where a group member actually left parliament and ceased to be an MP, few links were retained. Certainly in those groupings where membership was drawn exclusively from the PCP it was notable that once an MP had

[7] For the Unionist Agricultural Committee, see 'Farming and Protection', *The Times*, 30 May 1927 and for Guy Fawkes, see Anderson op. cit., 253

[8] For website, see http://www.bowgroup.org/ (accessed 26 October 2006), for Michael Howard, see Celia Walden, 'Spy', *The Daily Telegraph*, 21 March 2006 and for Geoffrey Howe, see Anderson op. cit., 39

left parliament, his or her membership and association with any grouping of which they had been a member ceased simultaneously. This was also true in the small number of cases where an MP left the Conservative Party. Enoch Powell's membership of the Economic Dining Club, for example, (according to Nicholas Ridley) ceased on his leaving the Conservative Party. [9]

This said, as above, there were again a few exceptions to this and as such worth brief discussion. Certainly in a few instances a group would make a concerted attempt to retain contact with ex-members once they left parliament. As detailed earlier, the chairman of Nick's Diner, for example, indicated his intention to invite as many previous members as possible to the group's thirty fifth anniversary dinner in order to maintain links with former members. Similarly another MP interviewed, who was the secretary of the 92 Group, indicated that the 92 would invite former members to dinners although in this instance on a fairly regularly basis. It was interesting that the same MP stressed the particular value of these invitations to those former MPs who were invited and how much they looked forward to renewing old associations, largely as once having left Westminster very few opportunities presented themselves to renew previous parliamentary acquaintances. [10] Certainly earlier research into the 92 Group would support this as an ongoing practice over many years although on occasion it would appear that after a general election, especially when the group's membership may have been reduced through members loosing their seats, that the invitations were not entirely altruistic and instead motivated by a desire to maintain both membership levels and a

[9] Ridley (1992) op. cit., 20
[10] Interview with Mr Philip Davies MP: 6 May 2008

respectable number of places around the table for dinner. [11]

In parliament: party leaders

Having examined relations within groups themselves, attention will now focus on relations between groups and others within the parliamentary arena. In order to do this, the thesis will discuss firstly, relations with the Party leader, secondly, relations with the frontbench team, thirdly, relations with other unofficial groupings and finally, relations with a number of remaining bodies and individuals located within parliament.

In the first instance, it was fascinating to peruse, over time, the numerous and varied relationships which were evident between a wide range of groups and almost without exception, each of the Party leaders who have served from the time of Robert Peel who became leader in December 1834 to the current leader, David Cameron, elected as leader almost one hundred and eighty years later in December 2005. [12] (See Table 2 below for leaders of the Conservative Party from 1834).

These relationships provide a microcosm of not only the history of the Party itself but also that of the wider political landscape and as such constitute not only one of the most insightful elements of the paper but also in terms of research, one of the most demanding components of the thesis. This said, when all the relevant information was

[11] Grant (2000) op. cit., 20-21, also DPW/37/11 (1974): correspondence between one ex-MP (and 92 Group member) and the 92 Group chairman, Pat Wall, and brief minutes of a meeting held on 13 March 1974 which records that 'ex-members who lost their seats, but who have been readopted for the same or another constituency, should be eligible at their request to attend group dinners'. Also, from writer's own observations from interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000

[12] For Robert Peel, see, for example, Chris Cook and John Stevenson, *The Longman Handbook of Modern British History 1741-2001*, London, Pearson, 2001, 19 and for David Cameron, see, for example, 'David Cameron: A new professionalism', *The Guardian*, 8 December 2005

Table 2:
Leaders of the Conservative Party from 1834

Leader	Date elected or appointed leader
David Cameron	December 2005
Michael Howard	November 2003
Iain Duncan Smith	September 2001
William Hague	June 1997
John Major	November 1990
Margaret Thatcher	February 1975
Edward Heath	August 1965
Alec Douglas-Home	November 1963
Harold Macmillan	January 1957
Anthony Eden	April 1955
Winston Churchill	October 1940
Neville Churchill	May 1937
Stanley Baldwin	May 1923
Andrew Bonar Law	October 1922
Austen Chamberlain	March 1921
Andrew Bonar Law	November 1911
Arthur Balfour	July 1902
3rd Marquess of Salisbury	June 1885 ii
H Stafford Northcote	April 1888 i
Benjamin Disraeli	February 1868
Lord Stanley	July 1846
Robert Peel	December 1834

i Leader in the House of Commons
ii Sole Leader of the Party - he had already become Leader in the House of Lords on 22 April 1881

Source: derived from NJ Crowson, *The Longman Companion to the Conservative Party since 1830,* Harlow Pearson, 2001, 5-6, Michael White, 'Duncan Smith is new Tory leader', *The Guardian,* 14 September 2001, Patrick Wintour and Michael White, 'Michael Howard claims the Tory throne', *The Guardian,* 7 November 2003 and Michael White, 'Cameron's new Conservatism', *The Guardian,* 7 December 2005

gathered together from a wide range of sources, which included interviews, archives, books, journals, newspapers and the internet, the overall picture gleaned was a very rewarding one.

Without doubt, many instances over the years were found of groups which had at best distant, at worst invective and at the very worst, tergiversate relations with the Party leaders. It is then hardly surprising that on occasion, a leader has made clear his

or her disapproval of individuals within the parliamentary party for being associated with a named group or groups, and again, on occasion, even banning membership of the same. Thus William Hague gave orders for his frontbench to abandon membership of any group which organised a slate for internal elections and Iain Duncan Smith ordered three Conservative MPs who were members of the Monday Club to resign. [13]

Similarly, as indicated earlier, Cameron has made clear his disapproval of membership of Better Off Out and indeed gone on to indicate that any MP who perseveres with membership of this particular group will not be promoted to the frontbench. To a much lesser degree, but interesting nonetheless, was that a number of MPs interviewed believed that David Cameron has exhibited a degree of pragmatism with respect to Cornerstone in that while they believed he supports some of the views of Cornerstone and is keen to ensure that representatives from all sections of the parliamentary party are included in his frontbench team, that they also believe that he 'keeps a close eye' on this specific group and indeed one MP asserted that the group was 'not popular in the whips' office'. [14] This said, another MP interviewed revealed that the new leader had attended a Cornerstone dinner as a speaker and that the group meetings had been 'fairly frequently attended by his parliamentary private secretary' (PPS). [15] Certainly Cornerstone was one of the groups which Cameron sought to keep 'onside' following negotiations for a coalition with Liberal Democrats following the 2010 General Election. [16]

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[13] For William Hague, see Stephen Castle, 'March in step or else, says Hague', *The Independent*, 29 June 1997 and for Iain Duncan Smith, see Benedict Brogan, 'Leader orders three to leave the Monday Club', *The Daily Telegraph*, 8 October 2001

[14] For Better Off Out, see Carlin and Isaby (26 April 2006) op. cit. and Walden (8 September 2006) op. cit. and for Cornerstone, see, for example, interview with Mr Greg Hands MP: 15 May 2008

[15] Interview with Mr Stephen Crabb MP: 6 May 2008

[16] http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/wintour-and-watt/2010/may/07/georgeosborne-conservatives (accessed 11 May 2010)

In terms of prohibiting group membership, what was interesting was that this was a relatively recent development in relations between the leader and groups as very few similar examples were found prior to the leadership of Hague. This said, while from the evidence above it would seem feasible to conclude that leaders are increasingly less tolerant in today's media driven world towards those groups which do not support their leadership and or views, this would be premature as the time frame of these examples could be equally explained by other factors such as the difficulties in securing historical evidence and also perhaps by the fact that as the Conservatives had been out of office for thirteen years the media had fewer substantive issues to report on in relation to the Party. Thus although prohibiting membership of certain groups may have taken place under other leaders, it was not found to have been recorded as having taken place.

Although relatively few examples were then found over time of a leader actually banning membership of a group, many examples were found where relations between a group and the Party leader were less than easy. To cite just a few examples of many, Robert Peel was subjected to the bellicosity of Benjamin Disraeli and the Young England Movement and then in turn, Disraeli by the Peacock's Tail while H Stafford Northcote had to contend with the continual criticism and abuse, especially on the floor of the House, from the Fourth Party. [17] Similarly Arthur Balfour found himself on the receiving end of actions taken by the Halsbury, the Unionist Free Food League and the Reveille and Andrew Bonar Law found himself similarly on the receiving end of actions taken by the Unionist Defence League, the Unionist War Committee and the Unionist Business Committee, Stanley Baldwin by the India Defence Committee and the

[17] For the Young England Movement, see Ramsden (1999) op. cit., 67, for the Peacock's Tail, see Crowson op. cit., 236 and for the Fourth Party, see Norton (1996) op. cit., 31

December Club and Neville Chamberlain by the Glamour Boys. [18]

In the same way, Winston Churchill found his popularity with the One Nation Group waning in that while his war record was always held in high esteem, by July 1954 his tenacity had led the group to despair with minutes of a group meeting dated 27 July 1954 recording their belief that 'they will not be getting rid of that old buffer till they shoot him on the Resurrection morning'. [19] Similarly his successors Harold Macmillan, Alec Douglas-Home (although to a lesser extent) and Edward Heath (to a greater extent and even before becoming leader) had to contend with the Anti-Common Market League; in the case of the last of these on one occasion the League even protested with candles and placards saying 'Heath Out' when he attended a concert while on another, a candidate was fielded against him at Bexley in the 1964 General Election. [20] Indeed Heath appeared to find himself having to deal with more disagreements from various groupings than his immediate predecessors by having to do doing battle with the 1970 Group, the Selsdon Group, the Economic Dining Club and the Privy Council. [21]

More recently, few examples were found of groups acting openly against Margaret

[18] For the Halsbury, see Seldon and Ball op. cit., 27, for the Unionist Free Food League, see 'Duke of Devonshire in Liverpool', *The Times*, 20 January 1904, for the Reveille, see Ramsden (1978) op. cit., 39, for the Unionist Defence League, see Murphy op. cit., 222-23, for the Unionist War Committee and Unionist Business Committee, see Stubbs (1990) op. cit., 875, for the India Defence Committee, see Rasmussen op. cit., 173, Seldon and Ball op. cit., 114-15 and Ramsden (1978) op. cit., 332-33, for the December Club, see Rasmussen op. cit., 174 and for the Glamour Boys, see Rasmussen op. cit., 175-76

[19] Garnett op. cit., 112 and Walsha (2000) op. cit., 203

[20] For the Anti-Common Market League and Harold Macmillan and Alec Douglas-Home, see (2002a) op. cit., 15, 26-27, 35 and for the Anti-Common Market League and Edward Heath: for general campaigning against before becoming leader see, 'Mr Soames expects dearer food under EEC: call for annual farm review by six', *The Times*, 7 June 1962 and 'Campaign against Common Market: Commonwealth as an alternative', *The Times*, 25 April 1962, for demonstration at concert, see 'Mr Heath faces anti-EEC demonstration', *The Times*, 13 January 1973 and for standing against in 1964 General Election, see 'Obituary: Mr John Paul', *The Times*, 7 June 1969

[21] For the 1970 Group, see Forster (2002a) op. cit., 35, for the Selsdon Group, see George Clark, 'Tory demands to 'root out' Thatcherite critics', *The Times*, 28 June 1976 and 'Mr Heath stalks Prime Minister over Europe', *The Times*, 12 July 1978 and for the Economic Dining Club, see 'Obituary: Lord Ridley', *The Guardian*, 6 March 1993

Thatcher although her successor John Major had to contend with a number of serious Euro-rebellions from those such as Fresh Start and the European Foundation and, in turn, his successor William Hague had, although to a lesser degree, to contend with those such as the Positive European Group. [22] Few examples were found of specific groups antagonistic to Iain Duncan Smith (although reports of general and widespread unease regarding his leadership amongst groups in general were found) and similarly Michael Howard although given the length of their tenures, less surprising than those above. [23]

From a more recent perspective, while Cameron has made clear his adversity to Better Off Out, he had not experienced hostility in the period preceding the 2010 General Election from any group to any meaningful degree. (Although not of any lasting significance, and as discussed earlier, A Better Choice did battle against his attempts to alter the arrangements for election of the leader of the Party and subsequently to fund legal challenges against those rejected as a result of his A-list policy). Indeed at the time of writing, even if his attitude to Better Off Out is less than positive and to Cornerstone rather pragmatic, Cameron does appear to experience good relations with two groups most recently formed under his tenure, namely Green Chip and Direct Democracy. [24] Indeed it was interesting to observe that after his announcement not to hold a referendum on the Lisbon Treaty, that those MPs and groups which would have wanted such a referendum made no quantifiable public protest (Philip Davies did give a television interview on the day of the announcement but few subsequent comments were reported). Although some disquiet was expressed

[22] For various rebellions under John Major, see Ludlam and Smith op. cit., 99, for Fresh Start and John Major, see Brandreth op. cit., 337 and for the Positive European Group, see Colin Brown, 'Patten lays down marker for tilt at future Tory leadership fight', *The Independent*, 6 January 1998a
[23] For Iain Duncan Smith, see, for example, Baldwin (18 January 2003) op. cit.
[24] Interview with Mr Douglas Carswell MP: 14 May 2008

on blogsites, Daniel Hannan MEP was instead taking up the ideas of Direct Democracy (his recently published book with Douglas Carswell on the same subject was discussed earlier) for 'a new infrastructure to promote localism'. [25] Whether this level of restraint remains in place over time remains to be seen.

Overall then it was notable from cursory observation that examples of negative relations were found to be greater in number and often, but by no means always, tended to be from what has traditionally been seen as the 'right' of the Party, than those which were found to be entirely positive or at least neutral with any given leader at any one point in time. However this could be explained as much by the failure of history to record the positive and uneventful as its success in recording the negative and more eventful. [26]

This is not to say that the relationship between groups and the Party leader was always found to be a negative one. Although fewer examples were found, a number of groups over time have had a positive relationship with the Party leader. Again, to cite a few of many possible examples, the Unionist Agricultural Committee supported Stanley Baldwin in the face of criticism by the National Farmers' Union, Harold Macmillan had an easy relationship with the Bow Group and launched its *Crossbow* magazine while the Scottish Thistle Group and the European Forum, later to become the Conservative Group for Europe, supported Edward Heath and the Economic Dining Club and the 92 Group supported Margaret Thatcher. Similarly Mainstream sought to support John Major in the face of hostilities by a number of anti-European groups and

[25] http://order-order.com/ (accessed 5 November 2009)
[26] The term 'right' is utilised in this context to mean the traditional 'right-wing' of the party, that is those tending towards economic liberalism, social conservatism and with clearly defined views as to Britain's place in the world

as previously indicated Green Chip and Direct Democracy have been viewed as supportive of David Cameron as Party leader. [27]

It was also notable from the research that a number of groups offered support to leaders in both the early and later stage of their tenure as both leadership candidates and retired leaders. Indeed in the case of the latter it was especially notable that for one leader, namely Thatcher, that her policies have continued to be supported (after she stood down as prime minister and leader of the Party) by a number of groups which have included the Standard Bearers, Conservative Way Forward and the No Turning Back Group. [28]

Previous leaders aside, a number of leadership candidates have been supported by a specific group and examples in this instance included Action Centre for Europe and Ken Clarke's candidature, the Lollards supporting Anthony Meyer's 'stalking horse' campaign against Thatcher and Blue Chip helping to organise Major's campaign. [29] That is not to say that groups always acted as a caucus at times of leadership elections, indeed as indicated previously, the opposite is more likely to prevail in that members of the same group would often hold differing views as to who they believed the best candidate would be, as indeed was illustrated by both the Upstairs Club and the

[27] For the Unionist Agricultural Committee and Stanley Baldwin, see, for example, 'Political Notes', *The Times*, 29 July 1927, for the Bow Group and Harold Macmillan, see, for example, Barr op. cit., viii, for the Scottish Thistle Group and Edward Heath, see, for example, see Barberis, McHugh and Tyldesley op. cit., 409, for the European Forum and Edward Heath, see, for example, Wood (16 August 1969) op. cit. and 'Nothing to fear over Common Market', *The Times*, 19 September 1969, for the Economic Dining Club and the 92 Group and Margaret Thatcher, see, for example, 'Obituary: Lord Ridley', *The Guardian*, 6 March 1993 and Heseltine op. cit., 232 and for Mainstream and John Major, see, for example, Landale (29 May 1996) op. cit.,

[28] For the Standard Bearers, see Riddell (1992) op. cit., 430-31, Hattersley (17 November 1996) op. cit., and Pilkington (20 March 1992) op. cit., for Conservative Way Forward, see http://www.conwayfor.org.uk/ (accessed 26 October 2009) and for the No Turning Back Group, see interview with Mrs Angela Watkinson MP: 8 May 2008

[29] For Action Centre for Europe and Ken Clark, see Milne and Cockett (18 May 1997) op. cit., for the Lollards and Anthony Meyer, see Webster and Wood (30 November 1989) op. cit., and for Blue Chip and John Major, see Barberis, McHugh and Tyldesley op. cit., 45

92 Group. [30]

Before closing discussions on the Party leader, it is interesting to note that a good or poor relationship between leader and group is not always a transferable one in that whereas a group may have good relations with one leader, no assumptions should be made that this will be continued with his or her successor. This changing relationship was illustrated particularly vividly by two groups, namely the 92 Group and the Bow Group. Both these two groups have not only survived the test of time but have succeeded in retaining some of their records for posterity and it is this which has enabled observations to be made in this respect.

In the first instance, the archive papers of Pat Wall, which encompass the period from 1964 to 1984, vividly illustrate the different and distinct relationships between the 92 Group and a succession of leaders over this period. Thus warm and open correspondence between Douglas-Home was evident alongside accepted invitations to dinner which together revealed a positive and mutually respectful relationship between the two. This said, it was noticeable towards the end of his relatively short tenure, that there were signs of pragmatism in the group when Wall records having discussed 'the progress of the shadow cabinet' and 'Ted's Committee' and although the notes are only brief so there is no record of substantive discussions there is a sense of change afoot. Certainly it would appear that by June, one month prior to the leader's resignation, similar notes reveal discussions included 'the need for a lead over the Party' and 'left-wing attacks within the Party'.

[30] For the Upstairs Club, see Gardiner op. cit., 46 and for the 92 Group, see interview with Mr Philip Davies MP: 6 May 2008 and interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000. The diversity amongst groups in often being no unanimous preference for a single candidate amongst members of the same group was supported by various comments to the author during the interviews with MPs conducted for this thesis

In contrast to his predecessor, papers revealed that attempts to arrange a meeting with Heath as the new leader eventually culminated in a half hour slot for a few members only one evening at 6.30PM with no personalised letters apparently having been sent or received. Heath was also invited to dine with the 92 in June 1970 and although preliminary arrangements were made, the dinner never materialised (see Figure 3 below for an internal 92 Group memo which informs group members of the cancelled dinner). Wall subsequently recorded that this was 'due to the pressure on him at this time'. [31]

Relations with the leader improved dramatically with his successor with warm correspondence again evident from her earliest years as leader. Good relations existed throughout her tenure as both leader and prime minister with her attendance at dinners and even a palm tree sent to her in commemoration of her first year in office although at least one member's signature was forged due to absence. [32]

Similarly James Barr, in his history of the Bow Group, and others elsewhere, illustrate how the Bow Group had very good relations with, for example, Macmillan (who launched the Group's quarterly magazine *Crossbow* in 1957) but less easy relations with Douglas-Home (who the Group thought should step down) and mixed relations with Heath (initially good but waned, he spoke only briefly at the group's twenty first anniversary dinner after 'affairs of state' intervened and was the subject of a hostile cartoon in *Crossbow*) and similarly with Thatcher (she spoke at their twenty fifth

[31] For Alec Douglas-Home, see, for example, DPW/ 37/ 2 (1965): various papers, for Edward Heath, see, for example, various papers in DPW/ 37/ 3 (1966) and DPW/ 37/ 7 (1970) and for Pat Wall's subsequent comments, see DPW/ 37/ 22 (Summary 1964-1984): typed summary of the 92 prepared by Pat Wall entitled 'The 92 Committee 1964-1984', dated 1984

[32] For Margaret Thatcher, see, for example, DPW/ 37/ 12 (1975): various papers and DPW/ 37/ 13 (1976): typed letter from Pat Wall to John Hall, dated 13 February 1976

Figure 3:
Internal 92 Group memo dated 6 April 1970

From: John Hall, O.B.E., M.P.

6th April, 1970.

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The dinner on Thursday, 16th April, will be held at St. Ermin's Hotel at 7.15 for 7.45 p.m. when our host will be W.H.K. Baker. Will you please let Mrs. Whittle, on Ext. 925, know by Monday, 13th April, at the latest, whether or not you can attend.

Unfortunately, Ted Heath is not able to be with us on the 4th June. He has expressed his great regret and disappointment, but has pointed out that the pressure on him at the present time is very great and that he has had to refuse invitations not only from our Group, but from other groups in the House as well. Under these circumstances, we may wish to reconsider the date for our following dinner and perhaps invite the Chief Whip or one of the Shadow Ministers.

I enclose a memorandum listing the subject headings raised at the last dinner and which it was proposed should be discussed on the 16th April.

Source: The Private Papers of Sir Patrick Wall: 92 Committee DPW/ 37/7 (1970)

anniversary dinner but her policies were later criticised by them). [33]

In parliament: frontbench team

While the leader and his or her frontbench team are by the very nature of their positions intrinsically linked, it was obvious from the research that some groups at certain points over time had a specific relationship with frontbenchers and, although not always welcomed by the leader, this remained true whether the Party was in government or opposition. Although a number of these relationships have been touched upon elsewhere, it is interesting to bring them together in this section, with others, so that a more complete picture of groupings can be observed. For ease of reference, the term frontbench will for the remainder of this section be taken to apply to both the Conservative frontbench when in government *and* the Conservative shadow frontbench when in opposition unless specified otherwise.

Certainly a number of groups were found to actively seek contact with members of both these through routine invitations to speak at meetings, dinners and conference events in both a private and public capacity. Notable public occasions included those at Party conference, and even on occasion to launch a particular policy at the same. However as these have been discussed previously in chapter three, it is not necessary for them to be reiterated here other than to visualise them in this context as part of a wider association between groups and the frontbench.

It is nonetheless interesting to cite one particular recent example, highlighted by a number of those MPs interviewed for this paper who were supporters of Cornerstone, in

[33] For Harold Macmillan, see Barr op. cit., viii, for Alec Douglas-Home, see Barr op. cit., 89, for Edward Heath, see Barr op. cit., 90, 128, 132 and for Margaret Thatcher, see Barr op. cit., 147 and Larry Elliott, 'Thatcher's mortgage tax relief policy attacked by Tory Group', *The Guardian*, 20 February 1989

that Desmond Swayne, as PPS to David Cameron, attended a number of meetings of the group. In this instance attendance of one close to the leader was seen as evidence of the fact that Cameron wished at the very least to be aware of issues which were considered of importance to the group and the attendance of Swayne was the conduit through which this awareness was made possible. Certainly all who mentioned his attendance clearly saw it as a positive move by the leader. [34]

This said, a number of occasions were found when attendance by a member of the frontbench was controversial such as indeed (and in this instance causing ripples with the Party leader) when John Major was clearly irritated by his chancellor's open support for Action Centre for Europe. [35]

In addition to the more routine invitations by groups to members of the frontbench to attend as a guest speaker, groups were found on occasion to seek out their presence for a specific meeting to make clear, often in no uncertain terms, their view on a specific topic or topics. This was found to be the case particularly when the group concerned was unhappy with the direction in which the Party was travelling on a particular issue or policy. Thus for example, the European Research Group met with Michael Howard when Home Secretary and both the Positive European Group and IGC Monitoring Group met similarly with Malcolm Rifkind when Foreign Secretary. [36]

While the above examples have revealed a desire to seek occasional contact with the

[34] See, for example, interview with Mr Stephen Crabb MP: 6 May 2008
[35] David Hughes, 'Single currency might never be, declares Major', *Daily Mail*, 9 June 1995
[36] For Michael Howard and the European Research Group, see Patrick Wintour, 'Howard urges return of power from Europe', *The Guardian*, 18 May 1996, for Malcolm Rifkind and the Positive European Group, see Colin Brown, 'Portillo sticks to his guns over conference tirade', *The Independent*, 16 October 1995 and for Malcolm Rifkind and the IGC Monitoring Group, see Patrick Wintour, 'Single currency: double trouble', *The Observer*, 28 July 1996

frontbench, other groups were found to seek contact with the frontbench on a more permanent footing by welcoming frontbenchers as group members. Certainly Green Chip, in the period preceding the 2010 General Election, was comprised of many shadow frontbench members. Indeed one MP interviewed stated that membership was 'drawn mostly from frontbenchers' although he did also acknowledge 'that a few of us are not'. [37] Other groups similarly retain MPs as members even when they have been promoted from the backbenchers. Angela Watkinson, for example, still attended meetings of the No Turning Back Group even though she was appointed a shadow whip in December 2005. When discussed further she emphasised that she had attended in her capacity as an MP rather than as a shadow whip and that she had found that no other group members were unhappy with this arrangement. [38]

Not all groups however, as indicated above, have been quite as welcoming to those members who have been promoted and it is notable that these instances were found largely when the Party was in power. Indeed some groups were found to expressly prohibit those promoted to the frontbench from being members although in such cases membership was found generally to be held in abeyance until any such time that the MP concerned may return to the backbenches. The One Nation Group, for example, tended to suspend a minister's membership, although not support, while in office and certainly historically the 92 Group has done likewise. [39] Indeed so keen were some groups to distance themselves from allegiances with the frontbench that in one case (the One Nation Group) a motion of censure was passed, in its early years, against certain

[37] Interview with Mr Stephen Crabb MP: 6 May 2008
[38] Interview with Mrs Angela Watkinson MP: 8 May 2008 and http://www.conservatives.com/People/Members_of_Parliament/Watkinson_Angela.aspx (accessed 30 October 2009)
[39] For the One Nation Group, see Donald Macintyre, 'One Nation Tories stagger into the light', *The Independent,* 1 March 1992 and Garnett op. cit., 107 and for the 92 Group, see various papers from DPW/ 37/ 1 (1964) to DPW/ 37/ 21 (1984) inclusively in addition to DPW/ 37/ 22 (Summary 1964-1984)

ministers, even if on this occasion it was no more than an idle prank. [40]

Certainly an examination of the political papers of Pat Wall in respect of the 92 Group, found that a number of members were clearly disassociated during the period in which they had been promoted and indeed this is acknowledged as such in a letter to Pat Wall from Alan Clark on the former's retirement as chairman of the group where it is acknowledged that neither himself nor any other member who currently served as a minister had any influence over group operations. [41]

There was however some elements of inconsistency in the membership lists in respect of the retention of ministers as the group perhaps wished to retain the status of being able to include ministers amongst their number. While some lists fail to include the names of any recently promoted members, one list, for example, of the 1978 members did appear to retain the details of three such members although it was noted that they would be 'held in abeyance because of frontbench appointment'. [42] Certainly there was evidence that whether or not membership was retained, when promoted, ex-members who returned to the backbenchers were invited to re-join. [43]

The assumption in this discussion regarding promoted members is that groups themselves do not feel it desirable or appropriate for these members to retain membership and certainly this was the general impression gained from examining Pat Wall's files. Similarly it is interesting to note that continued membership may be viewed by the member concerned as neither practical nor desirable. Thus the time

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[40] Garnett op. cit., 111-12
[41] DPW/ 37/ 21 (1984): letter from Alan Clark to Pat Wall dated 20 March 1984
[42] DPW/ 37/ 15 (1978): typed membership list dated 10 November 1978
[43] See, for example, DPW/ 37/ 11 (1974): typed minutes of a meeting held on 12 March 1974 and dated 13 March 1974

pressure on both ministers and shadow ministers is considerable and fulfilling membership of groupings, no matter how dedicated a member, is no longer a priority once promoted and therefore often just not practical. Similarly there may be an element of conflict which prohibits membership. It is interesting that, from a more recent perspective, when discussing the change of chairmanship of the 92 Group from Gerald Howarth to Christopher Chope, one MP interviewed spoke of 'the difficulties of riding two horses' for Howarth since his promotion in 2002 to the shadow defence frontbench team. Certainly the complexities of approaching David Cameron as leader of the Party by an MP who is both chairman of a leading backbench grouping and a member of his frontbench team would have been very real ones. [44]

Despite these obvious difficulties, they have not prevented some groups from having extensive links with frontbenchers in terms of incorporating them into, for example, their advisory boards as part of their organisational structure and indeed as a number of examples for this have already been discussed earlier no further discussion is required in this instance.

This said, while the above remains true, a number of MPs do combine a frontbench role with active membership of a grouping. Certainly from an examination of the websites of those groups which have one, it would seem that linkages between frontbench and groupings are very real ones. Thus, in the period preceding the 2010 General Election, two members of the shadow frontbench team namely Andrew Rosindell (shadow frontbench team for Home Affairs) and Owen Paterson (Shadow Secretary of State for Northern Ireland) were listed as supporters of both the European

[44] Interview with Mr Philip Davies MP: 6 May 2008 and http://www.conservatives.com/People/Members_of_Parliament/Howarth_Gerald.aspx (accessed 30 October 2009)

Foundation and Cornerstone. Oliver Letwin (chairman of Policy Review and Conservative Research Department) was also listed as a supporter of the European Foundation while Gerald Howarth (shadow frontbench team for Defence) was listed as a supporter of Cornerstone and Liam Fox (Shadow Secretary of State for Defence) and William Hague (Shadow Foreign Secretary and Senior Member of the Shadow Cabinet) were both listed as supporters of Conservative Way Forward. Ken Clarke (Shadow Secretary of State for Business) was listed as President of the Tory Reform Group. [45]

In parliament: other groupings

In terms of relations between groupings, most groups were generally found to act independently of each other and exhibit a clearly discernable sense of their own individual identity. This is not to say that relations between groups were adversarial. Indeed a number of those MPs interviewed stressed how tolerant members of different groups were towards each other, even when their views on policy for example differed dramatically, and certainly there was a very positive tone to all the interviews conducted for this thesis in this respect.

While the above remains true, it should be noted that the interviews were conducted during a time of rejuvenation for the Conservative Party and with a unified PCP and leader together sharing optimism for returning to power, intra-party dissent was found to be minimal. It is also worth noting that at the time the interviews were conducted, the PCP was relatively small and as previously discussed, research indicates that group

[45] For Andrew Rosindell, see http://www.europeanfoundation.org/personnel.html and http://cornerstonegroup.wordpress.com/about/ , for Owen Paterson see. http://www.europeanfoundation.org/personnel.html and http://cornerstonegroup.wordpress.com/about/, for Oliver Letwin, see http://www.europeanfoundation.org/personnel.html, for Gerald Howarth, see http://cornerstonegroup.wordpress.com/about/, for Liam Fox and William Hague, see http://www.conwayfor.org.uk/ and for Ken Clarke see http://www.trg.org.uk/index.php/about_the_trg_1 (all accessed 31 October 2009)

activity, and especially dissenting behaviour between groups, has a propensity to become evident when the PCP is greater in number.

This is not to say that there were *no* incidences of hostility between groups although from the above, it is hardly surprising that this occurred largely during leading instances of intra-party dissent. One example of this was that which occurred during the mid to late 1990s when dissent was focused on the issue of Europe. George Gardiner, for example, in his political memoirs discusses the bitterness displayed by Fresh Start towards the 92 Group for 'shoring up John Major'. [46]

In addition to the above, there was also evidence of competition between groups which at times could be robust. Certainly competition between groups when organising the slate for the 1922 Committee and, in the past, backbench subject committees was found to be significant. Gardiner, as previous chairman of the 92 Group, for example revealed during discussions with the writer the placing of 'a mole' in the opposition camp in order to ascertain the candidates to be put forward and tactics to be utilised by the left of the parliamentary party. Such undercover operations did not however prevent the defection of a small number of members of the 92 Group to Mainstream prior to the elections for the executive of the 1922 in 1993. [47]

Generally speaking however, and considering the highly charged atmosphere of working in parliament, relations between groups were notable for the respect and acceptance shown by one to another. Certainly groups were not totally mutually exclusive and it was apparent that, on occasion, they shared common aims. It was

[46] Gardiner op. cit., 19
[47] Nicholas Wood, 'Left and right battle for soul of the Conservative party', *The Times*, 18 November 1993 and Nicholas Wood, 'Right-wing Tories join leftish plot', *The Times*, 4 November 1993

interesting, for example, that in Mark Garnett's biography of Cub Alport, that minutes of the first official meeting of the One Nation Group held on 23 January 1951 detail that 'Alport and Macleod were given the task of approaching the ABB's (the Active Back Benchers marshalled by John Boyd-Carpenter) who might associate themselves with 'One Nation' in harassing the government'. [48] Similarly the Unionist War Committee and the Unionist Business Committee both pressed for a greater war effort in the run up to and during the First World War, the India Defence Committee and the December Club both centred activity on foreign policy during the 1930s and the Selsdon Group worked with the Monday Club and the Bow Group to press the government for greater action against the trade unions from 1980. [49]

One more recent example in this respect which is worth particular mention is the 92 Group which now acts as an umbrella co-ordinator to a number of groups on the right of the Party, the details of which were revealed during an interview with the secretary of the group, Philip Davies. As a number of groups now operate successfully on the right of the Party, the decision was made between himself and the chairman of the 92 Group that the group would hitherto act as an umbrella for these groupings with one member from each on the executive committee of the 92 Group. The sole purpose of the 92 Group would thus be to co-ordinate these member groupings at the time of elections for the executive of the 1922 to ensure that a maximum number of representatives from the right of the Party not only stand as candidates but are also subsequently elected. This arrangement also ensured that any potential overlap between groups would be

[48] Garnett op. cit., 106

[49] For the Unionist War Committee and the Unionist Business Committee, see Ramsden (1999) op. cit., 228, for the India Defence Committee and the December Club, see Rasmussen op. cit., 173 and for the Selsdon Group, the Monday Club and the Bow Group, see George Clark, 'Right-wing tries to set pace for Mr Prior', *The Times*, 7 October 1980 and Ian Bradley, 'Pressure groups launch attack on 'stage management' of agenda', *The Times*, 9 October 1980

minimised, thus the European Research Group would concentrate on issues concerning Europe, the No Turning Back Group would centre on economic liberalism and taxation and Cornerstone on social conservatism with representatives of each group coming together prior to internal elections to work together to try to move the Party forward in a concerted way. It is interesting that although Philip Davies was unaware of the founding statement of the 92 Group as detailed under the chairmanship of Pat Wall, the current working arrangement of the 92 Group seeks inadvertently to fulfil this same aim exactly. Thus the first memorandum of the Group dated 12 June 1964 stated its object was to ensure 'the Conservative Party must not depart from Conservative principles' and under current working arrangements, the 92 Group seeks to do just this. [50]

In the same way that the 92 Group has born the test of time (its seminal policy memorandum referred to above was dated 12 June 1964 and thus its first meeting must have been prior to this), and as a final point regarding relations between groups, it was interesting to note the generational renewal of certain broad ideologies or policy streams in the form of similar but different groups espousing similar but updated views on the same subject area over time. Thus similarities have been drawn by Philip Norton and others on the issue of social reform between the Young England Movement, the Fourth Party and the Unionist Social Reform Committee and similarly by those such as Anthony Forster, for example, on Europe with the Anti-Common Market League, CAFÉ, Fresh Start, the IGC Monitoring Group and subsequently the European Foundation and the European Research Group. [51]

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[50] DPW/37/ 1 (1964): typed three page document entitled '92 Committee Memorandum' dated 12 June 1964

[51] For the Young England Movement and successors, see, for example, Norton (1996) op. cit., 103 and Green (1996) op. cit., 286-87 and for the Anti-Common Market League and successors, see, for example, Anthony Forster, 'Anti-Europeans, Anti-Marketeers and Eurosceptics: The Evolution and Influence of Labour and Conservative Opposition to Europe', *The Political Quarterly*, vol.73 no.3 (2002), esp. 304

In parliament: miscellaneous

In addition to those already discussed, groupings were also found to relate to other bodies within the parliamentary arena and those of particular interest in this respect were found to be party whips, parliamentary committees and other political parties with each of these now being examined in turn. A brief mention will also be made regarding relations between MPs and peers.

In terms of relations with party whips, none of the MPs interviewed, including those who were serving opposition whips or who had previously served in the whips' office, had any knowledge of a grouping formed specifically for whips. Certainly research from other sources supported this. While this remains true, serving whips did, as a cohort, meet for dinner in the same way that women MPs did although dinner was a more regular occurrence in this instance and included all members of that particular cohort. [52]

There was in addition to this, evidence of links between the whips' office and groupings. Certainly one MP interviewed in the period prior to the 2010 General Election, who was a serving opposition whip, was very relaxed about the existence of such groupings and viewed them in a positive light in terms of their contribution to the PCP. This said, he was clearly aware of all the current groupings and who was a member of which grouping and indeed acknowledged that a knowledge of the groups, their members and activities were part of the remit of the whips' office. These same views were mirrored by another serving opposition whip who also indicated, as previously discussed, that she continued to attend meetings of particular groupings

[52] Interviews with Mr Brooks Newmark MP: 30 April 2008 and Mrs Angela Watkinson MP: 8 May 2008

which she supported in her capacity as an MP rather than a whip and that she had experienced no problems from other members resenting her presence in this respect. [53] The relaxed attitude from whips towards unofficial groupings and conversely by groupings towards the whips' office during this period was supported by other MPs interviewed.

Such an attitude at that time was entirely understandable considering the political paradigm within which the Party operated. Indeed it is worth noting, similarly as for inter-group relations, that the PCP was currently small in number and experiencing very little intra-party dissent, both pre-conditions which have in the past fostered amiable relations between groups and indeed between groups and the leader and the rest of the parliamentary party. There is moreover no doubt that as others have indicated, a degree of tolerance is accepted in opposition but when in government the whips are more likely to keep a closer watch over backbench activity. [54]

Indeed it is clear from the research that this mutual understanding has not always prevailed and in the past a number of groups have stated that members must resign their membership, although it would often be held in abeyance, when promoted to the whips' office. One member of the 92 Group, for example, who was promoted to the whips' office subsequently resigned believing it placed him and other 92 members in an 'insidious position'. [55] Although his resignation was accepted, he was offered assurances of being kept informed of group events and that his return to the group would be welcomed after his term in the whips' office. [56]

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[53] Ibid.,
[54] Walsha (2000) op. cit., 197
[55] DPW/37/13 (1976): handwritten letter from member concerned to Pat Wall dated 11 February 1976
[56] DPW/37/13 (1976): handwritten letter from Pat Wall to member concerned dated 13 February 1976

It was also clear from the research that historically, pressure, and at times considerable pressure, was placed on members of groups who continually and consistently dissented from Party policy. Attempts, for example, by the whips were made to persuade MPs not to sign the 'Fresh Start' motion and George Gardiner indicates that in this instance five MPs withdrew their names after being denied future promotion if they did not. [57]

By way of contrast, a number of groupings were found to have positive relations, although this fluctuated over time, with the whips' office in terms of ready access to the chief whip and thus to the Party leader; the Progress Trust, the One Nation Group and the 92 Group, for example, were all found to have access in this way at various points in their history. Indeed on one occasion members of the whips' office, allegedly, cheered when one long time dissenter, Bill Cash, was subjected to a 'barrage of criticism' by the Lollards. [58]

Leaving the party whips aside, in terms of the relations between groups and parliamentary committees, research revealed almost no contact with select, standing or all-party committees. Certainly from a current perspective, of all those MPs interviewed for this thesis, none possessed any knowledge of any relations between parliamentary grouping and these parliamentary committees. The only link which was found, and this was from other sources and even then was very tenuous, was on a rare occasion when an individual MP who had links with an unofficial parliamentary party

[57] Interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000 and Gardiner op. cit., 11

[58] For the Progress Trust, see Crowson op. cit., 237, for the One Nation Group, see Robert Walsha, 'Interview with Robert Jackson MP, One Nation Group Secretary', *Contemporary British History*, vol.17 no.2 (2003), 121, for the 92 Group, see Grant (2000) op. cit., 28 and for the Lollards, see Nicholas Wood, 'Whips enjoy their little lynch party', *The Times*, 14 June 1991

grouping was also linked in a personal capacity with one of the above committees. Edward Du Cann, for example, who penned a pamphlet for the Bow Group entitled *Time to hoist the red ensign: the decline of Britain's merchant fleet and how to restore it* was also chairman of the All-Party Maritime Affairs Group and similarly, Bill Cash, the founding member of the European Foundation, was (according to the website for the European Foundation) a one time chairman of the European Affairs Backbench Committee and also a member of the Select Committee on European Legislation. [59]

This said, links with groupings and backbench subject committees, when in existence, in addition to the 1922 Committee, were evident. Indeed, as also suggested elsewhere, research for this thesis revealed the link between the two is an interesting one and although they exist independently of each other a number of groupings had over time variously sought to influence the subject committees. [60] The most obvious linkage was that already touched upon earlier in the paper, namely the organisation of the slate by the 92 Group, the Lollards and others. [61] Certainly Philip Davies, the secretary of the 92 Group in 2008, detailed the considerable time, energy and discipline which was required for this task by the current generation of 92 Group executive members, not least in ensuring no rogue candidates stand to represent the right of the Party other than those agreed by the aforementioned committee.

It is also worth mentioning that other groups, in addition to the two previous examples, were also found to put forward their own candidates at certain points in their

[59] For Edward du Cann, see John Carvel, 'Du Cann urges help for merchant fleet', *The Guardian*, 15 December 1986 and for Bill Cash, see http://www.europeanfoundation.org/billcash.html (accessed 6 March 2007 and 19 October 2009)
[60] See, for example, Seldon and Ball op. cit., 117-18
[61] See, in addition, 'Times Diary: The ranks move right', *The Times*, 16 July 1987 and Webster (26 November 1986) op. cit.

histories. Thus Fresh Start at one time challenged the standing chairman of the 1922 Committee, Marcus Fox, with their own candidate, Nicholas Bonsor, and similarly the One Nation Group was found to put forward their own candidates at various points between 1950 and the mid to late 1980s. [62] It was also notable that on one occasion, one particular intake, namely those who entered parliament in 1979, ran their own slate of candidates and indeed achieved considerable success in so doing. [63]

Lastly with regard to backbench subject committees, and the slate aside, other linkages were on occasion to be found. It was bad relations, for example, between a number of die-hard backbenchers critical of the government's policy on India and frustrated at the position taken by the India Committee which resulted in the formation of the India Defence Committee. [64]

Moving on to backbench groupings and other political parties, very few instances were found of any connections between the two. This said, on occasion a group was found to have invited a member of another political party to dinner (the One Nation Group invited Aneurin Bevan), to have shared an office with a group from another political party (Anti-Common Market League shared a Park Lane address with the Labour Committee for Safeguards on the Common Market and the All-Party North Atlantic Free Trade Area Group), to have worked with a cross-party grouping (Positive European Group and the European Movement), to have worked with another party in parliament (the Whipless Nine abstained on a Labour amendment as part of their rebellion over Maastricht) and to have accepted an occasional member from another

[62] For Fresh Start, see Donald Macintyre, 'Challenge to Tory 1922 chairman', *The Independent*, 23 November 1994 and for the One Nation Group, see Shepherd op. cit., 97-98, Walsha (2000) op. cit., 197-99 and Robin Oakley, 'Taking the Tory pulse', *The Times*, 2 November 1988
[63] Seldon and Ball op. cit., 118
[64] Ibid., 114-15

political party (Better Off Out and Independent MSP, Brian Monteith and the European Foundation and Labour MP, Austin Mitchell). [65]

Finally, before proceeding to discuss groupings in relation to their extra-parliamentary networks, it is pertinent at this point to emphasise the relationship between both the House of Commons and the House of Lords in terms of membership of unofficial groupings. While this thesis has sought to make no distinction between MPs and peers, research revealed that in the majority of cases, groupings were largely comprised of members of the former with operations centred largely within the House of Commons. This is not to say that peers had no input into such groupings. Certainly from an historical perspective, a number of peers have played a very active role in a wide range of groups, the Imperial Unionist Association to cite but one of many, and similarly more recently members of the House of Lords have been, and indeed in some cases still are, closely associated with the 1912 Dining Club, the Bow Group and Better Off Out to name but a few of many. [66]

Thus having examined groupings in terms of their networks within parliament, it is interesting now to also examine the networks within which they operate 'extra' to the parliamentary arena which were, in turn, found to exist largely within the wider Conservative Party and the media.

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[65] For the One Nation Group, see Walsha (2000) op. cit., 205, for the Anti-Common Market League, see David Wood, 'Anti-Market forces unite', *The Times*, 5 February 1970, for the Positive European Group, see 'Channel of division: How Europe has split British politics', *The Independent*, 6 January 1998, for the Whipless Nine, see Major op. cit., 602-3 , for Better Off Out, see 'MSP joins anti-EU campaign', *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 10 June 2006 and for the European Foundation, see http://www.europeanfoundation.org/personnel.html (accessed 6 March 2007 and 19 October 2009)

[66] For the Imperial Unionist Association, see Norton (1979) op. cit., 33, for the 1912 Dining Club, see discussions with Professor The Lord Norton of Louth, University of Hull and peer; 1997-2010, for the Bow Group, see Alan Travis, 'A not-so-restraining hand: The Lords' strengths and weaknesses', *The Guardian*, 20 October 1987 and for Better Off Out, see http://www.betteroffout.co.uk (accessed 27 November 2006) and http://www.tfa.net/betteroffout/aboutbetteroffout.html (accessed 19 October 2009)

Beyond parliament: the wider Conservative Party

It is important here to return for a moment to the working definition of unofficial parliamentary party groupings which specifies that 'all groupings must exist with a core membership, governance or focus derived from the parliamentary party'. While this remains true for all those groups studied, a number were also found to 'spill over' outside the parliamentary party so that a wider membership, governance or focus was found to co-exist in tandem with the above. It is these groups (which also largely adopted a 'look at me' approach to their activities) which are examined here.

Certainly working relations were found over time within the wider Conservative Party which exists beyond the parameters of the parliamentary party, namely and most significantly within the grass roots of the Party, but also to a lesser degree within the CRD and Party hierarchy based in CCO. Networks were also found to occur with the European Parliamentary Conservative Party and each of these will now be examined in turn.

Most group activity beyond the PCP was found to occur with the grass roots of the Party and indeed the extent to which this existed for some groups was surprising, particularly from an historical perspective, with each generation of party members and supporters having their own opportunities for political participation. Certainly the Tariff Reform League flying the flag for Joseph Chamberlain, the Union Defence League, the Unionist Social Reform Committee, the Bow Group, the Monday Club, the Selsdon Group, the Anti-Common Market League, the Tory Reform Group and more latterly Conservative Way Forward, A Better Choice, Direct Democracy and Better Off Out have all offered their own moment for grass root focus, if not greater involvement and membership. Each of these groups has its own individual narrative in respect of

grass root involvement and research for this project was fascinating in this respect uncovering much original material of interest and indeed volumes could, and indeed have elsewhere, been written on the subject. [67] However, although tempting to do otherwise, discussion in this instance will be restricted to a few groups.

Research for this project would suggest that the Tariff Reform League has probably over time been the one group which has stimulated the greatest level of grass root involvement although others too have also provided considerable opportunity. From an historical perspective, the Monday Club, and from a more contemporary perspective, the Tory Reform Group, the Bow Group and Conservative Way Forward, are a few such groups and as some discussion has already taken place regarding the League, attention here will focus on the other four.

Certainly the Monday Club, which evolved out of a perceived failure by British governments to address the 'winds of change' in Africa and as a rear guard action to both preserve the Central African Federation and to maintain a British presence in Southern Africa, grew rapidly during the 1960s. Opportunities for grass root participation were considerable and by 1971 it had a mass membership of 'around 10 000' while also retaining a parliamentary membership of thirty MPs with six of these drawn from the frontbench. Although membership of the Conservative Party was not a prerequisite for grass root supporters who wished to join, it was specified that interested parties should be a supporter of the Party and certainly not belong to any rival political organisation. While the parliamentary membership engaged in its own campaign of strategy and tactics, the significant number of mass members enabled the

[67] See, for example, Ball and Holliday, op. cit.

development of a highly structured organisation which resulted in over thirty branches enabling grass root supporters to participate in a range of exceptional campaigning which included using propaganda and manipulation in the constituency associations, influencing the process of selection of parliamentary candidates and winning support and pressurising the leadership of the Party at annual Party conferences. [68]

While the Monday Club, in its original form, is now defunct, [69] the Tory Reform Group is not and with both a parliamentary and non parliamentary membership, it too offers opportunities for grass root participation. From a current perspective, a number of activities are detailed on its website, some of which have been discussed previously, and extra-parliamentary members are offered the opportunity to join one of its six branches, Student TRG, TRG Young Professionals, TRG Scotland, TRG Wales, TRG Reformers in addition to that most recently launched, in October 2009, namely TRG Midlands. [70] As above, although membership of the Conservative Party is not a prerequisite to joining, details of membership, where relevant, are requested on the application form. [71]

By comparison the Bow Group website states that potential members 'must hold Conservative views and would be expected to resign if cease to support the

[68] Seyd (1972) op. cit., 468-85. It is interesting, as Seyd also indicates, that while the Monday Club later came to be so clearly associated with racial prejudice, its early pamphlets contained a strong commitment to multi-racial communities and rejected apartheid as 'ill conceived and leading to injustices which are quite unacceptable'. On a more general note, the theme 'winds of change' was originally attributed to Harold Macmillan and discussed further in his book of the same name (see Macmillan (1966) op. cit.)
[69] A new, non-parliamentary organisation has formed under the same name. See http://www.conservativeuk.com/ (accessed 28 April 2010)
[70] http://www.trg.org.uk/index.php/conference, http://www.trg.org.uk/index.php/student_trg, http://www.trg.org.uk/index.php/trg_young_professionals, http://www.trg.org.uk/index.php/trg_scotland, http://www.trg.org.uk/index.php/trg_wales, http://www.trg.org.uk/index.php/trg_reformers and http://www.trg.org.uk/index.php/trg_midlands (all accessed 31 October 2009)
[71] http://www.trg.org.uk/index.php/join (accessed 1 November 2009)

Conservative viewpoint'. It is interesting that the Bow Group has also recently sought to increase its mass membership by rolling out regional Bow Groups to several universities and, in the words of the 2009/ 10 chairman Annesley Abercorn, is 'currently experiencing a renaissance in terms of regional Bow Groups'. [72] Like the Tory Reform Group above it too offers a range of activities on its website, again some previously discussed earlier.

Similarly, although currently to a lesser degree, Conservative Way Forward offers opportunities for grass root supporters (although in this instance no prerequisites are stated for on-line applicants) with significant plans to expand the group into a national organisation with a regional co-ordination team as part of a wider expansion of its activities under its new chairman, Don Porter. [73] Members can participate in a range of events which include Party conference, working breakfast meetings and dinners, which once again are detailed on its website. What is notable regarding this last group however is the assistance offered through a dedicated section on its website to those who regard themselves as potential PPCs. A 'wide range of support and training' is offered with 'early mentoring and help in getting selected' as well as 'campaign support when selected'. [74] Certainly much emphasis is placed on the nurturing of candidates with the most recent edition of *Forward!* focused primarily on parliamentary candidates selected for the 2010 General Election. [75] The Group also proposed to expand its membership base with a particular focus on PPCs in winnable seats in addition to having identified ten seats for focus in the 2010 General Election. [76] While the Bow Group is widely regarded as a stepping stone for those interested in entering parliament,

[72] 'Chairman's Message', *Crossbow*, Conference Edition 2009
[73] Correspondence from Mr Don Porter CBE: September-November 2009
[74] http://www.conwayfor.org.uk/ (About us/ Becoming a candidate) (accessed 2 November 2009)
[75] *Forward!*, Conference Edition 2009
[76] Correspondence from Mr Don Porter CBE: September-November 2009

no direct assistance is publicly offered by them in the same way as that proposed by Conservative Way Forward which if the current plans are put in place could soon lead the field in this respect.

In addition to networks between mass members and groupings, a limited degree of association was also found between groupings and CCO and the CRD. With regard to the latter, although tenuous, a few links were found which included the Bow Group (the Group worked with CRD in the 1950s) and the One Nation Group (again in the 1950s, when Enoch Powell was invited into the group as a result of a detailed knowledge of housing gained through his work at the CRD). [77]

With regard to CCO, again very few links were found which was hardly surprising considering the original definition of unofficial parliamentary party groupings identified those which exist outside the formal Party. This said, a small number of groups such as the Unionist Social Reform Committee were found to receive tacit support while others most certainly did not; a significant role was fulfilled, for example, by CCO in the drawing up and publishing of the blacklist of Free Traders opposed to tariff reform which helped sign the death warrant for the Unionist Free Food League. Along similar lines the Union Defence League (as discussed earlier) was refused funding for £10 000 and the Selsdon Group was seen to be seeking out 'conspirators' in CCO who were against Margaret Thatcher's leadership. [78] Similarly, a number of groups were also found to have sought meetings with senior members of the Party hierarchy at CCO when they felt the need had arisen although, more importantly, such meetings were

[77] For the Bow Group, see Ramsden (1999) op. cit., 342 and for the One Nation Group, see Walsha (2000) op. cit., 189

[78] For the Unionist Social Reform Committee, see Ramsden (1999) op. cit., 538 and Crowson op. cit., 239, for the Unionist Free Food League, see Sykes (1975) op. cit., 361 and for the Selsdon Group, see 'Selsdon Group attack anti-Thatcher move', *The Times*, 26 June 1976 and Clark (28 June 1976) op. cit.,

dependent on whether or not those approached were willing to so do. Thus, for example, the Positive European Group met with both Jeremy Hanley and Cecil Parkinson when both were chairmen of the Party. [79]

Finally with regard to the wider Conservative Party, a number of groupings were found to have definitive links with a number of Conservative MEPs although it was noticeable that it was the same few MEPs which tended to reappear within a few groups. Thus in 2009, for example, Roger Helmer and Daniel Hannan were both listed as supporters on the website of Better Off Out while Helmer was also listed as a member of the Advisory Board on the website of the European Foundation.

Also in relation to Conservative MEPs, one group, the Double-Eight, as previously discussed, is notable for linking pro-European MPs and MEPs at regular dinner meetings when diaries allowed. It is also notable in this context that a number of dining groups were found to exist aside from links with Westminster within the European parliamentary party. Indeed as briefly touched upon previously, one MP interviewed, who used to be an MEP, spoke of a number of dining clubs attended by Conservative MEPs with the most significant one called H-Bloc so named after the initials of the surnames of two of its leading lights, Chris Heaton-Harris and Roger Helmer. (It was also on occasion called the Aviators Dining Club after the bar where it would meet for drinks prior to dinner). The grouping, which met monthly, was very effective in negotiating positions for its members in response to promises of block support from that group and, according to the MP interviewed, was responsible for

[79] For Jeremy Hanley, see Nicholas Wood, 'Pro-Europe Tories striking back with their own manifesto', *The Times*, 2 February 1995 and for Cecil Parkinson, see Colin Brown, 'Tory warning against swing to Euro-scepticism', *The Independent*, 16 December 1997

deposing Edward Macmillan-Scott as leader of the Conservatives in the European Parliament in 2001 and replacing him with Jonathan Evans. [80]

Beyond parliament: the media

Relations were also found to exist between some groupings and the media. Unsurprisingly, the extent to which networks existed between the two reflected the extent to which the grouping concerned adopted an outward looking approach to its affairs or whether it preferred to remain anonymous to the world outside parliament, and indeed often within. Thus those groups which have preferred to remain low key, such as Blue Chip, the Burke Club, the Double-Eight, Nick's Diner and Guy Fawkes, have not courted the media in any form, have rarely if at all issued news releases and are very seldom mentioned amongst parliamentary colleagues nor indeed by those outside parliament. Indeed such groups will often take all possible measures to avoid any publicity whatsoever. During discussions with George Gardiner he revealed that on one occasion he arranged for a parliamentary reporter to be misinformed as to the location of a 92 Group dinner so that members could remain anonymous. The reporter concerned apparently spent the evening hidden in the back seat of a car outside the wrong venue awaiting diners who were arriving unobserved and unhindered elsewhere.

Conversely, those groups which adopt a 'look at me' approach, and over time these have included groups such as the Unionist War Committee, Action Centre for Europe, the Anti-Common Market League, Better Off Out, the Bow Group, the Tory Reform League, Mainstream, the Whipless Nine and Direct Democracy, have all adopted a very different *modus operandi* in their dealings with the media and certainly a sympathetic

[80] See discussions in earlier chapters and also interviews with Mr Ian Taylor MBE MP: 24 April 2008 and Mr Robert Goodwill MP: 4 June 2008

media can be seen to have been very advantageous to a number of groups over time.

From an historical perspective the relationship between the media and the Unionist War Committee was particularly notable. Certainly as far as the *Morning Post* was concerned this relationship was based on the personal friendship between Edward Carson and the editor, HA Gwynne. In this instance it was even argued that Gwynne was the 'personal mouthpiece of Carson' and that 'his columns closely mirrored the views of the Unionist War Committee'. Certainly there can be no doubting the momentousness of the occasion when Gwynne's editorial changed from criticising David Lloyd George to supporting him, and was widely interpreted at the time as a change of heart by Carson himself, nor indeed the voices of the established press baron Northcliffe and the up and coming Beaverbrook. [81]

Certainly a number of articles in *The Times* from 1916 make fascinating reading in their portrayal of the Unionist War Committee in a very positive light. One article dated from March 1916 recalls the indecision of the government regarding compulsory recruitment and that 'by far the most satisfactory statement' in the debate so far was Carson's call for 'compulsion' all round'. [82] Another article on the same subject from April 1916 discusses the 'formal adoption of the position of equal sacrifice in recruiting' by the Unionist War Committee and presses the government to take decisive action soon on the subject while yet another article, again from April 1916, recounts the details of 'a strong meeting of the Unionist War Committee yesterday' which 'authorised Sir Edward Carson to bring a motion with the object of full recruitment' after which it was hoped that 'this Prime Minister will need no further pressure to take

[81] JM McEwen, 'The Press and the Fall of Asquith', *The Historical Journal*, vol.21 no.4 (1978), 863, 869
[82] 'Still 'Examining Figures'', *The Times*, 30 March 1916

the plain oath of duty'. [83] A month later, in May 1916, pressure was still being exerted on the government, this time regarding the preparation of a new parliamentary register to ensure that all those serving in the war would be franchised and which stated that the 'resolutions passed yesterday by the Unionist War Committee will we hope quicken the leisurely advance of the Government...'. [84]

On a more contemporary level, while many examples exist of groups courting the press, it is interesting to examine further the Whipless Nine in this respect. Certainly at all stages of their rebellion they eagerly sought press coverage for their actions, not least after the whip had been restored to them. John Major gives an interesting, if rather poignant, account of events in his autobiography when he discusses the fact that against the wishes of his chief whip, Richard Ryder, the whip was restored to those concerned only to find that the same group had called a 'cocky, unapologetic press conference before decamping to College Green for triumphant television interviews'. The result was that Major was accused of a climb down by the media and criticised by loyalists in the Party for his management of the affair. [85]

While the above remains true, the omnipotent presence of the media in scenting blood during the latter days of Major's premiership was perhaps driven as much by a reaction to the previous large inbuilt majority of the preceding Conservative governments during the 1980s and a desire to regain the control of the political agenda than the success of the Whipless Nine to cultivate successful media networks.

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[83] 'Men and Money', *The Times*, 4 April 1916 and 'A Great Task-Are We Fulfilling It?', *The Times*, 12 April 1916
[84] 'The Parliamentary Register', *The Times*, 31 May 1916
[85] Major op. cit., 602-3, 605-7

Certainly one journalist working at *The Daily Telegraph* at the time summed up events rather succinctly when he claimed that 'stories are basically about disagreements and rows and controversy and when a group like the Whipless Nine threatens to topple a government there is a story there and they will get coverage'. [86]

It was interesting that media coverage, and negative coverage in particular, of unofficial groupings was generally minimal during Cameron's premiership in the period preceding the 2010 General Election but it will be even more interesting to see whether this level of media inactivity remains following the subsequent coalition agreement with the Liberal Democrats. [87] Certainly a number of groups, particularly those which adopt a 'look at me' approach to activities have recently expanded both their organisation and remit (the Bow Group, for example, with regional branches and similarly Conservative Way Forward with regional branches and candidate assistance) and it will be interesting to observe how these activities and others are reported by the media in the future. Certainly in the case of Conservative Way Forward there does appear to be an awareness of the potential for greater media interest with the group having appointed 'a leading figure' in 2009 to help with a much needed 'quantum leap in external relations'. [88]

Beyond parliament: significant others

While relations with the wider parliamentary party and the media form the vast part of the networks established by groupings outside of parliament, a small number of

[86] Bob Franklin, 'Keeping it 'Bright, Light and Trite': Changing Newspaper Reporting of Parliament', *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol.49 no.2 (1996), 298-315
[87] For full details of the agreement, see http://www.conservatives.com/News/News_stories/2010/05/Coalition_Agreement_published.aspx (accessed 17 May 2010)
[88] Correspondence from Mr Don Porter CBE: September-November 2009

associations were found with other individuals and bodies and these will be discussed here before proceeding to the next chapter. In addition to Conservative MEPs, a number of groups were found to have established networks with other parliamentarians from outside the UK and in the vast majority of these instances it was groupings in which the primary interest was with Europe. This can be exemplified by the European Forum which brought together amongst others, Conservative MPs and their opposite numbers from the French National Assembly, the European Foundation which not only sought to establish links with like-minded organisations across Europe but has hosted a joint conference in Prague attended by amongst others like-minded politicians from other countries while members of the European Research Group have worked with like-minded centre-right parliamentarians from other European countries to produce a pamphlet, *A Europe of Nations* to which John Major wrote the foreword. [89]

Along similar lines, a small number of groups were found to foster relations with certain academics and again, the European Foundation was one such example with academics serving on both its UK and International Advisory Board. [90] Similarly Action Centre for Europe was notable for its backing from a range of prominent and business interests which included Hambros, BMW, Salomon and Andersen Consulting. [91]

Relations with external bodies are by no means synonymous only with contemporary

[89] For the European Forum, see 'Nothing to fear over Common Market', *The Times*, 19 September 1969, for the European Foundation, see http://www.europeanfoundation.org/news.html (accessed 8 March 2007) and for the European Research Group, see Wood (27 February 1995) op. cit.
[90] http://www.europeanfoundation.org/personnel.html (accessed 3 November 2009)
[91] Ludlam and Smith op. cit., 116-17, 'Euro group learns the error of its ways', *Mail on Sunday*, 4 September 2005, 'Simon service could deliver an ace', *The Times*, 6 June 1997, Philip Webster and Nicholas Wood, 'Euro-sceptics want manifesto pledge to boycott single currency', *The Times*, 8 June 1995 and Donald Macintyre, 'New Tory think-tank to study single currency', 9 January 1995

groupings; from an historical perspective the Unionist Agricultural Committee, for example, commissioned the Food Council to undertake an inquiry into the prices received for and paid for by market garden produce. [92] Similarly the Unionist War Committee was another historical grouping with clearly established networks outside parliament. In this instance relations with the army were evident in its decision regarding conscription with reports in *The Times* in 1916 detailing that 'it had been semi-officially conveyed to the committee that the Army need all available single men, all the attested married men and many more besides...'. [93] Similar relations were also found to exist between the Unionist War Committee and the Statutory Pensions Committee and the Central Medical Committee which in this instance worked together to 'urge the government to take responsibility for disabled servicemen until they are ready to begin a new career in civil life'. [94]

On a final note, while a number of groupings have been seen to foster links with those outside both Party and parliament, not all bodies have welcomed association with unofficial groupings. When Sir Robin Butler, Head of the Civil Service, drew up new guidelines on the activities of the civil service in the 1990s, it was emphasised that civil servants must never, in their official capacity, attend meetings where membership of a political party is a condition of membership and indeed he illustrated this by giving as examples meetings of the Bow Group and the No Turning Back Group. [95]

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[92] 'Political Notes', *The Times*, 6 December 1927
[93] 'The Recruiting Tangle', *The Times*, 29 March 1916
[94] 'Political Notes', *The Times*, 3 November 1916
[95] Norton-Taylor (10 October 1995) op. cit.,

Chapter Five: Functions

'Each man makes his own role; that's what it comes to, you know'

Labour backbencher [1]

What emerges from the research is that groupings fulfil different functions for different MPs according to the emphasis placed by MPs themselves on different aspects of parliamentary life. Thus while all MPs are elected to represent their constituents, and certainly the workload in this instance has increased considerably over recent decades, some MPs prefer to concentrate on this aspect of their work and thus see themselves largely as 'constituency members'. Others however view themselves, in tandem, as 'policy advocates', 'ministerial aspirants' or simply as 'parliament men' (see Appendix 7) and certainly a greater understanding of discussion in this chapter is facilitated by an understanding of these roles. [2]

Theoretical frameworks

While discussion regarding the functions of groupings is a fascinating one and it is tempting to proceed accordingly, it is firstly useful to provide an element of theoretical structure to the chapter and discuss the work of others who have attempted to undertake a similar discussion regarding other elements from within the body politic. Apart from

[1] Searing (1994) op. cit., 1
[2] Ibid., 32

an unpublished paper on the subject, [3] no other paper has, at the time of writing, applied any theoretical framework in these terms to unofficial parliamentary groupings in the British parliament. This said, others have sought to apply a similar approach to the British, and other, legislatures and it is firstly useful to examine these. Although other elements are by their very nature intrinsically different to those of informal groupings, and as such discussion will not linger excessively in this area, there are elements of commonality, derived from the fact that groupings themselves operate within the parliamentary arena, and indeed these elements will emerge as the chapter develops and as such it is worth exploring them further, particularly as no directly relevant theoretical framework for groupings currently exists which can be drawn from.

Thus, as already indicated in the opening chapter, a number of academics have over time devised a number of functions for the central element within the body politic, namely legislatures themselves, and notable amongst these are Walter Bagehot writing in 1867, Robert Packenham just over one hundred years later in 1970 and more recently Philip Norton. While others too have contributed to this debate, Samuel H Beer for example, it is the frameworks of the first three which will be briefly examined here. [4] It is interesting, as indeed Norton illustrates, that each of these has in turn built on the work of a predecessor so that by the time the most recent of these was published, a more complete picture has been developed. [5] It is also worth mentioning at this conjuncture that Norton, in addition to his work on legislatures, has also compiled a listing of functions relating to other elements within the body politic, the CPC being one such

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[3] Lucy Grant, '*Purpose or Parody: A Study of Unofficial Groups within the Main Political Parties*', unpublished research paper, 2007

[4] For Walter Bagehot, see Bagehot op. cit., 73-75, for Robert Packenham, see Packenham op. cit., passim for Philip Norton, see Philip Norton, *Does Parliament Matter?*, Hemel Hempstead, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993, passim and Norton (2005) op. cit, 249 and for Samuel H Beer, see Samuel H Beer, 'The British Legislature and the Problem of Mobilizing Consent' in Elke Frank (ed.), *Lawmakers in a Changing World*, Englewood Cliffs NJ, Prentice Hall, 1966, passim

[5] Norton (1993) op. cit.,7-8

element, and this too will be referred to in discussions. [6]

Certainly as far back as 1867, Bagehot ascribed five functions to the British legislature and these can be seen in Table 3 below with the first of these, 'the elective', viewed as the most important of the time. [7]

Table 3:
Functions ascribed by Walter Bagehot to the British legislature, 1867

The 'elective' function: 'the forming of the government of the day'
The 'expressive' function: 'the expressing of the mind of the English people on all matters which come before it'
The 'teaching' function: 'a great and open council of considerable men (which) cannot be placed in the middle of a society without altering that society'
The 'informing' function: initially derived from 'informing the monarch of matters which were wrong', this same function was transposed to its new sovereign, the English people
The 'legislative' function: 'to legislate for the nation'

Source: Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution,* Brighton, Sussex Academic Press, 1997, 73-75

These same functions were developed further by Packenham in 1970 following his seminal study of the Brazilian congress during the 1960s. The tripartite listing of functions which he produced resulting from this study is detailed in Table 4 below with the roles ranked in order of importance. [8]

[6] Norton (2002) op. cit., 183-99
[7] Bagehot op. cit., 73-75
[8] Packenham op. cit., passim

Table 4:
Functions ascribed by Robert Packenham to the Brazilian legislature, 1970

Legitimation
Latent: through meeting regularly and uninterruptedly
Manifest: the formal stamp of approval
Safety Valve or tension release: outlet for tensions

Recruitment, socialization and training
Recruitment
Socialization
Training

Decisional or influence functions
Law making
Exit making: resolving an impasse in the system
Interest articulation
Conflict resolution
Administrative oversight and patronage (including 'errand running' for constituents)

Sources: Robert Packenham, 'Legislatures and Political Development' in Allan Kornberg and Lloyd Daryl Musolf (ed.), *Legislatures in Developmental Perspective*, Durham NC, Duke University Press, 1970, passim. Also detailed in Robert Packenham, 'Legislatures and Political Development' in Philip Norton (ed.), *Legislatures,* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992, 81-96 and Philip Norton, *Does Parliament Matter?,* Hemel Hempstead, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993, 7

While Packenham specifically makes no claim to having produced a definitive listing of functions, these same functions are utilised latterly by Norton as a building block for his own listing of functions for the British parliament which he in turn compiled in 2005. [9] These functions, which can in turn be seen in Table 5 below, have been worked to incorporate a different perspective from those above in that the roles of parliament are examined in terms of the relationship between parliament and government and parliament and citizen.

It is these last functions rather than the preceding ones which can be seen to provide particular relevance to the roles fulfilled by groups themselves and certainly the idea of a group and parliament and group and citizen relationship can be seen to contain

[9] Norton (2005) op. cit, 249

relevance for those groups which operate within networks on an extra-parliamentary as well as an intra-parliamentary basis.

Table 5:
Functions ascribed by Philip Norton to the British legislature, 2005

Parliament	
Parliament-Government	***Parliament-Citizen***
Manifest Legitimation	Acting as a safety valve
Recruiting, socialising and testing ministers	Addressing a redress of grievance (errand running)
Administrative oversight	Interest articulation
Legislative scrutiny	Mobilising and educating citizens
Conflict resolution	Conflict resolution

Source: Philip Norton, *Parliament in British Politics*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, 249

Before proceeding to discuss the roles which can be drawn from the research relating specifically to groupings, it is useful to introduce in more detail one final research source mentioned earlier, namely that produced by Norton in respect of functions fulfilled by the CPC during its fifty three year history. [10] Although the CPC, which operated from 1945 until 1998, is itself excluded from study for this thesis as it is an integral part of the official party machinery, Norton's work in this instance is perhaps the most useful of all those introduced above. These roles can be seen in Table 6 below.

[10] Norton (2002) op. cit., 184

Table 6:
The four roles of the Conservative Political Centre, Philip Norton, 2002

Role 1:
The reaching out to a particular group of Party activists and thus facilitating a dialogue between leaders and Party activists

Role 2:
The reaching out to Party members in general terms and thereby educating Party members

Role 3:
The reaching out to the politically informed community and thereby influencing the intellectual climate

Role 4:
The reaching out to a wider public and thereby providing a platform for Party leaders

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Source: Philip Norton, 'The Role of the Conservative Political Centre, 1945-98' in Stuart Ball and Ian Holliday (ed.), *Mass Conservatism: the Conservatives and the Public since the 1980s,* London, Frank Cass, 2002, 183-99

The CPC had devised a list of its own roles in 1967, revised in 1972, and it is these which Norton uses as a base to compile his own list of functions. Taken together these roles were, as the author indicates, engaged in the battle of ideas with its principal role being to ensure that its troops were well armed. Certainly the same can be said to be true for a consequential number of those groupings incorporated within this thesis. Norton goes on to indicate that while the above remains true, the rate of success for fulfilling these roles, especially with regard to the first three detailed in Table 6 above, varied over time while the fourth it fulfilled successfully on a continuing basis. It is interesting that the same can be said to be true for the specific roles designated from the research for unofficial groupings in that some groups fulfilled all the roles all of the time while others fulfilled only some of the roles all of the time and others still some of the roles some of the time.

Certainly those groups which adopted a 'look at me' philosophy discussed

previously can be seen to fulfil the first three of these while others, and Direct Democracy is one group which comes to mind in this instance, can be seen to fulfil the fourth by reaching out to a wider audience. Direct Democracy had at its height a list of fifteen thousand e-supporters, and with one of its key players having regular and close access to the leader of the Party at that time, provided a ready platform for him. [11] Certainly, as indicated earlier, localism was central to many policies which David Cameron campaigned on in the period preceding the 2010 General Election.

Functions, and the ranking, of unofficial parliamentary party groupings

Thus having outlined a number of works by others, common elements were found to have emerged and indeed these elements proved helpful when compiling a table of functions for groups. Certainly it was evident that after having put together a bank of information pertaining to groupings and after then having reviewed the information therein in conjunction with the common elements above that six primary functions could be ascribed to unofficial groupings. These functions and their constituent parts are listed below in Table 7.

Unlike Packenham's work detailed in Table 4, it is worth noting that these functions are not ranked in order of importance and that there is good reason for this. While a number of attempts were made to this end, they regrettably proved futile. This was due largely to three factors. The first of these was derived primarily from the diversity which was found to exist amongst the groups themselves with different groups fulfilling different roles and while a small number may fulfil all of those indicated in Table 7,

[11] Interview with Mr Douglas Carswell MP: 14 May 2008

Table 7:
The six functions of unofficial parliamentary party groupings within the Conservative Party from 1830

Career pathway
- Parliamentary aspirants
- Backbenchers on the march to promotion
- Leaders in the making
- Frontbenchers in retreat
- Alternative direction

Party management
- Internal elections
- Induction and training
- Management of dissent
- Reservoir function

Policy making
- Driving the policy agenda
- Contributing to party policy
- Scrutiny
- Alternative opposition

Political engagement and informing debate
- Interested public
- National party
- Within parliament

Social
- Ex-MPs
- Old timers
- Newcomers
- Candidates

Vehicle for Protest

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others may fulfil only one or two. Thus while one MP discussed the important social role played by groupings of which she was a member, the July 4th and Everest for example, in terms of providing an opportunity to meet with like-minded colleagues, another discussed the importance of groupings such as Direct Democracy in a policy making role in terms of providing policy ideas for when the Party was next in government and others again, the importance of groupings such as the 92 Group in terms of fulfilling a party management role in the organising of the slate for the 1922

Committee, and at one time the backbench subject committees. [12]

The second factor which resulted in an inability to rank the functions of groupings was that the importance of functions would vary over time in conjunction with events taking place within the external environment. Thus for instance during the First World War, the Unionist War Committee, and others, played a significant role in terms of policy making in that they scrutinised the government by holding it to account and in some respects driving the policy agenda with, for example, again the Unionist War Committee exerting significant pressure to introduce national conscription. They also thereby fulfilled a role of scrutinising government policy and in many ways acting as an official opposition, particularly with the event of coalition government. [13]

By way of contrast, in periods preceding a general election, groups would play a more significant role in terms of career pathway reminiscent of Bagehot's elective function by, for example, assisting parliamentary aspirants (Conservative Way Forward for example) and engaging the public in new ideas likely to be implemented when in government (Direct Democracy for example) and in the period after a general election, in terms of a social role for new MPs (the No Turning Back Group and the Picadors for example). [14]

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[12] For the July 4th and Everest, see interview with Mrs Eleanor Laing MP: 24 April 2008, for Direct Democracy, see interview with Mr Douglas Carswell MP: 14 May 2008 and for the 92 Group, see interviews with Lady Ann Winterton MP: 29 April 2008 and Mr Philip Davies MP: 6 May 2008

[13] See, for example, 'Political Notes', *The Times*, 25 April 1917, 'Political Notes', *The Times*, 9 May 1917, 'Political Notes', *The Times*, 14 November 1917 and 'The Shipbuilding Failure', *The Times*, 20 March 1918

[14] For Conservative Way Forward, see, for example, http://www.conwayfor.org.uk/'Becoming a candidate' (accessed 7 March 2010), for Direct Democracy, see interview with Mr Douglas Carswell MP: 14 May 2008, for the No Turning Back Group, see interview with Mrs Angela Watkinson MP: 8 May 2008 and for the Picadors, see a number of interviews with members of the 2005 intake especially Mr Graham Stuart MP: 29 April 2008

The third and final factor which prohibited any meaningful ranking of functions was that the role or roles which any one group may play can vary tremendously over time as part of the natural lifespan of a group rather than as a result of external influences. Certainly a number of MPs discussed this in relation to both the 92 Group (Philip Davies for example) and the One Nation Group (Ian Taylor for example) with both groups, although still in existence today, in many ways shadows of their former selves.

Rankings aside, discussion will now focus on the specific roles attributable to unofficial parliamentary party groupings by examining each in turn. It is important to stress at this conjuncture the importance of studying this chapter, and indeed subsequent chapters, in conjunction with the preceding chapters as the examples utilised, although supplemented with additional ones, are drawn from the information which came to light therein.

Career pathway

Five sub-functions were found to exist in respect of career pathway namely those in relation to aspiring parliamentarians, backbenchers seeking promotion, leaders in the making, frontbenchers in retreat and finally, in relation to a small number of other parliamentarians which did not fit into any of the above. The first of those indicated in Table 7 in terms of an MP's career pathway is that of assisting parliamentary aspirants and certainly some groupings were found to have a clearly discernable role to play for some, but not all, individuals seeking at best support, encouragement and at times help during the election period and at the very least any sort of contact with anyone involved with the PCP. Certainly one MP recalled how membership of Mainstream prior to his election offered him much valued contact with members of the parliamentary party and

those closely associated with it during the period in which he attempted to find a seat and secure election victory even if he did not necessarily count himself as a natural disciple in terms of what the group stood for. [15]

Without doubt incentives such as these were and are very real ones to those parliamentary aspirants who had joined, for example, the Bow Group. Although a parody of this particular grouping, and now somewhat dated, *The Short List* referred to earlier in the thesis still makes very entertaining reading and neatly sums up the points made here. From a more recent perspective, it is indicative of the role of this particular group in this respect in that it boasted eight PPCs 'who are likely to become Conservative MPs after the 2010 General Election' with the group's 2009/ 10 chairman, Annesley Abercorn, also selected as a ninth. It was notable that of this number, most were (or are) past or current chairmen, *Crossbow* editors or Bow Group officers. [16] The Bow Group aside, there is no doubt that in general terms the process of being selected as a candidate and then once on the candidates list, of being selected for a seat, can be a long, arduous and often very lonely one and any help offered from any quarter is warmly welcomed. [17]

Certainly in the case of Conservative Way Forward, it is evident from their website that a number of hopeful MPs had been attracted by the opportunities and encouragement provided within this particular political community for those yet to step on to the first rung of the parliamentary ladder. Indeed in this instance, it was clearly felt by those involved with directing and managing the group that there exists

[15] Interview with Mr Stephen Crabb MP: 6 May 2008
[16] 'Chairman's message', *Crossbow*, Spring Edition 2010
[17] Writers' own discussions with a number of individuals seeking both to be accepted onto the Conservative candidates list and once this has been achieved, seeking selection as a PPC by a constituency party

considerable potential for expansion in this respect as was seen from not only the dedicated section on their website but also their plans to develop further this aspect of group networking. [18] Along the same lines, it was interesting that one MP recalled being approached by another group, namely the 92 Group, during her time as a PPC prior to the 1997 General Election although no follow up contact was made once she entered parliament, largely due she believed to the fact that those who 'recruited' her lost their seats at the same election. [19]

In the same way, a number of parliamentary aspirants were also found to be allied to groups in a slightly different manner in that a number of such groupings were found to be formed by PPCs themselves (Standard Bearers for example) while others already mentioned, and some not yet mentioned (the European Forum for example), [20] were all found to count PPCs amongst their members.

It is also interesting to note briefly in this context that for those MPs who lost their seats at a general election and who sought to return to Westminster at the first possible opportunity, that the invitation to continue attending group dinners and meetings was a very valuable one for the same reasons as above and thus groupings had a role to play for these second time round aspirants. Certainly both the archive papers of Pat Wall and discussions with George Gardiner supported this in respect of the 92 Group. The latter, for example, recalled how a number of ex-MPs who continued to attend some dinners particularly valued the opportunity to revisit their old place of work and foster

[18] http://www.conwayfor.org.uk/ 'Becoming a candidate' (accessed 7 March 2010) and correspondence from Mr Don Porter CBE: September – November 2009
[19] Interview with Mrs Eleanor Laing MP: 24 April 2008
[20] For the European Forum, see, for example, Wood (16 August 1969) op. cit.,

relations with existing and new MPs in the hope they would very soon be back. [21]

While the above remains true, it was also true that not all members of groups who sought to enter parliament were successful in doing so and thus while membership had a role to play, it was only part of a process and not the entire process itself.

Once elected, there was some evidence that some groups have a role to play with regard to the second element detailed under the career pathway, namely those MPs seeking promotion to the frontbench although this was more tenuous than that above. While some linkage was found between some groups and promotion to the frontbench, it is impossible to conclude categorically that one is causally dependent on the other. Certainly a number of groups have over time seen a number of their members promoted to a greater extent than others and these include from an historical perspective, the Young Unionist Group and the Unionist Social Reform Committee and from a more recent perspective, the One Nation Group, the Economic Dining Club, Guy Fawkes and Blue Chip. [22]

While this remains true, promotion would certainly not be simultaneous for all members even when they were all part of the same intake. Thus, for example, in the case of the One Nation Group, Edward Heath was promoted first, to the whips' office, and then several months later, his replacement in the group, Reginald Maudling joined

[21] Various papers in DPW/37/1 (1964) to DPW/37/22 (Summary 1964-1984) and interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000

[22] For the Young Unionist Group, see, for example, 'Ready for the Fight', *The Times*, 2 November 1922 , for the Unionist Social Reform Committee, see, for example, Close (1974) op. cit., 374, for the One Nation Group, see, for example, Garnett op. cit., 111 and Wintour (13 January 1996) op. cit., for the Economic Dining Club, see, for example, 'Obituary: Lord Ridley', *The Guardian*, 6 March 1993, for Guy Fawkes, see, for example, Barberis, McHugh and Tyldesley op. cit., 57 and for Blue Chip, see, for example, Riddell (1992) op. cit., 430 and Critchley (1985) op. cit., 48

the Ministry of Transport followed by, in turn, Iain Macleod to the Ministry of Health and Cub Alport as Assistant Paymaster General. [23]

Along the same lines of career pathway, and from a more recent perspective, one MP recounted a meeting of the No Turning Back Group in the 1980s at which Margaret Thatcher asked one member why he was so quiet on this particular occasion when normally this was not the case. His reply had been a question, asking when members of the group would be promoted to the cabinet. Shortly afterwards several members of the group were promoted. [24] Whether or not the story is true, it is difficult, if nigh impossible without interviewing each leader of the Party to quantify exactly the relationship between membership and promotion and indeed to ascertain whether these members were promoted because of their membership of a group or whether they would have been promoted regardless.

Certainly it was interesting that those MPs interviewed from the 2005 intake did not see any correlation between group membership and promotion although it was noted that they did feel David Cameron was keen to ensure representatives from all wings of the Party were included and thus, they felt, consideration would be given to that although not necessarily in terms of membership of groupings. This said, it was interesting that Green Chip was seen by them and other MPs interviewed to be comprised of those MPs who it was felt were Cameron's 'chosen ones' and indeed one MP recalls that his attendance at an early Green Chip dinner was notable for the fact that he was only one of two backbenchers, the remainder were already members of the shadow frontbench. [25]

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[23] Garnett op. cit., 111, 120
[24] Interview with Mr Philip Davies MP: 6 May 2008
[25] Interview with Mr Philip Dunne MP: 24 April 2008

History would certainly indicate that in the run up to a general election, members of certain groups with close association to the leader find themselves in 'the right place at the right time'. It is interesting that closer examination of, for example, the Economic Dining Club which had a close alliance with Margaret Thatcher (she was a member and attended meetings) found themselves developing economic policy which they certainly believed was later adopted by her when prime minister and indeed, as indicated above, a number of members went on to hold cabinet positions. [26] Similarly, although more tentative than the previous example, was the relationship between John Major when he became prime minister and other members of Blue Chip. Although speculative, it is perhaps indicative of a degree of linkage in that when discussing his appointment of John Patten to the Department of Education he chose to explain it in terms of having put 'my fellow Blue Chip member in charge' and similarly Michael Ancram's political rebirth was deemed by some to be linked to his old Blue Chip contacts. [27]

While the above remains true, it is equally true that membership of a grouping, if not entirely in keeping with the views of a leader, may be seen to impede promotion and thus a conscious decision may be made not to join a grouping. It was interesting that one MP, Ian Taylor (who was a key member of Double-Eight which is a leading pro-European grouping), recalled how one new MP 'decided initially she would be a member but then panicked and withdrew her support and decided she didn't want to be a member anymore because of it affecting her career prospects'. She was indeed subsequently promoted and Taylor certainly believed that 'if the Party echelons had thought she was pro-European then she wouldn't have been promoted'. Similarly Taylor revealed how a member of the 2005 intake 'had to think very carefully' before

[26] See also Ridley (1992) op. cit., 20
[27] For John Patten, see Major op. cit., 308 and for Michael Ancram, see Stephen Castle, 'The toff in the middle: Profile Michael Ancram', *The Independent*, 2 April 1995

he accepted an invitation to join Nick's Diner as he would thereafter be labelled 'on the left of the Party'.

In terms of the third element of the career pathway, namely to stand as a candidate for the leadership of the Party, again groups were found to have a role to play. Certainly in more recent times they were found to have helped facilitate the leadership election process by hosting meetings at which candidates would attend and speak and subsequently be questioned by members as indeed has been discussed previously. In addition to this, a number of MPs interviewed discussed the fact that group meetings were especially useful to them during leadership election campaigns in that they provided MPs with a discreet and trustworthy environment in which all candidates could be considered and discussed in confidence. [28]

On a final note with regard to leadership elections, there is no doubt that from the perspective of the leadership candidates themselves, groups were found to have a role to play in terms of providing an arena in which they could meet with certain cohorts of the parliamentary party and thus work to secure their support as a unit rather than spending time on an individual basis with each member although in some cases this would also be part of the process. It is interesting that in his biography of John Major, Bruce Anderson cites Major as stressing the importance of maintaining an alliance with both Blue Chip and Guy Fawkes, and others, as part of a calculated attempt to allow the largest possible number of his colleagues to conclude that his views were broadly in agreement with theirs. [29]

[28] See, for example, interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008
[29] Anderson op. cit., 273-74

In respect of the fourth element of the career pathway, again groups were found to have a role for frontbenchers on their return to being backbenchers. Certainly a number of ex-ministers were found to have spoken to a number of groups over time and again these have been discussed in previous chapters. Certainly, from the perspective of backbenchers, these occasions offered opportunities to the latter to benefit from the experiences of the former in a way they would not otherwise have been able to have done so. Conversely from the perspective of the ex-minister, unofficial groupings were found to fulfil a function in providing such individuals with a role over and above that of the 'constituency member'. Thus for example Nick Ridley headed the Economic Dining Club, Ken Clarke, the Tory Reform Group (he has retained this position since his return to the frontbench) and, from an historic perspective, Edward Carson returned to the backbenches (he resigned as Attorney General in 1915 over what he believed to be the government's insufficient assistance to Britain's Balkan allies) to lead the Unionist War Committee while a number of disaffected ex-ministers, together with others, went on to form the Suez Group which bitterly opposed Eden's Middle Eastern policy in the 1950s. [30] On a more contemporary level, it was interesting that one MP discussed one particular current grouping, namely Conservative Way Forward, in terms of, she believed, 'providing an outlet for ex-frontbenchers'. [31]

In the same way, and lastly in respect of career pathway, a number of groups were found to provide an alternative career path for some MPs who neither sought nor received promotion. In some cases where an MP was particularly ambitious for a promotion which did not materialise, he, and all the examples found were men, went on

[30] For the Economic Dining Club, see Ridley (1992) op. cit., 20, for the Tory Reform Group, see http://www.trg.org.uk/index.php/about_the_trg_1 (accessed 25 November 2009), for the Unionist War Committee, see Barry McGill, 'Asquith's Predicament, 1914-1918', *The Journal of Modern History*, vol.39 no.3 (1967), 292-93 and for the Suez Group, see Alderman and Cross (1985) op. cit., 396
[31] Interview with Mrs Eleanor Laing MP: 24 April 2008

to direct their energies into a particular direction or cause from the backbenches which often involved close association with a particular group or groups. Thus, for example, Gardiner made a parliamentary career out of plotting from the backbenches through a number of groups on the traditional right of the parliamentary party which included the Union Flag Group, the 92 Group and the Upstairs Club, Richard Body directed his parliamentary energies against the EEC, and latterly the European Union (EU), during his time as an MP where he figured amongst others in the Anti-Common Market League and Whipless Nine and from an historical perspective, Walter Long established and led the Unionist Defence League after having failed as a principal contender for the leadership of the Party in November 1911 and Benjamin Disraeli harboured a political grudge against Robert Peel in his early political career for being passed over for promotion which some argue resulted in his forming and leading the Young England Movement. [32]

Before proceeding to discuss the second category of functions designated to groupings, it is worth observing for a moment that the relationship between groups and MPs in respect of MPs being promoted has in general terms been portrayed up to this point as a positive one. However this was not always the case and examples were found from the research where membership could prove detrimental to advancement, if indeed that is what an MP seeks, although certainly not all MPs do seek promotion. One contemporary example explored earlier in the thesis is that of Better Off Out where David Cameron explicitly stated that that MPs who supported the grouping would not be considered for promotion.

[32] For George Gardiner, see interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000, for Richard Body, see interview with Sir Richard Body: 26 February 2008, for Walter Long, see Murphy (1986) op. cit., 223-25 and for Benjamin Disraeli, see Crowson op. cit., 240

Party management

As above, a number of sub-functions were found to exist in terms of management of the parliamentary party namely those in respect of internal elections, the integration of new MPs and the management of dissent. In addition to these three specific functions, a fourth, more arbitrary function, was also evident which shall be called a 'reservoir' function. These will all now be addressed in turn.

With regard to the first of these, internal elections, certainly groupings were found to have a role to play in managing not only elections for the 1922 Committee but also, since 1965, the election of the leader of the Party. They were also found to play a significant role in terms of organising the slate for the backbench subject committees until their relatively recent abolition.

With regard to the first of these, the 1922 is often regarded as the 'trades union' of the PCP and as such its continued operation has become essential to the stable and smooth management of the parliamentary party not only on a day to day basis but also at times of pressure in the Party's history. By playing a key part in elections to this committee, groupings make a significant contribution to this stability.

By way of background to this, the 1922 undertakes elections on an annual basis with a chairman and officers of an executive duly elected each year and indeed these elections have taken place since 1923. Although its weekly meetings are generally not well attended, significant numbers of the parliamentary party do attend those meetings at which the annual elections take place and indeed similarly at those extraordinary meetings organised at pressure points in the party's history, including those held during

a leadership election campaign. [33] Thus the 1922 Committee operates on a day to day basis below the political radar although it can and does emerge into the limelight during any of the above. Certainly after its elections, in much the same way as appointments to the US Supreme Court, much analysis takes place within and beyond the parliamentary party as to whether its composition is deemed to be predominantly 'right' or 'left'.

Without doubt a number of groupings (the 92 Group, the Lollards, Mainstream and the One Nation Group for example) were found to play an integral and significant role in facilitating and managing these elections in not only sourcing candidates for all the positions (and in attempting to prevent 'unsuitable' candidates from standing) but also in canvassing and mobilising supporters on the day of the elections with the most notable in recent times being the 92 Group for the organising of the right and centre-right slate and Mainstream, for the organising of the left and centre-left. Certainly all these aspects of organising the slate were included in discussions held with the secretary of the 92 Group in 2008, and indeed since, although it was interesting that he particularly stressed the importance of trying to prevent rogue candidates from standing. [34] It was also interesting that another MP made the point that the importance of organising the slate could vary over time so that, for example, in the period preceding the 2010 General Election the PCP was relatively unified behind a new leader with few disparities within the Party which meant that it was less important who was elected onto the committee at this time. [35]

[33] Norton (1996) op. cit., 129-31
[34] Interview with Mr Philip Davies MP: 6 May 2008 and correspondence with Mr Philip Davies MP: March 2010
[35] Interview with Mr David Gauke MP: 22 April 2008

Groupings were also found to have fulfilled similar functions with regard to backbench subject committees. Although now defunct, they have in the past played a key role in influencing policy since their inception in the 1920s and thus by playing a significant role in managing elections to these committees, groupings (again the 92 Group and the Lollards for example) have assisted in the policy process in this respect. Indeed it was interesting that one long standing MP felt that backbenchers had become significantly less influential within the PCP since the demise of these committees. [36]

As the chairmen of these committees played a significant role in determining the policy recommendations of individual subject committees, success in securing these positions was potentially key to determining the direction the Party would take on certain policy issues and thus many keenly fought battles, and subversive activities, between groupings were found to have taken place over these positions. The 92 Group, for example and as discussed earlier, at one time organised a mole in the Lollards camp to ascertain which candidates were being put forward by them for these elections so that what George Gardiner called 'countermeasures' could be taken. While evidence was mainly found in respect of the 92 Group and the Lollards, organising the right and centre-right and left and centre-left slate respectively, other groups were also involved with the process. Certainly the One Nation Group in its early years was found to 'organise more carefully to win places on important committees'. [37]

In a similar way to elections for the 1922 and backbench subject committees, groupings were also found to make a significant contribution to the process of electing the leader of the Party. Certainly a number of groups (the 92 Group for example) were

[36] Interview with Lady Ann Winterton MP: 29 April 2008
[37] Garnett op. cit., 111

found to facilitate the process in terms of providing an arena in which the leadership candidates could meet with and answer questions from a particular cohort within the PCP. They also provided an arena (Nick's Diner for example) within which MPs could discuss the options in private with colleagues, and indeed this opportunity was found from the interviews conducted for the thesis to be valued especially by MPs in that they felt discussions could be candid and open amongst those in attendance without fear of prejudice or public exposure. Although consensus on one suitable candidate was rarely reached, one group emerged as an exception to this. Several MPs interviewed referred to the fact that during the 2005 leadership election (and despite internal 'discussions') Cornerstone was notable for making a public commitment, at least in terms of a commitment to the PCP, through the organisation of a caucus and thus offered a bloc vote for any one candidate they chose to support. [38]

A second aspect of party management with which groupings were found to be associated was that of the induction and training of new MPs and indeed this was in itself a chief motivation for the foundation of the 1922 Committee. Certainly relatively little formal induction and training is arranged for new MPs, although this is greater than it used to be, and the disorganised and unfamiliar situation which many new MPs have found themselves in when first entering parliament is well versed; often without office, staff and in some cases, with little idea as to what is expected of them on a daily basis. One MP in particular mentioned how useful her membership of the No Turning Back Group had been to her in the first few months in this respect after entering parliament. [39]

[38] See, for example, interview with Mr Douglas Carswell MP: 14 May 2008
[39] Interview with Mrs Angela Watkinson MP: 8 May 2008

While it would be wrong to suggest that groupings fulfil an all encompassing human resources function in this respect, which they quite clearly do not, a number of MPs have over time found the shelter offered by some groupings in their early months a very welcome one in terms of discussing mutual problems and how to overcome them and to also glean some idea as to what is expected of them in terms of parliamentary procedures and protocols with some intakes even forming their own groupings solely for these very purposes (1910 intake and Reveille for example). Similarly a number of those MPs interviewed from the 2005 intake discussed the fact that in the very early days the contact with other new MPs through the Picadors was very helpful to them in this respect. Some members also believed that the fact a number of their intake had been promoted relatively early in their parliamentary careers had served to break the cohesion of the group and indeed if they had not been duly promoted, they would have continued to meet as a close and cohesive group. Nonetheless, for the period in which they did meet, the helpfulness to them as new MPs in discussing the 2005 leadership election campaign which they found themselves in the middle of soon after entering parliament was stressed in particular. [40]

The third aspect of party management is that of managing dissent within the parliamentary party, similar to a degree to the function of conflict resolution which both Robert Packenham and Philip Norton have referred to in their studies of legislatures (see Tables 4 and 5). Certainly it was found that groupings became particularly active at pressure points within the history of the parliamentary party. This was certainly supported by a number of MPs interviewed who referred to the fact that they believed groupings had a greater role to play at times of dissent within the parliamentary party.

[40] Interviews with MPs from the 2005 intake, April-June 2008. A small number were especially helpful in this respect such as, for example, Mr Stephen Crabb MP: 6 May 2008

It was interesting that of those MPs interviewed who were currently whips there was, at the time of interviewing, a clearly discernable relaxed attitude towards groupings at a time when the parliamentary party was relatively united and optimistic for a successful outcome at the 2010 General Election. It was clear however that there was also a good knowledge of which MP was a member of which group and what that group stood for and thus through their membership of a group MPs could be categorised and thus by implication, managed at times of future dissent. One such MP summarised the position particularly succinctly when he said that the whips' office have a good idea 'as to the drums which are beating in all these groups'. [41]

Certainly historically at times of dissent the whips have been very un-relaxed about certain groups and managed them as such. (Richard Ryder, when Chief Whip for John Major, recommended the whip was not returned to the Whipless Nine who had persistently voted against Major in the House for example). There is also no doubt that as the whips are aware of which MPs are in which group they are able to gauge potential dissent, and most importantly the level of this dissent, and report back to the leader thus enabling deals to be brokered as and when it is considered suitable. It was interesting that a number of MPs interviewed who were associated with Cornerstone believed that David Cameron had taken account of the fact that a section of the parliamentary party were increasingly concerned that party policy was drifting away from core conservative values of marriage and family and that they believed alterations to party policy had been made accordingly to accommodate this belief. Whether or not they did have an impact is almost immaterial in respect of managing dissent in that it is the perception of having exerted influence which kept the group 'on side' and thus

[41] Interview with Mr Brooks Newmark MP: 30 April 2008

potential dissent had in effect been managed successfully.

From a slightly different perspective, but again regarding the management of dissent, it was interesting that groupings also had a role to play within the Party in terms of *inadvertently* helping to manage dissent within the PCP. Certainly one MP discussed the fact that in 1990, after Margaret Thatcher's resignation, there were many factions within the PCP at that time and that she remembers groupings fulfilling a very real role in that they helped the Party absorb all the discontent in a way she felt would not have been possible without them. She believed they had acted as a 'sponge' during this difficult time and that by absorbing factionalism and discontent in this way they enabled MPs 'to get rid of their frustrations' while still allowing the Party to continue to function. [42] Thus rather than solely the whips managing dissent amongst groupings as above, it was in fact the groupings themselves which helped to manage the dissent.

The fourth and final function relating to party management is broader and less specific than those above, namely a 'reservoir' function. Although not discussed in these terms with the majority of those MPs interviewed it is one which was evident over time. Certainly it was seen to be especially relevant when the parliamentary party was sizeable and a significant number of MPs who seek greater parliamentary involvement beyond their constituency responsibilities will have neither sought nor have been given positions of responsibility either in government or select committees. Indeed research has suggested that at these times the number of members of groupings increases which in turn suggests that groupings can provide a focus for those MPs who may seek a greater role for themselves. This is not to be confused with the earlier function of

[42] Interview with Mrs Eleanor Laing MP: 24 April 2008

managing dissent, although it may overlap at times, nor to suggest that unless an MP is in the cabinet or chairing a select committee he or she is a danger to party stability (which they clearly are not) but it does suggest that some MPs seek additional outlets, sometimes to voice disquiet but probably more often not, and that groupings provide an arena for these MPs.

Policy making

A third category of functions ascribable to MPs was discernable from the research, namely that which can be seen in terms of the policy making process and certainly a number of 'policy groups' were found to exist where members saw themselves very much as 'policy advocates'. Four sub-functions of policy making will be examined in this context, namely introducing ideas onto the policy agenda, contributing to the detail of party policy once an idea is on the policy agenda, scrutinising proposed government legislation and finally, related to the previous item but in a broader context, acting as an opposition party (and on occasion *the* official opposition to the government) at certain periods in history when, for example, the Conservatives had formed part of a coalition government.

The first of these, introducing ideas onto the policy agenda is potentially the most important of all. As Steven Lukes has argued in his third dimensional view of power, the question of control over the political agenda is a key factor in determining power relations. Thus if a grouping has any degree of influence in controlling the political agenda, and particularly if this is at the expense of other groupings with different policy preferences, not only does its own success constitute a significant one in terms of power

relations but this significance is enhanced if the inclusion of its own ideas are at the expense of others. [43]

Certainly a few groups were found to play a role in introducing ideas onto the policy agenda and this was found to be the case throughout the entire period studied. One notable example was that of the Bow Group. While others in the same vein include the One Nation Group (in response to the success of the Labour Party in 1945 and 1950) and the Economic Dining Club (with the development of Thatcherite economic policy following the election of Edward Heath as leader of the Party in 1965), the Bow Group without doubt has played a significant role in introducing new ideas onto the policy agenda in terms of the dissemination of a range of pamphlets over time, as indeed was illustrated in Table 1, many of which have received coverage in the national press.

A further, and more specific, example of a grouping introducing ideas onto the policy agenda, and more contemporary to those above, was Direct Democracy which was found to play a significant role in introducing the concept of localism. Through the publication of its books, *Direct Democracy: an Agenda for a New Model Party* published in 2005 and *The Plan: Twelve Months to Renew Britain* published in 2008, and indeed the serialisation of the first of these books by *The Daily Telegraph*, a number of ideas have been widely discussed both within and beyond the Westminster village which include the giving of councils the power to raise, lower and collect their own taxes, solving the West Lothian question by devolving powers to England, allowing anyone to select candidates for elections in open primaries (not just members of political parties) and taking power back from unelected bureaucrats through the direct

[43] Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, passim but esp. 14-29

election of officials. [44]

From this, a number of groupings were found to have a role to play in terms of not only introducing policy ideas onto the political agenda but for these same ideas to be adopted as party policy. This second role in terms of policy making can be illustrated by further examining the above example of Direct Democracy and a number of the ideas discussed in relation to the concepts of direct democracy and localism. Certainly the idea of open primaries for the selection of PPCs is one such policy idea which has already been adopted by some constituencies, Totnes for example selected their candidate for the 2010 General Election this way. Similarly prior to the 2010 General Election the official Conservative Party website, in its policy section, promised to address the West Lothian question by giving English MPs a decisive say on laws that affect only England as well as addressing the idea of directly elected bureaucrats. In terms of the last of these, the same website, in a separate section entitled 'Direct Democracy', explicitly detailed the introduction of directly elected police commissioners. [45]

While the above remains true, it is impossible to scientifically demonstrate beyond all doubt that there is a causal relationship between Direct Democracy and these policies and that these policies emerged only as a result of this particular group although there was no doubt in the mind of one of the main organisers of the group that this was the

[44] See, for example, Richard Woods, 'Get set for the great Tory; ideas that were once fringe are taking centre stage as the Tories plan radical action to tackle Britain's dire public finances and transform government', *Sunday Times*, 13 September 2009 and Daniel Hannan and Douglas Carswell, 'Giving control back to councils could cut taxes; today *The Daily Telegraph*, in association with Direct Democracy, begins a six week series that seeks your views on how to return power to the people', *The Daily Telegraph*, 21 May 2007

[45] For open primaries, see, for example, Michael Brown, 'Open primaries have revolutionary power', *The Independent*, 11 August 2009 and for the West Lothian question and the direct election of bureaucrats, see http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/Where_we_stand/Democracy.aspx (accessed 30 November 2009)

case and certainly the importance of this particular grouping in this respect was mentioned by a number of other MPs interviewed for the thesis. [46]

The third aspect of policy making for which groupings were found to play a role was that of scrutinising proposed government legislation. A number of groups were found to be especially active in this respect in terms of acting as an ad hoc 'bureau of information' (similar in part to the providing of information by pressure groups to MPs) for some MPs who may or may not be members of the group and who required further information pertaining to the details of proposed legislation to enable them to fulfil their duties in this respect. It was interesting, as indeed discussed previously, that several MPs discussed the role of Cornerstone in providing advice and or more information to MPs with regard to certain clauses of the Embryology Bill. [47]

Similarly while some groups were found to be active in tabling amendments, backbench motions and questions to ministers in a similar ad hoc manner (the One Nation Group for example), others were found to orchestrate more concerted parliamentary campaigns against specific policy proposals (the Peacock's Tail, the Privy Council and Sane Planning for example) with some having more success than others in seeing the progress of proposed legislation grind to a halt (Union Flag Group for example).

From this a final role was found to exist at certain points in history in terms of not only scrutinising one specific piece of proposed legislation but in wider terms, in acting, sometimes in liaison with others, as a broader unofficial opposition. Such examples

[46] Interview with Mr Douglas Carswell MP: 14 May 2008 as one of the main organisers of the group and, to support this view from interview, see, for example, interview with Mr Mark Harper MP: 24 April 2008
[47] See, for example, interview with Mr Greg Hands MP: 15 May 2008

were found to exist either during times when the Conservative Party formed part of a coalition government or during periods when intra-party dissent was particularly robust. Certainly in the case of the former, the Unionist War Committee was vocal in its criticism of the then coalition government to the extent that it operated in many ways as an official opposition during the First World War and in the case of the latter, the 1930s saw the emergence of a number of dissenting groups concerned with colonial issues during the transmutation of the British Empire into the Commonwealth when a number of die-hard colonialists found it impossible to reconcile themselves to change, largely concerning the status of Ireland and India. Certainly in terms of India, many government supporters persistently opposed the government on the five key divisions relating to the Government of India Bill.

A similar pattern emerged after the 1935 General Election regarding the conflict between Italy and Abyssinia. When it became known how much of Abyssinia Britain and France were prepared to let Italy gain as a result of the Hoare-Laval Agreement, dissent amongst elements of the PCP was so significant, not least through the 'Spear's motion' (signatories had already met as a grouping but it was not until after the government's climb down that they called themselves the December Club) that Samuel Hoare was forced to resign his post as Foreign Secretary. [48]

Thus it can be seen how groupings were found to influence policy at various stages of the policy making process and also on occasion by acting as an unofficial opposition. Generally it could be argued that influence was greater the earlier the stage of policy making with the greatest potential for affect in the 'battle of ideas' when potential

[48] For further details regarding this episode, see, for example, Rasmussen op. cit.,

policy items first appear on the political agenda. However, while this remains true to an extent, examples were also found on occasion of significant impact at other stages of the policy making process (Union Flag Group for example in scrutinising proposed legislation on the floor of the House) and thus the policy making role can be seen overall as a broad ranging one.

Political engagement and informing debate

Having examined the roles of groupings in terms of career pathway, party management and policy making, attention will now turn to the role of political engagement and informing debate. Three sub-categories of groups emerged based on the audience reached (sometimes this was found to be targeted and sometimes inadvertent); firstly those reaching the widest possible audience namely the interested public (both in its entirety and specific sections of), the national party and the parliamentary party, secondly those reaching only the national and parliamentary party and thirdly those reaching only the parliamentary party. Certainly this range was similar in many respects to those same audiences extrapolated by Philip Norton in relation to the CPC, see Table 6.

It was interesting that a number of groups from the first sub-category which reached out to all the above were those adopting a 'look at me' philosophy. Groupings in this instance were often well publicised and often highly successful in reaching their target audience. A number of activities were found to have been undertaken by a selection of these groups which ranged from the organisation of public meetings (the One Nation Group for example) and conferences (the European Foundation for example) and in the case of one group, a travelling 'lantern lecture' (the Union Defence League) to the

publication of books (Direct Democracy for example), journals, magazines and newsletters (Tory Reform Group for example) and pamphlets and reports (the Bow Group for example) to the use of letter writing in the national press (the Selsdon Group for example) and more recently to the use of the internet through websites and social network sites (Conservative Way Forward for example).

Similar but slightly different to the above, a number of other groupings in the first sub-category also sought to reach out to a wider audience (that is parliamentary and non-parliamentary) but, in slightly narrower terms, to only a specific section of the interested public rather than the public at large. One particular example in this respect was Sane Planning which sought to fight against the planning proposals proffered by Nicholas Ridley. In so doing the group not only sought to engage MPs from the affected area, namely the south east, but also those members of the interested public, and while some were members of the national Party others were not, who resided in this geographical area and who would be affected by the proposals. Once it had been successful in engaging its target audience, it sought to lobby as a group against the proposed changes by informing and educating those concerned not only in relation to the details of the proposals but also in relation to the progress being made.

With regard to the second sub-category of grouping, one notable example in this respect was the Monday Club, at least in its early years, which by fulfilling a role of political engagement saw its mass membership rise to around 10 000 by 1971 with over thirty branches in operation across the country. From inception its initial *raison d'être* was to discuss and debate party policy with its first general policy statement deploring 'the tendency of recent Conservative governments to adopt policies based upon expediency and demand'. This said although the particular stimulus for its formation

was African politics, and although it failed to achieve its goals in this respect, there is no doubt that at least in its earlier years it sought unequivocally to inform debate on this and other subjects. Although it later went on to become explicitly anti-intellectual, appealing to right-wing fundamentalists, it was for a while at least seen as a challenger to the Bow Group in terms of informing debate as a forum for intelligent, young conservatives expressing opinions in pamphlet form. [49]

It is interesting at this conjuncture to emphasise the role of Party conference in aiding groupings to engage and inform members of both the parliamentary and national Party. Certainly a number of groupings have over time utilised this forum to considerable affect to engage and thus recruit new members in addition to cementing relations with existing ones. Indeed as earlier chapters revealed, a concerted number of groups return annually to conference in order to not only reap the advantages offered by an opportunity to make contact with so many members of both the parliamentary and national Party but to organise a range of discussions and debates centred on subjects of interest and relevance to each.

The third and final sub-category of grouping, that which reaches out only to the parliamentary party, included those such as for example Nick's Diner and the 4th July. Although all parliamentarians are by the very nature of their employment politically engaged to a certain extent, members of a grouping continue to engage further with not only their own grouping but also with other like-minded parliamentarians who may wish to join their group and thus develop further their own political identity in respect of what the group stands for. By so doing the grouping not only guarantees its own

[49] Seyd (1972) op. cit., 467-70

future but fulfils a role in preserving, where relevant, the ideological stance taken by it within the parliamentary party. Indeed a number of those MPs interviewed discussed the fact that many groups, particularly those established some time ago, continued to recruit to their number as an ongoing process, not least so as to preserve their own future. Indeed the chairman of one group interviewed stressed this in particular and the fact that in 2007 they had already added to their number by engaging at least one member of the 2005 intake to their ranks. [50]

Before closing discussion regarding political engagement and informing debate, it is worth briefly emphasising the role which some groups were found to play in respect of the latter. Certainly their role in acting as a 'bureau of information' was touched upon when discussing the policy making process, and in a similar way a small number of groups were found to help inform debate by providing interested MPs with information relating to various aspects of policy (No Turning Back Group and economic policy for example) not only through discussion amongst themselves but also by learning from a range of knowledgeable speakers, drawn from both within and beyond parliament, who are invited to address them.

Social

The fifth role found to be attributable to groupings was a social one and it was interesting that this was found to be equally relevant for ex-MPs who had lost their seats and who may, or may not, be seeking to return, for MPs themselves at all stages of their parliamentary careers and for individuals seeking to become candidates and ultimately MPs.

[50] Interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008

Unless retiring, very few MPs stand down of their own accord and the process of unceremoniously loosing employment and, pensions aside, income immediately after a general election with no period of redundancy is unparalleled amongst other professions. Whether MPs seek to 'cut their losses' and move on or direct all their energies into returning, groups were found to play a social role for both. Many ex-MPs speak of withdrawal symptoms on leaving parliament and invitations to attend the meetings, dinners or other events held by groups are significant for a number of these MPs. For those who do not wish to return they offer the opportunity to maintain old acquaintances within familiar surroundings and for those who do wish to return, they offer the opportunity to socialise with other MPs and establish a network of contacts to aid their political comeback in a similar way that prospective candidates are attracted to them when they first attempt to enter parliament. Indeed it was interesting that one MP discussed the fact that this role was so significant for a number of ex-MPs who were so keen to continue their links with the PCP through his particular group, that the group had to limit the occasions at which ex- MPs could attend by way of a polite reminder that while their one-time parliamentary colleagues were pleased to see them once a or twice a year, they were now 'out of the loop'. [51]

For those returning MPs who succeeded in retaining their seat after a general election, groupings were found to also fulfil a role in terms of socialising with other MPs. Certainly this role is one which is popularly associated with groupings in that they offer the opportunity for a good supper (or increasingly lunch or breakfast) and political gossip with like-minded friends and while groupings were found to also fulfil many other roles, this socialisation role should not be underestimated nor trivialised.

[51] Interview with Mr Philip Davies MP: 6 May 2008

Certainly almost all those MPs interviewed, when discussing the roles of groupings, emphasised the importance of meeting with like-minded colleagues to discuss matters of mutual interest and concern whether it be a leadership contest, policy ideas or detail or indeed a good gossip. It was surprising, perhaps in retrospect somewhat naively, how many of those interviewed stressed the value of being able to meet with friends one could trust. It was interesting that one MP, who was a shadow whip when interviewed, discussed the value of groups to MPs in terms of the fact that although they could be divisive at times, groupings were also binding in that they provided the opportunity for friendships to be made and cemented and political views formed and developed. [52] Certainly one other MP, who was a member of a number of dining groups, stressed the point that unless diary time was put aside in advance, which dining clubs such as the July 4th and Everest allowed her to do, then it would be almost impossible to find the time to socialise with colleagues. [53]

Similar benefits were also seen to be relevant for those MPs first entering parliament in terms of fulfilling not only a social role but also a socialisation one. As discussed previously, many MPs are thrust into an unfamiliar environment with little training and no job description and thus contact with other MPs through a group provides a valuable vehicle to aid the socialisation process and enable them to become fully integrated into their new environment. It was interesting that one MP from the 2005 intake stressed in particular the value to him of being able to meet like-minded colleagues from other intakes through such groupings. [54]

Finally, for those candidates attempting to enter parliament for the first time, and this

[52] Interview with Mr Brooks Newmark MP: 30 April 2008
[53] Interview with Mrs Eleanor Laing MP: 24 April 2008
[54] Interview with Mr David Gauke MP: 22 April 2008

role to some extent overlaps with that designated to candidates under the career pathway category, groupings were found to be a valuable socialisation tool enabling parliamentary aspirants to assimilate political norms and values by providing an opportunity to socialise with not only other MPs but also those either in a similar position to themselves or involved with the body politic in some other guise. One MP discussed, for example, the value to him, prior to being elected, of just being able to be a member of any grouping which brought him into contact with politicians. [55]

Vehicle for protest

The sixth and final category of roles attributable to groupings is that of providing a vehicle for protest and certainly a number of groups stood out over time in this respect. It is unsurprising but worth noting nonetheless that MPs, and peers, can together voice a united disagreement through these groups and thus groupings tended to fulfil this role largely at times of intra-party dissent. Certainly a number of MPs interviewed believed that the significance of groups increased at times of dissent within the PCP.

In some instances, groups were found to act as a vehicle for protest against a leader and the direction which the party was taking. Recent examples include the Whipless Nine and 92 Group, both of which operated during John Major's time as leader and both of which served to protest against him as leader and the way in which the Party was moving at that time. Certainly a number of other such groups were found to fulfil a similar role over time (Peacock's Tail, Fourth Party, the Selsdon Group, Economic Dining Club and Privy Council to cite just a few of many possible examples) and the

[55] Interview with Mr Stephen Crabb MP: 6 May 2008

experiences of Major in this respect were not, from an historical perspective, unusual.

In other instances groupings were seen to exist as a vehicle for protest against a specific proposed policy (Sane Planning for example) when a number of individual MPs came together to protest against proposed planning proposals in the south east. In this particular instance, groupings were seen to play a role as a vehicle for protest in both a parliamentary and extra-parliamentary context with Sane Planning also counting non-parliamentary members amongst its number.

It is worth noting from this particular example, by voicing disquiet in this way through this group, that a grouping can also be seen to be acting as a voice for the constituents of their parliamentary members and thus enabling MPs to fulfil their role as 'constituency member'. It is also worth noting that by acting in this way, groupings are fulfilling a function of 'errand running' for constituents similar to that assigned by both Robert Packenham and Philip Norton to the Brazilian and British legislatures (see Tables 4 and 5 respectively).

As a final point, when serving shadow whip Brooks Newmark was asked if groupings were, due to the fact they can serve as a focal point for dissent and thus be divisive within the PCP, an element of political life he would rather do without, he replied that it was not groupings which they whips objected to, just certain individuals within.

By way of summing up, it can be seen then how groupings do indeed fulfil multiple roles and how, through these roles, they reach out to audiences which not only

encompass the parliamentary party but also whilst retaining this core parliamentary association, to an extra-parliamentary audience which includes both the national party and wider public. While unofficial groupings have traditionally been viewed by many primarily as an opportunity for a good supper with parliamentary friends, and certainly this social role was found to be a very real and meaningful one for those MPs who were members of such groupings, a significant number of additional roles were also isolated.

Certainly in terms of a career pathway, groupings were found to have a role to play for those MPs seeking to either enter or return to the parliamentary arena and indeed for those who were already established within the PCP whether on the back or frontbench. Similarly in terms of party management, groupings were found to play a significant role in facilitating and determining outcomes for internal elections, for assisting with the induction and training of new MPs while also helping the Party to manage dissent and when required to act as 'reservoir' for MPs in a number of contexts. In terms of policy making they were seen, on occasion, to determine the policy agenda as well as, again on occasion, contributing to party policy. They were also seen to play a role in scrutinising legislation and at times providing the government's official opposition. Similarly their significance in terms of both political engagement and informing debate not only within the parliamentary party but also beyond to the national party and in some cases to a wider interested public were revealed. Lastly, but by no means least, groupings were found to act as a vehicle for protest within the political system whether it be against a leader and the general direction of the Party or more specifically a single piece of proposed legislation.

As a final footnote to the chapter, it was interesting in the case of some groupings,

that the roles fulfilled were similar to those same roles which have been ascribed to legislatures themselves thus not only were groupings found to fulfil a number of functions in their own right but as one element within a legislature, albeit an informal and unofficial element, they were found to play a part in enabling legislatures themselves to fulfil their own roles within the wider political environment.

Chapter Six: An historical perspective

'I can't believe there have been quite so many groups over the years'.

Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP [1]

Chronological arrangement of groupings

It is evident from preceding chapters that unofficial parliamentary party groupings have existed over time within the Conservative Party and indeed that they have existed for as long as the Party itself has been in operation. With this in mind, it is opportune within this chapter to provide a window through which to examine further this historical dimension of groupings. In order to do so, the significance of groupings are examined in relation to certain historical events within both the Conservative Party and the wider political environment and in instances where these relationships may have further consequences, these too are explored further.

In order to proceed along these lines, it is first necessary to be able to examine the groupings chronologically and considerable time was thus spent in arranging the groupings within categories based on specific time periods from 1830 to the present, see Appendix 8. [2] Relevant key events related to discussion within the same time period

[1] Interview with Rt. Hon Theresa May MP: 29 April 2008

[2] While approximate life spans were ascertainable in most cases, more specific information regarding the exact date on which a grouping began and finished life was more difficult to ascertain. In the case of the latter, many simply faded over time, gradually disappearing from the radar in terms of being mentioned in political memoirs and newspapers. This said, it was mostly still possible to place groups within a certain time frame as can be seen in Appendix 8. Where information was insufficient to enable confident placement, an educated guess was made based on the information that was available and indeed these groups were placed in italics in order to differentiate them from others in their cohort

are also incorporated within this appendix to facilitate a greater understanding of discussion throughout the chapter.

The date at which the study commences, while not linked to any one specific event, is not an entirely arbitrary one either and as such worth brief comment for a moment. Certainly the Party did not come into being as a result of one seismic event in 1830; there was no 'big bang' which resulted in its conception. There was however a gradual emergence over a number of years during the 1830s and although the resultant Party was clearly the successor to the old Tory Party, as indeed Philip Norton indicates, there was no precise date on which it came into being. There is no doubt that the emergence of a number of constituency associations, an election 'fighting fund' and the 1832 Reform Act all played a part, but it was not, as Norton also indicates, a case of a new party, but rather a party with a new name. Indeed he goes on to acknowledge that the name of the Party emerged in the same way as the Party itself, by gradual evolution, so that by 1835 the Conservative Party as we know it was not so much formed as confirmed. [3]

Once Appendix 8 had been compiled it was then possible for this to be used as the basis for a more detailed examination of the groupings by studying in turn each of the periods within which the groups were arranged. The first period was slightly greater than those following owing to the fact that both a lesser number of groups and less material for those same groups were found during research for these years.

As a final note before proceeding, while a basic knowledge of the history of the Party will be assumed (although key events are summarised in Appendix 8), a brief

[3] Norton (1996) op. cit., 17-18

contextual explanation in terms of both the Party and the wider political environment will be provided at the beginning of the narrative for each section in order to facilitate greater understanding of groupings in each time period. Similarly where a number of groups were found to be of particular interest in any one time period, a degree of selection was undertaken in order to comply with the word parameters of the thesis. As a result, in some sections only a few groups were selected for further discussion whereas in others, particularly towards the end of the chapter where the total number of groups in each period was greater, a larger number were selected.

1830 to 1900

In terms of a brief contextual background for this first period, certainly a number of leaders successfully moved the Party forward, although with differing degrees of success, from 1830 as indeed Appendix 8 illustrates. While this remains true, it is also worth mention that the failure of the Liberal Party to keep onboard all its supporters, both within and beyond parliament, through for example the retention of a strong commitment to Home Rule and its failure to ensconce (and moreover translate this onto the statute book) a growing public desire for social reform, doubtlessly also contributed to the success of the Conservative Party during this period. Certainly, as Robert Blake argues, in dealing with the history of any political party the political forces of the other side must constantly be borne in mind; a party's fortunes for good or ill does indeed depend as much on the example of their opponents as upon its own exertions. [4]

However, whatever the reason for this success, it remains true that the Party

[4] Blake op. cit., 206

developed in this period from one based solely on the interests and membership of the landed aristocracy to one which began to encapsulate the aspirations of, and include members of, an emergent middle and increasingly franchised working-class.

How then, if at all, was this development reflected by unofficial parliamentary party groupings? Despite the fact that, as indicated earlier in the thesis, groupings have a propensity to emerge only within a long established political party, evidence was quite clearly found that groupings did exist in the Party during this early period and moreover that they also quite clearly reflected the issues affecting the Party at this time. This was however perhaps unsurprising considering Philip Norton's earlier comments regarding a new name and not a new party as such.

This said, while a number of groupings were found to exist during this earliest period of the Conservative Party's history, the number were significantly less than for all subsequent periods of its history. The reasons for this, in the face of no definitive explanatory evidence, can only be surmised but certainly the fact that approaching two hundred years have passed since the period in question will inevitably make the sourcing of any records which may have existed problematic.

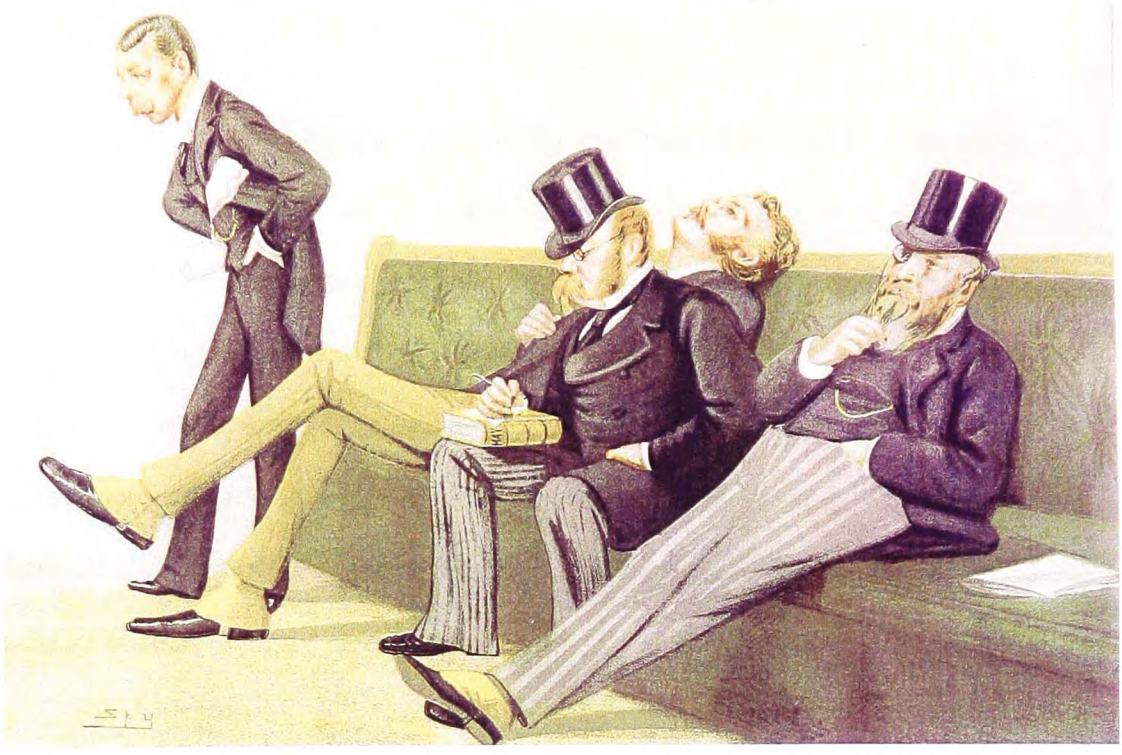
While the above remains true, the Young England Movement was one grouping which existed within this earliest period which was particularly interesting from an historical perspective. The group, which operated largely during the first half of the 1840s, was led by Benjamin Disraeli and represented more of an ideological movement than one engaged in a specific political activity. Disraeli and the three other core members were together representative of the traditional former Tory Party as members of the landed aristocracy although they were nevertheless an integral part of the new

Conservative Party. Although in terms of demography they represented the 'old guard', they shared a common binding adherence to a doctrine of the rights and responsibilities of property towards the rest of society. Thus they were in many respects, and somewhat ironically, 'ahead of the game' in relation to many of their Conservative contemporaries in terms of seeking social and economic improvement for the mass populous. However as this was driven by an anarchic commitment to paternalism rather than a more contemporary commitment to the concepts of equality, they did not at that point in time represent a dominant driving force within a party comprised of an increasingly middle-class membership.

From this it is interesting that another grouping which rose to prominence during this early period, and notably one of the few groups from this period for which any significant degree of information is available today, was the Fourth Party. Unlike the above, this particular grouping which was led by Randolph Churchill and once again small in number (there were again three members in addition to Churchill namely Henry Drummond Wolff, JE Gorst and Arthur Balfour whose uncle, the Third Marquess of Salisbury was leader of the Lords at this time), was representative of the new generation of members and grass root supporters who were increasingly active within the Conservative Party. Their political efforts were very much directed against what they considered to be the ineffectual leadership of H Stafford Northcote in the Commons and indeed the Fourth Party was most successful in facilitating these efforts. Figure 4 below illustrates this closely knit grouping rather neatly.

Certainly Blake argues that Northcote was genuinely driven out of office by the

Figure 4:
'Spy' cartoon of the Fourth Party



Source: Anthony Seldon and Peter Snowdon, *The Conservative Party: An Illustrated History,* Shroud, Sutton Publishing, 2004, 36

group. [5] By sealing Northcote's fate in this way, they also secured the future for Salisbury who went on to lead the Party in both chambers of the House and also a Conservative government for the large part of the next fifteen years. Indeed as Norton argues, Salisbury proved that by combining political acumen with *gravitas* he was an effective prime minister ensuring the Conservative Party saw out the nineteenth century as not only the dominant party but also the party of government. [6]

Northcote's early retirement instigated by the Fourth Party and his subsequent replacement by Salisbury was also significant in terms of establishing party machinery which, as Norton also argues, has today come to represent the 'golden age of Conservative organisation'. [7] The historical significance of the group in this respect within the Party is worth emphasising in that in addition to their single-minded persecution of Northcote on the floor of the House, the group were committed to modernisation of the Party both in terms of establishing a national organisation, which indeed Salisbury oversaw, and in terms of broadening membership to the middle-class.

Certainly one of the group's four members, Gorst, personified the new paradigm for the Party in that as chief party organiser he was linked to Central Office with responsibility to the party leader and important lines of communication to the whips. Gorst's period as chief party organiser was not a smooth one for intra-party relations despite its importance for the growth of the Party and his involvement with the Fourth Party did not serve to improve relations. Although, as Blake indicates, Gorst was a pushing, ambitious and prickly character he was able and competent with a keen interest in the problems of urban Conservatism and moreover a genuine believer in working-

[5] Blake op. cit., 136
[6] Norton (1996) op. cit., 33-34
[7] Ibid., 33

class Conservatism which he understood to be the essence of Disraeli's one nation creed.

Certainly the battles he fought with the Party hierarchy, and there were many, were not only key ones in the Party's history at this point but they also represented a microcosm of those taking place within wider society at this point in time. He constantly quarrelled with Party whips blaming them for the decline of the Party organisation after the victory of 1874 and with the subsequent growth of local associations and the National Union, to which Gorst was committed, tensions grew between upper-class parliamentarians and more middle-class leadership in the provinces. While Party managers such as Gorst recognised this tension, they were committed to broadening the appeal of the Party to the middle and working-class in urban constituencies and indeed it was this commitment which helped secure the future for the Party as it entered the twentieth century. [8]

Before proceeding to examine groups from the second historical period, namely 1901 to 1920, it is interesting to mention, albeit briefly, the Unionist Agricultural Committee. As some discussion has taken place earlier in the thesis regarding this particular grouping no further detailed discourse will be undertaken here although it is interesting to note in this context that although the Party at this time was increasingly coming to assimilate and represent the middle and to some extent working-class from emerging and developing industries, there was still a deeply entrenched bond between agriculture and the Party and it is this which resulted in the formation of this committee which was especially active in terms of consideration of policy in this particular area.

[8] Blake op. cit., 144-49

Certainly no comparable groupings representing other sector-specific interests in the same way were in existence at this time. Indeed this bond is still in evidence today with the existence of the Agricultural Dining Club although this is not attended entirely exclusively by Conservative parliamentarians. [9]

1901 to 1920

The second period studied, namely that from 1901 to 1920, was an especially notable one in terms of group formation and activity as indeed can be seen from Appendix 8. By way of contrast, it was not by any means the most successful one for the Party itself either in terms of consistency of leadership or in terms of being in a position to form the government of the day.

As before, again from Appendix 8, the Third Marquess of Salisbury was replaced by his nephew Arthur Balfour in 1902 who served as leader until 1911. Increasingly unpopular within the parliamentary and national party, Balfour was seen as ineffective and lacking strong leadership credentials and although initially following his uncle as prime minister, he resigned as prime minister in 1905 and as leader in 1911 when he was replaced by Andrew Bonar Law. Bonar Law remained as leader, although never becoming prime minister, until his resignation due to ill health in 1921 when he in turn was replaced by Austen Chamberlain.

The period was of interest in relation to groupings for two principal reasons. Firstly, Party organisation and composition during the period were significant with the

[9] Interview with Mr Philip Dunne MP: 24 April 2008

Conservatives continuing to incorporate a changing demographic profile and professionalism amongst the political classes with growing numbers of both younger people and the middle and working-class amongst its membership base and, significantly, amongst MPs themselves. The second area of interest was in relation to specific events. Although a number of events occurred during this period and were reflected in group activity (the Home Rule Bill in 1912 and the First World War being two examples), it was firstly the reintroduction of tariff reform onto the political agenda by Joseph Chamberlain and the subsequent civil war within the Party itself and secondly the constitutional crisis which saw the introduction of the Parliament Bill and then subsequently, the 1911 Parliament Act which will be discussed in this instance.

However to return first for a moment to party organisation and composition: certainly a number of groupings emerged which reflected such changes taking place within the Party at this time. The Unionist Organisation Committee was one such grouping, established following the 1910 General Election. Certainly this election saw a significant change in terms of the demographic profiles and professionalism of new MPs entering parliament for the first time and it was these new MPs, increasingly frustrated at poor communication and organisation within the parliamentary party, who sought to investigate how best the Party's organisations and practices could be updated. As Jane Ridley argues, this new breed of MP expected more from the Party, just as their constituents expected more from them, and certainly the Unionist Organisation Committee delivered the goods with whips subsequently more accessible and the ordinary MP more involved in the conduct of the parliamentary party. [10] The consequences of these changes were felt not just at the time with the establishment of a

[10] Ridley (1987), op cit., 392

range of committees established to cover the Insurance Bill, Welsh Disestablishment and defence for example but in the longer term in that these committees amounted to a forerunner for the subsequent backbench subject committees. (This growing frustration at not being heard by the parliamentary party was certainly the stimulus behind a number of other groupings which emerged at this time such as for example the Reveille which sought to reawaken the party to its Unionist principles).

It is interesting that this same changing demographic profile of the PCP was also reflected in the establishment of other sector-specific groups in addition to that of the Unionist Agricultural Committee which indeed continued to exist during this period. One such grouping worth more detailed discussion was the Unionist Business Committee, the object of which was reported in *The Times* as being that of 'assisting the government in the more efficient conduct of the war from a business point of view'. [11] (The Unionist War Committee was another such grouping which came into being after the war time coalition had been established in order to press for greater prosecution of the war effort, which indeed it did to great affect).

A number of sources suggest that one of the main consequences of this particular committee was, with others, to bring about the downfall of Herbert Asquith in 1916 (and subsequently the Liberal Party itself which never fully recovered from the resultant split) which in turn brought about the coalition between the Conservatives, under Bonar Law, and David Lloyd George thus returning the Party to power. [12]

Certainly the Unionist Business Committee appeared to have a productive working

[11] 'Demand for Tonnage', *The Times*, 9 February 1916
[12] See, for example, Ramsden (1999) op. cit., 538

relationship with the new leader with press reports from the period reporting Lloyd George as having 'complied readily with their requests' and even 'leading group members down to the basement to examine a munitions exhibition' after a meeting had drawn to a close. [13] Although led by a Liberal, the most senior posts in the new coalition went to the Conservatives with Bonar Law becoming Chancellor of the Exchequer. Thus as Philip Norton indicates, Britain now had a Liberal Prime Minister but a predominantly Conservative government. [14]

Turning from an internal to an external perspective, groupings in this period were found also to mirror four events, as indeed previously outlined, and indeed did so to a considerable extent. This was certainly true in relation to the first of these, namely the debate over tariff reform, with a number of groups which included principally the Tariff Reform League and the Confederacy on the one hand and the Unionist Free Food League and its successor, the Unionist Free Trade Club, on the other. Discussion has taken place in earlier chapters regarding this issue and its impact on the Party but certainly the consequences of their combined stances were to a considerable extent responsible for keeping the Conservative Party out of office until after the 1922 General Election.

The second event relates to the Parliament Bill and the subsequent 1911 Parliament Act. The Halsbury was one such group which rose to prominence at this time and indeed continued to meet even after the enactment of the Bill. Without doubt, the fact that this particular group continued to meet was a clear indication that the split which the constitutional crisis had caused had left a deep rift in the Party and moreover, as

[13] 'Political Notes', *The Times*, 23 May 1916
[14] Norton (1996) op. cit., 37

John Ramsden argues, that the rift outlived the debate itself. [15]

Certainly the Halsbury was one of a number of groups which existed around this time, the Confederacy and the Reveille being two other ones, which posed an increasing challenge to Balfour's leadership and without doubt the consequences of this were deep felt with his eventual resignation as leader of the Party. By November 1911 a new leader, Bonar Law, was in situ.

Overall then, it is impossible to measure exactly the consequences these groups had. Without doubt, as Norton argues, Balfour's handling of the Parliament Bill certainly encouraged dissatisfaction with his leadership and increasingly exasperated at the position in which he found himself, and citing age as a reason, Balfour did indeed resign. [16] What is certain however is that the degree to which the Halsbury and its discontent over the passage of the Parliament Bill, and to a lesser extent the Confederacy and its impatience over tariff reform, affected the final outcome is without doubt a significant one, if not directly measurable, and it is possible to conclude that the overall impact was a very real one.

[15] Ramsden (1978) op. cit., 38 citing RB Jones 'Conservative Party' (Thesis) Chapter 5. Although the members of the Halsbury worked together to fight the enactment of the Parliament Bill at every stage, the group itself was not actually formed until after Balfour's speech to the parliamentary party in the Lords on 25 July 1911 in which he recommended acceptance. The day following this speech, a few hundred peers, namely the 'ditchers', met for a dinner at which the group was formed with Halsbury their self-chosen leader in charge and as such they represented a concerted thorn in the side of Balfour's premiership to carry on the fight. Although the inevitable was looking increasingly likely, and indeed their fate was decided on 10 August 1911, the group continued to meet as an indication that the split in the Party had outlived enactment of the Bill. (Similar in some ways to the December Club which was not formed until after the Abyssinian Crisis even though its members had met and worked together throughout the critical period). For further information regarding the formation of the Halsbury, see, for example, Charmley (1998) op. cit., 42-43 and Seldon and Ball op. cit., 27, 103

[16] Norton (1996) op. cit., 35

1921 to 1940

This third period studied was similar in one respect to the preceding period in that some of the same unionist committees continued to operate although their numbers had declined significantly by the end of the period. As Appendix 8 illustrates, overall it would appear from information that was available that a lesser number of groups were in existence during this period although that is not to say that group activity was negligible.

By way of historical backdrop, Andrew Bonar Law's successor Austen Chamberlain lasted only a year and half until he too subsequently resigned when his preference for fusion with the Liberals proved unpalatable to many in a parliamentary, but increasingly a national, party, reeling not only from an increasing distrust of the coalition leader, David Lloyd George, but in particular from what had appeared to be imminent warfare, at his direction, only a month earlier during the Chanak affair. A brief returning spell as leader by Bonar Law in October 1922, who had to retire due to ill health just over six months later, was soon followed in May 1923 by a new leader in the form of Stanley Baldwin, a hitherto relatively little known industrialist from the West Midlands. In many ways a surprise choice over Lord Curzon, Baldwin's new administration was nicknamed the 'second eleven' by Winston Churchill as many of the most experienced MPs departed along with Chamberlain.

While much has been written about the success or otherwise of Baldwin's tenure of office, one particular element of this discussion is relevant in relation to groupings namely that which relates to foreign policy during the period and indeed a number of those groups most active during this time derived their *raison d'être* from this aspect of

policy. [17] As such it is these, and in particular those which related to both the future of the empire and to rearmament, which will be discussed primarily in this instance. Certainly the 1930s saw leading incidences of intra-party dissent and indeed this dissent was to a large part orchestrated by a number of groupings.

The dissent which appeared in the early 1930s derived from foreign policy was prevalent amongst the government's own supporters and occurred on colonial issues largely derived from the metamorphosis from empire to commonwealth. One element of policy in relation to the empire of relevance here is that of independence for India in the form of the 1935 Government of India Act. It is interesting to examine closer the impact of one grouping in relation to this area of policy, namely the India Defence Committee.

The Committee was the result of a merger in 1933 and certainly a number of die-hards from both the Commons and the Lords were hostile to any further independence for India, believing the diarchic arrangement put in place by the earlier 1919 Government of India Act provided sufficient autonomy for the Indian nation. Baldwin however advocated an opposing view and was committed to greater independence in the form of dominion status. His stance was a brave one considering, as indeed Philip Norton rightly emphasises, the fact it was, initially at least, seen as liberal for the times and moreover was supported by the Labour Party in the House and in the country while being vigorously opposed by a substantial section of PCP. [18] Baldwin subsequently found himself the subject of intense criticism by both the League and more specifically key die-hard parliamentarians with Churchill being notable amongst the latter and who

[17] For further information relating to the leadership of Stanley Baldwin, see, for example, Norton (1996) op. cit., 38-42 and Blake op. cit., 202-46
[18] Norton (1996) op. cit., 41

between them successfully extended their cause to elements of the grass roots, especially in southern rural constituencies which often had ex-officers and colonial civil servants amongst their number. [19]

What was notable about this particular grouping was that although it exerted considerable pressure upon Baldwin (and others) and indeed attracted the support of more than eighty backbenchers, [20] it nonetheless failed in its principal aim of thwarting the Government of India Bill. While its consequences in these terms were therefore negligible, it can be argued that wider consequences were later felt through the fate of one its chief protagonists, Churchill. Certainly by being seen to be so committed to such a cause, which failed, and by pursuing this cause in such a single-minded manner over this period (he even resigned from the shadow cabinet) even when others in the Party had accepted its inevitability, he served to distance himself from many in parliament and indeed beyond who subsequently viewed him as an old imperialist, out of touch with the times. The tragic consequence of this was that his subsequent criticism of other elements of British foreign and defence policy carried less weight because it could be presented by his enemies as coming from an old-fashioned reactionary. This was to impact upon a second and in many ways more important area of policy than that of imperialism which came to prominence in the latter half (if not before) of the 1930s, namely appeasement.

Where Baldwin had failed to demonstrate a convincing commitment to rearmament, although biographers have more recently advocated that considering the parameters of

[19] The India Defence Committee, which was dedicated to resisting the Government of India Bill, counted the Daily Mail and Morning Post amongst its supporters. For further information regarding this particular grouping, see, for example, Crowson op. cit., 233
[20] Seldon and Ball op. cit., 115

the period he did so to a greater extent than was accredited at the time, Neville Chamberlain, his successor in 1937 as both prime minister and leader of the Party, succeeded in demonstrating a commitment to appeasement towards both Hitler and Mussolini. Aside from some attempts by the Labour Party, Churchill was alone in directing his energies against Chamberlain's policy and took up the cause of rearmament with the same enthusiasm earlier apportioned to the India question. However due largely to a reputation lost over India and with very few supporters to back him, his voice went ignored if not unheard and his speeches and demands for rearmament, however effective in themselves, were tainted because of the general doubt as to the soundness of his judgement. [21]

As Robert Blake argues, Churchill was between 1935 and 1938 a lone voice and what mattered most was not his lost reputation but, and this mattered more than anything else, that he was proved right about Hitler. [22] Certainly it was not until 1938 that his arguments, but not him in person, were publicly supported by others. As Blake goes on to indicate, it was not until Anthony Eden's resignation in 1938 and his subsequent joining of a grouping, albeit an informal one, which came to be known derisively by the whips as the Glamour Boys (and alternatively the Eden/ Amery Group) that dissent from other quarters was manifested by abstaining against first the opposition's motion of censure and then eight months later over Munich. [23]

While the above remains true, this particular group was not perhaps as effective as it could have been in voicing disquiet and this can be construed as being derived from a

[21] Rasmussen op. cit., 182
[22] Blake op. cit., 240
[23] Ibid., 240-241

lack of a desire to speak out by Eden himself, even after his resignation. Certainly the group began meeting in 1935 under the chairmanship of Sidney Herbert with Leo Amery as vice chairman and Eden, together with a number of fellow supporters, only joined in 1938 after Eden's resignation over foreign policy. It is at this point that Herbert appears to fade from the group with activities revolving around both Eden and Amery instead although supporters of the latter, it is argued, became increasingly frustrated that Eden, even though he resigned from the frontbench, would not take a more decisive and clear lead against the government. Some believed this was as he wished to ultimately rejoin the government and, despite his resignation, did not wish to be seen to be too critical.

Whatever the internal politics of this particular group, Churchill's isolation was compounded not only by Eden's supporters but also by others who rallied late to the cause of rearmament. Even as a number of groups became increasingly vocal during the second half of the 1930s, and even rose to assume the role of an official opposition in some ways, Churchill and his few supporters remained pariahs. It is interesting that the two groups, the Churchill Group and the Glamour Boys appeared rarely to meet even though they quite clearly by this point in time shared a common distrust of the government's foreign policy. Although both groups dissented against the government on an ad hoc basis, the two rarely coalesced on any formal basis and met jointly only once, just before the Munich debate, and even then could only agree that each would follow its own line with Churchill attempting to dominate proceedings throughout. [24]

Along with the Glamour Boys and Churchill Group, another group which existed at

[24] Rasmussen op. cit., 182

the time, and which formed after the 1935 Abyssinia Crisis, was the December Club. All three groups dissented during this period on an ad hoc basis and certainly their actions were causal to the final resignation of Chamberlain and as such the consequence of their actions can be argued to be considerable in terms of the resignation of a sitting Conservative prime minister brought down by his supporters and his replacement by a government committed to a greater war effort.

However it is difficult to ascertain the exact degree to which the groupings themselves were causal. Certainly one study has found an overlap in their dissenting behaviour throughout the 1930s and that ad hoc opposition did eventually topple Chamberlain's government. However the same study also emphasises the divisions and ineffectiveness of the dissidents (the Churchill Group were seen as a political pariahs and the Glamour Boys as lacking commitment for action) who were as a result leaderless and thus suggests that the 'final push' did not come from these dissident groups on their own. Instead, it argues, that it was only the sudden and unexpected eruption of rebellion among MPs formerly quite loyal to the government which steeled the persistence of the dissenters in their final opposition to Chamberlain in May 1940 and that together they succeeded only because war had produced such a major crisis in the form of the disastrous Norway campaign that a government winning a Commons division by only eighty votes in war time had to concede that it lacked sufficient support to continue in office. [25]

While discussion of this period has for reasons stated concentrated on foreign policy, it is interesting as a final note to allude briefly to another, small, grouping which existed

[25] Ibid., 181-83

at this time during the 1920s and which focused largely on not foreign but domestic policy, namely the YMCA. Members of the group, who were generally perceived to be from the left of the Party at that time, sought a greater role for the state in dealing with economic depression and unemployment and these ideas were developed within its 1927 publication *Industry and State* urging greater state intervention in both economic and social spheres.

One of its key themes was that the best way to preserve property was to extend property to an increasing number within the community and indeed one of its members, Noel Skelton, was the first to use the term 'a property-owning democracy' in 1924. [26] Despite counting a future prime minister amongst its number, namely Harold Macmillan, and indeed another amongst its associates, namely Eden, the group was not taken seriously in its endeavours at this time although, like the Unionist Social Reform Committee before it, by seeking to develop an alternative arena in which policy could be developed in its own right for its own sake, rather than simply forming a protest group against an existing policy like the majority of its predecessors, the consequence of its existence as a precursor for other subsequent substantive policy groups was reaped by future generations of Conservative MPs. [27]

1941 to 1960

This particular period was, excepting the years 1945 to 1951, largely one of government for the Party, either as the key element within a war time coalition or as an independent post war government and, rather ironically considering his exclusion

[26] Seldon and Ball op. cit., 326
[27] For further information regarding the YMCA see, for example, Ramsden (1999) op. cit., 539 and Seldon and Ball op. cit., 326

during the preceding period, in both respects operations were dominated largely by Winston Churchill. Following the loss of power after the 1945 General Election, the Party found itself in the unexpected position of forming not Her Majesty's Official Government but Her Majesty's Official Opposition and although initially unwelcome, these years in opposition were spent constructively focusing on developing internal organisation and party policy. Certainly, as Robert Blake argues, every now and then a moment of defeat does produce real change and this was without doubt one such moment for the Conservative Party. [28]

As Appendix 8 illustrates, the subsequent return to power in 1951 following both the Party's reinvigoration after its spell in opposition and the subsequent collapse of public support for the Labour Party meant that once again the Conservatives took over the reins as the party of government. Indeed they continued as such until the end of this period with Churchill, who finally retired in 1955, replaced firstly by Anthony Eden in the same year (never was a succession so long in coming so soon spent) and then shortly afterwards following his resignation over the Suez debacle, by Harold Macmillan in 1957. Overall there were a number of significant events during this time with internal reorganisation, policy development and the Suez debacle amongst them with each significant in their own right in terms of the development and activity of not only the Party but also in terms of unofficial parliamentary party groupings.

The first two of these, namely internal reorganisation and policy development, were linked in relation to parliamentary groupings. Certainly a number of internal reorganisational changes were made which in addition to concentrating on the

[28] Blake op. cit., 259

membership, money, propaganda and party managers, included the revival of the CRD, the formation of the CPC and the growth of the Young Conservative network as a more contemporary replacement for its predecessor, the Junior Imperial League.[29] However while each of these made an integral and important contribution to the road to revival, it was the organisational developments within the PCP which had the greatest bearing upon groupings in terms of policy development.

Up to this point a small number of informal policy groupings had emerged with the Unionist Social Reform Committee and the YMCA, as previously discussed, amongst their number. However with the reorganisation and reinvigoration of the formal policy committees (and this was driven in part by the grass roots who made clear that they wanted the Party to come up with a clear and concerted policy document), [30] a much necessitated emphasis was seen to have been placed on the need for policy ideas and it was in this climate that the growth in informal policy groupings took place with the evolution of, for example, the Progress Trust, the Tory Reform Committee, the One Nation Group and the Bow Group. Although the existence today of the first of these could not unfortunately be clarified with complete certainty, the remaining three are all most definitely still in existence today in one form or another and, interestingly, two of these, the Tory Reform Group and the Bow Group, are amongst the small number of groupings which, in 2010, maintain a website. (One Nation is deemed to share that of the Tory Reform Group which espouses 'one nation' politics).

[29] For further information regarding reorganisation at this time, see, for example, Norton (1996) op. cit., 45-47 and Blake op. cit., 260

[30] As far back as the 1946 Party Conference, a motion had been carried, with a large majority, that the 'party should without further delay, prepare and issue a statement, in a concise form easily understood by the electorate, setting forth the policy for which the Conservative Party stands', see Norton (1996) op. cit., 45

The significance of this growth can be illustrated by examining in more detail the example of housing policy which was important for a number of reasons, not least as many natural Labour supporters had been badly affected by the lack of public housing stock after the war. Moreover with many other post war construction projects taking precedence, the failure of the new Labour government in this respect was central to many who had voted for them in 1945 and to a lesser extent in 1950. This need was recognised by a number in the Conservative Party, but none more so than by the newly formed One Nation Group which included proposals for a new housing policy in a chapter within its seminal publication, *One Nation,* published in 1950.

One Nation sold 8 500 copies with no other group throughout the entire period studied found to produce a publication which sold as many copies so soon after going to press. Even its successor, *Change is My Ally,* published soon after in 1954 failed to beat the record of its predecessor with sales of only 5 200. The timing of the publication of *One Nation* was brilliantly orchestrated. By coinciding with the 1950 Party Conference, it contributed significantly to the housing debate in which the leadership was pushed into accepting the yearly target of building 300, 000 homes. [31] While this impact on Party policy was important in its own right, the wider consequences were even more so in that housing policy played a key part in returning the Party to power in 1951.

Of similar interest is the Suez Group which was significant in that it served to not only mirror a major event in the Party's foreign policy history, namely the Suez affair, but also as such served to play a part in orchestrating the bitter intra-party dissent

[31] Walsha (2000) op. cit., 190

conducted by the right of the Party against the Conservative government not only from 1954 when British troops were withdrawn from the canal zone but also up to and including the events of 1956 after Colonel Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company which ultimately played a part in Eden's resignation and subsequent replacement by Macmillan.

It is, as ever, difficult to ascertain the exact consequences which resulted from the actions of this particular group during this period. They sought to fight against withdrawal of troops in 1954, and indeed did so with some considerable degree of organisation, [32] even though they ultimately failed in these endeavours. Similarly they believed Eden was right in sending forces to the area after Nasser had acted as he did but ultimately the attack was called off (under pressure from the US) after troops had gone into action. Thus on this basis it can be argued that while this particular group may have made a 'political noise' they exerted little real influence and certainly did not affect the outcome of either of these two events.

However to draw such a conclusion is to fail to examine and indeed appreciate a broader picture. Certainly a more rounded conclusion can be reached by reading political diaries from the 1950s and Macmillan's are notable in this respect. It is interesting that the Suez Group is mentioned therein on a number of occasions and although there are comments about 'right-wing die-hards', they are portrayed not entirely as a lunatic fringe that are best ignored but as a section of the PCP whose views are of sufficient merit to deserve comment if not agreement (and not just on the affairs concerning the Middle East but also on other issues of foreign affairs such as South

[32] For further information regarding the Suez affair, see, for example, Sir Philip Goodhart, *A Stab in the Front: The Suez Conflict 1956,* Windsor, Wilton (for the Conservative History Group), 2006

Africa and Cyprus) [33] and indeed by Macmillan himself in his appointment of his cabinet after his succession in 1957. In relation to the last of these, he vividly illustrates the balancing act required by any prime minister in deciding his cabinet with his discussion of the right-wing Suez Group with those on the other end of the 'Suez spectrum' by including both Edward Boyle (non Suez) and Julian Amery (Suez) in his cabinet. [34]

On a final note regarding the Suez Group, it is interesting that some regard the 'emergence' of Macmillan himself as leader as being influenced to some considerable extent by the fact that the Suez Group would quite simply never have tolerated his rival, Rab Butler. Blake for one indicates that Butler was 'unacceptable to the Suez Group and to the Tory Right' whereas 'Macmillan raised no corresponding antipathy among the Tory left'. [35] If their influence was indeed a key determinant in the succession of not only the new cabinet but also the positions of Party leader and indeed prime minister, then perhaps their influence was not after all entirely inconsequential.

1961 to 1980

Whereas Harold Macmillan's first three years as both leader and prime minister had seen him dubbed 'Supermac' his fortunes were less rosy during his last three years. Indeed as illustrated in Appendix 8, he was succeeded as party leader by Alec Douglas-Home in 1963 and then in turn by Edward Heath and Margaret Thatcher. Unlike the previous two decades which saw the Party in government for the majority of the time, power remained elusive for the greater part of this particular period. Indeed following

[33] Catterall op. cit., for South Africa, see diary entry for 21 January 1955, 383 and for Cyprus, see diary entry for 27 June 1956, 569 and 28 June 1956, 570
[34] Ibid., see diary entry for 3 February 1957, 615
[35] Blake op. cit., 278

Douglas-Home's resignation, of the fifteen years from 1964 until 1979 only four years were spent in office. [36]

While a number of organisational changes took part within the PCP during this period in terms of introducing new procedures for the election of the first party leader and the annual re-election of the same (Heath was the first leader to be 'voted in' and, a decade later in 1975, the first to be 'voted out'), these in themselves did not result directly in the formation of any particular groupings. However this is not to say that the events which followed the outcome of these changes, that is the policies introduced following the election of Heath as leader, did not result in a number of groups being formed which indeed they most certainly did. It is interesting, as indeed Appendix 8 illustrates, that this particular period in opposition appears to have resulted in the formation of a considerable number of groups, certainly more so than in the previous period which was spent largely in power.

As for previous sections, while it is impossible to discuss all the groups which existed within this period, one area of particular significance was found to be those groups which emerged in response to the economic turmoil which came to dominate these particular years. Similarly others were found to emerge in response to the UK's changing place in the world (the twilight years of the legacy of imperialism and the first steps towards joining the EEC) and indeed the changing blueprint of the UK itself through devolution.

Certainly a number of groups emerged as a result of the economic upheaval which

[36] Norton (1996) op. cit., 52

was experienced during this period with PEST on the left and the Selsdon Group and the Economic Dining Club on the right. [37] The Selsdon Group, which was formed in direct response to Heath's change of heart in 1972 and his abandonment of the 'Selsdon man' policy of economic liberalism and anti-interventionism, although vociferous in its criticism of Heath failed to result in a reversal of economic policy during this period. What it did do however, in addition to contributing to an already increasingly hostile climate towards Heath in the PCP, was to ensure that a future alternative policy based on economic liberalism was retained, at least in the parliamentary arena, at a time when first the Conservatives and then Labour Party returned to an interventionist and corporatist approach to the economy.

Indeed these same free market ideas were taken up by Keith Joseph at meetings of the Economic Dining Club and certainly the consequences of this particular group were to be greater than the Selsdon Group in that not only did they keep alive the essence of the policies put in place at Selsdon, but with meetings attended by Thatcher from 1977, developed these further within a wider intellectual framework. Indeed this framework was later utilised in determining Thatcher's own economic policy as first leader and then, from 1979, as prime minister. [38]

This particular period was also notable in that it experienced both the dying embers of imperialism and simultaneously, the birth of the UK's new relationship with the EEC after her application, at the third attempt, was finally accepted in 1973. Both impacted upon Britain's place in the world and as such wielded strong sentiments from different

[37] Although concerned with economic policy, PEST was also concerned with the intention of strengthening a political position on the left of the Party which ranged beyond one political issue. Six months after Margaret Thatcher's election as leader of the Party, the group merged with a number of others to form the Tory Reform Group

[38] Ridley (1992) op. cit., 20

elements of the PCP. The first was illustrated vividly by the UK's relationship with firstly Africa and secondly Rhodesia and indeed events therein during this time. Certainly it was Macmillan's 'winds of change' speech made in Africa on Monday 3 February 1960 which resulted in the formation of the Monday Club by those right-wing MPs, and many more at grass roots level, who retained a belief in many of the old colonial ideals. While it is impossible to directly link either the Monday Club, or any other group, directly to his resignation, it is a truism that while his premiership was initially dependent on the support of the right, he had most certainly ceased to command it by the end.

With regard to the second of these, namely Rhodesia, there is no doubt that the Rhodesian Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) announced by Ian Smith, the leader of the Rhodesian Front, on 11 November 1965 and the subsequent announcement of economic sanctions which resulted in a three way split in the Party between many of the same right-wing imperialists who formed the Monday Club (and indeed the 92 Group) and who were sympathetic to the settlers, the left-wing of the party who believed a tough line should be taken over the rebels and those in the centre who understood both sides. [39] The impact of this particular split in the Party should not be underestimated both beyond and within parliament with members of the Monday Club organising support for Smith at successive party conferences and a division in the PCP in the Commons over oil sanctions to Rhodesia the largest to have occurred both in absolute terms, and as expressed as a percentage of the PCP, since the division over the

[39] For further information relating to this split, see Mark Stuart, 'A Party in Three Pieces: The Conservative Split over Rhodesian Oil Sanctions, 1965', *Contemporary British History*, vol.16 no.1 (2002), 51-88. For the 92 Group, it was interesting that Rhodesia was much discussed in the early days at 92 Group meetings and as such no doubt helped to 'stoke the fires' which kept the 92 engine in operation at this time, see, for example, DPW/ 37/ 3 (1966): internal group memo dated 24 February 1966 referring to a forthcoming meeting with Edward Heath at which Rhodesia was one of the topics the group wished to discuss with him

American loan after the second world war in 1945. [40] (It was also interesting that a separate, unnamed, right-wing grouping composed of the core membership of a re-formed Union Flag Group, organised a concerted campaign in the House later in 1978 on the same issue in order to force a vote to reject a renewal of sanctions against Rhodesia.) [41]

A third issue, namely the UK's entry into the EEC was also significant at this time in terms of informal groupings and certainly a number of groups emerged both in support of and in opposition to closer relations with the EEC and, from 1993 following the Maastricht Treaty, the EU. The Anti-Common Market League on the right and the European Forum (later to become the Conservative Group for Europe) on the left were two of the first wave of such groups which emerged and which were to set the tone for the emergence of many subsequent groupings of the same ilk.

Certainly some, such as Robert Blake argue, that Heath's time as leader and prime minister was one of the most controversial in the history of the Party since Robert Peel and as such that his time in office was not a successful one. [42] It was interesting that research revealed that one particular group, the Privy Council, which came into being at around this time, orchestrated a concerted campaign from the outset against him in the House which certainly supported the views of some that the right were 'out to get' Heath from the start. [43]

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[40] Philip Norton, *Dissension in the House of Commons 1945-1974*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1975, 256
[41] Gardiner op. cit., 126-27 and John Barnes, 'Obituary: Sir George Gardiner', *The Independent*, 19 November 2002 and Thatcher (1995) op. cit., 417-18 for discussion of the same. For actual debate, see http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/sittings/1978/nov/08#commons (accessed 22 May 2010)
[42] Blake op. cit., 309. For further reading on Robert Peel, see, for example, Douglas Hurd, *Robert Peel: A Biography*, London, Phoenix, 2008
[43] For Privy Council see interview with Sir Richard Body: 26 February 2008. Those such as, for example, Mark Stuart argued that the right were indeed 'out to get Heath' from the outset, see Stuart (2002) op. cit., 51

However while this remains true, it was impossible to categorically distinguish whether this was derived from a pre-existing innate dislike of the new leader which manifested itself from the outset of his tenure or whether it was a conclusion drawn as a result of dealings with him over time as a poor leader who failed to manage his parliamentary party. The truth is most likely derived to an extent from both. Whatever the reason behind these poor relations, and he was certainly notoriously ineffective in dealing with his backbenchers, there was no question as to the resolve of the 92 Group to 'keep the Conservative Party conservative' throughout his leadership.

A final area of activity impacting on groupings during this time was that of devolution with two groups of interest in this respect, namely the Scottish Thistle Group and the Union Flag Group, with the former in support and the latter not. Although the Conservative Party has traditionally been seen as supportive of the Union of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, debate was effectively opened in this particular period, in June 1967, when Heath, as Party leader, responded to increased Scottish activism by establishing a Scottish Policy Group to examine the machinery of government in Scotland. The formation of the Scottish Thistle Group later in 1967 (by Michael Ancram and Malcolm Rifkind) was in part a reaction to this but also to Heath's subsequent 'Perth Declaration' made at the 1968 Scottish Party Conference. [44] Nonetheless once support for the SNP waned in the late 60s and early 70s, both the idea of a Scottish assembly and indeed the Thistle Group itself faded away. Having reacted to the moment, when the moment passed, so did they too and it was noticeable that no

[44] On the basis of the policy group's report, Heath made his 'Perth Pledge' at the Scottish Conservative Conference in May 1968, proposing the creation of an elected Scottish assembly. The exact form the Assembly might take was considered by the Scottish Constitutional Committee, set up in August 1968 under the leadership of Alec Douglas-Home. For further details regarding the Conservative Party and constitutional reform, see, for example, Martin Burch and Ian Holliday, 'The Conservative Party and Constitutional Reform: the Case of Devolution', *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol.45 no.3 (1992), 386-98

subsequent attempt to legislate along these same lines was taken during the 1970-74 Heath Government.

As a final note regarding the relationship between devolution and groupings, it is worth noting briefly the role played by the Union Flag Group in response to a renewed interest in devolution by the subsequent Labour government. Its principal organiser, George Gardiner, although impeded by what he termed the 'albatross that was the Perth declaration' ran a concerted parliamentary campaign against Labour's Devolution Bills as indeed has been well documented earlier in the thesis with its activities having a considerable impact in terms of the Party changing tack and opposing devolution. [45] The wider consequence of this grouping have of course already been alluded to earlier in this section in that key members of this same group went on to form the core of a later movement which fought against renewed calls for sanctions against Rhodesia in 1978.

1981 to 2000

This penultimate period was found to be once again an active one for unofficial parliamentary party groupings; indeed both the period before and the one after, which includes the present time, were all found to include a considerable number. This level of activity over time clearly reflects a steady increase in their number so that they had by the end of this period become a permanent fixture at a stable level within the PCP.

In terms of an overview of the period, it was one spent largely in office with only the

[45] See, for example, Gardiner op. cit., 119-25 and John Barnes, 'Obituary: Ian Grist', *The Independent*, 8 April 2002

last three years spent in opposition and certainly as such it stood out amongst all other periods studied. Three separate phases can be discerned within this period as indeed Appendix 8 illustrates under firstly the leadership of Margaret Thatcher, secondly under the leadership of John Major and thirdly, under that of William Hague, elected at the third round. Although Hague was, at thirty six years old, the youngest party leader in modern times and thus on paper the perfect antidote to New Labour's own charismatic figurehead, Tony Blair (he was forty four at this time), the four years spent under his leadership are argued by some to have proved one of the most troubled and ineffectual opposition periods, comparable only to 1906-10 when the Party was led by Arthur Balfour and split over tariff reform. [46]

A number of events dominated the period, most but not all of which were found to be synonymous with group activity. One area which was not, perhaps surprisingly, was that which related party organisation. Although very few changes were introduced, which considering the Party served in office for most of this period was hardly surprising when most, but not all, of its organisation changes have occurred during periods of opposition. Those changes which did take place in this period were implemented largely during the third phase, under the leadership of Hague, when indeed the Party was in opposition. Hague, who decided that a strategic priority would be an overhaul of the Party's structures as well as its leadership election rules produced details of the reforms in *Blueprint for Change* at the 1997 Party Conference and subsequently repackaged in 1998 for the Party membership as *The Fresh Future*. Although these changes did not in themselves result in the formation of any groupings, subsequent attempts to change these new rules did. As such, although mentioned in passing here,

[46] Stuart Ball and Anthony Seldon (ed.), *Recovering Power: The Conservatives in Opposition Since 1867*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, 249

they will be discussed further in the next section. [47]

Group activity was however found elsewhere and this was based on four other areas. Firstly, that which occurred in relation to the new creed of 'Thatcherism' and which took place largely in the first phase of the period, secondly, that which occurred, yet again, in relation to Britain's place in the world namely Europe and which occurred in the first and second phases, thirdly that which occurred in relation to policy both in general terms and as a reaction to a specific policy (and not one related to Europe) and fourthly that which occurred in relation to pure and simple socialising. The last two were not specific to any one particular phase.

The first area then in which group activity was found to exist was in relation to the event of Thatcherism which was based, as Philip Norton succinctly summarises, on the essentials of combating inflation, ridding the individual of the shackles of government, reducing public expenditure and withdrawing from as many areas of economic activity as possible. Market forces were, as far as possible, to operate with consumer choice not government diktat to determine economic activity and one group in particular embraced this philosophy with gusto. [48] With its aim to 'keep the Conservative Party conservative', it is no surprise that the 92 Group not only continued but flourished during this period. Certainly the chairman, George Gardiner, believed the group ran a highly organised right-wing slate for the backbench subject committees and the 1922 Committee which left its partner on the left of the party, the Lollards, trailing in its wake. This said, it is interesting that Norton found this claim to be a misnomer

[47] For further details regarding Hague's organisational changes see ibid., 250-52
[48] Norton (1996) op. cit., 60

following his analysis of the committees at the beginning of the 1988/89 session. [49]

This is not to say that the centre and centre-left were not involved in any group activity in this period. Indeed a number of such groups which had come into being in the preceding period continued as such while others emerged. What was noticeable was the fact that most if not all of these appeared to adopt a low public profile during this period. Perhaps not surprising considering how clear Thatcher made it that the 'lady was not for turning'. [50] While members of a number of these groups were nonetheless rightly perceived as having achieved promotion under Thatcher and sometimes dubbed 'Thatcher's most loyal rebels' (Blue Chip and Guy Fawkes for example) members of others did not. [51] Similarly while they did indeed take a relatively low public profile in terms of their group activities during this period, it can be argued that they were consequential in that, together with a number of left-leaning policy groups, they kept 'the home fires burning' and offered a haven with like-minded colleagues on the left of the Party until the political winds within the Party again reverted in their direction. It is interesting that Major was a member of both Blue Chip and Guy Fawkes, as indeed has been discussed earlier, and as such these groups inadvertently offered Thatcher's successor a secure environment in which to develop as a politician, similar in some ways to that offered by the Economic Dining Club to Thatcher before she became prime minister.

The second area in which groups were found to be active, and especially so within the second phase, was in relation to Europe and indeed activity was especially notable

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[49] Philip Norton, 'The Lady's Not for Turning' but what about the rest?: Margaret Thatcher and the Conservative Party 1979-89', *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol.43 no.1 (1990), 55

[50] Blake op. cit., 345

[51] For a detailed assessment of the parliamentary party under Margaret Thatcher, see Norton (1990) op. cit., passim

in this respect. While a small number were content just to meet and discuss matters of common interest, such as the Double-Eight, others were from the outset determined to attempt to dictate agendas in a very public manner. As above, some groups were a carry over from an earlier period, the Anti-Common Market League for example was established to fight entry to the EEC whereas others, in a similar vein, developed as the European journey progressed with for example Fresh Start and the Maastricht Treaty and the Whipless Nine and the subsequent Maastricht driven Bill to increase the European budget. In final desperation, as one after another anti-European grouping had its moment in the spotlight reducing Major's standing with the public at every outing, the centre-left attempted to fight back with the formation of the Positive European Group (and the cross–party European Movement). The PCP, and national party, seemed intent on self-destruct to a degree reminiscent only of its behaviour a century earlier over tariff reform. The principal consequence of this for the Party was not the prevention of the Maastricht Treaty or an increase to the budget or even the Social Chapter but to project the Party into a prolonged period of opposition.

The third area in which group activity was found to exist was, aside from Europe, in relation to single policy issues. A small number of groups, derived from the need in the previous period to create policy ideas for when the Party would next return to power, (the One Nation Group, the Bow Group, the Tory Reform Group for example) remained active throughout this period on a general policy level but of particular interest was a group initiated in response to a specific policy proposal, namely Sane Planning, and although discussed in earlier chapters it is worthy of mention again in this context. What stands out about this particular group is, and the outcome of the group's stance is almost immaterial when looking at it from an historical perspective, that it represents one of very few groupings which provide a direct conduit on a specific issue between

the individual members of the public, their elected representatives and individual members of the government. Indeed by so doing their consequences are considerable and although not wishing to return to material covered in the previous chapter, this group, by acting as a conduit in this way, served to fulfil elements of four of the six groups of functions detailed in Table 7. [52]

The fourth and final area in which groupings were found to be active was in socialising for its own sake and making no pretensions about discussing policy detail, although in effect they often do, and certainly a number of dining clubs (the 4th July, the Third Term Group and the Wednesday Club) were all found to exist on this basis. From an historical perspective such dining clubs were not new phenomena, the Agricultural Dining Club is one long standing dining club, and certainly chapter six revealed how such groups have a positive role to play for those MPs who wish to attend such groups. Certainly life can be isolated for some MPs, especially those who live away from home during the week, and socialising with trusted friends in this way can provide a valuable support network.

2001 onwards

The first decade of the twenty first century has, as Appendix 8 illustrates, seen four leaders with firstly William Hague, secondly Iain Duncan Smith, thirdly Michael Howard and fourthly, the current leader, David Cameron. While it is perhaps a little optimistic to make historical judgements on so recent a period, there are nevertheless

[52] Within 'Party Management' they can be seen to help prevent dissent by channelling it into a constructive outlet, within 'Policy Making' they can be seen to play a role in scrutinising policy and acting as an alternative opposition, within 'Political Engagement' all three sections can be seen to be engaged and finally they can be seen to have fulfilled a role in terms of acting as 'Vehicle of Protest'

pertinent areas of discussion which relate to groupings.

This last decade has, like the period before, been one of agonising soul searching for the Party in terms of both how it organises itself and what it stands for. In terms of organisation, proposed changes to the process of electing the leader were proffered by Howard who would have seen the final choice of electing a leader transferred back from the national to the parliamentary party. However, although MPs, peers and MEPs voted for the policy's acceptance, the national party failed to produce the two thirds required majority and as a result the proposal failed. [53] It is interesting that one group, A Better Choice, was formed for the specific purpose of fighting these proposals although while they were certainly successful in contacting Party chairmen and securing publicity both in the press and on political blogs, the extent to which this was a significant factor in determining the outcome is impossible to gauge. [54]

In general terms the decade has been a difficult one. Certainly the existence of Tony Blair as prime minister has been an exceptional force to battle against, with some comparing him only to Lord Palmerston in the late eighteenth century, [55] yet Winston Churchill faced with a Labour Party led by Clement Attlee nearly secured victory in 1950 and went on to do so in 1951 and indeed even the split under Arthur Balfour over tariff reform even earlier in 1906 saw a swifter recovery to the Party's fortunes.

In terms of groupings throughout this period, a considerable number of those same

[53] Shipman (28 September 2005) op. cit.,
[54] For press coverage, see, for example, David Charter, 'Leadership race is under threat as local Tories rebel', *The Times*, 5 September 2005, Tania Branigan, 'Tory leadership race at risk from party activists', *The Guardian*, 26 August 2005 and Rumbelow op. cit., (28 July 2005). For blogsites, see, for example, http://conservativehome.blogs.com/toryleadership/2005/09/a_good_week_for.html (accessed 6 February 2010)
[55] Ball and Seldon op. cit., 271

groups which existed in the previous period, and indeed even the one prior to this, continued to exist and indeed appear at this point in time to have become firmly ingrained as an integral, if informal, element of the Conservative Party structure and psyche. This said, it is notable that only a few new groups have emerged during this decade.

In 2010 a listing was published regarding bookings made by MPs for private rooms in the Palace of Westminster (see Appendix 9 for a selection of these) and notable on this list were numerous bookings made for a number of unofficial parliamentary party groupings. While Charles Barry would have undoubtedly approved as his original designs for the Palace sought to mirror those of a club [56] and useful to the writer in terms of research, it could place those concerned under further scrutiny in a climate generated by the MPs' expenses scandal and thus there is always the possibility that when such information becomes widely available in the public domain that MPs may question the appropriateness of retaining membership of any organisation which is likely to place them further under public scrutiny. [57]

This aside, those existing groupings which have carried over were found, generally, to exist at the same level of activity as before with the same dining clubs and policy groups appearing to continue as before. However, more recently, some initiative has been shown, as previously discussed, with, for example, the Bow Group arranging regular meetings with the shadow frontbench in the period preceding the 2010 General Election. Similarly policy initiatives were found to be forthcoming from other

[56] Michael Rush, 'The Members of Parliament' in Stuart Walkland (ed.), *The House of Commons in the Twentieth Century: Essays by members of the Study of Parliament Group*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1979, 118

[57] Groupings mentioned include Nick's Diner, the 4th July, the Third Term Group, the Bow Group, One Nation Group and the 1912 Dining Club

groupings, and often this was from new groups. One of the earliest of these was CChange which in 2004 was making a call to arms for the Party to modernise itself. Although self-labelled as a think-tank, it was in effect an unofficial parliamentary grouping headed by Francis Maude and with Theresa May, Tim Yeo, Ed Vaizey, Theresa Villiers, Archie Norman and David Willetts on its Board. Although it failed to achieve a great deal in its own right, it did put down a marker for change. [58]

In the period since 2004, three groups have emerged as 'next generation' groups. The first of these was Green Chip, seen by some to pursue a green policy agenda, although as discussed earlier in the thesis, a number who attended dinners have no recognition of such discussions. This is perhaps surprising considering the emphasis placed by the Party on its green agenda. More substantial attempts at policy activity have emerged from both, secondly, Cornerstone, on the right of the Party, and, thirdly, Direct Democracy which represents no particular wing of the Party. In the case of the former, as indeed was also discussed to some extent earlier in the thesis, members felt very much that their commitment to marriage and the family had been assimilated into party policy although a recently confused message on this articulated by Cameron would no doubt not have been welcomed. [59] In the case of the last of the above groups, namely Direct Democracy, it is interesting that it has sought to represent no particular wing of the Party but instead produced many of the ideas which have, within the concept of localism, been encapsulated by Cameron in his search for a new direction for the Party as indeed have been discussed earlier.

[58] Although this group appears to be defunct its original website remains live, see http://www.cchange.org.uk/ (accessed 4 February 2010)

[59] See, for example, Daniel Finkelstein, 'Cameron will not break his vow on marriage', *The Times*, 6 January 2010 which discusses the mixed messages given by David Cameron with regard to tax breaks for married couples

Chapter Seven: A typology of groupings

'I was in awe of these groupings when I was first elected … I soon came to realise they were a useful tool … I joined because you had views on various topics and certain groups had similar views and as a result you could encourage particular strands of thought within the Party. This was very noticeable with Margaret Thatcher when she was prime minister. She needed a lot of support against the 'wets' and certain types of groups gave this support. Groups would offer her support in what she was trying to do …'

Lady Ann Winterton MP [1]

From the outset, one of the aims of the thesis was to devise a typology of unofficial parliamentary party groupings and this penultimate chapter seeks to do just this. In order to do so, it will re-examine material in previous chapters and, where it exists, draw out commonalities.

It will also draw extensively from additional material secured during interview with MPs which, taken together with the above, will provide the basis on which to devise a classification. Once this typology has been completed it is hoped that each past, present and future grouping will be able to be placed into one of its categories with relative ease.

[1] Interview with Lady Ann Winterton: 29 April 2008

Theoretical frameworks

Before proceeding to devise the typology, it is interesting to assess any existing theoretical frameworks which may assist in this instance. Although, as indicated previously in the thesis, no typology has been devised for groupings as such, research undertakings which relate to factions, tendencies and to a lesser extent single-issue alliances have been conducted and indeed this debate has already taken place in an array of theses, periodical articles and other publications with extensive examples of these having already been detailed previously.

With this in mind, there are two important points in relation to the typology in this thesis. The first is that it seeks to examine groupings from a broader perspective in terms of the integral part they play within a wider parliamentary setting rather than within just a party context as indeed the above studies have tended to do. The second important point is that these same existing discussions regarding factions and so on, while valuable, have often placed groupings within the contextual framework of intra-party dissent and as such analysis concerning groupings is usually subjugated to the negative role that the groups play in orchestrating or participating in such dissent. This paper seeks to explore the positives in addition to the negatives and as such seeks a wider means of categorisation than that provided within the discussions relating to factions, tendencies and single-issue alliances. Related to this is the fact that this study seeks to examine groupings *en masse* whereas these existing discussions have tended to examine only a small number of groups at any one time.

In seeking to develop such a categorisation, it was interesting to examine the now historic work of two academics who were concerned with the categorisation of, not groupings, but legislatures and indeed legislatures *en masse* and although this work was

conducted some time ago and does not relate specifically to groupings, it was useful for the purposes of this paper to assess how these typologies were constructed. In the same way that the aim in both these two instances was to produce a broad based typology into which any legislature could be slotted, this thesis seeks to devise a typology into which any unofficial grouping could be slotted and as such the work of both were of interest.

The first of these two was that devised by Nelson Polsby during the 1970s which determined two basic categories of legislatures, namely arenas and transformative legislatures. These categorisations were derived from two sources. Firstly, from an examination of legislatures within both a closed and open political system and, secondly, from an examination of not only a number of variables depicting the internal structures of legislatures but also, and especially so, the relationships between legislative parties. [2]

What was of interest in relation to this particular typology was the emphasis given to the internal structures of legislatures and indeed the internal structures of groupings were initially anticipated as providing a basis for classification in this instance. However while the necessary information was available for some groupings, it was not available for all, and particularly so for historic groups, and thus while it was of value for those groups where the information was available, it would not have been possible to have devised a complete typology on this basis alone.

From this then the cynosure of the draft typology altered to examine the purpose, the *raison d'être*, of each group and indeed it was evident, unlike the above, that this

[2] See Nelson Polsby, 'Legislatures' in Philip Norton (ed.) *Legislatures* Oxford, Oxford University Press (1992) 129-48

information was available for the vast majority of groupings studied throughout the entire period in question. From this, with the most common perception of the purpose of unofficial groupings being the extent to which they achieve success in determining party, and ultimately government, policy this would in itself have provided the obvious basis on which to have based a typology. Indeed it is salient that a second study which seeks to classify legislatures themselves utilises this as the basis for classification, namely that conducted by Michael Mezey towards the end of the 1970s. [3]

Mezey examines the policy affect of legislatures in terms of strong, modest or little or none and indeed, as Philip Norton indicates, the capacity of legislatures to affect the content of public policy is indeed a central concern of legislative scholars. [4] With this in mind, in many respects such a basis would have also been of value for unofficial parliamentary party groupings and indeed as can be seen from Appendices 1 to 3, a number of the questions devised for interview of MPs were designed with this in mind. However, these same interviews and indeed other research revealed that while a number of groupings could indeed be classified in these or similar terms, many other roles were found to exist and indeed many groupings fulfilled these rather than a policy role.

As such, a broader basis for categorisation was required which would encompass this more diverse range of roles and indeed the final classification did just this. The resultant typology was thus based on a consideration of the primary *raison d'être* of each group in its broadest terms. The result of this was that four types of groupings were constructed and indeed these are detailed in Table 8 below.

[3] Mezey op. cit., passim and Michael Mezey, 'Classifying Legislatures' in Norton (1992) op. cit, 149-76
[4] Norton (1993) op. cit., 50

Table 8:
A one-dimensional typology of unofficial parliamentary party groupings within the Conservative Party from 1830

Fraternity groupings: those groupings which meet primarily to discuss common interests and ideas or simply as a group of friends or colleagues who may hold different views but who share a kindred spirit and a desire to meet regularly on these terms

Ideas groupings: those groupings which meet primarily to produce ideas as either a stimulus for wider discussion on a particular area of potential policy or as the basis for a specific policy

Positional groupings: those groupings whose primary *raison d'être* is to assume (and view themselves as the 'preserver of') a particular position on a range of policies and would thus be seen as, for example, in the very broadest of senses a left, right or centralist grouping

Protest groupings: those groupings which exist primarily to protest over a specific, or potential, policy which has been introduced by the government or opposition of the day which may, or may not, be Conservative. Often dissipated after the issue has been resolved

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Thus the first category of grouping, namely that of fraternity groupings, meet primarily to discuss common interests and ideas or simply as a group of friends or colleagues who may hold different views but who share a kindred spirit and a desire to meet regularly on these terms. While the traditional evening dining clubs will fall into this category, and indeed as discussed previously a number of such dining clubs still exist and would thus be included here, other groups which may meet at other times of the day could also fall into this category.

The second category is devised from the policy attributes of some groups although not in these terms directly. Thus instead of 'policy groupings', this particular categorisation is entitled 'ideas groupings' as many groups exist primarily to produce ideas as well as specific policy for the Party. Groupings in this category may indeed be significant in that their ideas may form the basis of one or more specific policies but

they may be equally significant in that their ideas provide the stimulus for a wider policy discussion. This significance is particularly relevant at certain pressure points in the Party's history when it has sought to re-engage with the voter after, for example, the appointment or election of a new leader or after defeat at a general election.

The third category of grouping, namely positional groupings, includes those groups which assume a particular position on a range of policies and would thus be seen as, for example, in the very broadest of senses a left, right or centralist grouping. The crucial point in this instance is that such groupings are distinct from those above in that they are not concerned primarily with policy (although in many cases policy discussions will take place at meetings) and indeed in some cases are fed through to the Party leadership. Unlike the above which exist primarily to influence policy, positional groupings see themselves primarily as the 'preserver' of the left, right or centre of the Party or indeed of a particular, and not necessarily political, position such as internal Party democracy. Thus whichever direction the Party may be taking at any one point in time, these groups believe they have a responsibility to keep alive their particular set of beliefs whether or not the general direction of the Party is sympathetic to them and their ideas at that point in time.

The final category of grouping, namely protest groupings, include those groups which exist primarily to protest over a specific policy, or potential policy, which has been introduced by the government of the day, whether Conservative or not, or indeed by the party of opposition. Such groups are born out of a response to the policy in question and then when the moment has passed and the issue resolved one way or the other, they too tend to cease to function. In some circumstances, when individuals find

they have a particular rapport as a unit, the members of such groupings may decide to continue to meet although not necessarily as a protest group as such but as one of the other three categories of groupings such as, for example, a fraternity grouping.

It was also noticeable from the research undertaken for this thesis that an additional perspective to groupings was evident and as such it is interesting to introduce a second dimension to the basic typology outlined above in Table 8. This second dimension evolves from the attitude of the group itself towards its external environment and this includes not only its immediate parliamentary environment but also its wider environment in terms of both grass root membership and more generally those members of the public interested in the body politic.

One of the questions asked of those MPs interviewed for this thesis was whether they believed the group or groups of which they were a member were a 'look at me' or a 'hideaway' grouping and it is the answers to this question which were utilised largely to determine which of these two categories groups could be placed in. In those instances where a current group was not discussed at interview, or where the group was an historic one, the group was placed into one of the two categories based on available material gained from research.

Thus it can be seen how an ideas grouping may adopt a 'look at me' or a 'hideaway' philosophy depending on whether it wished to make public its ideas or simply discuss them within the private confines of meetings or indeed the leader's or whips' office. Similarly a positional grouping may adopt a 'look at me' approach to its activities or alternatively may prefer to fight its corner behind closed doors.

What was noticeable about this second dimension of categorisation for groupings was that some groups would adopt a highly secret approach to affairs as far as the wider public was concerned but would less jealously guard its secrets as far as the parliamentary party was concerned. Similarly some groups which were comfortable to adopt a more passive 'look at me' philosophy and indeed existed quite happily on that basis and thus chose not to seek additional publicity whereas others quite clearly adopted a more actively aggressive 'look at me' philosophy and sought media coverage at every opportunity.

In order to attempt to reflect this variance, it is useful to reflect the *degree* to which a group sought privacy or publicity in respect of its operations and this has been done by identifying the degree of 'visibility' for each group. This is illustrated in diagrammatic form in Appendix 10. From this then, the closer a group is positioned towards the vertical axis, the less visible it is and the greater the extent to which it adopts a 'hideaway' philosophy. Similarly the further it is positioned away from the vertical axis, the more visible the grouping and thus the greater the extent to which it adopts a 'look at me' philosophy. The degree of visibility is categorised as low, medium or high depending on the distance from the vertical axis, as indeed is evident from Appendix 10.

Overall then from Table 8 and Appendix 10 it is possible to view groupings not only from a one-dimensional perspective but also from a two-dimensional one which encapsulates the degree of visibility relevant to each.

Before proceeding to examine these classifications in greater detail, it is important to stress, and indeed this has already been mentioned to some extent, that in some cases

while a group may exist for a number of purposes it is its *core* purpose, its primary *raison d'être,* which determines into which category it is positioned in this instance. Thus, for example, one group may discuss a number of policy issues at meetings and dinners, as do ideas groupings, and it may feed its views through informal channels to the whips' office and even protest at one or more aspect of party policy, as would a protest group, and indeed be comprised of a number of MPs from one wing of the Party who would wish to see that viewpoint underpin Party policy, as would a positional grouping, but if it meets primarily on a social basis to offer mutual support and companionship to other members then it will be categorised as a fraternity grouping. Conversely while a number of groups meet for dinner (or lunch or breakfast) yet their core interest lie in producing policy ideas they would thus be classified as ideas and not fraternity groupings.

It is also important to stress that the categories of groupings derived from this paper are not mutually exclusive and thus while a grouping may start life as, for example, a protest group, it may develop into a fraternity or even ideas grouping after the initial purpose for its formation has been resolved. Similarly an innocuous fraternity grouping may, over time, develop into a protest group and seek a wider remit than was initially anticipated. Overall however it was the primary purpose, that is the main purpose for which it existed and for which it existed the longest, which will determine its categorisation.

Finally, before examining the categories of groupings in more detail, although it was mostly obvious into which category a grouping should be placed, in a very small number of cases this was not the case and in such instances the grouping was listed in

italics in the category deemed most suitable in order to differentiate it from others where categorisation was more certain.

Fraternity groupings

Fraternity groupings constituted the second largest number of groupings as can be seen from Appendix 10. In many ways these are the most straightforward of all groupings as members meet solely, as the name suggests, for fraternising with other parliamentarians. On a one-dimensional level, such groupings originate from a desire to share common interests, discuss political ideas or simply in order to provide an opportunity to meet with a group of trusted friends or colleagues, who may or may not hold different views, but who simply enjoy each others company and feel that by meeting together regularly on these terms they provide a much needed arena for relaxation. They may 'catch up on the gossip' or they may discuss policy but the overriding benefit is of providing an opportunity for trusted colleagues to meet confidentially and discuss matters of mutual concern in what is an otherwise highly charged and often cut-throat work place.

One MP interviewed made the point that the very core purpose of parliament is to talk, even its name is derived from the French verb 'to talk', and that fraternity groups had a crucial role to play in facilitating dialogue between MPs. She believed that the best political discussions she had held and the most interesting speakers she had heard during her time as an MP were at fraternity group dinners. [5]

[5] Interview with Mrs Eleanor Laing MP: 24 April 2008

To look firstly then at 'who they are', it is interesting that a small number of such groups were established by PPCs, Everest for example, and in this particular instance the matters of mutual concern referred to above were those associated with life prior to entering parliament. Thus as one MP interviewed indicated, Everest was set up initially by a group of PPCs in 1995 prior to the 1997 General Election as a self-help group in which to discuss campaigning ideas and exchange information. In this particular instance the group continued to operate even after its members had been elected to parliament, all but one member being successful in achieving their aim, and indeed continued to meet regularly with between eight to ten MPs in 2008. The same MP also indicated that meetings tended to be in the form of a dinner held not at the Palace of Westminster but at members' houses by rotation. [6]

Fraternity groupings were found to be notable, but by no means exclusively so, in terms of their distinctive nomenclatures. On occasion they have been named after a 'founding father' (Nick's Diner after Nick Scott), their initial *raison d'être* (Everest believed they had 'a mountain to climb') or even a significant calendar date (the 4th July after the date on which members made their maiden speeches and the Third Term Group by the 1983 intake in order to secure a third term of government for the Conservative Party). [7] It was interesting how one individual was generally closely associated with a grouping although this one individual may change as the group developed over time. Thus, for example, Tristan Garel-Jones was closely associated with Blue Chip, Michael Jack with Nick's Diner and Eleanor Laing with the 4th July and Everest.

[6] Interview with Mr Stephen Hammond MP: 7 May 2008
[7] Interviews with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008, Mrs Eleanor Laing MP: 24 April 2008, and Mr Stephen Hammond MP: 7 May 2008

Groupings in this instance were also notable for the fact that membership was drawn exclusively (with one exception with the Bonar Law Club) from the parliamentary arena (although some ex-MPs were on occasion invited to attend) and also, but not always so, for their relatively small number of members. Thus the Upstairs Club, for example, experienced a regular attendance of ten (although up to twenty two attended at one time or another), the Burke Club has approximately twenty, the Third Term Group between twelve and fifteen, Everest between eight and ten and Nick's Diner has eighteen. A minority were found to have a greater number with Green Chip totalling approximately thirty and the oldest, the Agricultural Dining Club (founded in 1792), between thirty and thirty five. [8] It was interesting with regard to Green Chip dinners that attendees would vary and thus it was not so much a case of being a member as being on an invitation list and indeed this was also believed to be the case for the Agricultural Dining Club. [9]

Before moving on to discuss activities undertaken by fraternity groups, it was interesting that in the majority of cases there was a commonality in terms of the absence of any formal organisational structure, and indeed funding, with only one or two individual members responsible for organisation. Thus, for example, Michael Jack was found to be the lynchpin for the organisation of Nick's Diner, Eleanor Laing and Julie Kirkbride for the all-female Conservative dining group and Greg Barker, and to a lesser extent Michael Gove, for Green Chip. [10]

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[8] For the Upstairs Club, see Gardiner op. cit., 38, for the Burke Club, see interview with Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP: 29 April 2008, for the Third Term Group, the 4th July and Everest, see interviews with Mrs Eleanor Laing MP: 24 April 2008 and Mr Stephen Hammond MP: 7 May 2008, for Nick's Diner, see interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008 and Mrs Eleanor Laing MP: 24 April 2008, for Green Chip, see interview with Mr Graham Stuart MP: 29 April 2008 and also McGee (9 March 2008), op. cit. and for the Agricultural Dining Club, see interview with Mr Philip Dunne MP: 24 April 2008

[9] For Green Chip, see interview with Mr Robert Wilson MP: 29 April 2008 and for the Agricultural Dining Club, see interview with Mr Philip Dunne MP: 24 April 2008

[10] For Nick's Diner, see interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008 and for Green Chip, see interview with Mr Graham Stuart MP: 29 April 2008 and also McGee (9 March 2008), op. cit.

To turn now to examine 'what they do', it was noticeable that the vast majority of meetings were, and are, held in the form of dinners. In some cases this may be at each others houses, Everest and the all-female dining group for example, or in the case of the Third Term Group and Nick's Diner, in one of the private dining rooms available to hire by MPs although in the case of the Third Term Group, members take it in turns to host dinners. [11] It was also notable that a number of these groups, although this was more common amongst protest groupings, were keen to discuss how they could best operate as a unit on the floor of the House. Certainly one MP interviewed discussed how he had hoped that one fraternity grouping with which he had been involved would act in this way although in this particular instance, the group was relatively short lived and failed to continue beyond its first few meetings. [12]

Despite concerns by MPs that the opportunities to meet together at these fraternity groupings would be prohibited by the changes to MPs working hours, a cross-referencing of recent groupings listed in Appendix 8 with fraternity groupings listed in Appendix 10 reveals that this clearly is not the case. This said, there is no doubt that, as indicated previously, while such events for many MPs may be more difficult to organise with in many cases less evenings spent in London with time to spare and greater constituency workloads, such difficulties have certainly not seen the demise of such groupings. [13]

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[11] For Everest and the Third Term Group, see interviews with Mrs Eleanor Laing MP: 24 April 2008 and Mr Stephen Hammond MP: 7 May 2008 and for Nick's Diner, see interview with Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008. See also http://mpsallowances.parliament.uk/mpslordsandoffices/hocallowances/allowances-by-mp/Functions%20and%20Events.pdf (accessed 5 February and 24 February 2010)

[12] Interview with Mr Graham Stuart MP: 29 April 2008 regarding the Picadors

[13] For concerns regarding changes to working hours, see, for example, Greg Hurst, 'MPs find new hours too much to stomach', *The Times*, 1 January 2003 and for the realities of working under the new hours, see, for example, interviews with Mr Charles Walker MP: 7 May 2008 and Mr Graham Stuart MP: 29 April 2008

Dinners aside, fraternity groupings were found not to produce publications in the same way a number of others have. Similarly while other types of groups undertook a range of activities, these were notable for their absence amongst fraternity groupings with very little organised parliamentary activity other than discussions around a dining table and certainly no current grouping hosted a website or exhibited any degree of a presence on the internet or in the written media with, for example, the writing of any letters to newspapers or the organising of any concerted campaigns.

In terms of networking, certainly beyond the parliamentary arena, again such groups were notable for the absence of any activity in this direction with membership almost exclusively parliamentary. One new group was of particular interest in this respect, namely an all-female Conservative dining group which only relatively recently decided to meet together for the first time as a group of all-female Conservative MPs, in that they were able to build upon a network already in existence but to date rarely utilised. Although two female MPs (Ann Winterton and Ann Widdecombe) chose not to attend (although Ann Winterton did attend the first), of those female MPs interviewed who did attend all valued the opportunity which the dinners provided to share political experiences and discuss matters of mutual interest. [14]

The all-female dining group aside, other groupings were on occasion found to have extended their network to past members who had since left parliament. Nick's Diner, for example, planned to hold an anniversary dinner to which previous members, now ex-MPs, would be invited. No evidence was found of extra-parliamentary relations nor the fostering or encouraging of relations with the media. Indeed any mention of

[14] From, for example, interviews with Mrs Eleanor Laing MP: 24 April 2008 and Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP: 29 April 2008

any fraternity grouping by the media over the entire period studied was notable for its failure to provide any meaningful detailed knowledge.

What is immediately obvious from this, and as Appendix 10 vividly illustrates, is that the vast majority of fraternity groupings are, on a second dimensional level, 'hideaway' groups and thus to all intents and purposes invisible outside the parliamentary arena. Certainly the majority of groupings can be seen as low visibility with only a few as semi-visible and not one as being highly visible. Indeed those MPs interviewed who were members of fraternity groupings such as the Third Term Group, the 4th July, the Double-Eight and Nick's Diner were, when asked, very clear in defining the group of which they were a member as 'hideaway'. [15] Indeed so intent were a number of these groups to retain their anonymity that often only one or two references in newspapers could be found for the entire period of their existence. [16]

It was interesting that fraternity groups also retained a level of anonymity, although to a lesser degree, amongst their parliamentary colleagues. It was marked that of those MPs interviewed, a significant number showed very little awareness of fraternity groups other than those with which they had an association. Thus, for example, while all those interviewed had some knowledge of Green Chip, which is perhaps unsurprising considering many of those interviewed were from the 2005 intake and thus constituted a significant number of the members of the group, the majority had no knowledge of

[15] Interviews with Mrs Eleanor Laing MP: 24 April 2008, Mr Ian Taylor MBE MP: 24 April 2008 and Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP: 5 June 2008

[16] Snakes and Ladders, the Dresden, the Double-Eight and Burke Club are notable examples in this instance. For Snakes and Ladders, see, for example, Baldwin (18 January 2003) op. cit. and Brown (3 April 1991), op. cit., for Double-Eight and Dresden, see, for example, Brown (3 April 1991), op. cit., and for Burke Club, see, for example, Brown (3 April 1991), op. cit., and 'Even a Burke can see that Hague's a loser', *Mail on Sunday,* 22 April 2001. Very little additional information was found regarding Snakes and Ladders and the Dresden although additional information for the Double-Eight was sourced after an interview with Mr Ian Taylor MBE MP and for the Burke Club after an interview with Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP: 29 April 2008

other groupings such as the Third Term Group or the 4th July. It was interesting that even in the case of one long serving MP who had spent over twenty years at Westminster that while she had been aware of the existence of a number of such groups over time she was genuinely not able to recall the names and details to any significant degree other than those of which she was a member. [17]

Networking aside, it is interesting that fraternity groups were found to fulfil a number of common roles from those detailed in Table 7 and which, taken together, were helpful to an extent in assisting categorisation. Certainly all fraternity groups were found to fulfil a very real social role and this was without doubt their most significant one, although they did also play a part to a lesser degree in relation to a parliamentarian's career pathway and to a lesser extent still in terms of party management. Similarly there was some evidence that while they fulfilled a limited role for parliamentarians in terms of political engagement and informing debate and as a vehicle for protest, it was notable that their contribution in terms of policy making was negligible if not non existent. While these attributes are largely self-evident having been discussed previously it is interesting to examine in greater detail the first two of these for a moment.

Certainly in terms of the first, namely a social role, it was notable from the interviews the extent to which MPs valued their attendance at these fraternity groupings in this respect and that was equally as true for those MPs newly elected as it was for candidates and indeed on occasions where they were invited to return, for ex-MPs. There are in effect two aspects in this respect. Firstly in terms of socialisation, in that

[17] Interview with Lady Ann Winterton MP: 29 April 2008

fraternity groups enable MPs to become socialised into life as an MP in helping to establish contacts and networks which they can go on to utilise throughout their parliamentary life and from this, especially from more experienced MPs, further their insight and understanding into the myriad of procedures and their relevant rules which apply to the Palace of Westminster. The second aspect is that of socialising in that fraternity groups allow MPs (and candidates and ex-MPs) an opportunity to socialise and relax with trusted colleagues and friends in a closed and convivial setting. Both aspects were found, from interview, to be of importance which was perhaps surprising considering the reputation which fraternity groups have in the popular mind as raucous dining occasions attended only by the elite. One newly elected MP from the 2005 intake summed up their value rather succinctly when he discussed how much he appreciated having an interesting evening organised for him at which he could quite simply relax with trusted colleagues and certainly, as indeed highlighted previously in the thesis, this theme was mirrored by a number of other MPs interviewed. [18]

In terms of the second of these, namely career pathway, it is interesting that certainly a small number of these groups have on occasion been associated with their members receiving promotion *en masse*, Blue Chip being one notable example in this respect and which has indeed been discussed previously. It is important however not to overstate this point as certainly one MP interviewed pointed out that he believed his own promotion to the Board of the Conservative Party was actually due to the fact that he did not receive the support of any one slate from any one particular grouping. Indeed he believed his election was derived from group members rebelling against their own slate rather than voting in favour. [19]

[18] Interview with Mr Graham Stuart MP: 29 April 2008
[19] Ibid.,

On the same theme, the same MP also pointed out that one of the main reasons why the informal grouping which he and others members of the 2005 intake established relatively soon after entering parliament failed to continue in operation was because a sizeable number of the 2005 intake received promotion relatively early in the session. However in this instance, he believed promotion was in no way derived from membership of this particular group. Indeed membership of another recent grouping, Green Chip was formed largely by those already promoted to the shadow frontbench rather than membership of the same being responsible for their promotion with one backbench MP who attended one meeting finding himself only one of two backbench MPs at the meeting. [20]

Before proceeding to discuss the second classification, namely ideas groupings, it is notable from Appendix 10 that a considered number of groupings have been placed into the category of fraternity groups. A considerable number are contemporary which not only illustrates the durability of such groupings over time but also the value which a number of current MPs place on being members of such groupings.

Ideas groupings

The second type of groupings detailed in Table 8 is that of ideas groupings which at both a one and two-dimensional level are largely self-explanatory. As the name suggests, their core purpose is to produce ideas for the Party and this not only includes those instances where ideas may form the basis for one or more specific policies but also those which stimulate wider discussion in a broader sense.

[20] Interview with Mr Philip Dunne MP: 24 April 2008

With this in mind then it is perhaps surprising that the total number of these groupings is the smallest of the four categories and when Appendix 10 is again studied in conjunction with Appendix 8, it can be see that this has been the case for the entire period studied. It is difficult in many ways to identify the reasons for this although there is no doubt that alternative bodies have existed which fulfil the same functions and indeed it is worth exploring these further for a moment.

Without doubt a number of bodies, official and unofficial, have over time produced both broad based policy ideas and specific detailed policies for the Party. Certainly in terms of organisations with official links to the Conservative Party, the CPC and subsequently the CPF (its successor since 1998) is one such body which has been responsible for working on various policy initiatives. [21] Similarly the backbench subject committees, and it was interesting that although now non existent, they were mentioned in particular by one long serving MP who stressed their importance in the policy making process during their time in operation and certainly she believed that any policy role for unofficial policy groups would have been minimised whilst they were in operation. [22] This is not to say they prohibited the development of ideas groupings altogether as the Bow Group, for example, came into being in 1950 at a time when backbench subject committees were also in operation.

On a more contemporary level, it was interesting that another MP discussed a different type of policy committee in the same terms, namely the formal policy groups which some leaders have instigated in the run up to a general election. In this instance she believed there had been a deliberate decision by the current leader, David Cameron,

[21] For more information regarding the CPC, see for example, Norton (1992) in Ball and Holliday op. cit., 183-99 and Norton and Aughey op. cit., 217-20
[22] Interview with Lady Ann Winterton MP: 29 April 2008

to instigate a range of such policy committees to examine policy in a very visible and transparent way so that the Party not only reinvented itself but was *seen* to have reinvented itself which thus by inference would not have been the case if policy had been put into the hands of unofficial groups. [23]

Similar unofficial bodies have also existed in the form of think-tanks and advisory bodies. Indeed a considerable number of these such as Policy Exchange, Centre for Social Justice, Politeia, Reform and the Institute for Economic Affairs have operated over recent decades to the extent that it is hardly surprising that in many cases, with mutually beneficial working relationships with members of the shadow cabinet, sizeable budgets, dedicated offices with full time research and public relations staff, that ideas groupings cannot even begin to compete. [24] Certainly one MP believed that in terms of policy affect, think-tanks and the relationships which MPs have with them are far more influential than any policy relations with unofficial groupings, particularly since their increase in numbers over recent years. [25]

Before going on to assess ideas groupings in greater detail, there is one grouping which presents itself as an anomaly within this category, namely the One Nation Group, and as such is worthy of brief comment. In this particular instance, this group was very much an ideas grouping when it first came into being in 1950. With the publication of *One Nation,* which sold record breaking copies as indeed has been discussed, its ideas were very much at the forefront of policy discussion at a time when

[23] Interview with Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP: 29 April 2008
[24] For further information regarding Policy Exchange, see http://www.policyexchange.org.uk/ (accessed 26 February 2010), for Centre for Social Justice, see http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/ (accessed 26 February 2010), for Politeia, see http://www.politeia.co.uk/ (accessed 26 February 2010), for Reform, see http://www.reform.co.uk/ (accessed 26 February 2010) and for the Institute of Economic Affairs, see http://www.iea.org.uk/ (accessed 26 February 2010)
[25] Interview with Mr Philip Dunne MP: 24 April 2008

the Party was seeking to reconnect with the British electorate after two successive general election defeats by the Labour Party in July 1945 and February 1950. It has however since then, over time, come to assume the stance of a positional grouping in that it has come to symbolise a central focus for One Nation conservatism and as such it has been included in both categories.

It is interesting that within this particular genre, four subsets can be seen to exist namely those concerned with a specific sector of policy such as the Unionist Agricultural Committee, the Unionist Social Reform Committee and the Economic Dining Club, secondly those concerned with internal organisation or reorganisation of the Party such as the Unionist Organisational Committee, thirdly those concerned with general policy ideas such as the One Nation Group (in its early years) and the Bow Group, and fourthly, and finally, those concerned with specific policy proposals such as the Scottish Thistle Group and Direct Democracy. While these distinctions have no material affect on the devising of the typology, it is important to appreciate the diversity which exits under the wider umbrella of ideas groupings.

In order to asses first 'what they do', it was notable that most ideas groupings, but not all, were named either directly or indirectly after their particular area of interest and as such could almost immediately be classified as such. These include the eponymous Unionist Agricultural Committee, the Economic Dining Group, the Scottish Thistle Group and the Unionist Social Reform Committee.

What was of greater utility in determining classification in this respect was that some ideas groupings possessed some degree of organisational structure and certainly to a greater extent than fraternity groupings. Thus while both the Bow Group and the One

Nation Group (in its early years), for example, had a defined organisational structure and to a lesser extent so too did groups such as the Economic Dining Club and the Scottish Thistle Group, the Unionist Agricultural Committee was especially notable for its full committee, announced in *The Times* (as discussed previously) and the Bow Group for the extent to which its structure includes not only an extended committee but also a council and indeed both were based in a dedicated office. One notable contemporary exception to this was Direct Democracy which operated very much within the internet paradigm with no office and only a skeletal organisational structure comprised of the principal founder, Douglas Carswell, in addition to one non-parliamentary organiser who worked from home in the evening. All communications were by email with very few meetings held thus further reducing the need for administrative support. [26] From this it was notable, as for fraternity groups, that ideas groupings were generally allied to one individual at any one point in time such as Nicholas Ridley and the Economic Dining Club and indeed Douglas Carswell and Direct Democracy.

Organisation aside, while membership of a number of ideas groupings were exclusively parliamentary, such as the YMCA and the Economic Dining Club (similar to fraternity groupings), others extended membership to an extra-parliamentary audience (unlike fraternity groupings). Thus the Bow Group, for example, has always sought members not only from within the parliamentary arena but also from amongst both the grass roots membership and more generally amongst the interested public and similarly Direct Democracy has also been supported by members of both with a list of e-supporters totalling over fifteen thousand at peak of operations.

[26] Interview with Mr Douglas Carswell MP: 14 May 2008

In terms of 'what they do', it was more difficult to tease out common threads although a number of ideas groupings were similar to fraternity groupings in that dinners were central to operations such as, for example, the Economic Dining Club and the One Nation Group. [27] This said, a number of other groupings in this category also extended the range of activities to include meetings and other social activities with the Bow Group, for example, having organised a particularly wide range of activities which have latterly included a series of 'Meet the Shadow Cabinet' meetings which the group has deemed a 'roaring success'. [28] What is notable about these particular groupings, and again the Bow Group was found to be notable in this respect, is the extent to which they produced a wide range of pamphlets and reports.

Certainly the Bow Group aligns its current role with its original role put in place soon after its inception in the 1950s. Thus in both instances it sees itself fulfilling the challenge 'to show that the party was a respectable party to be involved in, a thinking party ... a party fit for Observer and Guardian readers to live in' and to 'uproot dogmatic thinking and replace it with new analysis which is at once incisive and easily digestible'. Indeed a recent edition of *Crossbow*, which includes articles on a diverse range of subjects including health, town planning and high speed rail to the economy, the 2010 General Election and counter terrorism, calls on all readers to contribute to this debate by submitting research papers for subsequent editions. [29]

Similarly the same group has over time produced a number of books, each written or

[27] It is interesting that although the name of the former would suggest that it should in fact be classified as a fraternity grouping and certainly group dining was central to its operations, its core purpose proved to be not only the discussion of the economic situation but also the development of an alternative economic strategy and thus it was more suitably classified as an ideas grouping
[28] 'Chairman's message', *Crossbow*, Spring Edition 2010
[29] 'Editor's Note', *Crossbow*, Spring Edition 2010

edited by a named individual, and in a number of instances these can be purchased from its website. Three recently published books which received coverage in the national press when launched include *The Ideas Book* published in 2000, *from the Ashes... the future of the Conservative Party* published in 2005 and *Conservative Revival: Blueprint for a Better Britain* published in 2006. [30] Perhaps the most recent of those books published by ideas groups are those by Direct Democracy, namely *Direct Democracy: an Agenda for a New Model Party* published in 2005 and *The Plan: Twelve Months to Renew Britain* published in 2008. [31]

Other groups in this category have also produced notable publications with, for example, the YMCA's *Industry and State*, published in 1927, which urged greater state intervention in the economy and in social policy. A similar philosophy was later developed further by one member, Harold Macmillan, in *The Middle Way* and although not written by the YMCA was, as discussed earlier, seen as supportive of the group's ideas for greater state intervention which were propagated within it.

In terms of other activities undertaken by these groupings it is hardly unexpected that, unlike fraternity groupings, ideas groupings were found to utilise the internet with the Bow Group and Direct Democracy both advertising their messages on their own websites.

It was also found, again in direct contrast to fraternity groupings, that a far wider range of networks were established by ideas groupings, not only within but also beyond

[30] Hinds op. cit., (and Hartley-Brewer (2 September 2000) op. cit.), Gyimah op. cit., and Philp (2006) op. cit., (and Philp (26 March 2006) op. cit.,) respectively. For publications available to purchase online, see http://www.bowgroup.org (accessed 23 September 2009)
[31] Carswell op. cit., and Carswell and Hannan op. cit.,

the parliamentary parameters. Whereas fraternity groupings existed almost exclusively within the confines of their own parliamentary membership, these groups extended relations far beyond. Certainly in terms of within parliament, it was notable that unlike fraternity groupings, all those MPs interviewed possessed a working knowledge of the majority of ideas groupings, albeit a relatively small number, and certainly all those which have existed since the 1980s. It was also noticeable that even discounting the longevity of two of these groups (the One Nation Group and the Bow Group both began life in 1950) ideas groupings had over time greater dealings with a greater number of the Conservative frontbench team than fraternity groupings and indeed both the Economic Dining Club and Direct Democracy had direct ties with the Party leader of their time with Margaret Thatcher regularly attending meetings of the former and Douglas Carswell indicating, during interview, his proximity to the current leader David Cameron in respect of the latter.

Similarly, in terms of extra-parliamentary networks, ideas groupings developed a range of relationships outside Westminster. Direct Democracy, for example, as indicated previously, had over fifteen thousand e-supporters and the Bow Group seeks members from not only the grass roots membership but from anyone who adheres to the Conservative viewpoint. In the same vein it is interesting that, again in direct contrast to fraternity groupings, ideas groupings have nearly all attempted to exploit the media opportunities open to them at some point in their particular histories. Thus the Unionist Agricultural Committee, the Unionist Social Reform Committee and the YMCA all received coverage in the media, notably *The Times*, during the first half of the century as did those which existed in the second half and certainly since the evolution of the internet, this too has been utilised to great affect, particularly by Direct Democracy, as indicated above.

From this then, a second dimensional view of ideas groupings can be seen and, again, this is in direct contrast to fraternity groupings. Whereas in general terms the latter seek invisibility and adopt a 'hideaway' philosophy to their affairs, all ideas groupings except one have sought to wrap themselves around the opposing pole in seeking high and semi-visibility and in adopting a clearly discernable 'look at me' approach to their affairs.

This aside, the use of the internet mentioned above, although taken for granted today, is also significant in that from an historical perspective it has provided ideas groupings with a vibrant new medium through which to fulfil a number of common functions. Certainly more generally in terms of the roles fulfilled by such groups, although there was very little evidence in terms of career pathway, party management and as a vehicle of protest, it was evident that together they did fulfil a number of aspects of policy making, political engagement and informing debate and to some degree of socialising and indeed that these could be utilised to assist in the classification of groupings.

To look first at the last of these, there was evidence that these groups played a role in socialising both candidates and new MPs. Certainly as indicated previously a number of members of the Bow Group either wish to be or are PPCs while others such as the YMCA, the Bow Group, the One Nation Group and more recently Direct Democracy have all been comprised initially of enthusiastic new MPs who shared common ideas for the establishment of a new paradigm for the Party. Certainly one member of the 2005 intake, namely Douglas Carswell, spoke of the frustration felt by himself and others at the critique voiced by the 'old boys' at what was wrong with both the Party and the country and it is not difficult to imagine the founding members of, for example, the Bow Group and the One Nation Group speaking in similar terms if they too had been

interviewed soon after entering parliament.

Related to this then is the commonality amongst ideas groupings in terms both of fulfilling roles of political engagement and informing debate and in terms of policy affect as indeed the very name of this category of grouping would suggest. As indicated above while a vast array and far greater number of other policy based bodies have existed over time, it is notable that the few unofficial groupings which have existed over time in this capacity have operated at particular pressure points in the Party's history with, for example, the Bow Group and the One Nation Group after two successive and largely unexpected general election defeats, the Economic Dining Club after the economic decline which occurred under Heath's premiership when elements of the Party were seeking a new alternative direction for the economy after years of industrial strife and Direct Democracy at a time when the Party had been out of office for thirteen consecutive years and was desperately seeking new policy initiatives to engage a public which appeared permanently wedded to the Labour Party.

Indeed in all these instances some degree of success has been seen in not only influencing party policy but also at a wider level (YMCA's pamphlet and, particularly, Macmillan's *Middle Way* and Carswell's localism agenda for example), in generating innovative ideas and concepts which subsequently stimulated wider debate within the policy arena. Certainly one MP, Philip Dunne, acknowledged that, although he was very sceptical of unofficial groupings when he first became an MP in 2005 and indeed remains wary of close association with any such grouping in case he is permanently labelled as such, he had come to appreciate that groupings have a very real role to play in helping to develop ideas at a broad level within the Party.

As a final note regarding ideas groupings it was noticeable that by again cross-referencing Appendix 8 and 10, unlike fraternity groupings, the number of groupings in this instance although relatively small stayed constant over time and indeed that two of these groups, the Bow Group and the One Nation Group, are amongst the longest serving groups included in the study.

Positional groupings

The third category of groupings, namely positional groupings, includes those groups which assume a particular broad stance on a range of policies. Unlike for the above, where four clearly discernable subsets were found, three types of positional groupings were in this instance found to exist and it is useful to distinguish between these during discussion.

Firstly, a grouping may overtly support or oppose the viewpoint of a particular leader or other key parliamentarian and thus be deemed Cameronite, Thatcherite or even Churchillian (the 92 Group was pro-Thatcher and the Churchill Group was pro-Churchill). Secondly, and less specifically, it may reflect a general position on the political spectrum, and because of this support a particular leader or leaders over time in a broader sense, and thus the grouping may be deemed left-wing, right-wing or centralist (Lollards were deemed to be on the left, Cornerstone and Conservative Way Forward are deemed to be on the right, and the Tory Reform Group and the One Nation Group from the centre). Thirdly, and finally, it may simply reflect a position within the Party that is not attributable to an overtly political position as such but rather one attributable to a commitment to a specific area of policy or operation over the long term (Charter Movement and internal Party democracy and Conservative Action for Electoral

Reform (CAER) and proportional representation). While the last of these was found to be the least evident, a number of examples were found to exist for the first and second type of positional grouping although it was notable that on occasion any one group could travel between the first and second of these over time.

Before proceeding to examine these in greater detail, it is important to emphasise that this discussion is not specifically concerned with what constitutes a left or right-wing grouping as the terms are in reality arbitrary ones beyond their very broadest interpretation not least as they can change over time as their position relative to the rest of the Party alters. Thus, for example, the 92 Group was widely deemed as centre-right under Margaret Thatcher when the Party was generally deemed to be right-wing whereas under David Cameron, to the extent that it does still exist, it was clearly deemed by those interviewed to be right-wing. The important point for the purpose of this thesis is that under both leaders it is deemed to hold a clearly discernable political stance on a range of issues.

Overall then, in the very broadest of senses, positional groupings see themselves primarily as the 'preserver' of the left, right or centre of the Party or as a beacon for a new direction for the Party and as such these groups believe they have a responsibility to keep alive their particular beliefs even when the general direction of the Party is not necessarily one they would choose at that point in time. One long serving MP interviewed summarised such groups particularly succinctly when discussing the 92 Group during the 1980s. When asked how she would explain the *raison d'être* of this particular group, of which she was a member at this time, she replied that it was quite simply to ensure that it provided a support network for Thatcher as both leader and prime minister and, as the opening quotation to this chapter alludes, to ensure that 'her'

section of the Party was well represented at every opportunity throughout the PCP with, for example, election onto the backbench subject committees. [32]

Another MP, talking in terms of groupings in general and his attitude to them, stated that in his view groupings did not actually influence specific policy as such but instead their effectiveness lay in the fact they tended to influence positions. Thus he believed that many groupings were very good at coming to a view on a range of issues and then arguing this general viewpoint within the PCP which is indeed exactly what groupings in this category were found to do, or at least it was their aim to do. [33]

To examine first then 'who they are', it was notable that no commonality existed in terms of who founded such groups and indeed why they were so named although it was notable that these groups generally, but not always, had a clearly defined organisational structure with a full committee and often an additional advisory body. Indeed it was also notable in instances where groups operate today and where the group concerned manages a live website that full details of these are provided on-line. [34]

It was also notable that like both fraternity groupings, and to some extent ideas groupings, that each positional grouping became allied to one or two individuals at any one point in time. Thus, for example, the Lollards with William van Straubenzee, the 92 Group over time with Pat Wall, George Gardiner and John Townsend and

[32] Interview with Lady Ann Winterton MP: 29 April 2008. It was interesting that the same MP also believed that, with this mind, the influence of unofficial groupings had waned since the demise of the backbench subject committees for this very reason. Thus she believed that the relationship between the two was a symbiotic one in that a great deal of the authority of groupings in the PCP was derived from their success in organising the slate for these committees and that the decline of one had resulted in the simultaneous decline of the other

[33] Interview with Mr Robert Wilson MP: 29 April 2008

[34] See, for example, Conservative Way Forward at http://www.conwayfor.org.uk/ 'Who we are ' and 'What we do' (accessed 1 March 2010) and Tory Reform Group at http://www.trg.org.uk/index.php/about_the_trg_1/people (accessed 1 March 2010)

Cornerstone with, simultaneously, John Hayes and Edward Leigh.

In terms of the membership of these groups, while a small number comprised only a parliamentary membership, the Lollards and the 92 Group for example, a number also extended membership to an extra-parliamentary audience. In some instances this extra-parliamentary membership was a formal affair requiring the payment of a fixed membership fee while in other cases it was more loosely based comprised only of an email address with communications between the group and its supporters conducted exclusively in this way. [35]

Less diversity was found in respect of group activities in that a number of groupings in this category met for a full range of activities which included dinners, meetings, conferences and seminars in addition to many other social activities, again with details of these broadcast, where relevant, on group websites. Although some of these activities were open to extra-parliamentary membership, such as Conservative Way Forward, others such as the One Nation Group, Cornerstone and the 92 Group were predominantly parliamentary. In most instances publications were produced at some point in its history, and indeed a number of these have already been discussed previously. The extent to which each of these was true depended largely on the degree of visibility of the grouping concerned with the most visible groups the most engaged in all respects.

Before moving on to examine these groupings in terms of any shared characteristics amongst the networks within which they operate, a particularly interesting aspect of

[35] See, for example, Conservative Way Forward for formal membership at http://www.conwayfor.org.uk/ 'Join Us' (accessed 1 March 2010) and Cornerstone for email supporters at http://cornerstonegroup.wordpress.com/about/ 'Contact' (accessed 1 March 2010)

'what they do' was revealed during the discussions with one long serving MP already referred to above. She recounted an incident experienced by her husband, also a long standing MP, whose performance as chairman of the Health Select Committee was not considered sufficiently 'Thatcherite' by the 92 Group and he subsequently found himself in front of a 'kangaroo court' under the direction of Jill Knight and two others who proceeded to lambast him for his actions in this respect. [36]

Certainly in terms of the networks within which these groupings operate, as a number sought membership from outside parliament it was clearly evident that they operated within an extra in addition to an intra-parliamentary arena and indeed all the groups had received coverage in the national press even if, from an historical perspective in the case of the 92 Group and especially the Lollards, this was not always particularly welcomed. [37] From this then, positional groupings can be seen, from a second dimensional perspective to be almost, but not entirely, exclusively 'look at me' groupings in terms of both an intra and extra-parliamentary perspective and even those two groupings which proved the exception to this, namely the 92 and the Lollards, remained 'look at me' groups in terms of a parliamentary audience if not an extra-parliamentary audience. (The Progress Trust was one exception to this).

Finally then in respect of positional groupings, it was notable that between them the majority fulfilled a wide variety of common functions. Certainly all groupings appeared to fulfil a socialisation role for 'old timers', 'newcomers' and certainly

[36] Interview with Lady Ann Winterton MP: 29 April 2008

[37] Interviews, discussions and correspondence with Sir George Gardiner: 1998-2000. The 92 Group has traditionally protected its right to privacy and indeed as far as it still exists today, continues to do so. The only exception to this was under the chairmanship of George Gardiner, who as an ex-lobby journalist himself, sought a greater degree of exposure for the group, and himself, during his period of tenure even though some members of the group were unhappy with this

candidates. Conservative Way Forward was particularly notable in respect of candidates as indeed has been discussed previously and certainly this role for this group was stressed by a number of MPs interviewed. [38] Similarly two positional groups, the 92 Group and the Lollards, were significant in organising internal elections with, for example, the 92 Group inviting most leadership candidates over recent decades to talk to its members, and other backbenchers.

Finally in respect of functions and positional groupings, it was interesting that one MP, who has served as chairman of the Party, isolated what she believed MPs saw as the two primary functions in this respect, namely career enhancement and policy enhancement and certainly these two were on balance the most prolific amongst positional groupings. In terms of policy enhancement, it was interesting that the same MP went on to illustrate this with the example of one particular group, namely Cornerstone, which she cited as having a very clear broad based policy agenda which they sought to drive through the Party. It was also interesting that the same MP flagged up the specific danger of groups such as these, although not Cornerstone in particular, in that when a number of like-minded people met together in this way there is always the possibility that by adopting a specific position within a wider political agenda that they can over time then begin to have issues with the leadership which is clearly not desirable for Party unity. [39]

In terms of career affect, it was interesting that while the same MP believed membership of a grouping may be perceived by a number of MPs as a means of career enhancement, that this is not always necessarily the case and she went on to discuss the

[38] See, for example, interview with Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP: 29 April 2008
[39] Interview with Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP: 29 April 2008

fact that there had over time been some 'issues' around people who have been spokesmen or women for particular groups when those groups have said things which may be incompatible with Party policy. In particular she remembered there being an issue with Cornerstone and John Hayes and although she could not recollect specific details she indicated that the normal procedure in such instances would be that the MP in question would be 'given a sharp talking to' by the chief whip and although impossible to pinpoint exactly, there is no doubt that such occasions would not be viewed favourably by a leader deciding on his or her shadow frontbench or frontbench team. [40] It was interesting that another MP independently supported this view and stated his belief that while there was a perception that membership of groupings may enhance parliamentary careers, this was not always proved to be correct and although a member of the 2005 intake, he already had a sense that members of Cornerstone would be less likely to receive promotion although he had no specific evidence for this. [41]

Protest groupings

The fourth and final grouping classified within the typology is that of protest groupings, see Table 8, and indeed as can be seen from Appendix 10, the greatest number of groupings by far were found to exist within this particular category. This final category of groupings includes those groups which exist to protest over a wide variety of specific policies, or draft policies, which have been introduced by various governments of the day, whether Conservative or not, or indeed by the Party when in opposition.

[40] Ibid.,
[41] Interview with Mr Philip Dunne MP: 24 April 2008

As for the three categories already discussed, a number of different themes were also found to exist for protest groups which could be see in terms of either an individual protest (occasional protest groups) or as part of a wider protest within the wider party (mass protest groups). Thus in the first instance a number have been formed in protest against a specific parliamentary Bill, or even Act, such as the Peacock's Tail prior to the passing of the 1867 Reform Act and the Halsbury prior to the passing of the 1911 Parliament Act, the actions of a government on other matters such as the December Club and the Abyssinian crisis and the Suez Group and the government's policy in the Middle East in the 1950s, or indeed even against a proposal, such as Sane Planning against planning proposals discussed by Nicholas Ridley. Similarly others have been formed as a protest against a particular leader and their policies, the Fourth Party against H Stafford Northcote, the Reveille against Arthur Balfour, the Privy Council against Edward Heath and Centre Forward against Margaret Thatcher for example, or to protest against existing (or changes to) internal workings of the Party itself, A Better Choice against proposals to remove the election of the leader from members for example.

In the second instance, in terms of mass protest groups, some groupings were found to be part of a wider protest both for and against a policy which could last many years such as protectionism and the Unionist Free Food League and the Unionist Free Trade Club, Irish separatism and the Union Defence League and more recently Europe and a plethora of groups which include, amongst others, the Anti-Common Market League in the 1960s and 1970s, the European Foundation and Fresh Start in the subsequent years up to 2000 and since then Better Off Out. Whatever the specific reason, all such groups had one common thread, namely that they were formed to protest.

It is interesting that mass protest groups appear in waves over time with an

occasional tsunami over a particular issue and indeed this has happened on three occasions over the period studied namely over free trade, Irish separatism and more latterly on Europe. It is interesting that on each of these occasions the core *raison d'être* is derived from a larger question of Britain's place in the world and her position in relation to others. Thus the free trade debate was founded on arguments concerned with the payment of tariffs and Britain's role as a trading partner within an imperialist paradigm. Similarly the debate of Irish separatism was derived from similar sentiments. The third and last debate concerned Europe and was founded on arguments concerned with Britain's status as an independent nation and the role which she should play within a federated Europe. It was also notable that, particularly in the case of the first and last of the three, the degree to which the debate was conducted within the Party was far greater than that which took place within the nation at large and indeed reviewing these periods from an historical perspective it appeared on each occasion as if a psychosis had taken hold of the Party.

On each of these occasions a number of groups have emerged which have gone on to utilise all possible means available at that time to fight their cause with, on occasion, small ripples felt before and after the event. In the case of Europe for example, the Anti-Common Market League was the first to emerge during the 1961-1980 period with the European Forum also developing during this time. The tsunami was then felt in force during the 1981 to 2000 period after which in latter years only a small number of such groups continue to operate such as Better Off Out.

The reasons for the position of relative peace and unity in the period preceding the 2010 General Election were multi-dimensional in that the Party had a leader who was not known for his support of a federated Europe (and as many of the groupings were

anti-European they therefore felt appeased to some degree although many must have felt their victory to be a pyrrhic one considering the upheaval and damage done to the Party with four leaders over eight years) and after a number of tumultuous years even those MPs with the most ardent views on Europe acknowledged that in order to return to power the disruptions they and others brought about must be tempered. It was notable that not one MP interviewed in 2008 from the 2005 intake, except Philip Davies who was asked to discuss Better Off Out, mentioned the divisions over Europe and instead stressed the unity felt within the Party at that time.

What then apart from a common desire to protest categorises such groupings? In terms of 'who are they', their name in many instances clearly indicated the area of protestation and enabled almost instantaneous classification, and this was particularly true for those groups which operated as part of a tsunami. Their organisational structure was generally clearly defined with an organising committee although, once again, in many cases one individual would in particular be associated with it such as Richard Body and the Anti-Common Market League, George Gardiner and the Union Flag Group, Francis Pym and Centre Forward, Jerry Wiggin and Sane Planning and Philip Davies and Better Off Out. Membership would generally be drawn only from the PCP but in those instances of mass protest groupings, it would more often than not be extended to include grass root members and supporters and indeed on occasion in considerable numbers.

In terms of 'what they do', while a number over time have met for dinner, the majority have also convened at a wide range of meetings and other events and once again, this was particularly the case for mass protest groups. It was notable that the vast majority of all protest groups also undertook a range of activities on the floor of the

House itself which ranged from, for example, an apparently never ending tirade against H Stafford Northcote by the Fourth Party to carefully planned interventions, voting behaviour and EDMs by groups such as the Privy Council, the Union Flag Group and Fresh Start. A number of these individual protest groups, and certainly the vast majority of mass protest groupings, were also notable in utilising every possible tool available to them at that time from the use of, for example, *The Times* and a travelling caravan complete with film by the Union Defence League to the extensive use of the internet by Better Off Out.

From this then, it can be seen that aside from those which operated solely within parliament, many of the others were very successful in establishing networks beyond the parliamentary arena with grass roots membership and supporters and as such could be seen from a second dimensional viewpoint very much as 'look at me' groupings with the vast majority of groupings found to be either semi or high visible. This said, this was not exclusively the case, with a small number such as the Privy Council remaining very much 'hideaway' and indeed in this case, especially keen to protect their anonymity. [42]

What was glaring in this respect was the fact that in establishing such networks, the vast majority, and by some considerable extent, of protest groupings operated against the leader of that time. Indeed it was interesting that although only a few MPs interviewed discussed protest groupings, several MPs did emphasise that while groupings were on balance a positive force within the Party, they could become extremely dangerous if they began to work against the leader. One MP in particular, who has served as chairman of the Party, illustrated this particularly vividly when she

[42] Interview with Sir Richard Body: 26 February 2008

referred to the danger which was caused when a number of groupings 'fermented and caused trouble for Iain Duncan Smith' when he was leader of the Party. [43]

Finally then in respect of protest groupings, while their social role was relatively unimportant and indeed this was also largely the case in terms of career pathway (although some protest groups were formed by 'frontbenchers in retreat' such as the Suez Group and others offered an alternative direction for some MPs such as Bill Cash and the European Foundation), they were found to have a greater role to play in terms of political engagement and informing debate amongst not only the parliamentary party but also the grass root membership and supporters and certainly the mass protest groupings were especially significant in this respect.

In terms of policy making, their role was found to be mixed in that some failed conspicuously to achieve their desired outcome such as the Halsbury, the India Defence Committee, the Suez Group and Better Off Out (to date) while others have achieved greater success, the Union Flag Group and A Better Choice although more specifically in acting as an official opposition their success was more marked with, for example, the Unionist War Committee and the December Club.

Probably their greatest impact in terms of the roles they fulfil was that of acting as a vehicle for protest, which they most certainly did, but also in terms of the management of dissent and as a reservoir function. Indeed while it can quite rightly be argued that, and this is true especially for mass protest groups, that they succeeded in splitting the Party on three separate occasions, it can also be argued that without them this split may

[43] Interview with Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP: 29 April 2008

have become irrevocable and although much discussion took place on each occasion in terms of elements of the Party becoming permanently separated, this did not happen. While it is too simplistic to argue that these groupings were simply a symptom of, and not a cause of, the splits in each case, (and certainly it is unlikely that any whip who was in office during these times would support this argument) it can be seen that from an historical perspective, that without such groupings the splits could indeed have been irrevocable. Indeed it is interesting, as indeed was indicated previously, that one MP who expressed her view that groupings had a particularly positive role to play in the Party, discussed both the fact that after Margaret Thatcher's resignation in 1990 there were so many factions within the PCP at that time and the fact that she remembers groupings fulfilling a very real role in helping the Party absorb all the factions in a way she felt it would not have been able to have done without them. She believed they had acted as a 'sponge' during this difficult time by absorbing factionalism and discontent and thus enabling MPs 'to get rid of their frustrations'. [44]

[44] Interview with Mrs Eleanor Laing MP: 24 April 2008

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

An assessment of aims

Unofficial parliamentary party groupings have been in existence for as long as the Party itself yet no study has sought to examine them in their entirety and while this study makes no claim to having provided a definitive all encompassing examination, it has sought to be the first to attempt to do so. It has brought together, within its allocated parameters of time, space and reasonable cost, material from a wide and disparate range of primary, secondary and original sources and from this undertaken an historical study which will, it is hoped, form part of the Party's archive and as such be available for present and future generations of those interested in the study of the Conservative Party.

Chapter one laid out five main aims and for the purpose of assessment it is helpful to restate these here. The first of these was to provide a comprehensive list of all unofficial parliamentary party groupings within the Conservative Party from 1830 and from this to provide a glossary of groupings, the second to produce a single bank of information pertaining to these same groupings, the third to provide a table of functions ascribable to groupings, the fourth to assess groupings in an historical context and the fifth, and final aim, to devise a typology of groupings into which past, present and future groups may be placed.

In this final chapter attempts will now be made to assess the extent to which each of these was achieved.

Aim one: a list of groupings

Thus the first aim, the creation of a list of all unofficial parliamentary party groupings within the Conservative Party since 1830, was a considerable task but one which was finally achieved with the results being laid out in Appendix 4. This was considerably larger than expected and indeed the final number certainly served to heighten an already keen interest in such groups. It also served to emphasise how, by virtue of this very number, groupings have endured the test of time throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century and indeed emerged into the twenty first in fine fettle with considerable activity evident amongst a sizeable number. As Philip Norton indicates, the Conservative Party has a long history throughout which it has proved politically resilient and this list revealed how the same can now be said to be true of unofficial parliamentary party groupings. [1]

While the above remains true, this large number of groupings meant that from a practical perspective, and given the fact that this list was to be the basis for all subsequent study, the focus of the thesis would be considerably broader than initially anticipated. This inevitably raised questions as to whether sufficient material could be obtained for all the groups and indeed whether it could be completed on time. With this in mind, consideration was given at this point to set narrower parameters with the post Second World War period in particular considered. However after much deliberation it was decided, in spite of the greater than anticipated scale of the project and the practical attraction of limiting the parameters, to adhere to the original spirit of the undertaking which was an all encompassing study of groupings in their entirety from 1830.

[1] Norton (1996) op. cit., 244

Certainly the greater than expected number of groupings was problematic in that considerable time had then to be spent in further researching each group in turn to ascertain whether each was in fact an unofficial parliamentary grouping. While all the groups included in the draft list appeared initially to be unofficial groupings, it was only after more detailed research that this was not always found to be the case. This said, a vigorous adherence to the definition of unofficial groupings as stated meant that the process although time consuming was by no means insurmountable although it was frustrating when on occasion considerable time was spent in researching a particular group only to find that it necessitated exclusion from study.

In addition to the greater than expected number, two other unexpected aspects of compiling the final list also emerged. The first of these was that despite an expectation that a number of new groupings would be added to the list after interviewing MPs, this proved not to be the case. Considering the already greater than expected number, perhaps this was to be welcomed. Although much information came to light during interviews regarding groupings which were already on the list, and indeed those interviewed were all extremely interested when shown the draft list, only five previously unknown groups were revealed from this source. [2]

The second of these was the fact that the majority of groupings were derived from more recent times. While it was very much hoped that the final list would span three centuries, which indeed it does in general terms, there was a sense that a number of groupings may have got lost in the mists of time. No evidence was found which indicated specifically that this was the case but there was a sense from the research that

[2] The Picadors, Green Chip, the Agricultural Dining Club, the Privy Council and the all-female dining group. A sixth, the 1912 Dining Club, which was thought to be defunct was found to have been rekindled

many groups are relatively short lived and fade over time, often only recorded in personal papers or even political memories or memoirs, and as such if there is a weakness in the list it is that a number of more historic groupings may have slipped through the net.

These comments aside, the first aim was achieved as was the compilation of the alphabetical glossary. The glossary which was developed from the list, and laid out in Appendix 5, provided a résumé of each group. Not only did they together provide a more than adequate basis on which to build the thesis but also, in their own right, they provided the first record of unofficial parliamentary groupings in their entirety within the Conservative Party over one hundred and eighty years.

Aim two: a bank of information

Using Appendix 4 as the starting point, the second aim of the thesis was to provide a bank of information pertaining to those groupings listing within it. Certainly the number of these groups together provided a sound basis on which to build.

In terms of gathering and processing this information, while the above remains true, the time taken was far greater than expected due to the number of groups however in terms of the quality of the information, the rewards were on balance greater than expected. It was uncertain at the outset whether sufficient information would be able to be obtained for all the groups and while in a small number of cases this did prove to be the case, the fear was in general terms thankfully unfounded. Certainly in the majority of instances sufficient information was obtained for most groups to enable the establishment of a meaningful bank of information and indeed the satisfaction in

tracking down details relating to a group after having spent several weeks working through a number of sources was considerable. A rigorous method of researching each grouping applied consistently to each one studied and a similarly consistent approach applied to the processing of this information ensured the second aim was achieved even if the process was at times a lengthy and on occasion frustrating one. Overall it was surprising how, once a routine was established for researching each group, familiarity with research sources aided the process.

This said, some groups were noteworthy for the fact it was impossible to find additional details other than a name mentioned briefly in one newspaper article or political memoir and certainly these few groups proved extremely frustrating subjects. Nonetheless thanks to the kindness of a number of MPs in finding time to agree to an interview, a number of gaps were painstakingly filled often with different individuals filling different gaps at different times. The result was that while some gaps still remain to this day, and it is unlikely that they will ever be filled, a sound body of information was slowly built up relating to each group in turn. This information was then cross-referenced across the spectrum of groups so that on completion it was, for example, possible to examine the origins or the activities of groups on an individual basis or *en masse*.

Some information was, on balance, as expected and served to reinforce what was known or at least suspected although none the less interesting for being so. Thus chapter two, for instance, which included an examination of the organisation of groupings revealed the existence of a wide range of organisational structures from those with an informal structure comprising only one or two key individuals, Nick's Diner with Michael Jack, the 4th July with Eleanor Laing and the No Turning Back Group

with John Redwood for example, to those with a more formal structure such as the European Foundation, for which a Patron, Chairman, International Director, European Director, UK Advisory Board and an International Advisory Board were all integral organisational components. This range was not unexpected. Similarly the fact that as discussed in chapter three, most groups operated primarily around dinners or meetings was to be expected and certainly the publication during the writing up of the thesis by the parliamentary authorities of the list summarising which MPs booked which rooms for which groups was fortuitous in that it helped substantiate many indirect references in this respect.

Other details however were less expected. Thus while the range of organisational structures was predictable, some aspects were surprising and foremost of these was the fact that some groupings actually had a dedicated office such as the Unionist Defence League, the Unionist Free Food League and the Bow Group, while others had administrative and research support with the European Research Group employing its own researcher and, again, the Bow Group, its own administrative support.

Similarly while it was known from the outset that groups had come into being for a variety of reasons, the extent of this variety as revealed in chapter two was surprising with for instance a number emerging as a reaction to one or more grouping already in existence. A wide variety of names was also evident and while some were straightforward others such as the Peacock's Tail, the Glamour Boys, the Snakes and Ladders, the 4th July, Everest, the Pudding Club, Blue Chip, Green Chip and the Picadors were not and indeed contributed to the richness of their history for being so. It was also unexpected that a number were formed by individuals before they entered parliament and interesting that bonds formed outside the parliamentary arena endured

within. Certainly the Anti-Common Market League and Everest survived well beyond their pre-parliamentary origins.

In the same way, while the lifespan of most groups was relatively short, it was remarkable that a significant minority have stood the test of time with, for example, the Agricultural Dining Club and the 1912 Dining Club (although in the case of the latter this was not continuous) the longest standing groupings and the One Nation Group and the Bow Group still in operation almost sixty years after their formation while others such as the 92 Group and the Selsdon Group are not so far behind. Considering the extent of political change that has taken place over these same periods, both intra and extra to the parliamentary arena, it is remarkable that they have prevailed for so long.

It was striking how a number of parliamentarians formed a close bond with a particular group to the extent that his or her membership would in part define their parliamentary identity even if the grouping was not formed by them and if the group continued after they had left parliament. Thus George Gardiner became associated with the 92 Group and more recently Michael Jack with Nick's Diner. What was also striking, for those groups which operated solely within the parliamentary arena, was the degree of consideration which was given by a group in deciding which parliamentarians to ask to join and in turn the consideration given by parliamentarians in deciding which group, if any, to join. Certainly Nick's Diner was typical of many exclusively parliamentary groupings in that all new members required the tacit agreement of all existing members with one dissenting voice being all that was required to 'blackball' a potential member and thus prevent the chairman from inviting the individual concerned to join. The example of Nick's Diner also serves to illustrate the consideration which was given by most MPs in deciding whether to accept an offer of membership. This

was vividly illustrated by Ian Taylor when he discussed the fact that one of the new 2005 intake was asked to join Nick's Diner and that that person would have to give considered thought as to whether or not to accept as he would for then after be viewed as being on the left of the Party.

Similarly he recounted the case of an MP who had initially planned to join the Double-Eight but decided to rescind after she felt it would affect her chances of promotion within a parliamentary party which was at that time not pro-European. It is impossible to say whether if she had made a different decision she would still have received her subsequent promotion. Along the same lines, a small number of MPs interviewed were categorical in their denial that they were not members of Cornerstone even though their names were listed on the Cornerstone website and certainly a number of MPs discussed the fact that they believed that membership of Cornerstone was very closely watched in the whips' office.

Before proceeding to evaluate the third aim, it is worth staying for a moment with the theme of membership in that it was notable that only recently had an all-female dining group been formed. Although they gave themselves no formal name and not all female Conservative MPs found attendance at dinners a worthwhile exercise, Ann Widdecombe and Ann Winterton did not attend (although the latter did attend the first dinner), it was surprising that such a grouping had not formed earlier and certainly it will be interesting to observe whether it continues, and if so to what degree, after the 2010 General Election and indeed if they decide to give themselves a formal name.

Overall then it can be seen how the second aim, of constructing a bank of information pertaining to unofficial groupings, was fulfilled even though it was a

lengthy and at times arduous task. Certainly while a number of preconceptions were realised, a number of surprises were also evident.

Aim three: a table of functions

The third aim, to put together a table of functions pertaining to unofficial parliamentary party groupings, was also achieved and indeed detailed in Table 7. It was retrospectively in many ways the most challenging considering the number and diversity of the groups involved. While the vast majority of the details assimilated in the bank of information were of relevance in one way or another, the interviews with MPs were particularly helpful in that most were able to articulate the functions which the groups fulfilled *as they saw them.* Certainly these interviews were explicitly helpful in teasing out a number of common threads which assisted to a considerable degree in isolating the functions that groupings fulfilled in terms of social roles, policy making and in providing a vehicle for protest. They were also implicit in determining the remaining three functions, namely career pathway, party management and political engagement although, with the exception of internal elections as part of a party management function, MPs interviewed did not generally view the role of groupings in these terms themselves.

From this then, certain roles of groupings were self evident from the outset. Certainly in general terms, the social role of groupings for existing MPs was expected in that groups provided a welcome opportunity to meet with trusted colleagues and friends to discuss matters of concern to those in attendance. As one MP pointed out, the essence of parliament is to talk and groupings provide the perfect medium in which to do this. While there is no doubt that political gossip was a feature of all groupings

which fulfilled a social function, the very essence of the fraternity groupings was more deep-seated than expected not least, as one group chairman indicated, because they allow MPs to fine tune in private political argument and indeed in a broader sense to grow as parliamentarians. Certainly the vast majority of MPs interviewed stressed the value of groupings in this respect in that they were able to openly discuss all manner of political ideas without fear of public redress. This is not to insinuate that discussions were in any way untoward but simply to articulate the extent to which many MPs valued a private arena in which their every word would not be open to public dissection and possible misinterpretation.

From this, it was unexpected how highly most, but not all, new MPs valued the opportunity to get to know parliamentary colleagues from not only their own intake but from others too. Similarly it was notable the extent to which certain ex-MPs and candidates, and indeed those aspiring to be candidates, also valued the opportunity to meet with sitting MPs.

A second role which was largely evident from the outset was, in general terms, that of policy making although it was extremely difficult to prove a direct and categorical causal link. Thus although Direct Democracy, for example, has driven a localist agenda, it was impossible to establish categorically a causal link between this and the Party's localism agenda which came to the forefront in the period preceding the 2010 General Election although there is no doubt in the minds of the key players within this group that this was the case. Certainly a number of other MPs interviewed stated that they felt there was a definite linkage between some elements of party policy and some groupings and a number independently cited Cornerstone and the policies followed by David Cameron with regard to the family and the taxation status of married couples in

the period prior to the 2010 General Election as evidence of this. But again, while there is no doubt that any party leader will seek to assimilate the views of a cross-section of his parliamentary party to some extent, it is impossible to prove a direct causal linkage.

This said, there was greater evidence of the role of groupings in the policy making process in terms of scrutinising legislation and certainly a range of groups were found to orchestrate tactics on the floor of the House against specific legislation and indeed, in the case of Sane Planning, even before the subject matter had reached white paper stage. There was also evidence which suggested that groupings took on the role of an alternative opposition party when the Conservative Party had joined with others to form a coalition as indeed was the case during the First World War. The extent to which this was evident was particularly surprising and it will be interesting to observe if this role is rejuvenated for a number of groups, particularly for those on the right of the Party, following the establishment of a coalition government with the Liberal Democrats after the 2010 General Election.

The third role evident from the outset was that of providing a vehicle for protest against either a specific policy or a general direction in which a leader was taking the Party. Certainly many of the groups which have fulfilled this role have done so in the public domain, and were thus very much 'look at me groups' and therefore this role was not in itself unexpected.

Similarly, with regard to party management, the role of groupings in organising the slate was not unexpected as it was found to be well documented in the research. What were less obvious from the outset were the other elements of the role of party

management. It was certainly surprising how many MPs interviewed articulated the value of groupings in not only providing a social context but through this in providing practical assistance to them as new MPs in helping them assimilate the norms and values and indeed complicated procedures of their new workplace. Similarly it was surprising that groupings could actually be seen in a management of dissent role as the common perception of such groups was that it was more usually groupings themselves which caused the dissent. The view, by more than one MP, that groupings played a key role in actually holding the Party together by managing the dissent within the PCP following Margaret Thatcher's resignation and that the Party would have been torn asunder without them was an original one, certainly to this author.

A further role ascribed to groupings was that of career pathway although it was noticeable that the majority of MPs interviewed did not automatically view groupings in these terms. It was surprising the extent to which some groups and aspiring MPs both sought each other for mutual benefit and certainly once elected, for those MPs who viewed themselves as 'ministerial aspirants' membership of one or more grouping was in many cases seen as integral to success. For one MP who subsequently went on to become prime minister, namely John Major, groupings were a way of consolidating his support within the PCP. For others they formed the basis, or at least part of the basis, for life after the frontbench. It was interesting that more than one MP mentioned Conservative Way Forward in these terms even if they had not previously thought about it from this perspective. Certainly in the period preceding the 2010 General Election the 'Friends' of this particular group (as listed on their website) included two serving shadow frontbenchers in addition to four previous members of the government frontbench and one previous leader.

A final role ascribed to groupings was that of political engagement and informing debate and again it was interesting that although a significant number of groups were found to fulfil this role, no MP interviewed saw groupings in these terms without prompting. Certainly a number of ideas groupings such as the One Nation Group and Direct Democracy have engaged, in addition to the national and parliamentary party, the interested public. Indeed the extent to which some groups reached out to an extra-parliamentary membership whilst still retaining their parliamentary core was considerable. The tactics employed by, for example, the Union Defence League with caravans and lantern lectures and by Direct Democracy with a list of fifteen thousand e-supporters were amongst the biggest surprises of the research in this respect.

Before moving on to the fourth aim, it is interesting to return to the ranking of these functions. Having constructed a table of functions, it was disappointing that the very same number and diversity of groupings which up to this point had provided a sound basis for research, also created difficulties when trying to place them in order of importance. Certainly different MPs saw their own parliamentary role from differing perspectives and thus groupings were impossible to rank on this basis alone. While some MPs, for example, ranked policy making affect as low others ranked it as medium. Their views were also dependent to a large degree on which groups they were a member of. Thus those MPs who were only members of fraternity groupings would view any possible policy making affect in minimal terms while others who were members of ideas or positional groupings would view policy making in a more positive light.

Even putting aside the views of MPs themselves, it was problematic to rank the roles of groupings as the importance of their roles changed in conjunction with the external environment. Thus when the main political parties joined together to form a coalition,

groupings (such as the Unionist Business Committee and the Unionist War Committee for instance) would assume some of the functions of an opposition party in fulfilling a policy making role by scrutinising legislation and in more general terms by holding the government to account.

Similarly in the period leading up to a general election a number of groups, as illustrated by the One Nation Group in the 1950s and Direct Democracy in the first decade of the twenty first century, were found to fulfil a policy making role in terms of introducing ideas onto the policy agenda and indeed subsequently driving these same ideas forward. In the same way, shortly after an election, a range of groups were seen to fulfil a social role in terms of the induction and training of new MPs. Similarly at times of crisis, after for example Margaret Thatcher's resignation, a range of groups were found to act as a vehicle for protest.

Aim four: an historical perspective

The fourth of the five aims was to assess unofficial parliamentary groupings from an historical perspective and if possible from this to evaluate groupings in terms of the existence of any historical consequences. Chapter six sought to do just this by assessing groupings in relation to their external environment in terms of events both within and beyond the Conservative Party itself. In order to make the task a manageable one it was decided to place groupings in an approximate chronological sequence. This chronological categorisation of groupings was detailed in Appendix 8. The appendix was subsequently examined in relation to the external political environment in terms of the state of other political parties at any one time and the political, social and economic agenda from both a national and international

perspective. Groupings were also examined in relation to the state and status of the Party itself over time.

The outcome of the assessment was compelling. As a result unofficial groupings, taken in their entirety, were found to represent a microcosm of not only the chronology of the Party but also of the wider political environment of the last one hundred and eighty years. Thus the introduction of tariff reform, the 1911 Parliament Act, independence for Ireland, Scotland and Wales, India and the countries of Africa, both the First and Second World Wars, the Abyssinian Crisis, the Suez Crisis and more recently debate concerning the future direction of Europe and even reform of the Party itself under the leadership of David Cameron have all resulted in the formation of one or more unofficial grouping. Some groups emerged to support a specific leader and some quite clearly to oppose a specific leader. On occasion, the party whip has even been withdrawn for acting against a leader, as was the case with the Whipless Nine who opposed John Major during the mid 1990s. Internal affairs of the Conservative Party alone resulted in the formation of a number of groups over time from the Fourth Party in the 1880s to CChange in the 1990s. Even the rise of other national political parties, with the election of the Labour Party (in 1945 and 1950, in 1964 and 1974 and from 1997) and similarly other minor political parties, with the Scottish National Party in the 1970s for example, have all been reflected in the creation of new groups. Thus a study of the development of all these groups is also a study of both the history of the Conservative Party and the wider contemporary political landscape.

While this historical link between the path of history and groupings was an interesting one, it was also interesting to attempt to assess groupings in terms of any consequences they fulfilled from an historical perspective. While some groupings did

not attempt to affect outcomes in any way, others did. Certainly a number of groups over time have a taken a position on a range of issues and tried to change the direction of the Party along those lines. The Selsdon Group and the Economic Dining Club have, for instance, 'kept the home fires burning' for economic liberalism at a time when the general direction of the Party has been towards corporate interventionism and similarly groupings such as Mainstream and the One Nation Group have strived for one nation conservatism at times of economic and social liberalism, but did they actually bring about change single-handed? It is impossible to say.

Similarly a number of groups, sometimes independently and sometimes not, have over time made life extremely problematic for a number of Party leaders and indeed a number of these leaders were forced into resigning at a time not necessarily of their own choice. Certainly while Northcote had to contend with the Fourth Party, Balfour was faced with the Halsbury, the Confederacy and the Reveille, Eden with the Suez Group, Heath with the Selsdon and Economic Dining Club and Major with a raft of anti-European groupings. It is nonetheless impossible to prove a direct causal link. Certainly these groups made life difficult for the leaders but would they have left office if these groups had not existed? Would Macmillan have been made prime minister if the Suez Group had not objected to other contenders for the job? It is impossible to say.

What is possible to say is that groupings, by bringing together a number of like-minded parliamentarians, have formed an important part of a movement in any one direction at any one time and as such have played a significant role in helping to facilitate the final outcome.

Aim five: a typology of groupings

The fifth, and last aim, of the thesis was to devise a typology within which all groupings (past, present and future) could be placed and although there was a degree of uncertainty from the outset whether the research would produce material of sufficient quantity and quality to make this possible, the concern proved unfounded and it was indeed possible, after due consideration of the material in all the preceding chapters, to put together a quadri-typology of groupings which indeed was detailed in Table 8. Once this typology had been devised, it was then possible to place groupings from Appendix 4 into each of the four final categories as indeed Appendix 10 illustrates.

It is worth stressing the value of material gained from interview for this particular aspect of the thesis. Thus, for example, it was the high value placed on membership of certain groupings by nearly all those interviewed as an opportunity for trusted discourse which gave rise to 'fraternity' groupings and certainly in these instances the groups were so much more than simply 'a dining club' to those involved. To use the term 'dining club' as many have done to date, was to understate and undervalue their purpose.

It was initially problematic to ascertain the most efficient basis on which to build the typology and as such it was helpful to examine the existing typologies devised by Polsby and Mezey. Even though these were compiled in relation to legislatures rather than unofficial groupings the underlying principles were the same in that both sought to devise an all encompassing basis into which all legislatures could be placed as indeed did this thesis for groupings.

The process in this case however was complicated to a degree by the fact that it was

evident from the research the vastly different characteristics of groups in terms of their visibility, not only within parliament but also beyond and by the fact that there was no overall consistency within each type of group in this respect. Thus while it was impossible to include this within the classification process itself, it was desired to acknowledge this difference within the typology to some degree. With this in mind, it was decided to include a two-dimensional approach to each type of group which would account for the 'visibility' of groups depending on the extent to which they were 'hideaway' or 'look at me'. Thus the range of visibility which existed within each of the four categories of grouping could now be reflected in the typology and indeed this was illustrated in Appendix 10.

The first of the groups isolated was that of fraternity groupings. As indicated above, many of these groups are traditionally recognisable as dining clubs and indeed many operate on this basis. However one of the surprises of the research was the value that many MPs put on their membership of such groups. Certainly social dining was one aspect of this value and thus in many ways these groups could in effect simply be named social groupings rather than dining clubs. Certainly such groups have traditionally been deemed to be raucous affairs embellished with political gossip and intrigue and even today there is a small element of this. However this reputation serves to under play the value which MPs placed on such groups and indeed was found to be considerably less than the popular perception would dictate. Thus the value to a significant number of those MPs interviewed was more than simply an opportunity to dine and socialise. Often, but not always, members would be like-minded but always held together with a common bond, if only the fact that they all were members of the same intake, but most importantly they would meet on a strictly private basis. Certainly many MPs felt this was key to their value in a professional environment

notorious for competition and back-stabbing. Thus the term 'fraternity' summed up exactly the position they held.

The second type of grouping was that of ideas groupings and although on balance not as prolific as fraternity groupings, was notable not least for the degree of visibility which such groups held. Considering the competition in terms of both those with official links to the Party (CRD, CPC, CPF, backbench subject committees and leadership driven policy committees for example) and unofficial links (think-tanks such as Policy Exchange and the Centre for Social Justice) their existence is in itself significant. Certainly a number of ideas groupings have proved to be particularly resilient and indeed the fact that the Bow Group and the One Nation Group, each formed almost sixty years ago, are both still in existence today is an impressive achievement.

Two particular groupings stood out in this category. The first, namely the Bow Group, is notable for remaining as active today as it ever was and certainly while others such as the One Nation Group continue to exist, none has endured to quite the same extent. Through its regular magazine, *Crossbow*, and a myriad of policy committees producing research papers which are frequently reported in the national media it continues to produce a stream of ideas which are subsequently discussed both within and beyond the parliamentary arena. Indeed many of its committee members, and certainly a succession of its chairmen, continue to this day to successfully enter the parliamentary arena as MPs. The second grouping which stood out in this category was Direct Democracy. The extent to which it utilised electronic communications and indeed its work rate in terms of the number of publications for its life span set it apart from all other ideas groupings.

The third and fourth classes of groupings which emerged from the research were those of positional and protest groupings. In terms of the first of these, it became evident fairly early on in the research that a number of groups existed in order to uphold a particular spectrum of views within the PCP and indeed this view was reinforced by a number of those interviewed. Thus these MPs, and it was largely those who had served for more than one parliament, saw a number of groupings in this light. While initial consideration was given to categorising groups as left, right or central it soon became evident that the left-right continuum so altered over time depending on where the central thrust of the Party was at any one point that it made any categorisation on this basis meaningless. Thus it proved far more effective to bring such groups together under one umbrella rather than differentiating between them on the basis of a moving foundation of left or right.

The fourth and final category of grouping was that of protest groups and by far the greatest number of groups were found to exist in this category in the form of both occasional protest groups and mass protest groups. Certainly in terms of the latter, research revealed the extent to which a number of groups over time have resorted to a range of actions, with the Union Defence League standing out as a notable example in this respect, derived to a large extent from Britain's place in the world. Also notable in this respect were those groupings associated with free trade and Europe as was the extent to which these particular groups opened a rift in the parliamentary, and indeed national, party. The transition from Empire to Commonwealth to Europe has over time resulted in a considerable number of protest groupings within the Party and it is interesting that the most vociferous of these have been those composed largely, but not exclusively, of the die-hards of each parliamentary generation.

Overall then the study was a revealing one and it is sincerely hoped that the reader will find it of interest. Indeed a similar study may bear repeating in respect of other political parties. Certainly while there were disappointments in that groupings could not be directly and causally related to policy to the extent which was anticipated from the outset and there was a sense that a number of historic groups may have got lost in the mists of time, there were a number of salient and indeed unexpected finds. There were, for instance, more groups then was initially expected and some of these were particularly memorable for the extent to which they were driven to achieve their aims; again the Union Defence League was one such example. Similarly the extent to which MPs valued the friendship, privacy and trust offered by their fraternity group colleagues, the extent to which these same groupings allowed MPs to develop as parliamentarians and the extent to which groupings fulfilled a number and range of functions.

As the thesis is prepared for submission, the Party is embarking on a period of uncertainty as it forms a coalition with the Liberal Democrats and there is a sense that the dual capacity of groupings to act as a vehicle of protest while also keeping members together may yet prove to be their most enduring.

Final thoughts ...

Thus the study has revealed much about unofficial groupings but by so doing, it has also revealed much about the nature of the Conservative Party itself. While the study has travelled through the history of the Party, often at great pace covering considerable ground in any one chapter, there is very much a sense of inevitability that history will repeat itself and that this study rather than being the start, middle and end of the story

for unofficial groupings is in effect just a snapshot in time. Certainly there is a prevailing sense that groupings within the Party are here for the duration and that they will remain an integral part of the Party, whether active or latent at any one point in time, for as long as the Party is itself in existence and that while members of current groupings may feel that they are the future they really are only a small part of a far bigger picture.

Thus the die-hards will always protest, the right will always seek a right-wing position for the Party and the left, a left-wing position, the centre will always try to moderate, the intellectual will always produce new ideas, new MPs will always seek security and reassurance in each others company, albeit sometimes briefly before moving on in the Party, and any number of parliamentarians will seek friendship and opportunities for gossip and discussion around a dining table whether it be for breakfast, lunch, supper or dinner.

The Party has outlived wars, coalitions, successes and disasters at home and abroad and an array of individual leaders and prime ministers and this study has shown that this is to a considerable degree because of and not despite the myriad of groupings which exist within it. Groupings have certainly at times ripped the Party in half, sometimes to the extent to which contemporary commentary believed it would never recover, yet they have also bound the Party together when it seemed as if it would never be possible for it to be so and indeed perhaps this capacity to keep members, and subsequently the Party, together is where their greatest value lies. They have distanced the Party from the electorate yet they have also sought to reconnect the Party with the electorate when it has become detached from it. They have contributed to election wins and election losses. They have seen MPs elected and deselected. They have even helped contribute

to the war effort in two world wars. They have been assisted at times by the national party and even by those outside the Party who possess an active interest in politics. They have provided good food and good company and good discussion for generations of Conservative parliamentarians and good material for generations of political journalists. When the Party moves to the right, they provide a balance by keeping alive the left and similarly when the Party moves to the left. They are as important now as they have ever been for the vitality and diversity of the Party.

Conservative parliamentarians representing all strands of political thought must be given the freedom to meet together and be heard together, to protest together and to produce ideas together. The Party has existed for as long as it has because it has succeeded in incorporating and assimilating a broad spectrum of views and individuals holding those views and there is no doubt that groupings have played an important, if not pivotal, part in this. Without them the very nature of the Party would not be what it is today indeed without them, there may not be a Party. Groupings are not just part of the Party, they are the very essence of the Party itself.

Appendix 1:

Standardised question format utilised for interviews with MPs from 2005 intake

2005 INTAKE: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

MR ROBERT GOODWILL MP, WEDNESDAY 4 JUNE 2008, 10AM
1, PARLIAMENT STREET, WESTMINSTER

Good morning and thank you for agreeing to participate in the research.

As you will be aware from the notes which I sent you, my thesis examines unofficial parliamentary groupings within the Conservative Party and it is this subject which I would like to discuss with you.

Again, from the notes, just to recap and to make sure that you know, today's interview will be digitally recorded and will be in two sections; each of which should take approximately 15mins depending on what and how much you wish to say.

The first section comprises general questions relating to groupings from your perspective as a member of the 2005 intake.

The second section will be more specific and relate to any one group/ s which you may be a member of or have a knowledge of and which we will talk a little bit more about in section one.

Do you have any questions before we start?

So if you're happy, we'll begin.

FOR THE RECORDER: INTERVIEW WITH MR ROBERT GOODWILL MP, WEDNESDAY 4 JUNE 2008, 10AM, 1 PARLIAMENT STREET, WESTMINSTER

Section One

General Questions

The first few questions will relate specifically to the fact that you are a member of the 2005 intake so I would be grateful if you could answer from this perspective:

1.As part of the new intake of MPs in 2005, do you know of any group/ groups which have been formed specifically by the 2005 intake? (Could I perhaps ask you some questions about this group in section 2?) The Picadors? Green Chip?

2.From your time as a PPC prior to 2005, do you know of any group which has actively recruited PPCs as members with view to their joining them at Westminster when elected? If so, how was this done?

3.Do you know of any member/s of the 2005 intake who have either secured promotion or been prevented from promotion as a result of being a member of an unofficial group/s?

4.Do you consider your own promotion in anyway attributable to membership of any particular group?

5.It may be too soon after the 2005 GE to answer this question exactly, but do you know of any member of the 2005 intake who has sought a position within an unofficial grouping as a substitute for not having achieved promotion?

6.What is your general attitude towards unofficial parliamentary groupings in the Conservative Party and is this attitude any different from that which you held when first elected to parliament in 2005?

7.What roles, or if you like purposes, if any do you believe unofficial groupings fulfil within the parliamentary arena? (e.g. career enhancement of MPs, legislative affect in terms of either introducing policy ideas or scrutinising existing policy, safety valve at times of crisis within the Party or reaching out to those outside the PCP to mobilise and/or educate?

8.The role I am most interested in from the above is policy affect. From what you have said above, would you consider it to be low, medium or significant? Please give any examples you can think of?

9.I understand that, at least in the past, there has been at least one unofficial grouping which I understand to be a dining club exclusively for the whips' office. As an ex-opposition whip, do you know whether one or more such groups are still operational today?

10.As a shadow minister, do you know of any groups which are organised and attended by either shadow ministers or ex-shadow ministers?

11.Do you know of any groups which in the past have been organised and attended by Conservative ministers?

12.As an ex-MEP and Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group of MEPs, were you aware of such groupings within the European parliamentary arena?

13.Would you be kind enough to look through this list which represents all of the unofficial groupings I have come across to date. Do you have any knowledge of any other grouping/s not on this list?

Are you a member of, or have you any knowledge of any group on this list or indeed not on this list which I could now go on to ask you some questions in relation to?

These questions relate to meetings, activities, members and so on. It may be that you would be able to answer these questions yourself today or perhaps you may know who is secretary to this group who deals with the more administrative side of things and who would be happy to answer these questions in a separate interview.

Section Two
Group specific questions

Roles/ Policy affect

1.We talked above in general terms about the roles, or if you like purposes, you believe unofficial groupings fulfil within the parliamentary arena. Is there anything you would like to add to this in relation to this specific group especially in relation to policy affect?

From what you have said above, would you consider it to be low, medium or significant? Please give any examples you can think of?

2.We also talked about whether you believe membership of a group has any material affect on an individual's career. Is there anything you would like to add to this in relation to this specific group? (e.g. is membership a platform for PPCs aspiring to become MPs or ministers, is it a platform for demoted or ex-ministers, has membership ever prohibited promotion and has membership ever been preferred to promotion?)

Organisation

1.When and why was this grouping formed?

2.Who were the founding members?

3.Why was the grouping so named?

4.What organisational structure does the group have? Does it for example have a chairman, a ruling body, sub-committees and how are these positions allocated. Also does it have any other branches at home or abroad?

5.Does the group have a dedicated office? In addition to the committee above, is any one person or persons responsible for the administration of its affairs?

6.How is the group funded?

7. In terms of its membership, it would be very helpful if you could provide a little more detail. For example, how do members join or leave the group, are potential members ever blackballed, how many members are there, are meetings open to men and women. Also is there any membership overlap with other groups?

8. What are the group's aims and beliefs and are these codified (written down)?

9. Where would you place it on a political spectrum in terms of a right and left-wing continuum of Conservative Party politics?

Activities

1.Could you tell me about meetings of the group, as distinct from any dinners. For example do you know where and when the first meeting was held? How often and where have subsequent meetings been held? Is there an agenda and/or minutes, are there any joint meetings with other groups, any speakers at meetings?

2.Could you now tell me about dinners of the group. Do you have dinners and if so when and where, are there any speakers, do you have an annual dinner?

3.Do any other social events take place? If so what are they?

4.Have any open debates/ discussion sessions or organised lectures/ seminars and conferences ever taken place?

5.What part, if any, does your grouping play at Party conference?

6.What part, if any, does your group play in a general election/ Euro election?

7.Has your group ever published any books, journal articles or pamphlets?

8.Does your grouping use the internet for any activity? For example, website, blogs, email updates to members, on-line polling

9.Has your grouping ever undertaken any steps to market its activities, with e.g. issuing of press and news releases, writing of letters to papers, advertising itself and/or its events

10.From this, would you consider your group to be a 'look at me' or a 'hideaway group'?

11.Is your group involved in any other activity other than those already mentioned? (e.g. fact finding trips, funding of campaigns/ other groups)

Relations with others

1.Would you say that relations within your group are generally harmonious or not harmonious?

2.Does your group have any relations with any former members of the group?

3.Does your group have any relations with any aspect of the British parliament? For example, select committees, Conservative backbench committees, all-party parliamentary committees?

4.What relations if any has or does your group have with previous and/or current leaders of the Conservative Party?

5.What relations if any does your grouping have with shadow/ ministers or whips?

6.What relations, if any, does the group have with the Conservative Party in terms of Conservative MPs, Peers (who are not members) or grass root supporters/ members other than group members? Does it have any relations with CRD/ central office?

7.Do you have any contact with any other political parties or members of any other national legislature?

8.Does the group have any relations with anyone else such as civil servants or academics?

9.Finally, is there anything else you would like to add which we have not covered.

Thank you so much. I am most indebted to you for your help. You have been extremely helpful and very eloquent in your replies.

Appendix 2:

Standardised question format utilised for interviews with female MPs

FEMALE MPs: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

MRS ELEANOR LAING MP, THURSDAY 24 APRIL 2008, 5PM
MEMBERS' TEA ROOM

Good afternoon and thank you for agreeing to participate in the research.

As you will be aware from the notes which I sent you, my thesis examines unofficial parliamentary groupings within the Conservative Party and it is this subject which I would like to discuss with you.

Again, from the notes, just to recap and to make sure that you know, today's interview will be digitally recorded and will be in two sections; each of which should take approximately 15mins depending on what and how much you wish to say.

The first section comprises general questions relating to groupings from your perspective as a female Conservative MP and your particular perspective as a member of the 1997 intake.

The second section will be more specific and relate to any one group/ s which you may be a member of or have a knowledge of and which we will talk a little bit more about in section one.

Do you have any questions before we start?

So if you're happy, we'll begin.

FOR THE RECORDER: INTERVIEW WITH MRS ELEANOR LAING MP, THURSDAY 24 APRIL 2008, 5PM, MEMBERS' TEA ROOM

Section One
General Questions

The first few questions will relate specifically to the fact that you are a female Conservative MP and a member of the 1997 intake so I would be grateful if you could answer from these perspectives:

1.Do you know of any grouping with an all female membership? (Could I perhaps ask you some questions about this group?)

2.From my research it would appear that unofficial groupings have historically been run largely by men for men. Would you say that this is still the case today and if so is this due to the fact that women constitute only 9% of the PCP or that membership of such groupings is simply a 'man's thing'?

3.Do you know of any grouping/s which have in the past or do currently blackball or exclude women in any way either formally or informally?

4.As we have said, as the vast majority of Conservative MPs are male, it is inevitable that many groups are likely to be predominantly male. Do you know of any groups which have attempted to remedy this by specifically inviting female Conservative MPs to join?

Turning now to the fact that you are a member of the 1997 intake:

5.As part of the new intake of MPs in 1997, do you know of any group/ groups which have been formed specifically by the '97 intake?

6.From your time as a PPC prior to 1997, do you know of any groups which have actively recruited PPCs as members with view to their joining them at Westminster when elected and, if so, how was this done?

7. Do you know of any member/s of the 1997 intake who have either secured promotion or been prevented from promotion as a result of being a member of an unofficial group/s?

8. Do you know of any member of the 1997 intake who has sought a position within an unofficial grouping as a substitute for not achieving promotion?

9. What is your general attitude towards unofficial parliamentary groupings in the Conservative Party and is this attitude any different from that which you held when first elected to parliament?

10.What roles, or if you like purposes, if any do you believe unofficial groupings fulfil within the parliamentary arena? (e.g. career enhancement of MPs, legislative affect in terms of either introducing policy ideas or scrutinising existing policy, do they act as a safety valve at times of crisis within the Party or a role to play in reaching out to those outside the PCP to mobilise and educate?)

11.The role I am most interested in from the above is policy affect. From what you have said above, would you consider it to be low, medium or significant? Please give any examples you can think of?

12.Would you be kind enough to look through this list which represents all of the unofficial groupings I have come across to date. Do you have any knowledge of any other grouping/s not on this list?

Are you a member of, or have you any knowledge of, any group on this list or indeed not on this list which I could now go on to ask you some questions in relation to?

These questions relate to meetings, activities, members and so on. It may be that you would be able to answer these questions yourself today or perhaps you may know who is secretary to this group who deals with the more administrative side of things and who would be happy to answer these questions in a separate interview.

Section Two
Group specific questions

Roles/ Policy affect

1.We talked above in general terms about the roles, or if you like purposes, you believe unofficial groupings fulfil within the parliamentary arena. Is there anything you would like to add to this in relation to this specific group especially in relation to policy affect?

From what you have said above, would you consider it to be low, medium or significant? Please give any examples you can think of?

2.We also talked about whether you believe membership of a group has any material affect on an individual's career. Is there anything you would like to add to this in relation to this specific group? (e.g. is membership a platform for PPCs aspiring to become MPs or ministers, is it a platform for demoted or ex-ministers, has membership ever prohibited promotion and has membership ever been preferred to promotion?)

Organisation

1.When and why was this grouping formed?

2.Who were the founding members?

3.Why was the grouping so named?

4.What organisational structure does the group have? Does it for example have a chairman, a ruling body, sub-committees and how are these positions allocated. Also does it have any other branches at home or abroad?

5.Does the group have a dedicated office? In addition to the committee above, is any one person or persons responsible for the administration of its affairs?

6.How is the group funded?

7. In terms of its membership, it would be very helpful if you could provide a little more detail. For example, how do members join or leave the group, are potential members ever blackballed, how many members are there, are meetings open to men and women. Also is there any membership overlap with other groups?

8. What are the group's aims and beliefs and are these codified (written down)?

9. Where would you place it on a political spectrum in terms of a right and left-wing continuum of Conservative party politics?

Activities

1.Could you tell me about meetings of the group, as distinct from any dinners. For example do you know where and when the first meeting was held? How often and where have subsequent meetings been held? Is there an agenda and/or minutes, are there any joint meetings with other groups, any speakers at meetings?

2.Could you now tell me about dinners of the group. Do you have dinners and if so when and where, are there any speakers, do you have an annual dinner?

3.Do any other social events take place? If so what are they?

4.Have any open debates/ discussion sessions or organised lectures/ seminars and conferences ever taken place?

5.What part, if any, does your grouping play at Party conference?

6.What part, if any, does your group play in a general election/ Euro election?

7.Has your group ever published any books, journal articles or pamphlets?

8.Does your grouping use the internet for any activity? For example, website, blogs, email updates to members, on-line polling

9.Has your grouping ever undertaken any steps to market its activities, with e.g. issuing of press and news releases, writing of letters to papers, advertising itself and/or its events

10.From this, would you consider your group to be a 'look at me' or a 'hideaway group'?

11.Is your group involved in any other activity other than those already mentioned? (e.g. fact finding trips, funding of campaigns/ other groups)

Relations with others

1.Would you say that relations within your group are generally harmonious or not harmonious?

2.Does your group have any relations with any former members of the group?

3.Does your group have any relations with any aspect of the British parliament? For example, select committees, Conservative backbench committees, all-party parliamentary committees?

4.What relations if any has or does your group have with previous and/or current leaders of the Conservative Party?

5.What relations if any does your grouping have with shadow/ ministers or whips?

6.What relations, if any, does the group have with the Conservative Party in terms of Conservative MPs, peers (who are not members) or grass root supporters/ members other than group members? Does it have any relations with CRD/ central office?

7.Do you have any contact with any other political parties or members of any other national legislature?

8.Does the group have any relations with anyone else such as civil servants or academics?

9.Finally, is there anything else you would like to add which we have not covered.

Thank you so much. I am most indebted to you for your help. You have been extremely helpful and very eloquent in your replies

Appendix 3:

Standardised question format utilised for interviews with other MPs

OTHER MPs: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

MR IAN TAYLOR MBE MP, THURSDAY 24 APRIL 2008, 11AM
PORTCULLIS HOUSE, WESTMINSTER

Good morning and thank you for agreeing to participate in the research.

As you will be aware from the notes which I sent you, my thesis examines unofficial parliamentary groupings within the Conservative Party and it is this subject which I would like to discuss with you.

Again, from the notes, just to recap and to make sure that you know, today's interview will be digitally recorded and will be in two sections; each of which should take approximately 15mins depending on what and how much you wish to say.

The first section comprises general questions relating to groupings from your perspective as a long serving MP and member of the 1987 intake.

The second section will be more specific and relate to any one group/ s which you may be a member of or have a knowledge of and which we will talk a little bit more about in section one.

Do you have any questions before we start?

So if you're happy, we'll begin.

FOR THE RECORDER: INTERVIEW WITH MR IAN TAYLOR MP, THURSDAY 24 APRIL 2008, 11AM, PORTCULLIS HOUSE

Section One
General Questions

The first few questions will relate specifically to the fact that you are a member of the 1987 intake so I would be grateful if you could answer from this perspective:

1.As part of the new intake of MPs in 1987, do you know of any group/ groups which have been formed specifically by the '87 intake? (Could I perhaps ask/ send you some questions about this group in section 2?)

2.From your time as a PPC prior to 1987, do you know of any groups which have actively recruited PPCs as members with view to their joining them at Westminster when elected and, if so, how was this done?

3. Do you know of any member/s of the 1987 intake who have either secured promotion or been prevented from promotion as a result of being a member of an unofficial group/s?

4. Do you know of any member of the 1987 intake who has sought a position within an unofficial grouping as a substitute for not achieving promotion?

5. What is your general attitude towards unofficial parliamentary groupings in the Conservative Party and is this attitude any different from that which you held when first elected to Parliament?

6.What roles, or if you like purposes, if any do you believe unofficial groupings fulfil within the parliamentary arena? (e.g. career enhancement of MPs, legislative affect in terms of either introducing policy ideas or scrutinising existing policy, do they act as a safety valve at times of crisis within the Party or a role to play in reaching out to those outside the PCP to mobilise and educate?)

7.The role I am most interested in from the above is policy affect. From what you have said above, would you consider it to be low, medium or significant? Please give any examples you can think of?

8.Would you be kind enough to look through this list which represents all of the unofficial groupings I have come across to date. Do you have any knowledge of any other grouping/s not on this list?

Are you a member of, or have you any knowledge of, any group on this list or indeed not on this list which I could now go on to ask you some questions in relation to?

These questions relate to meetings, activities, members and so on. It may be that you would be able to answer these questions yourself today or perhaps you may know who is secretary to this group who deals with the more administrative side of things and who would be happy to answer these questions in a separate interview.

Section Two
Group specific questions

Roles/ Policy affect

1.We talked above in general terms about the roles, or if you like purposes, you believe unofficial groupings fulfil within the parliamentary arena. Is there anything you would like to add to this in relation to this specific group especially in relation to policy affect?

From what you have said above, would you consider it to be low, medium or significant? Please give any examples you can think of?

2.We also talked about whether you believe membership of a group has any material affect on an individual's career. Is there anything you would like to add to this in relation to this specific group? (e.g. is membership a platform for PPCs aspiring to become MPs or ministers, is it a platform for demoted or ex-ministers, has membership ever prohibited promotion and has membership ever been preferred to promotion?)

Organisation

1.When and why was this grouping formed?

2.Who were the founding members?

3.Why was the grouping so named?

4.What organisational structure does the group have? Does it for example have a chairman, a ruling body, sub-committees and how are these positions allocated. Also does it have any other branches at home or abroad?

5.Does the group have a dedicated office? In addition to the committee above, is any one person or persons responsible for the administration of its affairs?

6.How is the group funded?

7. In terms of its membership, it would be very helpful if you could provide a little more detail. For example, how do members join or leave the group, are potential members ever blackballed, how many members are there, are meetings open to men and women. Also is there any membership overlap with other groups?

8. What are the group's aims and beliefs and are these codified (written down)?

9. Where would you place it on a political spectrum in terms of a right and left wing continuum of Conservative Party politics?

Activities

1.Could you tell me about meetings of the group, as distinct from any dinners. For example do you know where and when the first meeting was held? How often and where have subsequent meetings been held? Is there an agenda and/or minutes, are there any joint meetings with other groups, any speakers at meetings?

2.Could you now tell me about dinners of the group. Do you have dinners and if so when and where, are there any speakers, do you have an annual dinner?

3.Do any other social events take place? If so what are they?

4.Have any open debates/ discussion sessions or organised lectures/ seminars and conferences ever taken place?

5.What part, if any, does your grouping play at Party conference?

6.What part, if any, does your group play in a general election/ Euro election?

7.Has your group ever published any books, journal articles or pamphlets?

8.Does your grouping use the internet for any activity? For example, website, blogs, email updates to members, on-line polling

9.Has your grouping ever undertaken any steps to market its activities, with e.g. issuing of press and news releases, writing of letters to papers, advertising itself and/or its events

10.From this, would you consider your group to be a 'look at me' or a 'hideaway group'?

11.Is your group involved in any other activity other than those already mentioned? (e.g. fact finding trips, funding of campaigns/ other groups)

Relations with others

1.Would you say that relations within your group are generally harmonious or not harmonious?

2.Does your group have any relations with any former members of the group?

3.Does your group have any relations with any aspect of the British parliament? For example, select committees, Conservative backbench committees, all-party parliamentary committees?

4.What relations if any has or does your group have with previous and/or current leaders of the Conservative Party?

5.What relations if any does your grouping have with shadow/ ministers or whips?

6.What relations, if any, does the group have with the Conservative Party in terms of Conservative MPs, peers (who are not members) or grass root supporters/ members other than group members? Does it have any relations with CRD/central office?

7.Do you have any contact with any other political parties or members of any other national legislature?

8.Does the group have any relations with anyone else such as civil servants or academics?

9.Finally, is there anything else you would like to add which we have not covered.

Thank you so much. I am most indebted to you for your help. You have been extremely helpful and very eloquent in your replies.

Appendix 4:

List of unofficial parliamentary party groupings within the Conservative Party from 1830

A Better Choice

Action Centre for Europe

Active Backbenchers Committee

Agricultural Dining Club

Anti-Common Market League

Better Off Out

Blue Chip

Bonar Law Club

Bow Group

British League for the Support of Ulster and the Union (also known as the League for the Support of Ulster and the Union)

Budget Protest League

Burke Club

CChange

Centre Forward

Charter Movement

Churchill Group

Confederacy

Conservative Action for Electoral Reform (CAER)

Conservative Group for Europe

Conservative Philosophy Group

Conservative Way Forward

Conservatives Against a Federal Europe (CAFÉ)

Cornerstone

December Club (also known as the 1936 Club)

Direct Democracy

Dirty Dozen

Double-Eight

Dresden

Economic Dining Club

Eden/ Amery Group (also known as the Glamour Boys and the Eden Group)

Empire Industries Association Parliamentary Committee

European Forum

European Foundation

European Reform Group

European Research Group

Everest

Forward Look Committee

4th July

Fourth Party

Fresh Start (also known as the Jay Group)

Friends of Bruges

Friends of Maastricht

Green Chip

Guy Fawkes

Halsbury

Imperial Unionist Association (also known as the Imperial Unionist Committee)

India Defence Committee

Industrial Group (also known as the Forty Thieves)

Inter-Governmental Conference Monitoring Group (IGC Monitoring Group)

Lollards

Macleod Group

Mainstream

Monday Club

Monday Night Cabal

Nick's Diner

1900 Group

1912 Dining Club

1922 Committee (early years)

1970 Group (also known as Derek's Diner)

92 Group (also known as the Black Hand Gang)

No Turning Back Group

One Nation Group

Peacock's Tail

Picadors

Positive European Group (also known as the Positive Europeans and the Positive Group for Europe)

Pressure for Economic and Social Toryism (PEST)

Privy Council

Progress Trust

Pudding Club

Reveille

Sane Planning

Scottish Thistle Group (also known as the Thistle Group)

Selsdon Group

Snakes and Ladders

Social Tory Action Group (STAG)

Standard Bearers

Suez Group

Tariff Reform League

Third Term Group

Tory Reform Committee

Tory Reform Group

Union Defence League

Union Flag Group

Unionist Agricultural Committee

Unionist Business Committee

Unionist Free Food League (also known as the Free Food League)

Unionist Free Trade Club

Unionist Organisation Committee

Unionist Social Reform Committee (also known as the Group)

Unionist War Committee (also known as the Unionist Parliamentary Committee and the Unionist Reconstruction Committee)

Upstairs Club

Wednesday Club

Whipless Nine

YMCA

Young England Movement

Young Unionist Group

Appendix 5:

Alphabetical glossary of unofficial parliamentary party groupings within the Conservative Party from 1830

A Better Choice: A relatively new but short-lived and very visible protest group launched in 2005 to fight against proposals to remove the voting rights for the party leader from grass root members. Focusing on securing support from MPs and senior activists, it succeeded in drawing on support from within the parliamentary party, John Hayes was an early supporter, and claimed to have the active support of more than one hundred constituency chairmen together with £50 000 from backers. Led by Barry Legg, it disbanded after the above proposals were dropped although Legg subsequently indicated that funds remaining from the campaign could help to fund legal challenges against those rejected as a result of David Cameron's A-list policy for candidate selection

Action Centre for Europe: A pro-European protest grouping with some degree of visibility established after the 1994 European Election by Michael Welsh, a former Tory MEP, to counteract a number of Euro-sceptic groupings within the PCP and to ensure full account was taken by John Major of the pro-European viewpoint. While drawing its support largely from both Houses, a number of well known businesses were also active supporters. On one occasion sponsorship of £40 000 was provided to fund a research project to study the impact of a single currency. Active parliamentary supporters included Willie Whitelaw, Ken Clarke and Geoffrey Howe. Published a number of reports and pamphlets

Active Backbenchers Committee: A semi-visible protest grouping, formed in 1942 by Conservative MPs with the aim of scrutinising the government following the increase of powers awarded to it as a result of the Second World War. Certainly the government now had greater powers than ever before and many MPs recognised the importance of

their role in monitoring these and most importantly, overseeing war expenditure. Its role was seen as symbiotic to, and not in competition with, a number of steps taken by the House itself for the same purpose; namely the introduction, and reorganisation, of committees to keep the government under scrutiny. Younger Conservative MPs predominated amongst its founding and most active supporters and members included John Boyd-Carpenter, Peter Thorneycroft, David Eccles, Harry Legge-Bourke and Walter Bromley-Davenport

Agricultural Dining Club: A time honoured fraternity grouping with very low visibility, comprised predominantly of Conservative peers, with a lesser number of MPs, who have an interest in land and or agriculture and who meet for dinner and discussion regarding agricultural matters. There is no wider political purpose. Very little known as to its history except that it is believed to have been founded in 1792. Approximately thirty to thirty five members meet for dinner once or twice a year

Anti-Common Market League: A highly visible anti-European protest grouping, formed in 1961 to oppose Britain's first application to join the EEC. Up until this time, opposition to Europe was of a more general nature but with the specific proposals for entry to the EEC, opponents were given a target and responded accordingly. Thus the Conservative Party formed the League and the Labour Party, the Committee for the Five Safeguards on the Common Market. While initial membership was largely parliamentary, support from within parliament waned as members retired and other groups emerged and membership was subsequently widened. Generational renewal meant that it was largely superseded by Fresh Start and other anti-European groupings formed in the 1990s. Up until recently it published its own website although this is now non-existent. It had published a quarterly newsletter, entitled *Britain,* available online since 1999. It remained in dormant existence, although latterly renamed itself Get Britain Out, until recently when it disappeared from the political radar. Richard Body was its last President

Better Off Out: A highly visible protest grouping launched in 2005 drawing support from both the PCP and grass roots. While its *alma mater* was The Freedom Association it soon became an independent group. It was formed 'to make the positive, constructive case for Britain leaving the EU' and counts MPs such as Philip Davies, peers such as Norman Tebbit, MEPs such as Roger Helmer and MSPs such as Brian Monteith amongst its membership. Is very active and well supported on the Party conference fringe. Initially given a free rein by David Cameron, he has since made it clear that membership is not synonymous with promotion to the frontbench. The group publishes its own website at http://www.tfa.net/betteroffout/

Blue Chip: A semi-visible fraternity grouping formed by members of the 1979 intake, as was its contemporary, Guy Fawkes. Generally perceived as being on the left of the Conservative Party's political spectrum, it regarded itself in part as the successor to the old One Nation Group and an antidote to Thatcherism of the 1980s. Although it produced a pamphlet *Changing Gear* in Autumn 1981 which expressed opposition to the government's economic policies and remained an important part of the 'wet' movement of the 1980s, it also remained essentially a dining club rather than a campaigning group throughout its tenure. Its name was derived from the fact that most of its members were drawn from aristocratic families and was generally perceived as being fairly intellectual with its members ambitious for high office. Members included Tristan Garel-Jones (at whose Queen Anne house in Catherine Place, London they would dine), Chris Patten, John Patten and William Waldegrave. John Major was a member but there are varying accounts as to when he joined although it would appear to have been after the 1983 General Election. A portrait was painted of the group, including the deceased member Jocelyn Cadbury, by Rose Cecil, Robert Cranborne's sister

Bonar Law Club: A relatively new semi-visible fraternity grouping, founded in 2005, which met for political discussion although no longer appearing on the political radar. Speakers included peers such as Norman Tebbit and the Earl of Attlee, journalists such as Michael Brown and ex-MP Howard Flight. Open discussion meetings were generally

held at the Two Chairman Public House, Westminster and Chiswick Town Hall and required an entrance fee for attendance. Some uncertainty as to whether or not the group qualified but was included as focus was primarily parliamentary albeit peripheral

Bow Group: one of the oldest and most visible ideas grouping with members drawn from both the parliamentary and national party. Party membership is a pre-requisite to joining with an annual subscription charged. Members have included Geoffrey Howe (who is said to have charmed his future wife, Elspeth, with stories about his Bow Group activities), John Biffen, Peter Walker and Michael Heseltine. Founded in 1950 as an antidote to the Fabian Society by university friends and named after its first meeting place at the Bow and Bromley Constitutional Club. It was re-launched in 1957 with its magazine *Crossbow* which is still published for members today. Prolific researcher and publisher of pamphlets and indeed its stated aims are to 'publish research and stimulate debate'. Many members, particularly those from its executive committee have gone on to become PPCs and MPs. Was widely seen as the basis for the Stepney Group in David Walder's book *The Short List* published in 1964 and, less covertly, was the subject of a recent book written by James Barr. Is notable for having had a number of national and international branches including those at Oxford and Cambridge Universities and in Paris, Bonn and Brussels. The US Republican grouping, The Ripon Society, is believed to have been inspired by it. The Group publishes its own website at http://www.bowgroup.org

British League for the Support of Ulster and the Union: Also known as the League for the Support of Ulster and the Union, this highly visible protest group was established by Willoughby de Broke in 1913 as a competitor with similar aims to the Union Defence League, that is to fight against Irish separatism. The League had the support of one hundred peers and one hundred and twenty MPs and increasingly worked with the Ulster Volunteer Force to strengthen both their positions and provide a forbidding alternative to more moderate inclinations

Budget Protest League: A highly visible protest grouping, it was formed in 1909 by Walter Long to argue against David Lloyd George's 'People's Budget'. It targeted both a parliamentary and an extra-parliamentary audience. Produced posters outlining its opposition

Burke Club: A low visibility fraternity grouping established in memory of Edmund Burke whose argument two centuries ago that politicians had a duty to speak the truth, inspired independent-minded Conservative MPs to set up the Burke Club in his honour. Some believe that it was also formed to support the government in 'upholding the national interest' against progress to a European super-state. They meet secretly every month in a Commons Dining room to debate issues of the day. Members drawn from the parliamentary party have included David Liddington, Ray Whitney, David Maclean, Nick St. Aubyn, Jonathan Aitken and William Cash. Theresa May is also a member

CChange: A high visibility parliamentary ideas grouping which was formed early in the first decade of this century by MPs such as Theresa May, Ed Vaizey, Tim Yeo, Archie Norman and David Willetts and with Francis Maude as chairman. Sought ideas for overall change at a number of levels within the Party following a second electoral victory by Tony Blair and the Labour Party at the 2001 General Election. Received some press coverage at its launch but this since dissipated. Published its own website at http://www.cchange.org.uk/ but no changes have been made to this for several years

Centre Forward: A semi-visible protest grouping established by Francis Pym following dismissal from Margaret Thatcher's cabinet. One of very few public displays by groups against Thatcher, it started to meet in private at the end of 1984, launched May 1985 but short-lived (it survived barely a week after going public). An exclusively parliamentary membership of thirty two MPs with a ten man steering committee which included William Benyon, Nicholas Bonsor, Julian Critchley, Ian Gilmour, Fred Silvester and Peter Tapsell. Met weekly at one stage to protest against central planks of government policy

Charter Movement: A semi-visible positional grouping and one of a few groups for which its position is derived not from a right or left-wing stance but, in this case from its desire to preserve internal democracy within the Party itself. It was founded in the early years of the 1980s and active particularly when the Party was in opposition from 1997. Has campaigned for greater Party accountability and democracy over issues such as election of the Party leader by Party members and how the Party spends its money. Membership is drawn from both an intra and extra-parliamentary audience

Churchill Group: A small positional grouping with low visibility which supported Winston Churchill during the 1930s at a time when he was, to all intents and purposes, ostracised by many in the PCP due largely to his views on independence for India. Views differ as to how many parliamentarians were involved with the group although at the very least certainly a core participative membership of six was evident even if the number of sympathisers was larger. Existed in historical tandem with the Eden/ Amery Group but the two very rarely met or worked together such was Churchill's distance from the majority of the PCP at this time

Confederacy: An aggressive but very low visibility, almost semi-secret, protest grouping founded in 1905 which sought to use every possible means in its fight against all those who supported free trade. In many ways the militant arm of the Tariff Reform League although the latter distanced itself from them. Membership was generally secret but die-hard in nature. Especially active in constituencies where free trade unionists were selected as candidates and where a range of campaigning tools were utilised to achieve the desired outcome

CAER: Conservative Action for Electoral Reform was a semi-visible positional grouping where its position was derived from a desire to seek electoral reform. Established following the February 1974 General Election at which the Party received fewer seats but more votes than the Labour Party. Claimed the support of up to fifty Conservative MPs including Douglas Hurd. After much debate it recommended STV as its voting

system of preferred choice although the Party remains opposed to any substantial electoral reform. Although relatively dormant it does have a presence at Party conference and may become reinvigorated following the commitment of the post 2010 General Election coalition to a referendum on electoral reform

Conservative Group for Europe: Pro-European protest grouping which in 1970 developed from the European Forum. Most visible whilst Edward Heath was negotiating entry to the EEC. Claimed support of just over two hundred MPs in 1971. However since the late 1980s and 1990s when the Party has adopted a less enthusiastic European tone its stance has been less high profile and more defensive and indeed it has worked with the cross-party pro-European Movement. Members included Norman St John-Stevas, Ian Taylor and Julian Critchley. John Major set out his stance on Europe in a speech to the group in April 1993

Conservative Philosophy Group: A semi-visible (although initially highly secretive) fraternity grouping established to discuss Conservative philosophy in 1974 by Jonathan Aitken, Hugh Fraser and the philosopher Roger Scruton. Met predominantly in the 1980s and 1990s and largely for dinner at the London home of Jonathan Aitken (and on occasion William Waldegrave). Additional members included Enoch Powell, Julian Amery, Rhodes Boyson, Ray Whitney, John Selwyn Gummer and from the Lords, Peter Bauer. Margaret Thatcher also attended meetings as did, on occasion Harold Macmillan and on one occasion, Richard Nixon. Additional attendees included a number of journalists and academics

Conservative Way Forward: Established shortly after Margaret Thatcher's resignation as prime minister and Party leader, this highly visible positional grouping seeks to promote and sustain those ideas essentially associated with Margaret Thatcher. Key players include Norman Tebbit, Cecil Parkinson, William Hague and Liam Fox although membership is also actively sought from an extra-parliamentary audience. The group organises a variety of meetings and social occasions and offers help to like-minded

individuals seeking to become official Party candidates. The group publishes its own website at http://www.conwayfor.org/uk/

CAFÉ: Conservatives Against a Federal Europe was formed in 1995 by Vivian Bendall and William Walker and was comprised of MPs and peers counting Norman Lamont and Richard Body amongst its Euro-sceptic parliamentary membership. Membership was also drawn from an extra-parliamentary audience. A high visibility anti-Europe protest grouping and although no longer politically active, it has been suggested that it is in effect dormant and could be reactivated if the need arose (and thus placed in italics in Appendix 8). It did publish its own website at http:///www.cafe.org.uk but this is currently on domain holding only

Cornerstone: One of the most recently established positional groupings and also highly visible although it also works behind closed doors to push its particular brand of 'throne and alter' conservatism within the PCP. Deriving its name from the New Testament, it advocates traditional Conservative principles of monarchy, traditional marriage, family and community duties and lower taxation. Led by John Hayes and Edward Leigh, meetings and policy are organised through a small steering committee and monthly (and sometimes less) dinners are held with speakers whilst parliament is sitting. Claims a membership of forty which includes Nadine Dorries, Charles Walker. Owen Paterson, Greg Hands, Gerald Howarth, John Redwood, Philip Davies and Douglas Carswell although dinners are usually attended by between twenty and twenty five. The group publishes its own website at http://cornerstonegroup.wordpress.com/

December Club: Initially formed following the 1935 General Election as a semi-visible backbench protest group against the government's reaction to the invasion of Abyssinia by Italy; a cross-section of the PCP were deeply unhappy when it became clear how much of Abyssinia that Britain and France were prepared to let Italy gain and indeed with the secrecy of the negotiations. Dissent was so strong from the group, and others, that Samuel Hoare (foreign secretary) was forced to resign and the government had to

abandon its agreement. Edward Spears was a key figure. The grouping decided to continue to meet for dinner from 1936 as the December Club in order to monitor the government's foreign policy. Membership was limited to thirty five and was drawn from a cross-section of the PCP. Speakers were invited to address group dinners with, on one notable occasion in August 1939, the Polish Ambassador. The group was dissolved shortly afterwards but for a few years was an effective home for those unhappy with government foreign policy at a crucial time in British history. Also known as the 1936 Club

Direct Democracy: A small but highly visible ideas grouping under the leadership of Douglas Carswell and Daniel Hannan. Formed in the early days of David Cameron's leadership and produced a number of books promoting a localist agenda with transfer of powers from the state to citizen. Ideas included the direct election of mayors and parliamentary candidates and how to address the West Lothian question in parliament. Received considerable attention in the press and publishes its own website, recently revamped and reinvigorated, at http://www.directdemocracyuk.com/

Dirty Dozen: Left-leaning and low visibility fraternity grouping which met prior to the 2001 General Election. Little known other than a group of prospective candidates and Party aids which met for dinner at the Commonwealth Club. Speakers included Stephen Dorrell and Damian Green. *(There would also appear to be an earlier grouping, again a low visibility fraternity grouping, of the same name which was comprised of members of the 1979 intake but information on this grouping was even more sparse than its namesake above and therefore not included in discussion)*

Double-Eight: A pro-Europe very low visibility fraternity group comprising eight Conservative MPs and eight Conservative MEPs founded to cement relations between the Conservative parliamentary parties at Westminster and Brussels. Led by Ian Taylor, it meets for dinner as and when diaries permit with earlier meetings having taken place in L'Amico, an Italian restaurant on the Commons bell in Horseferry Road,

every two or three months although latterly meetings more sporadic. Members included Stephen Dorrell, Ken Clarke, David Curry and Edwina Currie. Quentin Davies attended before his defection to the Labour Party; he was chairman of the group but subsequently replaced by Taylor. No formal organisational structure with arrangements being made by the chairman

Dresden: A low visibility fraternity group of Conservative MPs who decided to form a club to continue the links forged after visiting Germany together. Met during the premiership of Margaret Thatcher but very little else known

Economic Dining Club: A semi-visible ideas grouping comprising twelve MPs set up by Nicholas Ridley in 1972 which developed into a forum for free market economic ideas and discussion in direct contrast to that espoused by Edward Heath. Members included Enoch Powell, Peter Hordern, John Biffen, Jock Bruce-Gardyne, John Nott, Cecil Parkinson and Margaret Thatcher. Meetings would take the form of a monthly dinner held at each other's houses by rotation with the exception of the inaugural dinner held at a Mayfair club and after which members found themselves locked in with the only means of escape an upstairs window and drainpipe

Eden/ Amery Group: A small positional grouping with low visibility which was unhappy with the position of the Party under Neville Chamberlain. Membership varied between twenty to thirty and the group voted against the leader over Norway and thus helped seal his fate. Although Anthony Eden was seen to play a key role (although a number of members felt he was not sufficiently outspoken against the government), the group continued under the leadership of Leo Amery after Eden's return to the frontbench. The group was often known by political commentators of the time as the 'Glamour Boys' in recognition of the generally held view of the good looks of both Anthony Eden and his followers. Also known as the Eden Group (and in Randolph Churchill's biography of Eden, as 'the Group')

Empire Industries Association Parliamentary Committee: Initially at least, a protest grouping of Conservative parliamentarians including Leo Amery and Henry Page Croft, formed to protect British industry through a system of imperial preference and viewed by some as a successor to the Tariff Reform League. The parliamentary wing of a wider movement, the Empire Industries Association, in the same way that the Friends of Bruges more recently represented the parliamentary wing of the Bruges Group. Most visible during the 1920s and 1930s

European Forum: Short lived semi-visible protest grouping of pro-Common Market Conservatives, comprised mainly but not exclusively, of MPs and PPCs. Established in August 1969 as a forum through which to discuss the Party's European policy, it established both an agricultural study group led by three MPs (Nicholas Ridley, Eldon Griffiths and Peter Kirk) and a conference bringing together Conservative MPs and their French counterparts from the National Assembly. Edward Heath presided as President with David Baker, a GLC alderman, as Chairman. Patrons were two former Conservative leaders, Alec Douglas-Home and Harold Macmillan. Almost a year after conception, in July 1970, it changed its name to the Conservative Group for Europe

European Foundation: A highly visible protest grouping of Euro-sceptic MPs established by William Cash in 1993 following the passing of the Maastricht Bill. Dedication to its cause generally perceived as greater than its loyalty to party leader. While its aims, clearly indicated on its website, include to 'further prosperity and democracy in Europe, the renegotiation of treaties of Maastricht, Amsterdam and Nice and the prevention of the UK from adopting the Euro' it exists in essence to research and publish Euro-sceptic material used also by other like-minded groupings and individuals to support a Euro-sceptic stance. Although its core is essentially parliamentary, it has actively liaised with like-minded organisations all over the world. Produced a monthly journal, *The European*, with analysis of news from around Europe, and publishes its own website at http://www.europeanfoundation.org/. Has no active membership as such with its activities managed by its ruling body and both its UK and International Advisory

Body which include both parliamentary and non-parliamentary figures.

European Reform Group: Another high visibility protest grouping of Euro-sceptic MPs, but this time comprised of only backbenchers. Founded in 1980 by Teddy Taylor who went on to run the group for the next two decades. At one time the group boasted that it had eighty five members who included Nicholas Bonsor, Richard Shepherd, Nicholas Budgen, Bill Walker, Jonathan Aitken and Anthony Marlow. It was initially established to discuss and protest against the perceived vagrancies of Europe which at the time manifested themselves in the form of the Common Agriculture Policy, the Maastricht Treaty and the single currency. While problematic for John Major as prime minister, the group retained a degree of loyalty to Party and leader where others did not

European Research Group: Initially established and chaired by Michael Spicer with parliamentary membership including Nicholas Bonsor and Archie Hamilton. It is now more reflective in nature, constituting a low visibility protest grouping, and meets regularly, sometimes with a speaker, for breakfast meetings to discuss European issues which relate to its Euro-sceptic position and to organise its own research (and indeed it employs a researcher for this purpose), much of which is passed to sympathetic parliamentarians both for their general use and for when speaking in parliamentary debates. Key members include David Gauke and David Heathcoat-Amory

Everest: A low visibility fraternity grouping founded by PPCs in 1995 prior to the 1997 General Election as a self-help group at which to discuss campaigning ideas and exchange information. The name reflected the views of its members of the enormity of the task ahead of them in becoming elected to parliament at that time. The group continued to operate once members were elected to parliament and indeed does so to this day with between eight to ten members attending each dinner which are held by rotation at each others' houses. Current members include Eleanor Laing

Forward Look Committee: Little known about this low visibility ideas grouping other than its existence as a committee comprising only members of the parliamentary party established by Tristan Garel-Jones following the 1997 General Election in order to discuss and take forward ideas as to the future direction of the Party. Meeting weekly, attendees included the leader, William Hague in addition to Alan Clark and Angela Rumbold. Similar in some respects to CChange which also sought to seek a new direction for the Party but after defeat at the 2001 General Election

4th July: A low visibility fraternity grouping initially established by members of the 1997 intake who made their maiden speeches on this day. Members represent a cross-section of the PCP and meet, usually in the House of Commons, for dinner and current members include John Bercow and Eleanor Laing although others are on occasion also invited to attend. There is no formal organisational structure with arrangements for dinner made principally by Eleanor Laing

Fourth Party: A highly visible protest grouping comprised of four Conservative MPs who mercilessly harassed the Commons leadership of H Stafford Northcote from 1881 to 1884. Led by Randolph Churchill, other members were John Gorst, Drummond Wolff and (for a time) Arthur Balfour. The actions of the group became associated with a wider movement, reflected in the ideas of 'Tory Democracy', for modernisation of the Conservative Party in terms of both national organisation and the broadening of its appeal from upper to middle class

Fresh Start: A highly visible protest grouping which served to formalise the parliamentary support for two EDMs, nos. 174 and 549, sponsored by Michael Spicer in June and September 1992, calling for a 'fresh start' to future development of the EU. Both EDMs followed the Danish 'No to Maastricht' vote in May 1992. Led primarily by Michael Spicer and William Cash, members include John Biffen, Richard Body, Nicholas Budgen, John Carlisle, Peter Tapsell, Teddy Taylor and Nicholas and Ann Winterton. The group organised their own 'unofficial whip' for their opposition to

the Maastricht Bill. Many members transferred membership to the IGC Monitoring Group under Cash's leadership from January 1996. Also known as the Jay Group

Friends of Bruges: A semi-visible protest grouping established in March 1989 as the parliamentary arm of the Bruges Group. Formed to fight against 'creeping EEC federalism' with William Cash elected as the first chairman. Other members included James Cran, Roger Knapman and John Greenway

Friends of Maastricht: A semi-visible protest grouping launched in October 1992 by Ray Whitney to counter the Euro-sceptics in the Party and to give a much higher profile to the advantages of Maastricht and of being at the centre of Europe. Supported by a number of backbenchers, including members of the executive of the 1922, such as Giles Shaw, Geoffrey Johnson Smith, Anthony Grant, John Hannan, Edwina Curry, Tim Renton and Tim Rathbone

Green Chip: A low visibility fraternity grouping established in 2008 and comprised of Conservative modernisers supporting David Cameron's leadership of Party. There is no formal organisational structure with dinners organised principally by Michael Gove and Greg Barker. Membership, which totals approximately thirty, includes George Osborne, Boris Johnson, Jeremy Hunt, Theresa Villiers, Anne Milton and Nick Herbert. While the majority are comprised of members of the 2005 intake, others include those who entered parliament in 2001. Many were members of the shadow frontbench and following the 2010 General Election have been promoted to the government benches

Guy Fawkes: Founded by John Watson soon after the 1979 General Election, this low visibility fraternity grouping was comprised largely of members of the 1979 intake. Some argue that it was essentially an 'overflow' of another contemporary group, Blue Chip, after its membership exceeded the number of seats around Tristan Garel-Jones' dining table. Others however argue that it was set up as a reaction to the 'blue blood' element which dominated the Blue Chip membership with Guy Fawkes, in

contrast, representing the state-school, redbrick educated and self-made members of the 1979 intake. Whatever its origins, it met once a week in a small private dining room at L'Amico's in Horseferry Road where it was well within the reach of the division bell. It was generally, but not exclusively, comprised of left-leaning members of the PCP keen both to progress to the frontbenches and to discuss politics with like-minded colleagues in a convivial setting. Members were self-selected and included John Major, David Mellor, Brian Mawhinney and Stephen Dorrell. There was some overlap in membership with Blue Chip in that John Major was a member of both Guy Fawkes and, later, of Blue Chip

Halsbury: Emerging in mid 1911, this high visibility protest grouping came into being, officially, as a reaction to the Liberal Government's determination to curb the powers of the House of Lords through the Parliament Bill, later 1911 Parliament Act. Unofficially it came to represent a growing dissatisfaction with Arthur Balfour who had led the Party unsuccessfully through three general elections and was deemed by many in the parliamentary party to have mortally failed in his opposition to the above Bill. Led by an octogenarian previous Lord Chancellor, Lord Halsbury, the Halsbury was notable for its support from both MPs and peers on and off the frontbenches

Imperial Unionist Association: A semi-visible short-lived protest grouping which was formed in July 1916 and sought to protest against an Irish settlement. Within two weeks it was supported by seventy six peers and ninety eight MPs, one third of Andrew Bonar Law's parliamentary supporters. Failure to reach any settlement resulted in its subsequent decline. Also known as the Imperialist Unionist Committee

India Defence Committee: A semi-visible protest group which represented the parliamentary arm of the extra-parliamentary India Defence League. Created in June 1933 at the same time as the white paper *Proposals for Indian Constitutional Reform*. It sought, as the nomenclature suggests, to fight against any government plans to grant a measure of devolution to India and to resist the Government of India Bill, later to

become the 1935 Government of India Act. It first met following an increased frustration at the lack of sympathy shown to their cause by both the government and the relevant party backbench committee, namely the India Committee

Industrial Group: Also called the Forty Thieves, this semi-visible protest group was established following the First World War and constituted an informal collection of Conservative die-hard backbenchers with banking and industrial interests who wished to protect these and who were intent upon fighting for protectionism of British industry

IGC Monitoring Group: A semi-visible protest grouping, established in January 1996 by William Cash which largely superseded Fresh Start. Membership was exclusively parliamentary and restricted to Euro-sceptic Conservative MPs who sought by way of protest to monitor the negotiations taking place at the 1996/ 97 Amsterdam IGC and to scrutinise every directive and piece of legislation of a European dimension.

Lollards: A low visibility positional grouping operational during the 1970s and 1980s although largely defunct from the 1990s when it was assimilated with others to form Mainstream. Was the Party's left-wing equivalent to the 92 Group, assuming responsibility for organising the centre and centre-left slate for backbench party committees and the executive of the 1922. Like the 92, also with an exclusively parliamentary membership, its name was derived from its original meeting place, a flat in Lollards Tower at Lambeth Palace which was the home of the founding member, William van Straubenzee. Other key figures included Peter Temple-Morris and Fred Silvester. Supported Anthony Meyer in his bid against Margaret Thatcher for the Party leadership

Macleod Group: This semi-visible positional grouping was initially formed as a memorial to Iain Macleod and operational during the first half of the 1970s. On the centre-left of the Party, it sought to encourage its own particular brand of 'one nation' conservatism within the PCP with members including David Knox, Robert Carr, Lynda Chalker and Nicholas Scott. The group supported Edward Heath in the 1975 leadership

contest and subsequently criticised Margaret Thatcher's first shadow cabinet for not including 'the progressive wing of the Party' (and the exclusion of Carr, Walker and Scott). It shortly after, in September 1975, merged with PEST and STAG to form the Tory Reform Group as one centre-left grouping in which to consolidate opposition to Thatcher within the PCP. It subsequently and similarly, in September 1996, united with others to form Mainstream, an umbrella grouping on the centre-left under the leadership of David Hunt which sought to consolidate support for John Major

Mainstream: This semi-visible umbrella positional grouping was launched in May 1996 under the leadership of David Hunt in order to unite a number of existing centre-left groupings which included the Lollards, the Macleod Group, the Tory Reform Group and Action Centre for Europe partly in an attempt to 'give the Party back its 'one nation' soul in time for the 1997 General Election'. The group meets regularly, every other week when parliament is sitting, for lunch and also two dinners each year and espouses a centre-left pro-European brand of conservatism. Lunches are well attended with between fifteen and thirty MPs and peers at any one time and often a frontbencher or other high profile member of the PCP will be invited as guest speaker, both Iain Duncan Smith and David Cameron (before becoming leader) have spoken to the group

Monday Club: This high visibility positional grouping (although latterly a protest grouping) took its name from the day of Harold Macmillan's 'winds of change' speech made in February 1960. It was initially a challenger to the Bow Group, and thus in some ways even an ideas grouping, in that it sought to debate party policy as a forum for intelligent young conservatives although later was to become explicitly anti-intellectual, appealing to right-wing fundamentalists. Especially active in the late 1960s and 1970s and certainly by 1971 it had a parliamentary membership of thirty MPs (including six frontbenchers) engaged in its own campaigns of strategy and tactics. It also had an additional extra-parliamentary membership of 10 000 with thirty branches across the country and was utilising a variety of campaigning techniques in constituency associations influencing amongst other things, the selection of parliamentary candidates.

By 2001 Iain Duncan-Smith, as leader of the Party, ordered any MP who was a member (there were three) to resign. The grouping still exists today although not as an unofficial parliamentary party grouping although it does publish is own website at http://www.conservativeuk.com/

Monday Night Cabal: Very little known about this low visibility fraternity grouping except that it was most likely derived in part from the extra-parliamentary Round Table Movement and constituted a small group of unionist parliamentarians and their supporters who met weekly, on a Monday, in the period preceding the First World War and included Edward Carson and FS Oliver (a successful businessman who was employed by Carson as his secretary to one of his cabinet committees) in addition to Lord Milner and David Lloyd George. The grouping were increasingly unhappy with the leadership of Asquith and sought to work towards his replacement

Nick's Diner: A low visibility centre-left fraternity grouping formed in 1975 in part as an antidote to the move to the right under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher and although traditionally pro-European is latterly more centralist in outlook with differing degrees of enthusiasm amongst its membership towards Europe. Takes its name from founding member, Nicholas Scott. Meets regularly for dinner, approximately every other week when parliament is sitting, in the House of Commons and often with an external speaker in attendance. Members have included Michael Jack, Ken Clarke, Ian Taylor, George Young, John Gummer, Stephen Dorrell, Damian Green and Eleanor Laing. Current membership stands at eighteen and turnover is minimal although care is taken to refresh the membership from new parliamentary intakes with potential new members recommended by other colleagues. There is no formal organisational structure with arrangements for dinner made by the chairman

1900 Group: A long serving low visibility fraternity grouping although relatively little known. Formed around the turn of the last century by recently elected MPs with members including Lord Selbourne and Edward Carson. Repeatedly called, through

The Times, for the distribution of game to the injured in London hospitals during the First World War. Met regularly for dinner (on one occasion in 1907 allegedly consuming 300 bottles of crème de menthe) with external speakers who included Arthur Balfour, when leader of the Party in 1906, and also in 1936, Neville Chamberlain when Chancellor of the Exchequer (leaks of 'indiscretions' from the Chancellor at this last meeting subsequently found their way in to *The Times).* More recently the group appears to have extended membership to party activists with speakers having included Margaret Thatcher and more recently David Davies in 2005 and Norman Tebbit in 2010. The group contributed to Party fund raising through dinners in 2007

1912 Dining Club: A low visibility fraternity grouping which was formed in 1912 although more active at certain times notably during the 1930s and 1980s and 1990s when a number of reports were filed in the press. A seventy fifth anniversary dinner was held in 1987 and regular dinners are otherwise organised at a variety of locations which include the Carlton Club, St Stephen's Club and the House of Commons. Speakers, some external, are invited to attend and include Frederick Forsythe, Ken Clarke, Lord Jenkins, Stephen Dorrell, Christopher Chope, Bernard Jenkin, Liam Fox and Dominic Grieve. Membership is parliamentary and extra-parliamentary with the former drawn from both Houses and has included Baroness Miller of Hendon, David Amess, Roger Sims, David Atkinson and Peter Rost. Baroness Miller is currently president

1922 Committee (early years): Although recognisable today in its present form, the Committee was in its early years a low visibility protest grouping formed by members of the 1922 intake following the 1922 General Election. Of the three hundred and forty five Conservative MPs returned, one hundred and eleven were 'first timers' and in the words of one new MP, Gervais Rentoul, the new members soon became conscious of a 'feeling of ineffectiveness and bewilderment due to the complete insignificance of an inexperienced rank and file Member lost in the maze of parliamentary procedure'. The intake went on to form the Conservative Private Members (1922) Committee for the purpose of 'mutual co-operation and assistance'. Rentoul was elected chairman and

the first steps were taken towards it becoming the permanent institution recognisable today in acting as a conduit between leader and parliamentary party. Channels were soon established with the whips' office and members from other intakes joined and by 1926 it was opened to private members and thus it was not so much a group within the parliamentary party but it was indeed *the* parliamentary party.

1970 Group: A semi-visible fraternity grouping which met during the 1970s under the chairmanship of Derek Walker-Smith which gave rise to the group's nickname, Derek's Diner. At its peak it claimed fifty six members who included Enoch Powell and John Biffen. Originally formed shortly after the 1970 General Election when six MPs led by the father of the House, Robin Turton, tabled a motion effectively opposing British entry to the EEC which attracted over forty four signatures, nearly half of whom had just entered parliament

92 Group: A semi-visible positional grouping, also known as the Black Hand Gang, formed in 1964 under the chairmanship of Pat Wall and derived its name from the address of his London home, 92 Cheyne Walk. Dedicated to 'keeping the Conservative Party conservative' it was subsequently led by the right-wing MPs George Gardiner, John Townend, Vivian Bendall, Christopher Chope and latterly, with Philip Davies as secretary, Gerald Howarth. Was particularly active during the 1980s and 1990s when it organised regular dinners and although a loyal supporter of Margaret Thatcher as leader of the Party was less supportive of John Major. Organised the right-wing slate for the backbench subject committees (during their life time) and the executive of the 1922. In latter years it has become an umbrella organisation for a number of groups on the centre-right/ right of the Party such as the European Research Group, the No Turning Back Group and Cornerstone and representatives from each sit on the executive of the 92. The group still organises the right-wing slate for the executive of the 1922

No Turning Back Group: A semi-visible positional grouping formed in the mid 1980s. Members have included Michael Portillo and Francis Maude, Angela Watkinson, John

Redwood, Edward Leigh, Christopher Chope and Gerald Howarth. Meetings take the form of monthly dinners held on a Monday evening at the House of Commons and which are usually attended by between fifteen to twenty members. It has no organisational structure with the chairman making the necessary arrangements for dinners. It espouses free market Thatcherite economics and on occasion will feed economic policy discussions directly to the Conservative chancellor

One Nation Group: A centre/ centre-left long standing and in its later years semi-visible positional grouping, it was established by nine members of the *premier cru* of the 1950 intake including Edward Heath, Robert Carr, Enoch Powell and Iain Macleod. Initially nameless, it later derived its nomenclature from the idea of two nations espoused by Disraeli in his political novel, Sybil, published in 1845 and subsequently used for the title of its first pamphlet. This pamphlet, *One Nation,* was received with much acclaim and at the time credited for being the intellectual stimulus towards regeneration of the Party from 1950 onwards. No future pamphlets have ever received quite the same reception. Still meets regularly, on a Wednesday, although competes with Nick's Diner in terms of membership and attendance at meetings. Membership currently stands at approximately thirty to forty although attendance at meetings is usually around ten. Current members include David Willets and Stephen Dorrell

Peacock's Tail: Little known about this low visibility protest grouping other than that it constituted a grouping of Conservative MPs, led by GMW Sanford and including Cranborne, who fought against Benjamin Disraeli's 1867 Reform Act

Picadors: A short-lived low visibility fraternity grouping established by the 2005 intake (although only known to its founders by this name) which sought to bring members together for mutual benefit. Many members were promoted relatively early in their parliamentary careers following the election of David Cameron as leader soon into the new parliament or joined other groupings such as Green Chip and with the founders finding it increasingly difficult to organise the sizeable number of MPs who entered parliament at this time, the group no longer continued to meet

Positive European Group: Also called the Positive Group for Europe and Positive Europeans, this semi-visible pro-European protest grouping was especially active during the 1990s as a counter movement to the Euro-sceptics in the Party under John Major's leadership. Letters and deputations sent to, amongst others, John Major, the party chairman (including Jeremy Hanley and Lord Parkinson when in office) and the foreign secretary (including Douglas Hurd and Malcolm Rifkind when in office) in an ongoing attempt to ensure that pressure continued to be exerted upon the Party hierarchy. It also concentrated parliamentary activity against Euro-rebels and was responsible for an unprecedented round-robin letter calling on rebel members of the executive of the 1922 to resign. This resulted in the Chief Whip, Richard Ryder, stepping in to diffuse the row with a public call for unity. The group threatened to put up its own breakaway pro-European candidate at a by-election in Newark and produced its own self-styled manifesto, a pamphlet entitled, 'Europe: In or Out?' which was launched February 1995

PEST: A highly visible protest grouping established in 1963, Pressure for Economic and Social Toryism, merged in September 1975 with the Macleod Group and the Social Tory Action Group to form the Tory Reform Group as one centre-left grouping in which to consolidate opposition to Thatcher within the PCP. It began life at Cambridge University as a newly formed grouping set up by Michael Spicer and others and at its height it operated both within parliament, with the support of over fifty MPs, and beyond, with fifteen university groups. The grouping was considered to the left of the political spectrum at the time of operation and regarded as an antidote to the Monday Club. It supported the principle of comprehensive education and sought a moral rather than populist policy on immigration reflected by Enoch Powell. Chairmen included Stephen Dorrell and Keith Raffan

Privy Council: Low visibility and small protest grouping which existed under Edward Heath's leadership of the Party during the 1960s and 1970s. Members included Richard Body, Enoch Powell, Ronald Bell, Jock Bruce-Gardyne, Nicholas Ridley and John Biffen who would meet after meetings of the 1922 at Ronald Bell's parliamentary office with the

aim of discussing the following week's business and how it could be influenced to their own satisfaction. The group, in the words of one ex-member, 'saw Heath as the enemy' and was largely anti-European and anti-interventionist with areas of particular interest including the economy, nationalisation and numbers of civil servants. The group drew largely from the considerable parliamentary knowledge of Powell to achieve its aims and indeed fell apart when he left the Party, despite Ridley's attempts to engage him at meetings of the Economic Dining Club

Progress Trust: Very secret and low visibility positional grouping founded in 1943 by Alex Erskine-Hill as a supposed 'libertarian' alternative at this time to the Tory Reform Committee and to the implications of the Beveridge Report. Membership was selective and initially constituted twenty members who between them had power to 'blackball' new members. Its formation was announced in *The Times* with the stated object 'to promote the advancement of education and, in particular, political and sociological education'. The same article stated that 'those responsible for its inception and direction believe that objective research work on these lines will be of value in aiding the formulation of Conservative policy'. Some sources indicate that the chairman had immediate access to Number 10 and the Chief Whip and that, as a result, the impression emerged during the 1940s that it was even more influential than the 1922 and that by the mid-1950s it was influencing the agenda and tone of political debate among the Party's other official backbench committees. It appeared to attempted to 'reign in' members of the executive of the 1922 when they repeatedly voted against the leadership of John Major on the Maastricht Treaty and thereby help provide Major with the Commons stability he required in order to stamp his authority on the country over the following year. Chairmen include Peter Hordern

Pudding Club: A low visibility fraternity grouping which met during the 1990s founded to discuss economic policy. The group included those from both the right and left of the Party with members including Peter Lilley, John Redwood, Francis Maude, Tim Smith, Stephen Dorrell and David Curry. Dinners would take place at the homes of the London members to enjoy 'good home cooking'

Reveille: A high visibility protest grouping launched by a group of Conservative MPs in October 1910 led by Henry Page Croft and Lord Willoughby de Broke. Its name reflected its desire to 're-awaken' the party to Unionist principles with wide ranging aims which included tariff reform, a strong navy, reform of the Poor Law, reform of land ownership and an imperial foreign policy. Membership overlapped with another grouping, the Confederacy, and included at least fifty MPs and peers although it was extended beyond parliamentary parameters. Its existence was widely seen as a protest against, and direct challenge to, the leadership of Arthur Balfour and its 'vigorous' manifesto was published in full in *The Times.* It disbanded soon after Andrew Bonar Law replaced Balfour as leader of the Party in November 1911

Sane Planning: A high visibility protest grouping of approximately eighty Conservative MPs, largely from constituencies in the south east, which operated during the 1980s to fight against proposed development on green belt sites. Founded by Jerry Wiggin, it planned a campaign of parliamentary questions, speeches and letters, including one to Margaret Thatcher when leader of the Party which received short shrift. The group came into direct conflict with Nicholas Ridley as Secretary of State for the Environment over a number of proposed developments which he supported and the group did not. The grouping later went on to widen its membership beyond the parliamentary arena and develop into a more general pressure group which called itself Sane Planning in the South East (SPISE) which was concerned with fighting the threat posed by development

Scottish Thistle Group: A short-lived semi-visible ideas grouping formed by Scottish Conservative Party MPs, it began life in 1967 and lasted until the late 1970s. The group came into being partly following increased activity of the SNP and partly in response to a call from the leader of the Party, Edward Heath, for ideas to rejuvenate the Party north of the border. This was, in turn, followed by Heath's 'Perth Pledge' to the Scottish Conservative Party Conference in May 1968 proposing the creation of an elected Scottish Assembly. Although this was endorsed by the group, Scottish devolution was to split the Party for the next decade. Also known as the Thistle Group

Selsdon Group: This high visibility protest grouping was formed in 1973 to protest against the economic U turn of Edward Heath's government and although it was particularly active during the second half of the 1970s and during the 1980s it is still in a state of dormant existence today. Named after events which occurred when Heath took his shadow cabinet to the Selsdon Park Hotel in Surry in January 1970 for a conference to formulate the 1970 General Election manifesto. Although detailed discussions took place and concrete proposals proffered these were not driven by a clearly defined neo-liberal ideology as many subsequently believed. The conference was nevertheless hailed at the time by both the press and Harold Wilson's Labour government as a turning point for a new-look Conservative Party which now offered a clear neo-liberal economic policy. It was largely from these reactions that the myth of 'Selsdon Man' emerged and indeed it was this myth which provided the inspiration for the Selsdon Group itself which today still supports minimum government intervention and strict adherence to a free market economy. Although membership is not restricted to parliamentarians, it is restricted to members of the Conservative Party who must also commit to its six point 'Selsdon Declaration'. Past and current parliamentarian members include John Redwood, Norman Tebbit, Nicholas Ridley, Christopher Chope, John Whittingale, Bernard Jenkin and MEPs Roger Helmer and Dan Hannan. The group publishes its own website at www.selsdongroup.co.uk/

Snakes and Ladders: A low visibility fraternity grouping. Very little known about this group except that it was formed and attended by two former ministers, Bob Dunn and Rhodes Boyson. Drew its name from the 'fact that politics is all snakes and ladders'

STAG: Little known about this semi-visible positional grouping. Social Tory Action Group was operational during the 1970s and similar in tone to the Macleod Group, it united with both the Macleod Group and PEST in September 1975 to form the Tory Reform Group as the one centre-left grouping in which to consolidate opposition to Margaret Thatcher within the PCP

Standard Bearers: A low visibility fraternity grouping. Slightly unusual in that it was established by a small number of Conservative PPCs prior to the 1992 General Election and then continued by the same once elected. Key members included David Willetts, Alan Duncan, David Lidington and Liam Fox who set out to define 'conservatism' in a post-Thatcher era. They produced a pamphlet *Bearing the Standard* in which the authors referred to the fact that 'the old labels of wet and dry' were 'now just misleading' although they were seen by the popular press of the time as being formed very much from a Thatcherite mould. Meetings of the group took place at the Westminster home of Alan Duncan. One of the founding members, David Willetts, published *New Conservatism* at the same time in which he set a more detailed philosophy for 'new conservatism' along broadly similar lines although with a greater emphasis on combining 'community' with free market economics

Suez Group: A high visibility protest group which objected to withdrawal of troops from the canal zone. Operational during the 1950s and consisted largely of die-hard MPs, a number with frontbench experience. Claimed membership of approximately forty with a smaller, core membership of about twenty eight included Charles Waterhouse, Julian Amery, John Biggs-Davison, Henry Legge-Bourke and Angus Maude

Tariff Reform League: A high visibility protest grouping founded in 1903 and operational during the first two decades of the last century supporting Joseph Chamberlain's call for tariff reform. In rivalry with the Free Food League and Free Trade Club. Instigated considerable grass root involvement and had many branches across the country. Called for restrictions on immigration in addition to goods and along with the Confederacy orchestrated tariff reform candidates against free traders in the 1906 General Election which resulted in their near obliteration. It was also responsible for setting up the Tariff Commission, an unofficial body (but not parliamentary grouping) established in 1903 by invitation of Chamberlain to examine and report on Chamberlain's proposals for tariff reform and their probable effects on British trade and industries. The commission collected extensive data from British business which is available today in

AIM25 (Archives in London and M25 area). While the League played a key role in creating and maintaining an intense obsession within the Party, the same intensity was not evident within the general population as a whole, in many ways similar to the internal divisions within the Party over Europe in the last decades of the twentieth century and first decade of the twenty first

Third Term Group: A low visibility fraternity grouping which was established by MPs at the start of the 1983 Parliament in order to work for a third term in office. The group still meets today with regular dinners held at the House of Commons hosted by members in rotation. Dinners are attended by twelve to fifteen members and the group's continued existence has been preserved by admitting MPs from subsequent intakes

Tory Reform Committee: A semi-visible grouping active in the 1940s which sought to support proposals associated with the Beveridge Report. Although in many ways a positional grouping, it did seek new ideas for the Party's post-war image and thus has been categorised as an ideas grouping although its attempts to influence the 1945 manifesto were thwarted by the Party which viewed it as a direct challenge to its own machinery. It nevertheless established an important precedent for the next generation of groups such as the Bow Group and One Nation and in many ways the Tory Reform Group later succeeded where it failed. Was supported by approximately forty parliamentarians who included Viscount Hinchingbrooke, Quintin Hogg and Peter Thorneycroft

Tory Reform Group: This highly visible positional grouping was formed in 1975 following a merger between the Macleod Group, PEST and STAG to form one centre-left grouping in which to consolidate opposition to Margaret Thatcher within the PCP. It subsequently and similarly, in September 1996, joined with others to form Mainstream, an umbrella grouping on the centre-left under the leadership of David Hunt although it is still in existence today as a separate grouping. It publishes its own website at http://www.trg.org.uk/ and organises a number of branches around the country

for grass root supporters. Parliamentary supporters include Ken Clarke, Michael Heseltine, Michael Howard, John Major, Ian Taylor, Damian Green and Jonathan Evans

Union Defence League: One of many Edwardian groupings. Launched in January 1907 by Walter Long, this highly visible protest group survived up to the First World War with the specific aim of educating and mobilising electors against the threat of Home Rule. Although initially less effective, this was soon to change as it formed the focal point against Asquith's third Home Rule Bill in the months leading up to the First World War. Exerted considerable pressure on Andrew Bonar Law to accept no compromise over Home Rule although eventually the Bill was passed, excluding Ulster, after the onset of war. Had its own offices in Victoria Street which were also used for the signing of the Ulster Covenant and as a central address for donations raised for Ulster unionists. The group sent speakers and a photo exhibition depicting illegal nationalist activities around the country together with a portable slide show for the same purpose in addition to organising active campaigning at by-elections during the pre-war period. Produced a monthly publication entitled *Irish facts for British Platforms* which was freely available including through the advertisement pages of *The Times*

Union Flag Group: A relatively short-lived semi-visible protest grouping. Established for the sole purpose of fighting devolution proposed in Wilson's 1976-77 Scotland and Wales Bill and which subsequently failed at second reading. The group had three joint presidents, Maurice Macmillan, Julian Amery and Betty Harvie Anderson, and three secretaries who were appointed to represent the three countries of the Union affected, Ian Sproat (Scotland), Ian Grist (Wales) and George Gardiner (England). It was the latter who organised meetings and the filibustering of the Bill and his success in doing this led to his subsequent appointment as Organising Secretary, under Pat Wall's chairmanship, to the 92 Group. Named after the small Union Jack flag on a stand which was brought by one member to the second meeting and thereafter to each meeting which followed. Approximately forty supporters attended each of these meetings which took place weekly in the House. A number of its core members later went on to form another similar but un-named grouping which sought to force a vote to reject sanctions in Rhodesia

Unionist Agricultural Committee: A very active highly visible ideas group which sought to further the cause of agriculture and more widely rural life largely during, but also following, the Edwardian period. With assistance from a number of dedicated sub-committees, the Committee was actively engaged in many areas which included agricultural trading with the US, rating of agricultural land, importing of eggs, lobbying for increases to the Road Fund for rural areas, the implications for agriculture and rural life of proposed education and poor law reform and, ahead of its time, lobbying for the production of 'power alcohol' from sugar beet. Membership comprised largely all those MPs from the Party representing agricultural constituencies with approximately one hundred and eighty attending key meetings. Notable chairmen include Henry Cautley and his successor, George Courthope

Unionist Business Committee: *A* relatively short-lived but very active and highly visible protest grouping established in early 1915 following the outbreak of the First World War. Although no definitive date could be sourced for the ending of its activities, the latest possible estimate would appear to be early 1920s, its influence is generally seen as being at its greatest in the period up to the point where Andrew Bonar Law allied the Unionists to a Liberal war time coalition government led by David Lloyd George in 1916. The grouping was established to protect the interest of business in Parliament during the First World War and to press first Asquith's Liberal government and then Lloyd George's coalition government for a greater war effort, at whatever cost. Headed by Walter Long and WAS Hewins, it at one time comprised sixty backbench supporters and threat of concerted and hostile action by the group against its Unionist leader, Bonar Law, and the Liberal PM, Asquith, is argued by some historians to be one of the main precipitants leading to the formation of the coalition government between the two in May 1915

Unionist Free Food League: Also referred to as the Free Food League, this visible protest group emerged during 1903 and lasted for the best part of three years as a reaction to the Tariff Reform League which called for protected trade between the UK and the colonies. Hugh Cecil, Winston Churchill, Michael Hicks Beach and the

Duke of Devonshire were amongst its key members. While centring its activities largely within the parliamentary arena it did organise some, often sizeable, public meetings in the constituencies although not to the same extent as the Tariff Reform League. Placing itself in direct opposition to Joseph Chamberlain, members of the group became known as 'free fooders' and argued that Chamberlain's stance would only serve to artificially raise the price of basic food and goods for those who could least afford it. Although resonating with the general population, the group's arguments became marginalized amongst members of the parliamentary and national party where it found very little support. The issue served both to split the Party (some Conservative MPs including Churchill even crossed the floor as a result) and to keep it out of power for subsequent years, similar indeed to the affect on the Party of Europe almost a century later

Unionist Free Trade Club: This semi-visible protest grouping was established, according to *The Times,* in June 1904. It sought to attract the 'free traders' from both Conservative and Liberal Unionists and even considered a formal merger with the Liberal Free Trade League to form a central party. It continued until March 1910 when a special general meeting of the group passed a resolution of dissolution which led to its subsequent cessation. A *Times* editorial at the time expressed 'pleasure that it was being wound up'. Active members included Hugh and Robert Cecil

Unionist Organisation Committee: This semi-visible ideas grouping was established by Arthur Balfour in 1911 following the 1910 General Election which saw significant numbers of younger Conservative MPs enter parliament for the first time and who were to become increasingly frustrated at poor communication within the parliamentary party. Reporting to Balfour, the Committee sought to investigate how best to update the Party's organisations and practices and comprised a range of MPs from all wings of the Party, including those newly elected in 1910

Unionist Social Reform Committee: This highly visible ideas grouping was established in February 1911, following the December 1910 General Election, and under the

chairmanship of FE Smith it sought to construct specific proposals for social and economic reforms. It operated largely from 1911 to 1914 and then again after the First World War until 1922 when it was also known as 'The Group'. Comprised largely of MPs drawn from industrialised constituencies, it sought, for the first time ever, to address the role of the state within Conservative Party policy. It was in many respects a 'trailblazer' for later groupings such as One Nation and, to some extent, the Bow Group. Effectively organised through a number of sub-committees, it covered a range of social and industrial policy areas such as health, poor law, agriculture, housing and industrial unrest producing a number of detailed pamphlets. A number of its conclusions were incorporated into the Conservative *Campaign Guide* prepared in readiness for a general election eventually delayed until 1918 following the end of the First World War. The group was very active in Parliament, sponsoring a number of Private Member Bills and claimed membership of up to seventy MPs at its height.

Unionist War Committee: Established in January 1916 this high visibility protest grouping sought to press for a more vigorous implementation of the war effort. Arguably the most notable of the Edwardian backbench groupings, it was initially chaired by ex-minister Edward Carson and in turn by Lord Salisbury and subsequently by sessionally elected chairmen from the ranks. It survived largely up to the 1922 General Election and in its later years came to be known as the Unionist Reconstruction Committee, the War and Reconstruction Committee and the Unionist Parliamentary Committee. At its peak it had the support of up to one hundred and fifty members, the great majority of Unionist MPs not in the armed forces, and lobbied successfully on a number of specific issues including conscription, the updating of the war time parliamentary register and conditions for troops fighting on the front line. It was an effective opposition, in many ways operating as the quasi-opposition party, to the Asquith-Bonar Law and subsequent Lloyd George coalition governments. Carson was noted for sitting in the leader of the opposition's place on the opposition frontbench in the House of Commons. It established a small number of sub-committees, notably the Enemy Influence Sub-Committee, but not to the same degree as its contemporary the Unionist Business Committee

Upstairs Club: A low visibility fraternity grouping, established in the summer of 1994 by George Gardiner who had become increasingly impatient with John Major's attempts to build a coalition of all factions within the Party rather than giving a Euro-sceptic lead. Meetings usually took the format of a working lunch held firstly, and then predominantly, in the upstairs room (from which its nomenclature is derived) at Gran Paradiso but also occasionally at L'Amico's restaurant in Horseferry Road. Members met regularly at intervals of two months or more until late 1996 when the group appears to have been disbanded as a result of a growing frustration with Major for refusing to listen to their views. Gardiner alleges that there were twenty two members at any one time although each lunch was usually attended by a hard core of approximately ten. These included Gardiner, David Amess, Vivian Bendall, Alan Duncan, Iain Duncan Smith, Bernard Jenkin, Barry Legg and John Townend

Wednesday Club: Very little known but appears to be a small low visibility fraternity grouping of approximately half a dozen members which met during the 1990s. The grouping was comprised largely of ambitious MPs some of whom had already secured promotion as PPS. Members included Gyles Brandreth, Michael Trend, Stephen Willetts, David Garnier, David Liddington and Charles Hendry. It would appear to have met occasionally for sandwiches and general discussions relating to the current position of the government and, on occasion, dinner with wives and girlfriends. One meeting was held in the Home Secretary's office behind the Speaker's Chair but on this occasion the formal surroundings seem to have inhibited free and open discussion

Whipless Nine: A high visibility protest grouping comprised of eight MPs - Richard Shepherd, Teresa Gorman, Nicholas Budgen, Teddy Taylor, John Wilkinson, Christopher Gill, Tony Marlow and Michael Carttiss – who had the whip withdrawn from November 1994 until April 1995 by Richard Ryder, Chief Whip, for failing to support the Major government on the European Communities (Finance) Bill. A ninth, Richard Body, resigned the whip in support of his Euro-sceptic colleagues the day after the whip was withdrawn. The group had weekly meetings and produced a pamphlet entitled *Not A Penny More* which read like a manifesto for an alternative anti-European party

YMCA: A semi-visible ideas grouping of left-leaning Conservative MPs meeting during the 1920s nicknamed the 'YMCA' by their opponents who compared them to the Young Mens' Christian Association for 'their mixture of self concern and sanctimoniousness'. There appears to be no fixed membership as such although known associates included Harold Macmillan, Oliver Stanley, Robert Boothby, Anthony Eden and Alfred Duff Cooper. Another of those involved, Noel Skelton, was the first person to use the term 'property owning democracy' in 1924. They were eager to argue for greater state involvement to deal with economic depression and high unemployment and their publication *Industry and State,* printed in 1927, urged greater state intervention in both economic and social spheres

Young England Movement: A highly visible early ideas grouping, operating largely from 1841 to 1846, it represented more of an ideological political movement than one engaged in specific political activity. It was led by Benjamin Disraeli with three other core members, George Smyth (later 7th Viscount Strangford), Lord John Manners (later 6th Duke of Rutland) and Alexander Baille-Cochrane (later Lord Lamington). They were genuinely moved by the plight of the working classes, particularly in the industrial north, and believed that property had responsibilities as well as rights. Although critical of the severity and inadequacy of the poor law, they looked to the past rather than the future for a solution and were often, as a result, subjected to public ridicule outside their own circle of supporters. They believed the answer lay in a return to the Middle Age ideas of medievalism where the paternalistic landowner had responsibility for the well being of those in his charge. Following Disraeli's exclusion from the 1841 ministerial team, they led a campaign against Robert Peel in the Commons where their charm and wit frequently scored points against their leader on the floor of the House

Young Unionist Group: A semi-visible ideas grouping operational from 1919, it was established by Lord Winterton, Edward Wood and other MPs keen to promote ideas for social reform. A report in *The Times* dated 20 August 1919 details the formation of a new Young Unionist Group incorporating 'some of the best brains in the party steadily

drawing away from the government and finding their natural leader in Robert Cecil'. It goes on to cite 'Major Edward Wood, Major Hills, Captain Ormsby-Gore and a score of other Unionists of the Young Guard moving to the left, not only on social and industrial matters but on the Irish question..'. The group acted as a cohort in the House often voting together on relevant issues. Andrew Bonar Law promoted many of the group in 1922 when again *The Times* reported that 'Bonar Law had acted wisely and well in introducing so much vigorous young blood into the administration.. the group of young Unionists had high qualification for office and have been transferred almost bodily to the Treasury bench'

Appendix 6:

Schedule of events for unofficial parliamentary party groupings at the 2009 Conservative Party Conference

Monday 5 October

Tory Reform Group

Midland Hotel: Fairclough Suite, 18.00

TRG Mainstream Conference Reception

Speaker: Damian Green MP, Vice-President of Tory Reform Group

The Bow Group

Midland Hotel: Octagon Court, 21.30

Annual Drinks Party

Speaker: Andrew Gimson, Parliamentary Sketch writer, *The Daily Telegraph*

Conservative Way Forward

Midland Hotel: Wyvern Bar, 23.30

Midnight Drinks Reception

Tuesday 6 October

The Bow Group

Midland Hotel: French Room, 10.00

Conference Brunch

Cornerstone Group

Friends' Meeting House: 6 Mount St, Main Hall, 14.00

Cornerstone Conference Event

Speaker: The Rt. Revd James Jones, Bishop of Liverpool

Tory Reform Group and Groundwork UK

Manchester Central: Charter 4, 18.00

The Big Debate: What is the most important issue facing an incoming Conservative Government?

Speakers: Rt. Hon Sir Malcolm Rifkind QC MP, former Secretary of State for Defence; Rt. Hon David Davis MP, former Shadow Home Secretary; Rt. Hon The Lord Stern, author of Stern Review; Rt. Hon The Lord Hunt of the Wirral, Shadow Minister for Business; Tony Hawkhead, Chief Executive of Groundwork UK

The Bow Group

Manchester Central: Exchange Room 2, 19.30

The challenges for young people today

Speakers: David Willetts MP, Shadow Minister for Universities and Skills; David Goodhart, Editor *Prospect*

Wednesday 7 October

Conservative Action for Electoral Reform

Manchester Central: Exchange Room 2, 12.30

Democracy: Dragon's Den

Speakers: Eleanor Laing MP, Shadow Justice Minister; Matthew Elliott, The Taxpayers' Alliance; Michael White, *The Guardian;* Peter Facey, Director of Unlock Democracy; Anthony Barnett, Open Democracy

Conservative Way Forward

The Great Northern: The Linen Room, 19.30

Party Conference Dinner

Speaker: Dr Liam Fox MP

The Bow Group sponsored by Institution of Occupational Safety and Health

Midland Hotel: Fairclough Suite, 19.30

In sickness and in health – creating healthier UK workplaces

Speakers: Rt. Hon Oliver Letwin MP, Conservative Party Policy Review; Stephen Alambritis, Spokesperson FSB

Tory Reform Group

Midland Hotel: The French, 23.30

Midnight Conference Reception

Speaker: Rt. Hon Kenneth Clarke QC MP, President of Tory Reform Group

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Source: http://ftlisting.salespack.conservativepartyconference.com/admin (accessed 23 September 2009), http://www.bowgroup.org/content.asp?pageid=46 (accessed 23 September 2009) and correspondence from Mr Don Porter CBE: September – November 2009

Appendix 7:

Backbench Roles in Parliament, Donald Searing, 1994

Policy Advocate

- Ideologue
- Generalist
- Specialist

Ministerial Aspirant

- High flyer
- Subaltern

Constituency Member

- Welfare officer
- Local promoter

Parliament Man

- Status seeker
- Spectator
- Club man

Source: taken from Donald Searing, *Westminster's World: Understanding Political Roles,* Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1994, 32

Appendix 8:

Chronological categorisation of unofficial parliamentary party groupings within the Conservative Party from 1830 together with relevant key events

1830-1900:

Agricultural Dining Club

Fourth Party

Peacock's Tail

Unionist Agricultural Committee

Young England Movement

1828 Duke of Wellington appointed leader and serves as PM 1828-32, 1834 (Acting)

1832 Reform Bill

1834 Robert Peel appointed leader and launches his *Tamworth Manifesto.* Serves as PM 1834-35, 1841-46

1846 Lord Stanley appointed leader and serves as PM 1852, 1858-59, 1866-68
Party splits over Corn Law repeal between Peel (free trade) and Benjamin Disraeli (protectionist)

1868 Disraeli appointed leader and serves PM February–December 1868, 1874-80 and subsequently forms the first major Conservative administration since the 1846 split

1881 H Stafford Northcote appointed leader in the Commons and 3rd Marquess of Salisbury in the Lords. Salisbury serves as PM 1885-January 1886, July 1886-1892, 1895-1902

1885 Northcote stands down

1901-1920:

Agricultural Dining Club

British League for the Support of Ulster and the Union

Budget Protest League

Confederacy
Halsbury
Imperial Unionist Association
Industrial Group
Monday Night Cabal
1900 Group
1912 Dining Club
Reveille
Tariff Reform League
Union Defence League
Unionist Agricultural Committee
Unionist Business Committee
Unionist Free Food League
Unionist Free Trade Club
Unionist Organisational Committee
Unionist Social Reform Committee
Unionist War Committee
Young Unionist Group

1902 Arthur Balfour appointed leader and serves as PM 1902-05
1904 Joseph Chamberlain becomes president of the Liberal Unionists which become tariff reform caucus
1911 Parliament Act
Andrew Bonar Law appointed leader (but never PM)
Final report of the Unionist Organisation Committee
1912 Liberal Unionists formally merge with the Conservative Party
Home Rule Bill
1914-1918 First World War

1921-1940:

Agricultural Dining Club
Churchill Group

December Club

Eden/ Amery Group

Empire Industries Association Parliamentary Committee

India Defence Committee

Industrial Group

1900 Club

1912 Dining Club

1922 Committee (early years)

Unionist Agricultural Committee

Unionist Business Committee

Unionist Social Reform Committee

Unionist War Committee

YMCA

Young Unionist Group

1921 Austen Chamberlain appointed leader (but never PM)

1922 Revolt of Conservative MPs ends the coalition with David Lloyd George's Liberals and Bonar Law appointed leader (again). Serves as PM 1922-23

1923 Stanley Baldwin appointed leader and serves as PM 1923-January 1924, November 1924-29

1935 Government of India Act

1939-1945 Second World War

1937 Neville Chamberlain appointed leader and serves as PM 1937-1940

1940 Winston Churchill appointed leader and serves as PM 1940-45, 1951-55

1941-1960:

Active Backbenchers Group

Agricultural Dining Club

Bow Group

1900 Club

1912 Dining Club

One Nation Group

Progress Trust

Suez Group

Tory Reform Committee

1940 Winston Churchill serves as PM 1940-45

1945 General Election: Labour victory

1950 Publication of *One Nation* pamphlet by One Nation Group

1951 General Election: Conservative victory. Churchill serves as PM 1951-55

1954 British troops withdraw from Suez Canal zone

1955 Retirement of Winston Churchill as leader and Anthony Eden appointed (finally) as his replacement. Serves as PM 1955-57

1956 Colonel Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company

1957 Harold Macmillan appointed leader and serves as PM 1957-1963

1961-1980:

Agricultural Dining Club

Anti-Common Market League

Blue Chip

Bow Group

CAER

Conservative Group for Europe

Conservative Philosophy Group

Economic Dining Club

European Forum

Lollards

Macleod Group

Monday Club

Nick's Diner

1900 Club

1912 Dining Club

1970 Group

92 Group

One Nation Group

PEST

Privy Council

Progress Trust

Scottish Thistle Group

Selsdon Group

STAG

Tory Reform Group

Union Flag Group

1960 Harold Macmillan's 'winds of change' speech

1963 Alec Douglas-Home appointed leader and serves as PM 1957-63

1965 Rhodesian Unilateral Declaration of Independence

Edward Heath elected leader. First leader to be elected. Serves as PM 1970-74

1968 Heath makes 'Perth Declaration' at 1968 Party Conference

1973 UK's (third) application to join the EEC is accepted

1975 Margaret Thatcher elected first female leader of Conservative Party

1979 General Election: Conservative victory. Thatcher elected first female PM

1981-2000:

Action Centre for Europe

Agricultural Dining Club

Anti-Common Market League

Blue Chip

Bow Group

Burke Club

Centre Forward

Charter Movement

CAER

Conservative Group for Europe

Conservative Philosophy Group

Conservative Way Forward

CAFÉ

Dirty Dozen

Double-Eight

Dresden

Economic Dining Club

European Foundation

European Reform Group

European Research Group

Everest

Forward Look Committee

4th July

Fresh Start

Friends of Bruges

Friends of Maastricht

Guy Fawkes

IGC Monitoring Group

Lollards

Macleod Group

Mainstream

Monday Club

Nick's Diner

1900 Club

1912 Dining Club

92 Group

No Turning Back Group

One Nation Group

Positive European Group

Progress Trust

Pudding Club

Sane Planning

Selsdon Group

Snakes and Ladders

Standard Bearers

Third Term Group

Tory Reform Group

Upstairs Club

Wednesday Club

Whipless Nine

1989: Leadership challenge by Anthony Meyer (unsuccessful)

1990 John Major elected leader. Thatcher becomes the longest serving PM while Major serves as PM from 1990-97

1992 General Election: Conservative victory. Major serves as PM 1992-97

1995 Leadership challenge by John Redwood (unsuccessful)

1997 General Election: Labour victory. Worst Conservative electoral defeat since 1906. William Hague elected leader (but never PM) and publishes *Blueprint for Change*

1998 Hague publishes *The Fresh Future*

2000 to the present:

A Better Choice

Action Centre for Europe

Agricultural Dining Club

Anti-Common Market League

Better Off Out

Bonar Law Club

Bow Group

Burke Club

CChange

Charter Movement

CAER

Conservative Group for Europe

Conservative Philosophy Group

Conservative Way Forward

CAFÉ

Cornerstone

Direct Democracy

Double-Eight

European Foundation

European Research Group

Everest

4th July

Friends of Bruges

Green Chip

Mainstream

Monday Club

Nick's Diner

1900 Club

1912 Dining Club

92 Group

No Turning Back Group

One Nation Group

Picadors

Positive European Group

Progress Trust

Selsdon Group

Third Term Group

Tory Reform Group

2001 General Election: second successive Labour victory. Iain Duncan Smith elected leader (but never PM)

2003 Michael Howard elected leader (but never PM)

2005 General Election: Third successive Labour victory. David Cameron elected leader

2010 General Election: Hung parliament. David Cameron forms coalition government with Liberal Democrats and becomes PM and Nick Clegg, leader of the Liberal Democrats, becomes DPM

NB: italics denote the fact there is a degree of uncertainty as to the exact dates for a grouping's existence and indeed whether it was active for the period in question

Appendix 9:

House of Commons Banqueting Office Function List

1 April 2004 to 30 September 2009

Selected pages follow

Source: http://mpsallowances.parliament.uk/mpslordsandoffices/hocallowances/allowances-by-mp/Functions%20and%20Events.pdf (accessed 6 February 2010)

House of Commons Banqueting Office Function List 1 April 2004 to 30 September 2009

This table provides details of event and function bookings made by Members on behalf of outside organisations. This covers bookings made with the House of Commons Banqueting Office between 1 April 2004 and 30 September 2009

MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Abbott, Diane	28/04/2004	Disarm trust	Reception	80	Strangers Dining Room
Abbott, Diane	14/09/2005	Joseph Rowntree Project	Reception	80	Members Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Abbott, Diane	15/09/2005	John Loughborough 25th Anniversary	Reception	100	Terrace Pavilion
Abbott, Diane	03/10/2005	Publicis Ltd	Dinner	24	Dining Room B
Abbott, Diane	06/03/2006	Achieve Parliamentary Presentation	Reception	50	Dining Room A
Abbott, Diane	13/03/2006	Caribean Board	Reception	50	Strangers Dining Room
Abbott, Diane	23/03/2006	Editor's Forum	Reception	15	Dining Room C
Abbott, Diane	08/09/2006	London Schools and the Black Child Awards	Reception	150	Churchill Dining Room, Dining Room D
Abbott, Diane	15/11/2006	UJIMA Housing Group	Dinner	10	Astor Suite
Abbott, Diane	26/04/2007	Rethink	Breakfast	6	Dining Room D
Abbott, Diane	11/06/2007	Celebrating Black Women in Public Life	Reception	150	Terrace Pavilion
Abbott, Diane	05/10/2007	LSBC Awards Ceremony	Reception	150	Members Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Abbott, Diane	03/10/2008	London Schools/Black Child Awards	Reception	200	Members Dining Room, Strangers Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion, Members Dining Room, Strangers Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Abbott, Diane	25/02/2009	Womans Right to Abortion in Northern Ireland	Reception	30	Dining Room B
Abbott, Diane	14/07/2009	Sickle Cell & Thalassaemia APPG	Reception	80	Strangers Dining Room
Afriyie, Adam	14/07/2005	Association	Dinner	18	Club Room
Afriyie, Adam	27/10/2005	Creative Solutions	Dinner	18	Dining Room B
Afriyie, Adam	27/06/2006	Windsor Patrons Club	Dinner	38	Dining Room A
Afriyie, Adam	20/11/2006	Englemere DFAS	Lunch	50	Dining Room A
Afriyie, Adam	30/10/2007	Big Lottery Fund	Lunch	21	Dining Room A
Afriyie, Adam	16/07/2008	2020Health.org	Breakfast	14	Dining Room C
Afriyie, Adam	12/11/2008	Promoting the Vital Role of Engineering	Lunch	20	Dining Room B
Afriyie, Adam	10/03/2009	ETB Smallpeice Trust Reception	Reception	100	Terrace Pavilion

MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Burt, Lorely	28/10/2008	Prowess Study Tour	Reception	45	Dining Room B
Burt, Lorely	25/02/2009	Ridge (Birmingham) Dinner	Dinner	21	Dining Room B
Butler, Dawn	15/03/2006	Arts in Healthcare Programme	Reception	90	Strangers Dining Room
Butler, Dawn	14/07/2006	Copeland Dinner	Dinner	176	Members Dining Room, Strangers Dining Room
Butler, Dawn	15/11/2007	YMCA England	Reception	100	Terrace Pavilion
Butler, Dawn	13/06/2008	The New School Dinner	Dinner	165	Members Dining Room, Strangers Dining Room
Butler, Dawn	21/10/2008	Young Volunteers Visit Westminster	Reception	85	Strangers Dining Room
Butler, Dawn	01/07/2009	4Children	Reception	60	Strangers Dining Room
* Butterfill, John	20/04/2004	Burke Club	Dinner	10	Dining Room C
Butterfill, John	24/06/2004	PDSA	Lunch	18	Dining Room B
Butterfill, John	29/06/2004	Sixty Six Club	Dinner	40	Dining Room A
Butterfill, John	01/07/2004	Assoc. of Consulting Actuaries	Lunch	43	Dining Room A
* Butterfill, John	16/11/2004	Burke Club	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Butterfill, John	05/07/2005	Sixty Six Club	Dinner	40	Dining Room A
* Butterfill, John	12/07/2005	Burke Club	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
* Butterfill, John	24/10/2005	Burke Club	Dinner	10	Astor Suite
Butterfill, John	03/11/2005	Association	Meeting	12	Dining Room C
* Butterfill, John	13/12/2005	Burke Club	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
* Butterfill, John	17/01/2006	Burke Club	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Butterfill, John	21/03/2006	British Resorts Association	Dinner	38	Dining Room A
* Butterfill, John	09/05/2006	Burke Club	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Butterfill, John	04/07/2006	Sixty-Six Club	Dinner	54	Dining Room A
Butterfill, John	04/12/2006	RNIB Reception	Reception	100	Members Dining Room
Butterfill, John	27/02/2007	The Pensions Advisory Service	Reception	116	Terrace Pavilion
Butterfill, John	28/03/2007	APPG on Occupational Pensions	Lunch	45	Dining Room A
Butterfill, John	08/05/2007	PDSA Meeting	Meeting	10	Dining Room D
Butterfill, John	09/05/2007	Association of Accounting Technicians	Reception	152	Terrace Pavilion
Butterfill, John	04/12/2007	DLA Campaign Reception	Reception	100	Terrace Pavilion
Butterfill, John	06/02/2008	Conservative Friends of Israel	Reception	120	Terrace Pavilion
Butterfill, John	23/04/2008	Building Societies Association Lunch	Lunch	12	Dining Room C
Butterfill, John	14/05/2008	AMI Private Lunch	Lunch	12	Dining Room D
Butterfill, John	12/06/2008	Additional Event - John Butterfill	Dinner	56	Special Venue

MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Chapman, Sydney	13/11/2004	XK Club	Dinner	170	Members Dining Room, Strangers Dining Room
Chapman, Sydney	17/11/2004	Regent Ifa Services Ltd	Dinner	20	Dining Room B
Chapman, Sydney	25/11/2004	St George Dinning Club	Dinner	22	Dining Room B
Chapman, Sydney	15/01/2005	The Sherlock Holmes Society	Dinner	176	Members Dining Room, Strangers Dining Room
Chapman, Sydney	22/01/2005	Mayor Of Barnet Charity	Dinner	138	Members Dining Room, Strangers Dining Room
Chapman, Sydney	05/02/2005	James Lamb	Dinner	54	Dining Room A
Chaytor, David	06/07/2004	Globe UK	Lunch	15	Astor Suite
Chaytor, David	03/11/2004	NATFHE	Reception	150	Terrace Pavilion
Chaytor, David	25/05/2005	Adult Learners Week	Reception	180	Terrace Pavilion
Chaytor, David	25/05/2005	Adult Learners Week	Tea	180	Terrace Pavilion
Chaytor, David	19/07/2005	Universities Uk	Reception	150	Members Dining Room
Chaytor, David	14/03/2007	Greater Manchester Aimhigher Lunch	Lunch	13	Dining Room C
Chaytor, David	19/03/2007	All Party Intelligent Energy Group	Dinner	24	Astor Suite
Chaytor, David	03/11/2008	O2	Dinner	18	Astor Suite
* Chope, Christopher	01/07/2004	Conservatives Way Forward	Reception	200	Terrace Pavilion
Chope, Christopher	26/07/2005	Conservative HQ	Reception	100	Terrace Pavilion
* Chope, Christopher	03/07/2006	Conservative Way Forward	Reception	70	Terrace Pavilion
Chope, Christopher	06/11/2006	Freedom Association Dinner	Dinner	24	Dining Room B
Chope, Christopher	21/05/2007	Association	Dinner	14	Dining Room B
Chope, Christopher	22/05/2007	The Freedom Association	Reception	50	Dining Room A
* Chope, Christopher	16/06/2008	'92' Dining	Dinner	16	Club Room
Chope, Christopher	10/02/2009	Angel Trains Dinner	Dinner	21	Dining Room A
Chope, Christopher	01/05/2009	BCCH / ASSH Dinner	Dinner	24	Dining Room B
Chope, Christopher	30/06/2009	Making Roads Work Lunch	Lunch	17	Dining Room B
Clapham, Michael	26/04/2004	Federation of British Fire Organizations	Reception	70	Strangers Dining Room
Clapham, Michael	27/04/2004	The Fire Brigades Union	Reception	120	Members Dining Room
Clapham, Michael	21/06/2004	Fire Safety	Reception	110	Members Dining Room
Clapham, Michael	06/12/2004	Fire Safety Group	Lunch	70	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Clapham, Michael	06/12/2004	Fire Safety Group	Reception	100	Strangers Dining Room
Clapham, Michael	28/02/2005	Fire Safety	Reception	100	Strangers Dining Room
Clapham, Michael	17/01/2006	Book Launch & Westminster Guidance	Reception	60	Strangers Dining Room

MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Duncan Smith, Iain	17/10/2005	Heaven House Foundation	Dinner	14	Dining Room C
Duncan Smith, Iain	04/09/2006	Whitefield School	Tea	180	Terrace Pavilion
Duncan Smith, Iain	26/10/2007	Guild of Freeman	Dinner	108	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Duncan Smith, Iain	31/10/2007	WFHA - Launch	Reception	60	Members Dining Room
Duncan Smith, Iain	10/12/2007	CSJ Staff Christmas Dinner	Dinner	20	Dining Room B
Duncan Smith, Iain	12/11/2008	Solomon Group 10th Anniversary Celebration	Reception	55	Dining Room A
Duncan Smith, Iain	21/01/2009	CSJ Inner City Challenge	Reception	18	Dining Room D
Duncan Smith, Iain	24/06/2009	MHS " Conway"	Reception	75	Dining Room A
Duncan, Alan	21/09/2005	Bow Group	Reception	150	Terrace Pavilion
Duncan, Alan	28/11/2005	Rutland & Melton Cons Assoc	Lunch	75	Dining Room A, Dining Room D
Duncan, Alan	13/02/2006	Corporate Responsibility Group	Dinner	25	Club Room
Duncan, Alan	16/10/2006	Rutland & Melton Cons Assoc	Tea	54	Terrace Pavilion
Duncan, Alan	15/11/2006	Patrons Club	Lunch	42	Dining Room A
Duncan, Alan	10/05/2008	Police Social Club Dinner	Dinner	87	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Duncan, Peter	21/02/2005	Third Term	Dinner	12	Dining Room C
Dunne, Philip	11/01/2006	Oxford West & Abingdon Cons	Dinner	50	Dining Room A
Dunne, Philip	10/07/2006	Oxford University Air Squadron	Dinner	19	Dining Room B
Dunne, Philip	01/11/2006	Corporate Governance Forum	Breakfast	45	Dining Room A
Dunne, Philip	16/11/2006	Policy Exchange Breakfast	Breakfast	12	Dining Room C
Dunne, Philip	13/12/2006	Corporate Governance Forum	Breakfast	40	Dining Room A
Dunne, Philip	07/02/2007	Corporate Governance Forum	Breakfast	35	Dining Room A
Dunne, Philip	23/05/2007	Corporate Governance Forum	Breakfast	45	Dining Room A
Dunne, Philip	25/06/2007	Corporate Governance Forum	Dinner	42	Dining Room A
Dunne, Philip	18/07/2007	Association	Breakfast	12	Dining Room C
Dunne, Philip	23/10/2007	Corporate Governance Research Launch	Reception	100	Members Dining Room
Dunne, Philip	07/11/2007	All Party Parliamentary Corporate Governance	Breakfast	44	Dining Room A
Dunne, Philip	21/11/2007	Policy Exchange	Breakfast	12	Dining Room D
Dunne, Philip	31/01/2008	Corporate Government	Breakfast	33	Dining Room A
Dunne, Philip	23/04/2008	Corporate Government	Breakfast	40	Dining Room A
Dunne, Philip	29/05/2008	Policy Exchange Business Breakfast	Breakfast	18	Dining Room B
Dunne, Philip	10/06/2008	Big Lottery Fund	Lunch	13	Dining Room C
Dunne, Philip	11/06/2008	Corporate Government	Breakfast	48	Dining Room A

MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Garnier, Edward	13/03/2007	Law Society Dinner	Dinner	13	Dining Room C
Garnier, Edward	19/03/2007	Business Club Italia	Reception	60	Dining Room A
Garnier, Edward	19/04/2007	St John Eye Hospital	Reception	118	Terrace Pavilion
Garnier, Edward	08/05/2007	The Beauchamp College	Reception	180	Terrace Pavilion
Garnier, Edward	21/06/2007	Laytons Client Reception	Reception	150	Churchill Dining Room
Garnier, Edward	03/07/2007	HCA Little Bowden	Tea	48	Terrace Pavilion
Garnier, Edward	04/02/2008	Harborough Conservatives	Lunch	67	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Garnier, Edward	04/03/2008	Leicestershire Law Society	Dinner	11	Dining Room C
Garnier, Edward	22/09/2008	Anglo-Italian Autumn Reception	Reception	250	Terrace Pavilion
Garnier, Edward	06/11/2008	Anglo - Korean Society Annual Dinner	Dinner	89	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Garnier, Edward	10/03/2009	Leicestershire Law Society MP'sDinner	Dinner	12	Dining Room C
Garnier, Edward	05/05/2009	HKAS Parliamentary Dinner	Dinner	30	Club Room
Garnier, Edward	21/05/2009	Chambers of a Caldecott QC Reception	Reception	150	Terrace Pavilion
Garnier, Edward	15/06/2009	University of Leicester Dinner	Dinner	23	Club Room
Gauke, David	25/10/2005	European Research Group	Breakfast	12	Dining Room D
Gauke, David	13/12/2005	European Research Group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room C
Gauke, David	10/01/2006	European Research Group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room D
Gauke, David	07/02/2006	European Research Group	Breakfast	15	Dining Room C
Gauke, David	14/03/2006	Lions Club	Reception	105	Terrace Pavilion
Gauke, David	21/03/2006	European Research Group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room D
Gauke, David	13/06/2006	European Research Group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room C
Gauke, David	11/07/2006	European Research Group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room D
Gauke, David	17/10/2006	European Research Group	Breakfast	13	Dining Room C
Gauke, David	21/11/2006	European Research group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room D
Gauke, David	23/01/2007	European Ressearch Group	Breakfast	11	Dining Room C
Gauke, David	27/02/2007	European Research Group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room D
Gauke, David	13/03/2007	Lions Day with the UN	Lunch	19	Astor Suite
Gauke, David	17/04/2007	European Research Group	Breakfast	10	Dining Room D
Gauke, David	27/04/2007	The Bonded Warehousekeepers Association	Lunch	73	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Gauke, David	22/05/2007	Eurpoean Research Group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room D
Gauke, David	17/07/2007	European Research Group	Breakfast	10	Dining Room C
Gauke, David	23/10/2007	European Research Group	Breakfast	11	Dining Room D
Gauke, David	08/11/2007	Help the Aged Dinner	Dinner	95	Churchill Dining Room

MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Gibb, Nicolas	04/07/2005	1912 Club	Dinner	48	Dining Room A
Gibb, Nicolas	06/03/2006	Old Bedford Modernians' Club	Lunch	120	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Gibb, Nicolas	09/06/2006	Bognor Regis & Littlehampton Cons Assoc	Lunch	72	Churchill Dining Room
Gibb, Nicolas	30/11/2006	Patrons Lunch	Lunch	19	Dining Room B
Gibb, Nicolas	05/11/2007	1912 Club	Dinner	46	Dining Room A
Gibb, Nicolas	03/03/2008	Old Bedford Modernians Club Lunch	Lunch	115	Churchill Dining Room, Dining Room D, Terrace Pavilion
Gibson, Ian	28/04/2004	The Field Studies Council	Reception	25	Dining Room B
Gibson, Ian	04/06/2004	Bass Meeting Of European Directors	Reception	90	Strangers Dining Room
Gibson, Ian	08/06/2004	Association of Universities	Dinner	18	Club Room
Gibson, Ian	22/06/2004	International Myeloma Foundation	Reception	180	Members Dining Room
Gibson, Ian	30/06/2004	EDF Energy	Reception	50	Strangers Dining Room
Gibson, Ian	08/09/2004	NHS Confederation	Reception	50	Strangers Dining Room
Gibson, Ian	09/09/2004	University of East Anglia	Reception	190	Terrace Pavilion
Gibson, Ian	27/10/2004	B&Q	Reception	100	Terrace Pavilion
Gibson, Ian	08/11/2004	Macmillan Cancer Relief	Reception	200	Terrace Pavilion
Gibson, Ian	30/11/2004	PPARC	Dinner	15	Dining Room D
Gibson, Ian	11/01/2005	Cancer Research Uk	Reception	150	Terrace Pavilion
Gibson, Ian	19/01/2005	Cambridge Stem Cell Institute	Dinner	10	Dining Room C
Gibson, Ian	27/01/2005	Bio Industry Association	Lunch	45	Astor Suite
Gibson, Ian	09/03/2005	Association	Lunch	11	Dining Room B
Gibson, Ian	22/03/2005	Novartis Oncology	Breakfast	30	Dining Room B
Gibson, Ian	25/05/2005	Parkinson's Disease Society	Reception	185	Terrace Pavilion
Gibson, Ian	29/06/2005	Macmillan Cancer Relief	Reception	100	Members Dining Room
Gibson, Ian	06/07/2005	EDF Energy	Tea	35	Dining Room B
Gibson, Ian	18/07/2005	Edelman	Dinner	23	Astor Suite
Gibson, Ian	07/11/2005	UKLCC	Reception	80	Dining Room A
Gibson, Ian	09/11/2005	Nesta	Reception	200	Members Dining Room
Gibson, Ian	09/11/2005	Chirow Vaccines	Dinner	14	Dining Room C
Gibson, Ian	30/11/2005	Association for International Cancer Research	Reception	50	Astor Suite
Gibson, Ian	13/12/2005	APCO Uk	Breakfast	18	Dining Room B
Gibson, Ian	10/01/2006	Association	Dinner	26	Astor Suite
Gibson, Ian	17/01/2006	NUS Annual Reception	Reception	150	Terrace Pavilion

MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Gummer, Rt Hon John	01/12/2004	Lexington Communications	Tea	60	Dining Room B
Gummer, Rt Hon John	17/06/2005	Veolia Water UK	Dinner	35	Dining Room A
Gummer, Rt Hon John	04/07/2005	Suffolk Coastal Cons Assoc	Lunch	90	Churchill Dining Room
Gummer, Rt Hon John	07/11/2005	The Westminster Club	Lunch	82	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Gummer, Rt Hon John	14/03/2006	Waveney Business Group Lunch	Lunch	22	Dining Room B
Gummer, Rt Hon John	27/04/2006	Association	Reception	200	Terrace Pavilion
Gummer, Rt Hon John	07/06/2006	Environment Council	Reception	70	Dining Room A
Gummer, Rt Hon John	03/07/2006	Westminster Club	Lunch	91	Churchill Dining Room
Gummer, Rt Hon John	18/09/2006	AFB Launch	Reception	80	Strangers Dining Room
Gummer, Rt Hon John	19/09/2006	Martin Bicknell Testimonial Dinner	Dinner	108	Members Dining Room, Strangers Dining Room
Gummer, Rt Hon John	06/11/2006	Westminster Club	Lunch	76	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Gummer, Rt Hon John	06/03/2007	Westfield URT Launch	Reception	100	Terrace Pavilion
Gummer, Rt Hon John	24/04/2007	Woodland Trust Landfill Fund Celebration	Reception	120	Members Dining Room
Gummer, Rt Hon John	13/09/2007	Pugin Reception	Reception	120	Terrace Pavilion
Gummer, Rt Hon John	31/10/2007	City & Guilds College Association	Reception	80	Dining Room A
Gummer, Rt Hon John	17/01/2008	AIFA Member Dinner	Dinner	11	Dining Room C
Gummer, Rt Hon John	07/07/2008	Business Lunch	Lunch	58	Churchill Dining Room
Gummer, Rt Hon John	17/11/2008	Suffolk Consultative Council	Lunch	61	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Gummer, Rt Hon John	06/07/2009	Summer Lunch	Lunch	49	Dining Room A
Gwynne, Andrew	11/12/2007	LFI	Lunch	13	Dining Room C
Gwynne, Andrew	20/02/2008	LFI Chair Lunch	Lunch	15	Dining Room B
Gwynne, Andrew	07/05/2008	LFI Chair Lunch	Lunch	10	Dining Room C
Gwynne, Andrew	11/06/2008	L F I	Lunch	14	Dining Room C
Gwynne, Andrew	15/07/2008	L F I	Lunch	15	Astor Suite
Gwynne, Andrew	22/07/2008	LFI Reception	Reception	20	Dining Room B
Gwynne, Andrew	29/10/2008	LFI Chair Lunch	Lunch	24	Dining Room B
Gwynne, Andrew	10/12/2008	LFI Chair's Lunch	Lunch	14	Astor Suite
Gwynne, Andrew	16/12/2008	LFI Informal Drinks	Reception	25	Dining Room C
Gwynne, Andrew	26/03/2009	LFT Chair's Breakfast	Breakfast	24	Dining Room B
Gwynne, Andrew	06/05/2009	LFI Chairs Breakfast	Breakfast	18	Dining Room B
Gwynne, Andrew	01/07/2009	LFI	Breakfast	23	Dining Room B
Hague, Rt Hon William	17/01/2005	Third Term	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Hague, Rt Hon William	06/07/2005	Association	Lunch	8	Dining Room C

MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Hayes, John	17/06/2004	Breakfast For Luis	Breakfast	20	Dining Room B
Hayes, John	28/10/2004	VoxGen	Breakfast	20	Dining Room B
Hayes, John	20/12/2004	Association	Dinner	14	Dining Room C
Hayes, John	22/02/2005	Sx3	Breakfast	20	Dining Room A
Hayes, John	09/03/2005	Council of Mortgage Lenders	Lunch	14	Dining Room C
Hayes, John	22/03/2005	Lewis PR	Breakfast	54	Dining Room A
Hayes, John	23/03/2005	Association	Breakfast	8	Dining Room C
Hayes, John	28/06/2005	All Members Group	Dinner	6	Dining Room D
Hayes, John	14/07/2005	Lewis Communications	Breakfast	14	Dining Room D
Hayes, John	19/07/2005	All Member Group	Dinner	14	Dining Room C
Hayes, John	19/10/2005	Lewis Communications	Breakfast	22	Dining Room C
Hayes, John	25/10/2005	Association	Dinner	16	Astor Suite
Hayes, John	22/11/2005	All Member Group	Dinner	19	Astor Suite
Hayes, John	14/12/2005	Education Forum	Breakfast	24	Dining Room B
Hayes, John	17/01/2006	Association	Dinner	10	Astor Suite
Hayes, John	07/02/2006	All Member Group	Dinner	20	Astor Suite
Hayes, John	07/03/2006	All Members Group	Dinner	10	Astor Suite
Hayes, John	02/05/2006	All Members Group	Dinner	17	Astor Suite
Hayes, John	28/06/2006	Voxgen Business Breakfast	Breakfast	18	Dining Room B
Hayes, John	24/07/2006	Cornerstone Dinner	Dinner	10	Astor Suite
Hayes, John	23/11/2006	North East Derbyshire Conservatives	Lunch	33	Dining Room A
Hayes, John	12/12/2006	Cornerstone Dinner	Dinner	10	Astor Suite
Hayes, John	16/01/2007	Cornerstone Dinner	Dinner	11	Astor Suite
Hayes, John	13/03/2007	Cornestone Dinner	Dinner	20	Astor Suite
Hayes, John	08/05/2007	Cornestone Dinner	Dinner	10	Astor Suite
Hayes, John	23/10/2007	Cornerstone Dinner	Dinner	16	Astor Suite
Hayes, John	11/12/2007	Cornerstone Dinner	Dinner	11	Astor Suite
Hayes, John	15/07/2009	Engineering, Education, Business	Lunch	16	Dining Room B
Heal, Sylvia	09/11/2005	B&Q	Reception	100	Terrace Pavilion
Heal, Sylvia	21/11/2005	USDAW	Lunch	18	Dining Room B
Heal, Sylvia	01/12/2005	Carers Uk	Reception	100	Terrace Pavilion
Heal, Sylvia	18/04/2006	Disabled Childrens Dinner	Dinner	30	Club Room
Heal, Sylvia	21/11/2006	Every Disabled Child Matters	Tea	100	Strangers Dining Room
Heal, Sylvia	20/03/2007	Work & Families Act	Reception	80	Strangers Dining Room

MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Heathcoat-Amory, David	16/06/2004	European Research Group	Breakfast	10	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, David	20/07/2004	European Research Group	Breakfast	10	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, David	16/11/2004	European Research Fund	Breakfast	10	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, David	14/12/2004	European Reseach Fund	Breakfast	10	Dining Room C
Heathcoat-Amory, David	18/01/2005	European Research Group	Breakfast	10	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, David	22/02/2005	European Research Group	Breakfast	10	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, David	21/06/2005	European Research Group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, David	19/07/2005	European Research Group	Breakfast	10	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, David	10/01/2006	European Research Group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, David	07/02/2006	European Research Group	Breakfast	15	Dining Room C
Heathcoat-Amory, David	13/06/2006	European Research Group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room C
Heathcoat-Amory, David	11/07/2006	European Research Group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, David	21/11/2006	European Research group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, David	15/07/2008	European Research Group Breakfast Meeting	Breakfast	11	Dining Room C
Heathcoat-Amory, David	25/11/2008	European Research Group	Breakfast	10	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, David	08/12/2008	European Research Group Breakfast Meeting	Breakfast	13	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, Rt Hon David	21/06/2004	Third Term Group	Dinner	8	Dining Room C
Heathcoat-Amory, Rt Hon David	25/10/2005	European Research Group	Breakfast	12	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, Rt Hon David	22/11/2005	European Research Group	Breakfast	10	Dining Room C
Heathcoat-Amory, Rt Hon David	13/12/2005	European Research Group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room C
Heathcoat-Amory, Rt Hon David	16/01/2006	Third Term	Dinner	11	Dining Room C
Heathcoat-Amory, Rt Hon David	07/03/2006	Wells Conservative Association Patrons Club	Lunch	19	Astor Suite
Heathcoat-Amory, Rt Hon David	21/03/2006	European Research Group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, Rt Hon David	25/04/2006	European Research Group	Breakfast	15	Dining Room C
Heathcoat-Amory, Rt Hon David	23/05/2006	The Wessex RFCA	Tea	100	Strangers Dining Room
Heathcoat-Amory, Rt Hon David	17/10/2006	European Research Group	Breakfast	13	Dining Room C
Heathcoat-Amory, Rt Hon David	23/01/2007	European Ressearch Group	Breakfast	11	Dining Room C
Heathcoat-Amory, Rt Hon David	27/02/2007	European Research Group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, Rt Hon David	17/04/2007	European Research Group	Breakfast	10	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, Rt Hon David	22/05/2007	Eurpoean Research Group	Breakfast	14	Dining Room D
Heathcoat-Amory, Rt Hon David	14/06/2007	300th Aniversary of The UK Parliament	Dinner	73	Members Dining Room

MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Howarth, Gerald	25/01/2006	Rotary Club of Farnborough	Dinner	53	Dining Room A
Howarth, Gerald	28/02/2006	UK Defence Forum	Dinner	24	Dining Room B
Howarth, Gerald	31/03/2006	Aldershot Conservative Business Club	Dinner	70	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Howarth, Gerald	18/07/2006	BBGA	Reception	200	Terrace Pavilion
Howarth, Gerald	06/11/2006	P2 Dinner	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Howarth, Gerald	10/11/2006	Airpower Association's Industry Dinner	Dinner	130	Members Dining Room, Strangers Dining Room
Howarth, Gerald	14/12/2006	Chief of the Airstaff	Breakfast	22	Dining Room B
Howarth, Gerald	20/02/2007	RAF Breakfast Meeting	Breakfast	18	Dining Room B
Howarth, Gerald	23/03/2007	Aldershot Conservative Business Club	Dinner	75	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Howarth, Gerald	26/03/2007	Hampshire Conservatives	Dinner	23	Club Room
Howarth, Gerald	17/04/2007	UK Defence Forum	Dinner	26	Club Room
Howarth, Gerald	23/04/2007	NBJ United Kingdom Limited	Dinner	25	Dining Room B
Howarth, Gerald	08/05/2007	The Air League	Reception	100	Members Dining Room
Howarth, Gerald	04/06/2007	Rolls-Royce	Lunch	24	Dining Room B
Howarth, Gerald	06/06/2007	Chief of The Air Staff's Breakfast	Breakfast	20	Dining Room B
Howarth, Gerald	03/07/2007	Air League	Reception	60	Strangers Dining Room
Howarth, Gerald	23/07/2007	92 Group Dinner	Dinner	23	Club Room
Howarth, Gerald	06/11/2007	P2 Dinner	Dinner	11	Dining Room C
Howarth, Gerald	22/11/2007	CAS Breakfast	Breakfast	26	Dining Room B
Howarth, Gerald	30/11/2007	Air Power Association's Industry Dinner	Dinner	117	Members Dining Room, Strangers Dining Room
Howarth, Gerald	18/06/2008	Future Procurement	Dinner	14	Dining Room C
Howarth, Gerald	16/07/2008	Farnborough Air Show	Reception	197	Terrace Pavilion
Howarth, Gerald	16/07/2008	Kansas Farnborough Reception	Dinner	24	Dining Room B
Howarth, Gerald	17/07/2008	British Business and General Aviation	Reception	180	Terrace Pavilion
Howarth, Gerald	20/10/2008	Centenary of Flight	Reception	50	Dining Room A
Howarth, Gerald	12/11/2008	C A S Breakfast	Breakfast	25	Dining Room B
Howarth, Gerald	20/03/2009	Aldershot Conservative Business Club Annual Dinner	Dinner	80	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Howarth, Gerald	31/03/2009	Network enabled Capability	Reception	75	Strangers Dining Room
Howarth, Gerald	01/04/2009	Royal Air Force Briefing	Breakfast	24	Dining Room B
Howarth, Gerald	29/04/2009	Royal Air Force Reception	Reception	150	Terrace Pavilion
Howarth, Gerald	29/04/2009	RAF Gallantry Dinner	Dinner	40	Churchill Dining Room

MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	21/03/2006	Nicks Diner	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	30/03/2006	Windmill Business Group	Lunch	35	Dining Room A
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	18/04/2006	Nicks Diner	Dinner	12	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	02/05/2006	Nicks Diner	Dinner	12	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	16/05/2006	Nicks Diner	Dinner	11	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	23/05/2006	City Remembrancer's Office	Reception	200	Terrace Pavilion
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	06/06/2006	Nicks Diner	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	20/06/2006	Nicks Diner	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	04/07/2006	Nicks Diner	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	18/07/2006	Nicks Diner	Dinner	13	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	10/10/2006	Nicks Diner	Dinner	14	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	24/10/2006	Nicks Diner	Dinner	15	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	07/11/2006	Nicks Diner	Dinner	13	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	21/11/2006	Nicks Diner	Dinner	11	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	05/12/2006	Nicks Diner	Dinner	12	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	09/01/2007	Nicks Diner	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	23/01/2007	Nicks Diner	Dinner	13	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	06/02/2007	Nicks Diner	Dinner	6	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	07/02/2007	MP Briefing Dinner	Dinner	14	Club Room
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	20/02/2007	Nicks Diner	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	05/03/2007	Balppa Parliamentary Lunch	Lunch	83	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	06/03/2007	Nicks Diner	Dinner	12	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	13/03/2007	BT	Lunch	14	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	20/03/2007	Nicks Diner	Dinner	7	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	17/04/2007	Nicks Diner	Dinner	8	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	01/05/2007	Nicks Diner	Dinner	8	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	15/05/2007	Nicks Diner	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	12/06/2007	Nicks Diner	Dinner	11	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	26/06/2007	Nicks Diner	Dinner	7	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	10/07/2007	Nicks Diner	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	24/07/2007	Nicks Diner	Dinner	7	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	16/10/2007	Nicks Diner	Dinner	12	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	13/11/2007	Nicks Diner	Dinner	12	Dining Room D
Jack, Rt Hon Michael	27/11/2007	Nicks Diner	Dinner	10	Dining Room D

MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Ladyman, Stephen	15/10/2007	Network Rail	Dinner	19	Dining Room B
Ladyman, Stephen	26/06/2008	Greenergy Reception to Discuss Biofuels and Sustainability	Reception	50	Strangers Dining Room
Ladyman, Stephen	19/11/2008	Helpage International	Reception	45	Astor Suite
Ladyman, Stephen	05/12/2008	IOD Kent	Lunch	54	Dining Room A
Ladyman, Stephen	09/12/2008	ARHM Annual dinner 2008	Dinner	24	Astor Suite
Ladyman, Stephen	16/03/2009	National Federation of Retail Newsagents	Reception	150	Members Dining Room
Ladyman, Stephen	25/06/2009	Automotive Leasing	Breakfast	26	Dining Room B
Ladyman, Stephen	20/07/2009	Dinner with Highways Agency	Dinner	13	Dining Room D
Ladyman, Stephen	14/09/2009	Gala Dinner for Global Shippers Forum	Dinner	50	Pugin Room, Strangers Dining Room
Laing, Eleanor	20/04/2004	4th July Dining Club	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Laing, Eleanor	16/06/2004	Conseil National des Ingenieurs et Scientifiques	Lunch	42	Dining Room A
Laing, Eleanor	12/07/2004	Third Term Group	Dinner	10	Dining Room C
Laing, Eleanor	19/07/2004	4th July Dining Club	Lunch	10	Dining Room C
Laing, Eleanor	16/09/2004	Rotary Club	Reception	150	Terrace Pavilion
Laing, Eleanor	01/11/2004	Epping Forest Patrons Club	Dinner	38	Dining Room A
Laing, Eleanor	24/01/2005	Burns Supper	Dinner	40	Dining Room A
Laing, Eleanor	14/03/2005	Fourth of July Dining Club	Dinner	10	Club Room
Laing, Eleanor	21/03/2005	Volunteer Reading Help	Tea	200	Members Dining Room
Laing, Eleanor	04/07/2005	Fourth of July Dining Club	Dinner	10	Dining Room C
Laing, Eleanor	07/11/2005	Fourth of July Dining Club	Dinner	10	Dining Room C
Laing, Eleanor	19/11/2005	St Columba's School	Lunch	94	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Laing, Eleanor	19/12/2005	Third Term	Dinner	12	Dining Room C
Laing, Eleanor	23/01/2006	Burns Supper	Dinner	24	Dining Room B
Laing, Eleanor	27/03/2006	4th July dining club	Dinner	10	Dining Room C
Laing, Eleanor	26/04/2006	Volunteer Reading Help Parliamentary Reception	Tea	150	Members Dining Room
Laing, Eleanor	19/06/2006	BBC Lunch	Lunch	14	Dining Room C
Laing, Eleanor	22/06/2006	Conservative Women's Organisations	Reception	120	Members Dining Room
Laing, Eleanor	06/11/2006	4th July dining club	Dinner	10	Dining Room C
Laing, Eleanor	26/02/2007	Association	Dinner	12	Dining Room C
Laing, Eleanor	26/03/2007	4th July Dining Club	Dinner	7	Dining Room C
Laing, Eleanor	18/06/2007	Third Term	Dinner	10	Dining Room C

MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Mitchell, Andrew	27/06/2005	One Nation	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	18/07/2005	One Nation	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	17/10/2005	One Nation	Dinner	13	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	24/10/2005	One Nation	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	07/11/2005	One Nation	Dinner	13	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	14/11/2005	One Nation	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	28/11/2005	One Nation	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	05/12/2005	One Nation	Dinner	13	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	30/01/2006	One Nation	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	06/02/2006	One Nation	Dinner	13	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	13/02/2006	One Nation	Dinner	16	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	13/03/2006	One Nation	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	24/04/2006	One Nation	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	08/05/2006	One Nation	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	15/05/2006	One Nation	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	12/06/2006	One Nation	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	03/07/2006	One Nation	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	10/07/2006	One Nation	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	17/07/2006	One Nation	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	04/09/2006	Imperium Launch Party	Reception	150	Terrace Pavilion
Mitchell, Andrew	13/09/2006	Reception for Howes Percival	Reception	150	Terrace Pavilion
Mitchell, Andrew	16/10/2006	One Nation	Dinner	10	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	20/11/2006	One Nation	Dinner	8	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	27/11/2006	One Nation	Dinner	11	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	15/01/2007	One Nation	Dinner	8	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	22/01/2007	One Nation	Dinner	13	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	29/01/2007	One Nation	Dinner	13	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	05/02/2007	One Nation	Dinner	6	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	12/03/2007	One Nation	Dinner	14	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	19/03/2007	One Nation	Dinner	6	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	23/04/2007	One Nation	Dinner	12	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	14/05/2007	One Nation	Dinner	9	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	21/05/2007	One Nation	Dinner	4	Dining Room D
Mitchell, Andrew	11/06/2007	One Nation	Dinner	10	Dining Room D

MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Raynsford, Rt Hon Nick	07/10/2008	Governance of Complex Partnerships	Breakfast	22	Dining Room B
Raynsford, Rt Hon Nick	09/10/2008	Confidence in Construction-BDB Reception	Reception	120	Churchill Dining Room
Raynsford, Rt Hon Nick	20/10/2008	Kier Group Reception	Reception	200	Terrace Pavilion
Raynsford, Rt Hon Nick	17/11/2008	ADB:Incorporating Insurer Requirements	Reception	29	Dining Room B
Raynsford, Rt Hon Nick	17/11/2008	Celebration of Social Housing	Reception	150	Terrace Pavilion
Raynsford, Rt Hon Nick	07/05/2009	L + Q Delivering Communities in London	Reception	100	Members Dining Room
Raynsford, Rt Hon Nick	11/05/2009	NHIC Big Green Homes Initiative	Lunch	83	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Raynsford, Rt Hon Nick	25/06/2009	NLGN Summer Reception	Reception	200	Terrace Pavilion
Redwood, Rt Hon John	21/07/2004	Wokingham Cons Assoc	Tea	50	Terrace Pavilion
Redwood, Rt Hon John	04/04/2005	Wokingham Portcullis Club	Dinner	35	Dining Room A
Redwood, Rt Hon John	25/11/2005	Middlesex University	Lunch	19	Dining Room B
Redwood, Rt Hon John	27/02/2006	Wokingham Portcullis Club	Dinner	38	Dining Room A
Redwood, Rt Hon John	20/03/2006	Supper Club	Buffet	17	Club Room
Redwood, Rt Hon John	15/05/2006	Supper Club	Dinner	15	Club Room
Redwood, Rt Hon John	05/06/2006	Association	Lunch	12	Dining Room D
Redwood, Rt Hon John	12/06/2006	Supper Club	Dinner	20	Club Room
Redwood, Rt Hon John	22/06/2006	Wokingham Conservatives	Tea	35	Terrace Pavilion
Redwood, Rt Hon John	10/07/2006	Supper Club	Dinner	23	Club Room
Redwood, Rt Hon John	16/10/2006	No Turning Back Group Supper	Dinner	23	Club Room
Redwood, Rt Hon John	14/11/2006	Supper Club	Dinner	11	Club Room
Redwood, Rt Hon John	11/12/2006	Supper Club	Dinner	24	Astor Suite
Redwood, Rt Hon John	22/01/2007	Supper Club	Buffet	20	Club Room
Redwood, Rt Hon John	19/02/2007	Supper Club	Buffet	15	Club Room
Redwood, Rt Hon John	12/03/2007	Supper Club	Buffet	16	Club Room
Redwood, Rt Hon John	16/04/2007	Supper Club	Buffet	17	Club Room
Redwood, Rt Hon John	14/05/2007	Supper Club	Buffet	12	Club Room
Redwood, Rt Hon John	11/06/2007	Supper Club	Buffet	21	Club Room
Redwood, Rt Hon John	09/07/2007	Supper Club	Dinner	11	Dining Room D
Redwood, Rt Hon John	15/10/2007	Supper Club	Buffet	23	Club Room
Redwood, Rt Hon John	12/11/2007	Supper Club	Buffet	13	Club Room
Redwood, Rt Hon John	17/12/2007	Supper Club	Buffet	21	Club Room
Redwood, Rt Hon John	07/01/2008	Supper Club	Buffet	15	Club Room
Redwood, Rt Hon John	10/11/2008	Supper Club	Buffet	18	Club Room

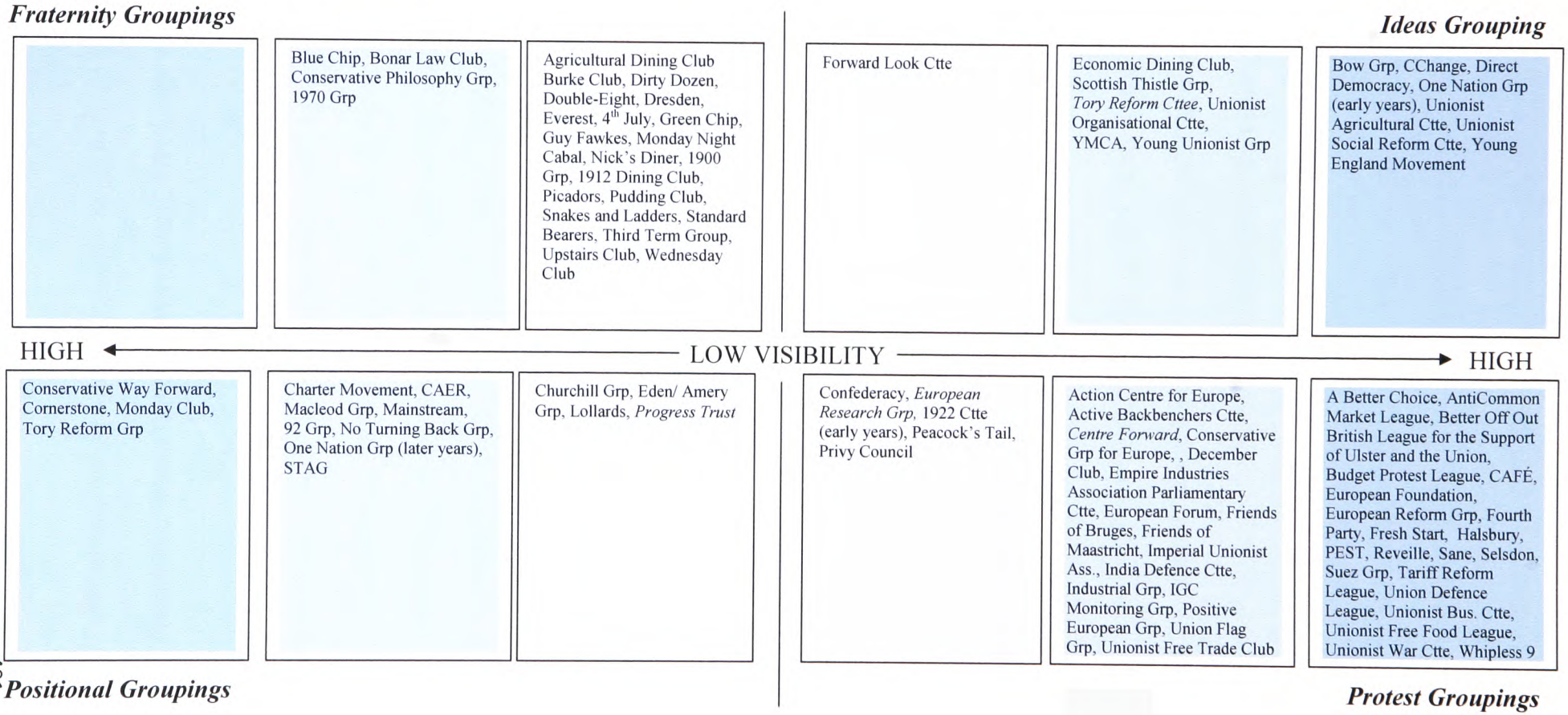
MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Rosindell, Andrew	27/05/2006	Romford Conservative Club	Dinner	99	Churchill Dining Room
Rosindell, Andrew	30/11/2006	The Glass Slipper Appeal	Dinner	24	Dining Room B
Rosindell, Andrew	07/12/2006	The Westminster Club	Dinner	26	Dining Room B
Rosindell, Andrew	16/03/2007	Blue Iguana Recovery Programme	Dinner	90	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Rosindell, Andrew	19/04/2007	Walbrook Trustees	Dinner	23	Dining Room B
Rosindell, Andrew	26/04/2007	Constitutional Monarchy Association	Reception	150	Terrace Pavilion
Rosindell, Andrew	09/06/2007	Victory Dinner	Dinner	215	Members Dining Room, Strangers Dining Room
Rosindell, Andrew	03/07/2007	1912 Club	Dinner	43	Dining Room A
Rosindell, Andrew	15/01/2008	Rotary Club	Lunch	41	Dining Room A
Rosindell, Andrew	16/05/2008	Lady's Lucheon	Lunch	14	Dining Room C
Rosindell, Andrew	09/06/2008	Ludwigshafen Delegation	Lunch	11	Dining Room D
Rosindell, Andrew	26/02/2009	Association	Lunch	14	Dining Room C
Rosindell, Andrew	04/06/2009	Birthday Lunch	Lunch	10	Dining Room C
Rosindell, Andrew	15/06/2009	The Cazenove Association	Lunch	17	Dining Room B
Rosindell, Andrew	30/09/2009	Barking and Havering LMC	Dinner	45	Dining Room A
Ross, Ernie	22/11/2004	Eid Celebration	Tea	200	Members Dining Room
Rowen, Paul	30/05/2006	WRAC Lunch	Lunch	11	Dining Room C
Rowen, Paul	24/06/2008	Light Rail APPG	Reception	100	Strangers Dining Room
Rowen, Paul	24/02/2009	APPG Light Rail Lunch	Lunch	19	Dining Room B
Rowen, Paul	05/06/2009	Mayor of Camden's Charity Launch	Dinner	86	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Rowen, Paul	23/06/2009	Light Rail APPG Tea	Reception	100	Strangers Dining Room
Roy, Frank	07/06/2005	Lord of the Wing Launch	Reception	100	Members Dining Room
Roy, Frank	01/02/2006	Scotish Enterprise	Dinner	13	Dining Room C
Roy, Frank	29/11/2006	Scottish Enterprise for Lanarkshire	Dinner	8	Dining Room C
Roy, Frank	05/12/2007	Lanarkshire MPs Dinner	Dinner	11	Dining Room C
Ruane, Chris	22/06/2004	All Party Parliamentary Group On Heart	Reception	60	Dining Room A
Ruane, Chris	24/01/2005	Westminster Diet And Health Forum	Reception	100	Terrace Pavilion
Ruane, Chris	16/01/2007	British Heart Fundation	Reception	60	Members Dining Room
Ruane, Chris	25/04/2007	British Heart Foundation	Reception	100	Terrace Pavilion
Ruane, Chris	13/07/2007	London 2007 Conference	Dinner	85	Churchill Dining Room
Ruane, Chris	10/12/2007	CACDP 25th Aniverasary	Reception	80	Dining Room A
Ruane, Chris	30/01/2008	Anti Terrorist Bomb Disposal Course	Lunch	28	Dining Room B

MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Waterson, Nigel	18/04/2008	Old Eastbournian Association Dinner	Dinner	91	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Waterson, Nigel	24/04/2008	UK Liquidity Challenge/ Demographic Change	Dinner	13	Dining Room C
Waterson, Nigel	03/06/2008	Pensions Policy Institute	Reception	45	Dining Room B
Waterson, Nigel	09/06/2008	Tea on the Terrace	Tea	46	Terrace Pavilion
Waterson, Nigel	03/07/2008	Celebration for 100 Years of Pension	Reception	115	Members Dining Room
Waterson, Nigel	27/10/2008	Friends of Louisiana Lunch	Lunch	17	Dining Room B
Waterson, Nigel	25/03/2009	Grandparent of the year Awards Ceremony	Reception	40	Terrace Pavilion
Waterson, Nigel	23/04/2009	Retirement of South East Employers' Chairman	Reception	25	Dining Room B
Waterson, Nigel	16/06/2009	PPI Key Supporters Dinner	Dinner	10	Dining Room C
Waterson, Nigel	20/07/2009	Eastbourne Business Briefing	Tea	35	Terrace Pavilion
Watkinson, Angela	29/04/2004	City Livery Lodge	Dinner	52	Dining Room A
Watkinson, Angela	25/11/2004	Upminster Conservative Association	Dinner	54	Dining Room A
Watkinson, Angela	17/11/2005	Association	Dinner	44	Dining Room A
Watkinson, Angela	13/11/2006	1912 Club Dinner	Dinner	53	Dining Room A
Watkinson, Angela	16/11/2006	Upminster Westminster Dining Club	Dinner	54	Dining Room A
Watkinson, Angela	15/03/2007	Robertson Milroy Corporate Lunch	Lunch	18	Dining Room B
Watkinson, Angela	05/12/2007	Breakthrough Breast Cancer	Dinner	15	Club Room
Watkinson, Angela	17/01/2008	Chamber Of Commerce	Lunch	29	Dining Room A
Watkinson, Angela	22/01/2008	1912 Committee	Lunch	45	Dining Room A
Watson, Tom	27/04/2004	Music West Midlands	Reception	45	Dining Room B
Watson, Tom	13/05/2004	SODEXHO	Reception	40	Dining Room A
Watson, Tom	27/10/2004	Black Country Chamber	Lunch	24	Dining Room B
Watson, Tom	15/06/2005	Good Relations	Reception	45	Dining Room B, Dining Room D
Watson, Tom	01/03/2006	Futures Housing Launch	Tea	60	Strangers Dining Room
Watson, Tom	09/01/2007	Centro /WMPTA Reception	Reception	100	Terrace Pavilion
Watson, Tom	12/05/2008	AMEC Parliamentary Reception	Reception	200	Terrace Pavilion
Watson, Tom	02/02/2009	CIO/CTO Council Green ICT	Reception	80	Churchill Dining Room
Watson, Tom	01/06/2009	Greets Green	Reception	75	Dining Room A
Watts, Dave	29/04/2004	Glass + Glassing Federation	Lunch	54	Dining Room A
Watts, Dave	08/06/2004	St Helens Chamber Ltd	Lunch	18	Dining Room B
Watts, Dave	28/06/2005	Connect Conferences	Reception	100	Strangers Dining Room

MP Name	Date	Event	Type	Numbers	Venue(s)
Wyatt, Derek	22/06/2009	Oxford Internet Institute	Reception	80	Strangers Dining Room
Wyatt, Derek	09/07/2009	BBC Dinner	Dinner	9	Dining Room D
Wyatt, Derek	21/07/2009	The Love Geist Report 2009	Breakfast	16	Dining Room C
Yeo, Tim	24/05/2004	TBC	Lunch	20	Dining Room B
Yeo, Tim	18/10/2004	Third Term Group	Dinner	10	Dining Room C
Yeo, Tim	24/04/2006	Third Term	Dinner	10	Dining Room C
Yeo, Tim	31/10/2006	CPRE Tranquillity Campaign	Breakfast	25	Dining Room B
Yeo, Tim	29/11/2006	Federation of Small Businesses	Reception	40	Dining Room B
Yeo, Tim	11/05/2009	CBI ETS Roundtable	Dinner	22	Astor Suite
Yeo, Tim	02/07/2009	Environmental Investment Network	Tea	150	Members Dining Room
Young, Rt Hon Sir George	22/06/2004	Tbc	Dinner	14	Astor Suite
Young, Rt Hon Sir George	18/09/2004	Christening	Reception	60	Strangers Dining Room
Young, Rt Hon Sir George	23/09/2004	MCA	Reception	180	Terrace Pavilion
Young, Rt Hon Sir George	11/11/2004	Dominion Housing	Reception	100	Terrace Pavilion
Young, Rt Hon Sir George	30/11/2004	McCarthy & Stone	Tea	25	Dining Room A
Young, Rt Hon Sir George	23/11/2005	North West Hampshire Cons Assoc	Dinner	46	Dining Room A
Young, Rt Hon Sir George	25/01/2006	Dominion Housing Group	Reception	110	Terrace Pavilion
Young, Rt Hon Sir George	01/03/2006	Safer Child Car Travel	Reception	80	Dining Room A
Young, Rt Hon Sir George	06/12/2006	Foundations Independant Living	Dinner	14	Dining Room C
Young, Rt Hon Sir George	20/04/2007	Mayor of Ealing - Charity Dinner	Dinner	106	Churchill Dining Room, Terrace Pavilion
Young, Rt Hon Sir George	19/02/2008	BBC South	Breakfast	21	Dining Room B
Young, Rt Hon Sir George	05/03/2008	Hampshire Further Education Colleges	Dinner	25	Dining Room B
Young, Rt Hon Sir George	17/03/2008	Radar's MP Dialogue	Reception	60	Dining Room A
Young, Rt Hon Sir George	06/05/2008	Anton Rotary Club	Dinner	50	Dining Room A
Young, Rt Hon Sir George	20/10/2008	RADAR	Reception	70	Strangers Dining Room
Younger-Ross, Richard	10/06/2008	Sustainable Innovation Launch	Lunch	35	Dining Room A
Younger-Ross, Richard	21/04/2009	BSF Event	Reception	70	Strangers Dining Room

Appendix 10:

A two-dimensional typology of unofficial parliamentary party groupings within the Conservative Party from 1830



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Mr Philip Dunne MP: 24 April 2008, 12Noon, Portcullis House, Westminster

Mr David Gauke MP: 22 April 2008, 2.30PM, Portcullis House, Westminster

Mr Robert Goodwill MP: 4 June 2008, 10AM, 1 Parliament Street, Westminster

Mr Stephen Hammond MP: 7 May 2008, 2.30PM, Portcullis House, Westminster

Mr Greg Hands MP: 15 May 2008, 12Noon, by telephone

Mr Mark Harper MP: 24 April 2008, 9AM, Members' Tea Room, House of Commons

Rt. Hon. Michael Jack MP*: 5 June 2008, 10AM, by telephone

Mrs Eleanor Laing MP: 24 April 2008, 5PM, Members' Tea Room, House of Commons

Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP: 29 April 2008, 10AM, her private office, House of Commons

Mrs Anne Milton MP: 22 April 2008, 11AM, Portcullis House, Westminster

Mr Brooks Newmark MP: 30 April 2008, 9AM, Portcullis House, Westminster

Mr Graham Stuart MP: 29 April 2008, 5PM, Portcullis House, Westminster

Mr Ian Taylor MBE MP*: 24 April 2008, 11AM, Portcullis House, Westminster

Mr Charles Walker MP: 7 May 2008, 10.30AM, Members' Tea Room, House of Commons

Mrs Angela Watkinson MP: 8 May 2008, 11AM, Portcullis House, Westminster

Mr Robert Wilson MP: 29 April 2008, 1.30PM, Portcullis House, Westminster

Lady Ann Winterton MP*: 29 April 2008, 3.30PM, Members' Family Room, House of Commons

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