

THE IDENTIFICATION OF 'RADICALS' IN THE BRITISH PRESS, 1889-1914

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INTRODUCTION

This article results from research into who the British Radicals were in the Press, at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries. More specifically, the time-span under scrutiny is a quarter of a century – that is the late Victorian period, and paying special attention to the Edwardian Age with the era of the Liberal Governments before the Great War.

The purpose is to identify the Radicals as individuals and the publications that they were associated with in the Press. Special note is made of anything to do with their impact, or rather one should say lack of it, on the foreign policy matters of the times. For 'foreign policy matters', please understand that in this paper, the focus is almost exclusively to do with attitudes related towards central and eastern Europe. With the exception of the 2nd Boer War of 1899-1902, British domestic matters of the period in question, concerning which the Radicals wrote and said much more about, are not normally referred to here.

For an initial definition of the word 'Radicals', the reader is referred to previous publications in past issues of this *Review*. There, one can appreciate the familial background, the educational standing, the attitudes, and the interests, etc., of others holding similar opinions. Thereby, it is possible to begin to come to a greater understanding of the type of people of this frame of mind.¹

(I)

The reduction of the stamp duty and its total abolition in 1855 resulted in the creation of many newspapers, mostly of a Liberal bias. The introduction of a large cheap Press was aided by other factors, such as the growing prosperity of the country, the extension of the vote to more people, the redistribution of seats favouring urban areas, and the introduction of elementary education.² By 1886 when Gladstone's 3rd Ministry ended in electoral defeat, the Liberals had the greatest Press

¹ P. Hansen, 'The Identification of 'Radicals' in the British Parliament, 1906-1914' in *The Meijo Review*, Vol. 4, No. 3, March 2004, pp. 31-62, and :

Susan Hansen, 'The Identification of 'Radicals' in the British Parliament, 1906-1914: Some Attitudes to Foreign Policy' in *The Meijo Review*, Vol. 6, No. 4, March 2006, pp. 1-32.

² Alan J. Lee, *The Origins Of The Popular Press In England 1855-1914* (1976), pp. 133-134.

lead that they had ever had or were ever to have. However by 1906, when the Liberals scored the greatest electoral landslide victory ever, their Press had diminished to the point of causing anxiety.³

The Radical Press was not exempt from the reverses suffered by the Liberal Press.⁴ Before specifically analyzing the problems facing the Radical Press it is necessary actually to identify what constituted those papers and journals that could be described as being 'Radical.'

Of the London morning papers only three were Liberal at the outbreak of the Boer War. The *Daily News* since 1896 had been the Liberal voice of Imperialism and in November 1899 the *Daily Chronicle* joined the *Daily News* in keeping with most papers in being supportive of the war against the Boers. The change had occurred in the *Daily Chronicle* by the replacement of its Radical editor H. W. Massingham by W. J. Fisher. Consequently only the *Morning Leader* remained as a Radical London morning paper at the start of 1901.

The *Morning Leader* had been established in 1892 by Sir John Brunner and various Liberal industrialists. It was reputedly read by a section of the lower classes and amongst low-paid clerks who avidly took to the cricket reporting. Under the guidance of one of its directors, James Stuart,⁵ it held a Radical position in relation to social policy and foreign affairs. During the Boer War, George Cadbury the chocolate manufacturer, sponsored its distribution in the Midlands where Imperialist feelings of support for the South African war were very strong.

Nevertheless it was felt that a much more weightier publication was wanted by the Radicals, so the MPs Lloyd George and Corrie Grant sought to raise money for purchasing a newspaper already in existence. They chose the *Daily News*. George Cadbury contributed £20,000 towards the £100,000 needed to buy the newspaper. One of the proprietors was Rudolph Lehmann⁶ of *Punch* who was appointed editor. Unfortunately, the new proprietors' were divided amongst themselves, as was so often the case with the Radicals, over issues other than that of the Boer War, to the extent that by 1902 they began to withdraw, leaving George Cadbury with the losses. Eventually A. G. Gardiner of the *Blackburn Weekly Telegraph* was appointed editor, as well as T. P. Ritzema as manager, and the paper's fortunes substantially improved. It upheld the 'new liberalism' by favouring the provision of welfare through increased state intervention, advocated land reform, and coming to an arrangement with the Labour movement.⁷

Special mention must be made of the ill-fated morning paper the *Tribune* that published its first issue on 15 January 1906 and yet totally collapsed in two years (7 Feb. 1908). The wealthy cotton-spinner J. P. Thomasson of Bolton left in his bequest the enormous sum of £1,151,378 with the

³ *ibid.*, p. 134.

⁴ See APPENDIX for the names of some leading Radicals in the Press.

⁵ Liberal MP for Hackney 1884-5, Hoxton district of Shoreditch 1885-1900, Sunderland 1906-Jan. 1910.

⁶ Liberal MP for Harborough division of Leicestershire 1906-Dec. 1910.

⁷ Alan J. Lee, 'The Radical Press' in A. J. A. Morris (ed.), *Edwardian Radicalism 1900-1914* (1974), p. 49.

intention 'to establish a London journal in the Liberal interest.'⁸ Consequently, following the latter's death in May 1904, his son Franklin rapidly put into effect his father's wishes. The reasons for the papers demise will be referred to later, but it is important here to note that the editorial staff consisted of a most striking Radical group, namely L. T. Hobhouse as political editor, J. A. Hobson and F. W. Hirst. Additionally, G. H. Perris acted as Foreign News editor and H. N. Brailsford was the correspondent in St. Petersburg. J. L. Hammond and William Archer were amongst their number, while William Hill was overall editor. The Radical tone was set in the paper's first leader, almost certainly written by Hobhouse, re-affirming the basic Liberal tenets:

There is no standing still. He who is not pressing forward is slipping back. Freedom is always expanding or withering away. Class interests if not perpetually repressed, will daily increase their hold on government. . . Liberalism, as the principle which stands for personal right, popular sovereignty and international justice, has its hearing again. . . The belief too easily held that Liberalism had done its work, and ended its career was in fact partly responsible for the reaction which we have described. The work of Liberalism is never done, because its essence is the permanent protest against Force, of the common good against class interest, of the ideal element of political life against a merely mechanical efficiency. . .⁹

Unfortunately for the Radicals, the classic difficulty of finding it too difficult to work together for long because of their strongly individualist dispositions, meant that the staff drifted away from the paper. J. A. Hobson left the full-time staff almost certainly as early as March 1906 because the stress of daily journalism was too great for him. William Hill was sacked in June of the same year, while L. T. Hobhouse resigned his position in the January of the next year. In the summer of 1907 J. L. Hammond departed to join the Civil Service Commission, while in September F. W. Hirst left. Meanwhile H. N. Brailsford was displeased with some articles in summer 1906 entitled *The Bitter Cry of the Middle Classes*.

Of the London evening papers only two could be described as Radical, namely the *Star* and the *Echo*. The *Star* was established in 1888 by those industrialists referred to above in connection with the founding of the *Morning Leader*. The first editor T. P. O'Connor quarrelled with the proprietors, and H. W. Massingham his successor was removed a year or two later because he was considered to be too favourably disposed towards socialism. Still the words of the first editor persisted that everything would be considered 'from the Radical standpoint' and that all privilege

⁸ Alan J. Lee, 'Franklin Thomasson And The Tribune: A Case-study In The History Of The Liberal Press, 1906-1908' *Historical Journal*, xvi, 2 (1973), p. 347.

⁹ *Tribune* 15 Jan. 1906.

would be opposed.¹⁰ The *Echo* was an even older newspaper that made little headway in competition with the *Star* or the *Evening News* at the turn of the century. In 1901 Lloyd George used F. W. Hirst to approach F.W. Pethick Lawrence to buy the paper, which he did. The Radical staff included Percy Alden as editor, J.R. MacDonald as Labour columnist, and additionally H.N. Brailsford as chief leader-writer. The paper favoured better relations between the Liberals and Labour and led in vain a campaign to create an alliance between them. However, despite financial help from the Sheffield Radical H. J. Wilson, the lack of advertisement revenue forced the paper to close in 1905. As a result of that shut-down, the *Star* and *Westminster Gazette* were the only two London evening papers left to defend Liberalism and only the former was actually Radical. Ranged against them were the *Globe*, the *Evening News*, the *Evening Standard*, the *St. James's Gazette* and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the last-named gracing the coffee tables of the upper classes.¹¹

Of the Sunday newspapers, only *Reynolds News* owned by another of Lloyd George's friends, J. H. Dalziel,¹² could be considered Radical. The *Lloyds Weekly News*, the *News of the World* run by George Riddell who was yet another of Lloyd George's associates, and the *Weekly Dispatch*, did not fall into that category.

The Radical Press was traditionally significantly stronger in the provinces than in the metropolitan area. Indeed it was from the cities of the Midlands and the North that the Radicals would be looking for most votes. The *Manchester Guardian* was regarded by the Radical cause, as the *Westminster Gazette* was to the Liberal party, and the *Times* by the Conservatives. Under C. P. Scott's long editorship (1872–1929) the *Manchester Guardian* expounded Radical views more than any other provincial morning newspaper. Its staff included such Radicals as the leader-writers L. T. Hobhouse, R. C. K. Ensor, and H. W. Nevinson. Vaughan Nash left the *Manchester Guardian* to become private secretary to Prime Minister Campbell-Bannerman who was regarded by many as having distinctly Radical leanings. For its stand against the Boer War it lost one-seventh of its circulation, but it managed to survive primarily because people bought it for the news about the cotton industry that it carried.

The toll that the Boer War took on the Radical Press cannot be easily dismissed, for in the case of the *Newcastle Daily Leader* its editor Aaron Watson was sacked in 1901 largely for his criticism of that conflict. Two years later, the paper was closed by its proprietor, Sir James Joicey, because he felt its Radical output to be offensive to his neighbouring industrialists.¹³

Another Radical morning paper worthy of mention is the *Northern Echo* of Darlington that had been established in 1870. By about the time of the Boer War it was experiencing financial

¹⁰ Stephen E. Koss, *Sir John Brunner: Radical Plutocrat 1842–1919* (1970), p. 131 and pp. 157–8.

¹¹ Alan J. Lee, 'The Radical Press' in A. J. A. Morris (ed.), *Edwardian Radicalism 1900–1914* (1974), p. 51.

¹² Liberal MP for Kirkcaldy 1892–1921.

¹³ M. Milne, *Newspapers of Northumberland and Durham* (1972), pp. 128–130. Lord Joicey, who sat for 20 years as Liberal MP for Chester-le-Street, joined the Conservative party, aged 85. See announcement in *Sheffield Telegraph*, 1 May 1931, p. 6.

difficulties, so that Charles Starmer its manager, approached Joseph Rowntree for help. As the Radical Quakers Rowntree and Cadbury believed that newspapers could be used in the fight for social reform, the Rowntree Social Service Trust bought the *Northern Echo* in 1904. It was then run under the guidance of Joseph Rowntree's nephew, Arnold.¹⁴ As George Armstrong became its editor from the *Morning Leader*, the two newspapers henceforth emitted similar ideas.

If one examines the provincial evening papers it can be noted that most were devoted to sport coverage, and that political issues were relegated to a low status. Among significant papers there was the *Northern Daily Telegraph* in Blackburn and the *North Eastern Gazette* in Middlesbrough.

Overall, even if one adds the local weekly Press to those mentioned above, then the combined Radical Press was still very small. Instead, one has to look at the weightier weekly Press, where the object was not primarily to win voters so much as to influence decision-makers, to realize the scale of how the Radicals were pre-occupied with spreading their ideas and principles. Alan J. Lee put the case at its strongest, that: 'Here undoubtedly lay one of the strengths of Edwardian Radicalism. . . [for] it possessed journals whose arguments carried exceptional weight amongst even orthodox Liberals.'¹⁵ Such journals were the *Speaker* familiarly nicknamed the Squeaker, which in March 1907 became the *Nation*; one should mention also the *New Age* and the *Economist*.

The *Speaker* had begun in 1890 with financial help from Sir John Brunner and because of low circulation constituted a continuing burden on Brunner's finances. J. L. Hammond was put in charge as editor in 1899 and remained so for seven years. Other Radicals on the staff were the writer Hilaire Belloc, the future editor of the *Economist*, Francis Hirst, and the future MP John A. Simon. Though it did discuss social issues,¹⁶ most of its articles were given over to foreign matters and the debate about free trade. Indeed in 1904, only 17 of 626 were given to social reform.

The *New Age*, which was established in 1894, took a very strong anti-Boer War stance under the editor Joseph Clayton. In 1899 the paper was bought by Rev. Harold Rylett, a Unitarian minister who was secretary of the '1900 Stop the War Committee.' It helped to try to form the projected alliance between the Liberals and Labour in 1901. After its sale in 1907 to A. R. Orage and Holbrook Jackson, it took a distinct move leftwards, so that by 1909 it was acclaiming Victor Grayson, and was recognized as the organ of Guild Socialism.¹⁷

In 1903 the *Independent Review* began as a Radical monthly. It was edited by the historian Edward Jenks and aided by G. L. Dickinson, F. W. Hirst and C. F. G. Masterman.

One of the chief trends during the period 1889-1914, was for the concentration of newspaper ownership into even fewer hands. By 1914, the Rowntrees still owned the *Nation* and *Northern*

¹⁴ Liberal MP for York Jan. 1910-1918.

¹⁵ Alan J. Lee, 'The Radical Press' in A. J. A. Morris (ed.), *Edwardian Radicalism 1900-1914* (1974), p. 54.

¹⁶ Some put into book form *Towards a Social Policy* (1905).

¹⁷ A. Compton-Rickett, *I Look Back* (1933), p. 12 and p. 90.

Echo, while the Cadburys had the *Daily News*, the *Morning Leader* and *Star*. Meanwhile, Sir Alfred Mond owned the *Westminster Gazette* and the *English Review*, the latter of which had begun in 1909 as a Radical literary and political weekly, but which had since shifted politically to a more central Liberal position.

Part of the problem in trying to name those who were employed in journalism who were specifically 'Radicals', is that many articles were unsigned, and that in some cases even pseudonyms were used. For example, H. N. Brailsford's articles were normally unsigned until 1917.¹⁸ H. W. Nevinson in commenting about his experiences with the *Nation* stated 'My articles were always unsigned, . . .'¹⁹ It was not unusual for that practise to be the case in newspapers at that time, to the point at which even initials were rarely printed. As indicated above, the *Tribune's* first leader is thought to have been *only attributable* to L. T. Hobhouse. Pseudonyms were common as well. For example, Ramsay MacDonald when writing as a Labour columnist for the London evening *Echo* used the title 'Spectator.'

Fortunately, from the point of view of identifying Radicals, the number of staff employed on the Liberal papers was relatively few. So the names keep re-occurring. The reasons for that are multiple. First, naturally enough, the editors were running businesses, so therefore they aimed to keep staff costs as low as possible and employed fewer full-time staff. Indeed, the small circulation enjoyed by the Radical Press forced that on them. Additionally, the writers had to be very effective, and have a certain pre-disposition towards the image that the paper that they were to work for, intended putting over to the public. For those journalists who were not fortunate enough to have a full-time appointment, they had to make do with writing for several papers as and when the editors called upon them in order to make a living. One could ask the question, however, who would employ people with such Radical opinions as H. N. Brailsford and H. W. Nevinson? So not only were there relatively few vacancies available at any time, but those journalists of a Radical disposition were restricted in their choice of employment within the Press.

Many problems confronted the continued existence of the Radical Press between 1889 and 1914. Not least of these was the impact that the 'new journalism' was having on the Liberal Press. After the final repeal of the Stamp Duties in 1855 the number of newspapers had soared. Following that, a second wave of major change occurred in the late nineteenth century by the introduction of technical improvements to printing machinery, thus enabling the mass printing of copies of newspapers.²⁰ The result was the production of the mass circulation of $\frac{1}{2}$ d morning and evening papers and the popular weeklies. The Liberals particularly, had some hopes that the 1870 educa-

¹⁸ F. M. Leventhal, *The Last Dissenter* (1985), p. 43.

¹⁹ Henry W. Nevinson, *More Changes More Chances* (1925), p. 215.

²⁰ Two major innovations were the rotary press and the composing machine. See Alan J. Lee, 'Franklin Thomasson And The Tribune: A Case-study In The History Of The Liberal Press, 1906-1908' in *The Historical Journal*, xvi, 2 (1973), p. 348.

tion act would substantially increase the number of readers. Additionally, the hope existed that as more people read the Press, then the papers would further educate their clientele. Liberals felt that the extension of the franchise would make such developments necessary. They hoped to extol their principles through papers. Newspapers of the 'old journalism' were aimed at disseminating news, argument, and opinion, to the public.

However, Liberals were dismayed that trends encompassing the 'new journalism' did not live-up to their high-minded expectations. They were upset by the Press, in that it appeared to be 'a perfect engine for keeping discussion at a low level.'²¹ This trend had been pointed out by the Radical, H. J. Wilson, as early as 1874 when he claimed that

. . . the *Daily Telegraph* thought and wrote with the people, the *Morning Star* to the people. . . Men are not courted by argument; they are swayed by interest and sympathy.²²

There was a desire to give the people what they wanted, and thereby increase sales figures. By the turn of the century, the age of mass circulation had arrived. Unfortunately, from the Radicals' point of view, it was perceived that what sold newspapers in such large quantities, was to give a greater consideration to sport and leisure activities, and to the less principled and high-minded advertisement of liquor sales. In practise, more gossipy and sensationalized news, and less informative fact and opinion, was perceived to be the order of the day. The pressure to increase sales was not just the result of natural business competition amongst papers for a larger share of the readership, it was also the result of the desire by proprietors for greater profits now that they chose to effect greater control over their editors than before. In brief, journalism was moving to becoming more of a trade, than the profession that it had previously seemed to be.

The business drive in journalism, led towards amalgamation and the formation of trusts to run newspaper conglomerates. The trend experienced in the pre-1914 period was for fewer papers to have larger circulations. For example, if one examines the London Press, according to the concentration of proprietorship by circulation in 1910, then it can be deduced that about 70% of the morning output was controlled by just three groupings,²³ that about 82.5% of the evening print was controlled by the same three companies,²⁴ and that of the Sundays just 4 companies²⁵ produced

²¹ J. A. Hobson, *Democracy After The War* (1917), p. 127. Words attributed to John Morley.

Also see J. A. Spender, *The Public Life*, vol. II (1925), pp. 108-9.

²² Ellis to Wilson 31.10.74, MD 5999.

Report by Collard Ellis on the project to publish a third Sheffield newspaper and correspondence with him, J. H. Bell, Charles Fox and others, 1874-86, MD 5999, H. J. Wilson Papers, Sheffield City Archives.

²³ Northcliffe 39%; Morning Leader Group 15.5%; Pearson 12.4%

²⁴ Morning Leader Group 34.5%; Northcliffe 31.3%; Pearson 16.8%

²⁵ H. J. Dalziel 30.7%; G. Riddell 22.9%; F. Lloyd 15.3%; Northcliffe 11.8%

virtually 81% of circulation.²⁶ The concentration of specifically Radical papers owned by the Rowntrees and Cadburys has been referred to earlier.

(II)

The Radical Press was faced with major financial difficulties. There were three broad ways to ensure solvency for papers, namely: to have a large circulation; to attract many well-paying advertisers; and to have wealthy proprietors.

If one examines the first of those conditions for financial security, then it can be stated that the Radical Press never had a large circulation. That was not surprising really, as it was appealing to a minority of people in society. In 1910, the combined circulation of the *Daily News*, *Morning Leader*, *Star* and *Manchester Guardian* totalled just over $\frac{3}{4}$ million, and therefore, even added to some provincial papers of a similar leaning, would barely exceed that of the *Daily Mail* and *Evening News* together. Clearly, the Radical Press could not put up the price as that would drive readers away. Even the price of 1d was prohibitive when most papers were charging a $\frac{1}{2}$ d. Indeed, the high price of 1d was considered to be one of the reasons why the *Tribune* eventually failed. As A. J. Lee claimed: 'The theory was that if the quality of the paper were high enough people would be willing to pay double the normal price, but they were not.'²⁷ Indeed both the *Daily News* and the *Daily Chronicle* had felt compelled to reduce their price in 1904 to $\frac{1}{2}$ d, and the *Times* just two years later made the dramatic cut from 3d to 1d, in order to survive. J. A. Spender claimed:

It is not an accident that the largest circulations are seldom or never on the side of advanced opinion. That follows inevitably from the fact that the readers of the journals, and those who advertise in them, are predominantly Conservative and are supposed to want on the whole Conservative opinions.²⁸

The second source of financial income was from advertising revenue. J. A. Spender rated advertisements as being so inextricably bound up with the Press that he felt able to summarize the link by writing:

The answer is that the newspaper lives on the advertiser, and that he who advertises

²⁶ See tables in Alan J. Lee, *The Origins Of The Popular Press In England 1855-1914* (1976), p. 293.

²⁷ Alan J. Lee, 'Franklin Thomasson And The Tribune: A Case-study In The History Of The Liberal Press, 1906-1908' in *The Historical Journal*, xvi, 2 (1973), p. 349.

²⁸ J. A. Spender, *The Public Life*, vol. II (1925), p. 109.

follows the largest circulation.²⁹

Quite naturally, advertisers wished to reach the widest audience possible, so they would seek to use those papers with the biggest circulations, especially those with the potentially wealthiest readers. Papers sought advertisers, and especially those who were prepared to pay the most, in order to aid the cost of initially producing the paper. Proprietors and editors realized that they could not hope to pay for the purchase of new printing equipment, its running and subsequent maintenance, as well as the cost of upkeeping the papers premises, and paying the salaries of the staff, all on the price of a daily paper costing $\frac{1}{2}$ d a copy. As A. G. Gardiner succinctly expressed it :

All newspapers depend for their existence on advertising revenue ; but none depends upon it so much as the halfpenny morning paper, which, with its ten or twelve or fourteen pages, is produced at a cost which involves a loss on every copy printed. If this loss is balanced by the revenue from advertisements, all is well ; if it is not then the position can only be expressed in the immortal phrase of Mr. Micawber.³⁰

A. J. Lee believed that :

Liberal, and especially radical, journalists did seem affected more than others by the new trend in proprietorship towards financial success as the overriding goal.³¹

He attributes that, to the idea that anything of a Radical nature put off many unsure advertisers and proprietors. Business considerations usually required a conservative approach. In fact, in a fictional exchange between Passmore Edwards and M. L. Hawkes³² (on the staff of the *Echo*) in the latter's novel *A Primrose Dame* of 1886, the point is made clearly, and applies to the period 1889-1914 just as much :

The word Radical... ought never to be used... in public or in print. In public it alarms property ; in the press it loses advertisements.³³

The small circulation that Radical papers had, meant that they were continually handicapped by financial worries. The papers employed the minimum number of full-time staff possible, just

²⁹ *ibid.*, p. 98.

³⁰ A. G. Gardiner, *Life Of George Cadbury* (1923), p. 228.

³¹ Alan J. Lee, *The Origins Of The Popular Press In England 1855-1914* (1976), p. 159.

³² Son of a republican journalist and lawyer.

³³ Alan J. Lee, *The Origins Of The Popular Press In England 1855-1914* (1976), p. 168.

calling on the ever-present pool of journalists who acted as casual labour and living a hand-to-mouth existence. That employment practise existed throughout the newspaper business, and indeed, in no way detracted from the fact that those called upon to fill a temporary vacancy were often experts in their subject. In fact many academics freely wrote for the Press.

The third source of financial support was dependent on how much money the proprietor was able and willing to put into his paper in order to keep it going. Also, that meant that editors and their staff were compelled to act in accordance with the proprietors wishes. The degree of freedom, or lack of it, for editors and staff will be a subject for later discussion, but it is sufficient to draw the attention of the reader here to the closure of the *Newcastle Daily Leader* by its proprietor James Joicey in 1903, simply because he felt his paper was upsetting his fellow industrialists.

A particular mention must be made of the *Tribune* in connection with proprietorial finance. Undoubtedly the paper began with the backing of a great deal of money³⁴ and the initial capital to form the company was £300,000. However, the paper failed according to A. J. Lee³⁵ primarily because of commercial reasons, and not because of any deficiency in the quality of its output. Simply: 'too few chose to read it, or to advertise in it,'³⁶ and there was no 'rich Liberal to come forward in its support, even in its last few months.'³⁷ Additionally, when the fund specifically allocated by J. P. Thomasson ran out, his son Franklin was not prepared to put further finance into it and risk losing even more. Therefore the paper closed after only twenty-five months publication. The losses have been estimated at somewhere ranging from about £300,000 to as much as £600,000.³⁸ Summarized, in 1909, the *Daily News* stated the obvious in criticizing Northcliffe by the comment 'it is (the wealthy men) who own newspapers.'³⁹

Undoubtedly, sums put into papers by proprietors varied greatly. For example, if one examines the *Nation* 1907–23, then it can be noted that the Joseph Rowntree Social Service Trust put £60,000 into subsidizing the paper, and that without this money it would have ceased publication at a very early date. During the first year, the Trust's subsidy was £6,500, though due to the successful increase in sales, thereafter, never amounted to more than £5,000 annually.⁴⁰

³⁴ £1,151,378 was left by J. P. Thomasson some of it being for the purposes of establishing just such a paper, *Daily Chronicle* 1 June 1905.

³⁵ Alan J. Lee, 'Franklin Thomasson And The Tribune: A Case-study In The History Of The Liberal Press, 1906–1908' in *The Historical Journal*, xvi, 2 (1973), pp. 359–360.

³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 359.

³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 360.

³⁸ Latter estimate by the editor S. J. Pryor made to Wickham Steed in Wickham Steed, *The Press* (1938), pp. 83–4. See *Spectator* 14 and 21 May 1943, p. 454 and p. 477.

³⁹ Alfred Gollin, '*The Observer*' and J. L. Garvin, 1908–1914, *a study in a great editorship* (1960), p. 102.

⁴⁰ Alfred F. Havighurst, *Radical Journalist: H. W. Massingham (1860–1924)* (1974), pp. 153–4.

(III)

Fortunately for the staff of the papers, financial return was not the prime concern of some of the proprietors. For example, George Cadbury was '... happy to take his profit in moral currency [and] was reconciled to a loss on each ten, twelve, or fourteen-page halfpenny paper.'⁴¹ As a philanthropist, he believed that instead of giving money in the form of direct charity, it was better to put his donation into the Press, in order that people's minds would be enlightened and educated to help those in need. A. G. Gardiner eloquently expresses this sentiment when writing of him :

He had always been strongly impressed with the power of the newspaper to mould opinion and to exercise influence for good or evil upon the life of the people. While he saw that a newspaper like any other business must be conducted on business lines, he felt that its responsibilities differed from those of ordinary enterprise, and that its chief task should be not to make money, but to bring an enlightened and publicspirited [sic] criticism to bear upon affairs.⁴²

Other Quakers, such as the Rowntrees, believed that the Press could, for example, be used to illustrate the futility of war, that money spent on armaments would be better spent on the relief of the sufferings of their fellows.

The amount that a proprietor was prepared to spend on his newspaper business also reflected the extent to which he was to stand by his principles. It showed in the way their Press dealings were conducted, not only amongst themselves, but also vis-à-vis people who were not Radicals. It gives a guide to identifying the Radical Press and Radical journalists. Additionally, it created problems for those who adhered to their principles.

The issue of what ought or ought not to be advertised in a newspaper is a point in question. The importance of advertisement to a paper has been stated above, and yet Radical proprietors initially banned adverts to do with betting and liquor. In 1894, A. E. Fletcher resigned from the *Daily Chronicle* because he felt unable

... to be responsible for the publication of betting odds. I regard this as the curse and shame of journalism. ... I have decided to resign rather than be liable to the charge of perpetuating that curse.⁴³

Also in the same year, a scheme had been mooted that a Liberal group should buy the *Sheffield*

⁴¹ Stephen E. Koss, *Fleet Street Radical* (1973), p. 66.

⁴² A. G. Gardiner, *Life Of George Cadbury* (1923), p. 211.

⁴³ A. E. Fletcher to H. J. Wilson 31 Oct. 1894, MD 6003, H. J. Wilson Papers.

Independent and then publish it as a Radical paper. The principal difficulty was that Sir Frederick Mappin would not support the scheme unless the paper published betting news, and the Radical H. J. Wilson was opposed to that.⁴⁴ When in 1901, George Cadbury bought the *Daily News* and T. P. Ritzema became the paper's manager, the former insisted that there be no betting news and the latter that there be no liquor advertising. It was recognized that such policies were damaging the paper's financial position, and especially so, when in 1904 the paper had to drop its price to $\frac{1}{2}$ d in order to remain competitive with the *Daily Chronicle* that had made a similar price change. By reducing the paper's price, it became even more dependent on advertising revenue. It has been suggested that from then onwards, the *Daily News* ceased being commercially viable.⁴⁵

However, principles were being compromised, such as when the Wilson family bought the *Sheffield Independent* in 1909, or when the Cadburys acquired the *Star* and *Morning Leader* in the following year. Those new proprietors accepted betting news maintaining that '... there are not so many daily newspapers willing to take the unpopular side, ... that the country can lightly dispense with one of them.'⁴⁶ George Cadbury suffered attacks from elements of the Press, making him out to be a hypocrite. However, of even greater concern were the criticisms levelled against him from amongst fellow Quakers. He knew that what he had done was inconsistent with the principles of the Friends. As it was a case of conscience, he decided the matter for himself, that

... it was better to keep the *Star* as an influence for what he believed to be good causes than to let it pass into hands which would make it the instrument of what he regarded as an evil cause. He would not, he argued prevent it from giving betting news by letting others have it...⁴⁷

Financial necessity in the competitive fight for increased circulation figures meant that advertisers had to be courted, not driven away. James Annand of the *Newcastle Daily Leader*, resisted pressure in 1891 from the Anti-gambling League and maintained that simply to exclude betting news from the paper would not in itself bring gambling to an end. "A newspaper is not like a church, or chapel, or even anti-gambling society;" it had, unlike them, to be commercially sound.'⁴⁸

One of the reasons for the demise of the *Tribune* lay in its 'advertising scruples.'⁴⁹ It had an impressive advertising hall and its own separate composing room for advertisements, but put off

⁴⁴ MD 6002 Letters, H. J. Wilson Papers.

⁴⁵ Alan J. Lee, *The Origins Of The Popular Press In England 1855-1914* (1976), p. 164.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, p. 215.

⁴⁷ A. G. Gardiner, *Life Of George Cadbury* (1923), p. 232.

⁴⁸ *Sell's Dictionary of the World's Press* (1892), pp. 33-4.

⁴⁹ Alan J. Lee, 'Franklin Thomasson And The Tribune: A Case-study In The History Of The Liberal Press, 1906-1908' in *The Historical Journal*, xvi, 2 (1973), p. 360.

potential advertisers by being scrupulously strict over what the paper would and would not publish. Consequently, by December 1906 thousands of pounds had been lost by the rejection of more than 320 columns of adverts, not even counting the banning of such additional material as liquor advertising and sports and racing results.⁵⁰ By refusing all dubious adverts, it undoubtedly lost many good ones. Such a practise was yet another example of Radical high-mindedness, but it was certainly not conducive to good business.

In discussing the relation of Radicals to their principles, one can also draw on the dilemma facing George Cadbury over the source of cocoa to his industry. It amounted to the fact that a system of slavery, under the name of 'contract labour', as practised on the Portuguese plantations of São Tomé and Príncipe off the west coast of Africa, produced part of Cadbury's cocoa. This revelation, quite apart from being abhorrent to the Radicals beliefs in spreading humanitarianism, was also in contrast to the policy that the Cadbury family adopted towards their own workpeople in the Bournville village. The issue had become known largely as a result of H. W. Nevinson's book, produced four years earlier, and based on his personal experience in travelling in that inhospitable region. Subsequently, the cocoa manufacturers had become aware of this state of affairs in Africa. The matter came to a head when the *Standard* published an article in September 1908 apparently exposing the double standard involved. A libel case ensued in Birmingham in late November 1909 from the publication of the article. The Cadburys were awarded a farthing damages, and the *Standard* was required to pay the costs of both sides. Even the *Morning Post*, which was the politically strong opponent of George Cadbury could write that: 'By the formal verdict of the jury Mr. Cadbury is cleared from any suspicion of double dealing and hypocrisy.'⁵¹ The Cadburys were apparently phasing down their purchases from the Portuguese dependencies and switching to buying from the free natives of the Gold Coast and elsewhere before the publication of the *Standard* article, but with other firms such as Rowntrees and Frys, declared a boycott on 17 March 1909⁵² to last until conditions improved among the black workforce. Cadbury received further criticism for this initially slow way of attempting to bring improvements to the black workers by bringing progressive economic pressure, rather than introducing an immediate total boycott of that source of supply. He countered by arguing that if he withdrew from buying from that source instantly, other markets would be found by the plantation-owners in other countries, and therefore the blacks' predicament would not be altered a jot. It was not until 1917 however, that the British Government recommended publicly through a White Paper, that the boycott be lifted as unnecessary.⁵³

Another contemporary example worthy of particular note, of where part of the Radical Press

⁵⁰ *Tribune* 21 Dec. 1906.

⁵¹ A. G. Gardiner, *Life Of George Cadbury* (1923), p. 248.

⁵² Henry W. Nevinson, *More Changes More Chances* (1925), p. 89.

⁵³ A. G. Gardiner, *Life Of George Cadbury* (1923), p. 250.

found itself in difficulties over matters involving principles, was the case about H. N. Brailsford's procuring three passports for Russian revolutionaries to return to Russia. This journalist, in keeping with other Radicals, detested Tsarist autocracy. But Radicals believed in democratic change through pressure on the British Government, not by using or abetting violent revolutionary activities to further their causes. Apparently, one of the false passports supplied by Brailsford, had been found with the corpse of a Russian who had been blown up when the terrorists' bomb had exploded in St. Petersburg, in March 1905. Consequently, Brailsford was summoned to appear in May, on charges of conspiracy. Radicals were in sympathy with Brailsford's thinking and predicament, but wished publicly to distance themselves from what he had done. His friends collected money for his defence. Gilbert Murray gave him £100, and C. P. Scott, the editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, offered to lend a similar amount. John Simon and Robert Reid both waived their legal fees. Courtney even acted as a character witness on his behalf. In the Bow Street gallery, other Radicals such as H. W. Nevinson, Barbara Hammond and F. W. Hirst along with C. P. Scott observed the proceedings. The public distancing from the issue was expressed by C. P. Scott to his employer-proprietor, John Taylor, when the former in discussing the possible employment of Brailsford on the *Manchester Guardian*, hoped that the 'trouble may not prove so serious' that it would 'supply an adequate reason for breaking off our engagement.'⁵⁴ Clearly, C. P. Scott did not wish Brailsford's brush with the law to tarnish the image of the *Manchester Guardian*, whatever principles might be at stake.

Brailsford was found guilty of conspiracy, based on the understanding that he had procured passports knowing that they would be used by others. He remained unrepentant. His attitude was in keeping with the high-minded, some might even say arrogant way, that afflicted Radicals in their attitude towards those principles that they believed in. John Simon was blamed by him for poorly managing his [i. e. Brailsford's] defence. Interestingly, Brailsford's obvious contempt for the law was reflected in other evidence. One piece, was the opinion held by Gilbert Murray, that Brailsford 'should be kept out of the witness-box himself, as he evidently has serious scruples about the existence of Courts of Law at all.'⁵⁵ Another example of his attitude, was that within just two weeks of the trial ending, he wrote to his friend David Soskice: 'It occurs to me that I might make more money by going to Russia as a special correspondent than in any other way, if I knew when anything important was going to happen and if I could get a false passport.'⁵⁶

The matters raised above, illustrate some of the problems that the Radical Press could be confronted with, in squaring up to their principles in a world which seemed to care increasingly for greater profit and very little for humanitarian causes. It also shows how Radicals compromised their principles on occasions so as to obtain a pragmatic solution, and that if faced with such

⁵⁴ F. M. Leventhal, *The Last Dissenter* (1985), p. 51.

⁵⁵ *ibid.* p. 54.

⁵⁶ *ibid.* p. 55.

dilemmas, they would choose the lesser of two evils, that is the evil that tended most towards the good for which they sought.

(IV)

In looking at the problems confronting the Radical Press, one needs to examine the relationships between proprietors and editors, and also those with their journalist staff. What influence did proprietors have on editors? Were they dictatorial in running the papers? Additionally, to what length were editors prepared to go to in order to restrict their staff? These are the type of questions that need to be answered, in order to be able to ascertain whether the independent thinking of the Radicals had any effect on their ability to work together.

Undoubtedly, proprietors were increasingly having a larger influence on editors and the way that policy affected a paper's stance than in the decades before the 1890s. This was quite understandably as a result of the encroachment of the 'new journalism' and the realization of profits before principles. The Boer war in particular compelled proprietors to decide whether their papers would adopt a pro-war policy or not. Those who chose to adopt an anti-war stance saw their circulation figures plummet. Newspapers were becoming big business and proprietors expected as big a return on their investment as possible. The majority were not like the Cadburys who were prepared to settle for less profit and to be satisfied with knowing that moral principles were being upheld. Many editors were shareholders in the newspapers they worked on, so it seemed to make sense to be in accord with a proprietor's policy. Papers were identified with one political party or another, so that '... the practice of capturing newspapers and transferring them bodily from one side to another or from one group to another set in, ...'⁵⁷ According to Spender, these transactions took no consideration of what the editors thought, let alone the journalists. For example, Edward Cook, editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*,⁵⁸ found the paper sold without his knowledge in 1892, and yet again in 1900 when he edited the *Daily News*. Likewise Massingham lost his job when the *Daily Chronicle* changed from pro-Boer hands to those of the Liberal Imperialists. Differences in attitudes and policy meant that proprietors and editors fell out with one another, so that

... the net result was a further discouragement to serious journalists, who found themselves with an extremely precarious tenure and no secure retreat if they resigned or were ejected from their posts.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ J. A. Spender, *The Public Life*, vol. II (1925), p. 99.

⁵⁸ Definitely not a Radical newspaper.

⁵⁹ J. A. Spender, *The Public Life*, vol. II (1925), pp. 99-100.

Different pressures existed for proprietors. Quite apart from the financial return required by proprietors, there was also the fact that the latter were often MPs or had political ambitions. In 1906, journalism formed the third most prolific occupation amongst MPs. Such people were subject to party pressures from the whips, and belonged to different elements of a party. For example, Hobhouse and Thomasson were both Radicals. How could such a Radical be in charge of a paper that criticized the Liberal party in power? That was the dilemma facing the Radical Press following the electoral victory of 1906. In that, the Radical Press faced the same problem as the Radical MPs' in parliament. They were more used to, and orientated towards, criticizing the Liberal Party in political opposition than in office.

Proprietor-editor disagreements, though not by any means confined to the Radical Press, nevertheless were sharpened for the above reasons. As Stephen Koss expresses the Radical predicament :

Hobhouse preserved his moral integrity by retreating into academic life, . . . Scott's long collaboration with Taylor on the *Manchester Guardian* had ended in acrimony over the Dibblee partnership, implicitly a political issue. At the *Daily Chronicle*, Donald did not always see eye-to-eye with Frank Lloyd. At the *Daily News*, Gardiner found intolerable the 'niggling criticisms' levelled by Henry Cadbury, manager of his father's paper.⁶⁰

As proprietors wanted a greater say in their investment, it meant that they tried to influence the editor in the decision-making involved in the running of the paper. For example, C. P. Scott of the *Manchester Guardian* tried to get H. N. Brailsford appointed as the paper's parliamentary correspondent but the chief proprietor, John Taylor, repeatedly rejected the idea.⁶¹ F. M. Leventhal, writing of Brailsford claims that : 'He was always more advanced in his outlook than the Liberal papers for which he wrote in the years before the First World War, a source of friction with the editors who needed to placate their proprietors.'⁶² In the case of the *Daily News*, it was usually the Cadburys rather than the editor, A. G. Gardiner, who pulled a straying journalist into line.⁶³ An insight is given into the proprietor-editor relationship by the leader-writer H. W. Nevinston. Nevinston reprimanded Gardiner for kowtowing to the Cadburys on vital issues,⁶⁴ and in his autobiographical *More Changes, More Chances* described Gardiner's efforts to prevent him and his colleague

⁶⁰ Stephen E. Koss, *The Rise And Fall Of The Political Press In Britain* (1984), p. 78.

⁶¹ F. M. Leventhal, *The Last Dissenter* (1985), p. 45.

⁶² *ibid.*, p. 42.

⁶³ Stephen E. Koss, *Fleet Street Radical* (1973), p. 67.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*, p. 112.

Brailsford from working for a boycott of Angolan cocoa until May 1908.⁶⁵ However, Gardiner's position vis-à-vis his proprietor was not as bad, for example, as that of J. A. Spender, who edited the decidedly non-Radical *Westminster Gazette* and whose chief proprietor was the Liberal politician of enormous wealth, Sir Alfred Mond. Mond particularly irked Gardiner in October 1912, when the former sent to the latter an unsigned cheque. The *Daily News* had begun a fund with the purpose of relieving Balkan war victims to which Mond had pledged support.⁶⁶

Cadbury's opinion of Gardiner, when the latter had first been appointed editor at the amazingly early age of 36, in 1902, is worthy of note. Cadbury took the attitude, that because Gardiner was an unknown entity, and had not been associated in people's minds with particular political sections within the Liberal Party, the paper would help unite the Opposition belonging to the Left against the Unionist Government. Cadbury told Herbert Gladstone that '... our chief Editor, Mr. Gardiner, is fortunately for the paper a very retiring man who does not go into Society and who will therefore I think be able to retain his independence.'⁶⁷ Gardiner, however, soon showed that he was not going to be fashioned by the hopes and aspirations of his proprietor, but instead showed considerable independence in editing the *Daily News*. From the start, he devised changes in the content and format of the paper.

Those editors who did not fit in with the policies of their proprietors, or who did not get the results of increased sales, were summarily dismissed. In 1901, James Joicey sacked Aaron Watson who was the editor of the *Newcastle Daily Leader* over policy deviation. In June 1906, the editor of the *Tribune*, William Hill, was dismissed⁶⁸ after only five months in that position for failing to make the paper a commercial success.

Permanent, full-time employment for journalists was highly prized. The very rumour of an impending vacancy for a paper, such as in the *Daily News*, brought applications from Fleet Street veterans. Even politicians, attempting to earn some money⁶⁹ and prestige, wrote for papers. In 1905, for example, Ramsay MacDonald unsuccessfully applied to succeed Vaughan Nash who had left the *Daily News* to become private secretary to Prime Minister Campbell-Bannerman. There was great underemployment among Liberal journalists, for there were too few papers who could pay a living salary. Journalists were chosen not only for their ability to produce good written material in keeping with the policies of the paper, but also for their compatibility with existing staff. Many would-be journalists had to wait years for a suitable appointment.

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p. 113.

It is noted that in his diary, 5 May 1908, he described how A. G. Gardiner 'had faced [the] D. N. directors on [the] Angola question & secured freedom of publication.'

⁶⁶ Stephen E. Koss, *Fleet Street Radical* (1973), p. 136.

⁶⁷ *ibid.*, p. 48.

⁶⁸ Alan J. Lee, 'Franklin Thomasson And The Tribune: A Case-study In The History Of The Liberal Press, 1906-1908' in *The Historical Journal*, xvi, 2 (1973), p. 355.

⁶⁹ Before 1911, MPs were not paid a salary for their parliamentary attendance.

As in any walk of life, personal loyalty played its role in editor-staff relations, and undoubtedly A. G. Gardiner and H. W. Massingham were very highly thought of by their staff, not only for their editorial competence but also for the personal respect that they inspired. Stephen Koss maintains that 'With relatively few exceptions, those who worked with Gardiner became his friends for life.'⁷⁰ Arnold Bennett refused a well-paid proposition from the Cadburys to continue his employment with the *Daily News* once Gardiner had left. H. W. Nevinson thought very highly of Massingham, to the extent of considering him 'beyond comparison the best editor I have ever worked under'⁷¹ and underlined that point by dedicating one of his three autobiographical books after the editor. Nevinson once described Massingham as 'a delightful combination of St. Francis and Rabelais' to express the editor's 'simple human-kindness' on the one hand and 'his primitive language and tolerant acceptance of natural man in every phase.'⁷²

To work for a sensitive editor was important, as Radical journalists in particular were very sensitive, indeed prickly people. Such journalists were finely attuned to the many causes of injustice, and were quick to recognize the need of humanitarian relief. For example, it was C. P. Scott's idea in April 1903, that H. N. Brailsford ought to go to the Balkans to investigate Macedonia, as a result of the insurrection against Ottoman rule. Brailsford was delighted.⁷³ Likewise, not seeing eye-to-eye with one's editor could be uncomfortable or even costly for a journalist. Nevinson relates in *Changes And Chances* how he suffered from a new editor once Massingham resigned from the *Daily Chronicle* in November 1899.⁷⁴ Massingham refused to support Chamberlain's war policy. Nevinson was in South Africa at the time, and following his attempts to get news back to his paper from living under siege, naturally expected some form of congratulations for his efforts. Instead, he 'was answered by sneers, taunts, complaints, and orders to return to Ladysmith.'⁷⁵ He maintained that it was then that he realized just how important 'the distinction between one editor and another [was], and to understand that the greatness of a paper depends upon its editor alone.'⁷⁶

A particularly strong example of disagreement between employer and writer, and its cost to the journalist, was the dismissal of Herbert Paul from the *Daily News* on 1 April 1902. He was sacked for producing an article condemning Cecil Rhodes only about two weeks after the latter's death. Nevinson objected to the way in which Herbert Paul was relieved of his duties. Having worked for over twenty years for the paper it seemed wrong, according to Nevinson, for Herbert

⁷⁰ Stephen E. Koss, *Fleet Street Radical* (1973), p. 60.

⁷¹ H. W. Nevinson, *Changes And Chances* (1923), p. 186.

⁷² *ibid.*, p. 187.

⁷³ F. M. Leventhal, *The Last Dissenter* (1985), p. 47.

⁷⁴ H. W. Nevinson, *Changes And Chances* (1923), p. 260.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p. 261.

⁷⁶ *ibid.*, p. 261.

Paul to simply be informed by a letter left on his desk. Nevinson in his autobiography,⁷⁷ absolved the editor Gardiner from having any responsibility for the matter, for 'there was a power on that paper behind the editor, as I was myself to discover in 1909.'⁷⁸

The fact that Radicals were so highly-principled, meant that their individualism showed itself on occasions to the embarrassment of the editors. For example, Brailsford's passport trial of 1905 was just such an issue. C. P. Scott of the *Manchester Guardian* wrote to his proprietor, J. Taylor, during the negotiations concerning employing Brailsford and expressed his concern lest that passport 'trouble may... prove so serious' that it would 'supply an adequate reason for breaking off our engagement.'⁷⁹ And after the trial, Scott made an offer to obtain Taylor's consent to approach Brailsford again about working for the *Manchester Guardian* now that he had 'purged his offence.'⁸⁰

The ending in 1909 of H. N. Brailsford's and H. W. Nevinson's employments on the *Daily News* can also illuminate editor-writer relations. Initially, doubts had been in A. G. Gardiner's mind about employing Brailsford and Nevinson as the paper's two leader-writers. Nevinson wrote in his autobiography :

... I found that Gardiner... feared both of us as being so difficult and rebellious that if we ran in harness, Heaven knew what might happen to the coach. "What a pair to drive tandem!" Ernest Parke, then editor of the *Star*, had said to him.⁸¹

Firstly, Nevinson had renounced his Liberal Party membership at the Government's entente with the Tsarist regime. Additionally, Nevinson called for a boycott of Angolan cocoa as he had helped to expose the slave trade employed in its production. His persistence in working for such a boycott meant that Nevinson, and the Cadburys' who were the paper's main proprietors, would be on a collision course. In fact 'Cantankerous and devoid of humour, Nevinson clashed to one extent or another with every editor for whom he worked.'⁸²

One could argue that Brailsford was even more abrasive than Nevinson. Macedonia had given Brailsford the opportunity to vent his anguish over a matter of great contemporary humanitarian concern. *Macedonia: Its Races and Their Future*, which appeared in early 1906, was proclaimed to be the authority on the subject. His connexions with Russian revolutionaries in exile in England had created the passport trial problem, which his fellow journalists had looked at with help, but anxiety. It was Brailsford who interceded with the millionaire Joseph Fels, to loan money to the

⁷⁷ *ibid.*, p. 315.

⁷⁸ *ibid.*, p. 315.

⁷⁹ F. M. Leventhal, *The Last Dissenter* (1985), p. 51.

⁸⁰ *ibid.*, p. 56.

⁸¹ H. W. Nevinson, *More Changes More Chances* (1925), p. 284.

⁸² Stephen E. Koss, *Fleet Street Radical* (1973), p. 112.

hard-up delegates of the Russian Social Democratic Party, so that they could return to Russia, following the Fifth Congress held in London in 1907. Fels blamed Brailsford for the Social Democrats' failure to meet the repayment deadline of 1 January 1908.⁸³ Such risky dealings, undoubtedly made any editor for whom Brailsford worked, wary in case such matters might reflect badly on the image of the paper. Radicalism aimed at changing society for the better through gradual democratic means, not by revolutionary violence to which those Social Democratic delegates subscribed. Radicals did not believe that 'the means justified the ends.'

Indeed, it was the failure to follow that dictum and ignore just such a correct approach on the part of Brailsford and Nevinson that ultimately led to their leaving the *Daily News* in October 1909. The issue was womens' suffrage. For some time, the editor Gardiner, had been known to prune Brailsford and Nevinson's articles on the suffragettes. However, when Gardiner seemed to condone the Government's introduction of forcibly feeding the women in prison in September 1909 in a *Daily News* leader, both journalists exploded. Neither Gardiner nor Massingham would publicly distance themselves from the Government's behaviour. Gardiner believed that women's suffrage would come, but ought to be achieved by peaceful pressure applied to parliament, rather than violent protests. He found himself in the unenviable predicament of suffering criticism from his proprietors and his journalists. The latter naturally believed him to be too subservient to the Government and to the proprietors, while the Cadburys thought him capitulating to the militant actions of the suffragettes. In reality, Gardiner was privately approaching the Home Office with a view to getting the Government to moderate its policy. Brailsford's resignation letter, which was intended by him to be a means by which Gardiner as editor might put pressure on the proprietors failed in its purpose. It was very much a case of Brailsford 'crying wolf' once too often, for his resignation was accepted. Gardiner realized that Nevinson would follow suit. Standing up for their Radical principles was costly, for as Leventhal summarized Brailsford's act:

For the sake of principle he was willing to abandon the position of principal leader-writer on the most important Liberal daily. Not only did it involve serious financial sacrifice, but a turning from the direction his career had followed for a decade. . . . He would never again be employed as a regular staff member of a daily newspaper.⁸⁴

H. N. Brailsford had threatened to resign on several occasions, and on each occasion had been calling the editor's bluff. His tempestuous career emerges from the series of appointments that he held. He first began as a leader-writer with the *Morning Leader*, occasionally contributing to the *Speaker*. From 1902 he wrote for the *Echo* until the paper's closure in 1905, by which time he was

⁸³ F. M. Leventhal, *The Last Dissenter* (1985), p. 62.

Repayment was made to Fels's widow in 1922.

⁸⁴ F. M. Leventhal, *The Last Dissenter* (1985), p. 66.

engaged on a piece-work basis for the *Manchester Guardian*. Only a few weeks after his work for the latter paper had begun, he accepted a job with the ill-fated *Tribune* which lasted until March 1907. Towards the end of February 1907 he undertook employment for four days a week on the *Daily News*, and from March 1907 was a member of the *Nation's* staff. Following his resignation from the *Daily News* in October 1909, he remained attached to the *Nation*.

Lest one think that the departure of Brailsford and Nevinson were exceptional, it should be noted, that on the same newspaper, both George Bernard Shaw and G. K. Chesterton quarrelled regularly. Consequently, as Koss expresses it :

More painful to all concerned [than Brailsford and Nevinson's exit] was the departure in 1913 of Chesterton whose relations with Gardiner (like his commitment to the Liberal Party) had grown increasingly strained.⁸⁵

(V)

Contacts between journalists and politicians were frequent. In fact, many involved in journalism were also involved in politics. According to J. A. Thomas, for example, journalists formed the third largest occupational group in the House of Commons, after law and the military.⁸⁶ For many politicians, especially those of the Labour Party and the Irish Nationalists, it was a way of earning some money at a time when MPs were not paid. Likewise, the connections between journalists and politicians gave the Press the opportunity to communicate ideas and to put pressure on parliament. For the Radicals, that opportunity was particularly welcome, for their other ways of influencing the decision-makers were very limited.

Some editors and journalists were likely and able to change careers into politics or the academic world. Amongst Liberal journalists, there are the examples of J. L. Hammond, L. T. Hobhouse and C. F. G. Masterman. Such changes of employment could occur, because most of the journalists came from the same section of society that produced the academic and political leadership. Apparently, the bonds between those triple occupations were not so strong amongst the Conservatives, largely on account of the exclusive character of that Party. Additionally, some journalists remained in that occupation while also being MPs'. C. P. Scott was the most notable example amongst the Radicals. He was both editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, and also the MP for the Leigh division of Lancashire for ten years during 1895-January 1906.

Parliamentary correspondents for newspapers were also an important point of contact between the Press and politicians. Amongst the Radicals, H. W. Massingham was of particular note. He acted in that capacity for the *Daily News* during January 1901 to February 1907 and built-up a

⁸⁵ Stephen E. Koss, *Fleet Street Radical* (1973), p. 113.

⁸⁶ Alan J. Lee, *The Origins Of The Popular press In England 1855-1914* (1976), p. 199.

formidable knowledge of parliamentary procedures, personalities and party policies. As Lucy Masterman recalled: 'Everybody who mattered in the world round Westminster read the Parliamentary sketch which he wrote night by night; and those who knew nothing of the actual debate very largely took their opinions from it.'⁸⁷ Those politicians who had not followed a debate, felt able to update themselves by asking Massingham the present position on the matter, so as to vote accordingly, when it came to the 'division' bell. He acted for some MPs' as a weather-vane of political opinion.

Additionally, newspaper-owners were well-placed to supplement the funds of political parties. That could occur in a variety of ways, such as financially helping new or struggling papers, or simply by ensuring the fidelity of their own newspapers. They would also be expected to contribute directly to the party coffers as a routine matter.

Personal motives played a not insignificant part. Politicians sought popularity with the public as a means to strengthen their political position vis-à-vis their colleagues in the Cabinet, and in return for a good Press suggested honours and titles for journalists. Some of the latter welcomed, and in some cases aspired to such rewards, in their efforts to climb socially and hence to gain increased respectability. It should be noted that Asquith's personal attitude to the idea of honouring Press men was outdated:

There is nothing gives me so much trouble, (or I may well add such profound disgust) as the allocation of honours. In the case of the smaller fry I am obliged to act mainly on the advice of the whips and other such experts. The man you mention (I think his name is Riddell) was strongly recommended to me on the ground (amongst others) that his paper the *News of the World* had become definitely Liberal, and was a valuable party asset. I am disposed to agree with you that it would be better if journalists should neither seek nor accept such distinctions; but that unfortunately is the way of the world in which we live.⁸⁸

The 'G. A. Riddell' referred to was honoured three times⁸⁹ in his 'craving for recognition.'⁹⁰ The first occasion was in 1909 when he was knighted. Though no money was mentioned, Asquith believed that the price to Riddell ought to be that the latter 'might help a hospital, and use a paper in our favour.'⁹¹ But many of the journalists involved in the Radical Press would not have accepted titled honours, despite Asquith's reticence, even if offered them, for they wished to maintain their

⁸⁷ Lucy Masterman, *C. F. G. Masterman* (1968), p. 78.

⁸⁸ J. A. Spender, *Life, Journalism And Politics*, vol. I (1927), p. 152.

⁸⁹ 1918 Baronet, 1920 Lord Riddell of Walton Heath.

⁹⁰ J. M. McEwen (ed.), *The Riddell Diaries 1908-1923* (1986), p. 12.

⁹¹ Stephen E. Koss, *The Rise And Fall Of The Political Press In Britain*, vol. 2 (1984), p. 103.

independence. Massingham and Scott fell into that category. However, it must be said that Asquith's attitude towards Massingham, who had criticized the Government so severely over its foreign policy, was totally uncompromising. Asquith told Churchill 'To Massingham I shall certainly not offer (recognition).'⁹² Asquith's attitude of distancing himself from the Press in such matters, is in total contrast to that of the Radical politician Lloyd George. Undoubtedly, it was Lloyd George whose influence acquired the knighthood for Riddell, just as later it was within Lloyd George's power as Prime Minister to grant the other two honours to Riddell. In return, the journalist had a house built for the politician at Walton Heath.

Lloyd George and other politicians indulged in the Edwardian craze for golf at Walton Heath. There they met leading journalists and academics, besides feeding Riddell useful information occasionally through indiscretions. However, it was at Lloyd George's 'breakfasts' that so much was discussed and so much manipulation operated. Those conversations are not only extensively referred to in Riddell's Diaries,⁹³ but also received substantial attention in those of C. P. Scott, editor of the *Manchester Guardian*.⁹⁴ The occasions, which were about 9.15-11.00 a.m., were either at 10 Downing Street or at Walton Heath. It was through such meetings that Lloyd George acquired the reputation of being the great manipulator of the Press, while of course, those who met him, hoped for publishable information based on insight into leading personalities and their policies. The importance of these contacts should not be underestimated, for C. P. Scott also met other leading figures besides Lloyd George. On various occasions he met C. F. G. Masterman (16.2.1911), Robert Donald editor of the *Daily Chronicle* (2.12.1911) and John Simon (15.1.1914). The topics discussed, ranged from: relations between Britain and Germany with extensive talk about the naval arms race, to issues such as women's suffrage, and the timetable for Irish Home Rule. It is interesting that Scott on the morning following the Mansion House speech, met Winston Churchill, the Master of Elibank who was the Chief Whip and his brother A. C. Murray, quite apart from the 'man of the moment' Lloyd George (22.7.1911). Indeed, it says something for the standing of the *Manchester Guardian* that it was considered necessary to brief C. P. Scott on the international situation at such a time. Likewise, Scott 'Went to London, at Lloyd George's request to see him "as early as possible," by morning train'⁹⁵ on the fateful day of 4 August 1914.

Another regular gathering of Radicals of particular note, that brought politicians and journalists together, were the *Nation* 'lunches.' These gatherings which began in March 1907, occurred usually every Tuesday in the period until 1918, and after that were on Mondays. They were presided over by the editor Massingham, at the usual location of the National Liberal Club. The

⁹² R. Churchill, *The Young Statesman*, companion vol. 3 (1967), pp. 1628-9.

⁹³ G. A. Riddell, *More Pages from My Diary, 1908-1914* (1934) for this period under scrutiny.

⁹⁴ Trevor Wilson (ed.), *The Political Diaries of C. P. Scott 1911-1928* (1970), see comments pp. 24-5 of Introduction.

⁹⁵ *ibid*, p. 96.

idea was attributed to Massingham by Masterman, in that the editor wished the *Nation* to be run not by himself alone, but by the collective ideas of like-minded Radicals. The meetings were to be in his opinion '... where conversation would be entirely free, entirely reckless, entirely secret, in which we would hammer out together ideas suitable for the paper to advocate.'⁹⁶ Likewise, Massingham wrote in June 1908 to invite Arthur Ponsonby to attend, by claiming that 'We discuss politics and other things in a free way, ...'⁹⁷ Amongst those who gathered there, were several members of the paper's staff, such as Nevinston whose first attendance was on 16 April 1907, and from whose journals we have such detailed accounts of the proceedings. Brailsford, J. L. Hammond, F. W. Hirst and Leonard Hobhouse also attended. Additionally, from journalism was C. P. Scott of the *Manchester Guardian*, and one of the Rowntree family or represented by their solicitor, E. Richard Cross. Visitors were permitted, so that 'Men of all classes and creeds, from Prime Ministers downwards'⁹⁸ were present. As Masterman claimed, that included 'every kind of genius or freak.'⁹⁹ Lloyd George and Lord Courtney made an appearance, as did other politicians, such as Lowes Dickinson, C. F. G. Masterman, Philip Morrell and John Simon. Those politicians not only exchanged views with the staff of the most Radical journal of its time, but also with members of the Radical intelligentsia such as J. A. Hobson, Gilbert Murray and H. G. Wells.

Such frank discussions often led to heated exchanges between those present, but Massingham successfully acted as referee, and indeed insisted on drawing in those who looked as if they were forming exclusive sub-groups independent of the main topic of conversation. Masterman did not recall 'any permanent ill-feeling between one man and another'¹⁰⁰ at the end of the lunches, but it is interesting to note the emphasis he places on the divisions amongst those present. It is reminiscent of the highly individualistic type of person that the Radicals were. They had their principles, but chose to argue amongst themselves about how to formulate the policy or policies necessary to achieve their goals. As Masterman stated

... we... felt deeply on divergent questions depart[ing] always with a sense of respect for each other. ... [Massingham] knew that while men had diverse and almost religious political differences they were expressing only their own honest minds.¹⁰¹

Nevinston stated that personal insults and missiles flew across the famous round table so that he had occasion to grab the tablecloth more than once.¹⁰²

⁹⁶ Lucy Masterman, *C. F. G. Masterman* (1968), pp. 78–9.

⁹⁷ Alfred F. Havighurst, *Radical Journalist: H. W. Massingham (1860–1924)* (1974), p. 152.

⁹⁸ Lucy Masterman, *C. F. G. Masterman* (1968), p. 79.

⁹⁹ Alfred F. Havighurst, *Radical Journalist: H. W. Massingham (1860–1924)* (1974), p. 153.

¹⁰⁰ Lucy Masterman, *C. F. G. Masterman* (1968), p. 80.

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*, p. 80.

¹⁰² Henry W. Nevinston, *More Changes More Chances* (1925), p. 216.

An avenue of opportunity for bringing politicians and journalists together, that ended with the demise of the *Tribune* newspaper, was the 'Tribune Rendezvous.' It was established as a political centre for 1,000 people on the ground floor of the building in which the paper was produced. It had a reference library. As a club, it was to facilitate Liberal and Labour politicians, journalists, and academics, meeting and mixing, so as to exchange ideas, for as Thomasson explained '... we wanted to show them that we were prepared to learn from them as well as to teach them.'¹⁰³ A foreboding sign of where Liberal priorities lay, was that on the day of the Rendezvous opening (25.2.1906), when a substantial dinner party was arranged, many leading members of the government chose to dine instead with the King. Evidently, the 'Tribune Rendezvous' never came near to being a substitute for the established political clubs, and indeed tended to attract people of a less well-positioned station in life and cranks. Many of those who attended probably did not even buy the newspaper.¹⁰⁴

Of personal, domestic arrangements bringing politicians and journalists into contact, one could choose to examine their location of abode, and whether they intermarried or not. Also attendance at dinner parties can tell us about the social associations of the Radicals.

Meeting at one another's homes helped cement the bonds between journalists and politicians. It was at Morley's Wimbledon home, for example, in 1902, that Gardiner brought Philip Snowden to listen to anecdotes about Gladstone, as both Morley and Francis Hirst were in the process of writing the renowned biography of the 'Grand Old Man.'¹⁰⁵ Likewise, once Lloyd George had decided to live at Walton Heath, then others wished to live there too. Amongst the Radicals, could be counted Winston Churchill, Robert Donald, Charles Masterman, Reginald McKenna, and Sir John Simon.¹⁰⁶

The personal friendship of the Radical politician John Burns with H. W. Massingham is of special note. In Autumn 1911, for example, Massingham felt able to freely discuss with John Burns, who held the post at the Local Government Board, about the Anglo-German tension over Agadir, and particularly his [Massingham's] concern about the recent hostility of Churchill and Lloyd George to Germany. On 9 October, they lunched together at the Devonshire Club to discuss the political situation.¹⁰⁷ Their friendship was so close that it extended to the editor's personal life. John Burns was the only person outside Massingham's family who called the latter 'Harry.' Everyone else referred to Massingham as 'Mr. Massingham' or 'H. W. M.'¹⁰⁸ Burns regularly visited Massingham's home, and they went to the theatre together such as to see 'Major Barbara'

¹⁰³ Alan J. Lee, 'Franklin Thomasson And The Tribune: A Case-study In The History Of The Liberal Press, 1906-1908' in *The Historical Journal*, xvi, 2 (1973), p. 356.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.* p. 357.

¹⁰⁵ Stephen E. Koss, *Fleet Street Radical* (1973), p. 69.

¹⁰⁶ J. M. McEwen (ed.), *The Riddell Diaries 1908-1923* (1986), p. 9 and p. 49.

¹⁰⁷ Alfred F. Havighurst, *Radical Journalist: H. W. Massingham (1860-1924)* (1974), p. 206.

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.* p. 223.

in January 1906. It is known that Burns was the greatest source of comfort to Massingham when the latter's wife died in March 1905.¹⁰⁹

Discussions at meals were a means of contact between journalists and politicians. Mention has already been made of Lloyd George's 'Breakfasts' and the *Nation* 'lunches.' In the case of lunches, in talking of Burns, one could also mention that A. G. Gardiner often met him at lunch at the National Liberal Club, and that they 'would stroll afterwards along the Victoria Embankment, trading impressions of books or apprehensions about the 'vulgaring [sic] of public life, Americanizing of Press, and materializing of politics generally'. . .'¹¹⁰ And yet again, the mix of politicians and journalists, in C. P. Scott's diary for 27 November 1914:

Lunched at the Courtneys – Morley, L. T. Hobhouse, H. N. Brailsford and Bertrand Russell there.¹¹¹

It was fashionable to talk over dinner too. A dinner party was described in Kate Courtney's diary for 30 July 1901, in which the Brailsfords, F. W. Hirst and Emily Hobhouse attended.¹¹² In March 1907, the *Daily News* celebrated Massingham's career and new editorship of the *Nation* by giving a dinner in his honour at the National Liberal Club. Amongst those present, were the Radical politicians John Burns, Leo Chiozza Money, Winston Churchill, Lord Courtney and Lloyd George. Apologies for absence were given by the Prime Minister, Augustine Birrell, Sir Charles Dilke and John Morley. Of those belonging or closely associated to journalism, one could count J. L. Hammond, F. W. Hirst, R. C. Lehmann, C. F. G. Masterman and H. W. Nevinson, with apologies from G. Cadbury and J. Rowntree.¹¹³

Some managed to combine such lunch and dinner contacts within the same day. On 19 September 1912, Scott 'lunched with Massingham. . . & dined with Gardiner' finding them both antagonistic towards Grey's foreign policy. In the same month Masterman:

Had lunch with Gardiner, who was quite cheerful and cursing Winston's speeches. Dined with Massingham, also cursing Winston. Afterwards with him to 'Everywoman' at Drury Lane. . .¹¹⁴

Other occasions occurred, bringing politicians and journalists together, such as the naval review of 9 July 1912. Churchill sent Riddell a ticket. On board, the party consisted of the Prime

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*, p. 134.

¹¹⁰ Stephen E. Koss, *Fleet Street Radical* (1973), p. 96.

¹¹¹ Trevor Wilson (ed), *The Political Diaries of C. P. Scott 1911-1928* (1970), p. 115.

¹¹² F. M. Leventhal, *The Last Dissenter* (1985), pp. 44-5.

¹¹³ Alfred F. Havighurst, *Radical Journalist: H. W. Massingham (1860-1924)* (1974), p. 141.

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 218.

Minister, some Canadian Cabinet Ministers, and various newspaper editors including Donald of the *Daily Chronicle* and Gardiner of the *Daily News*.¹¹⁵

Contacts between journalists and politicians should not automatically be equated with influence of one group over the other. The exercise of influence is a more intangible factor to ascertain. Distrust existed on both sides. The Press, and that belonging to the Radicals in particular, distrusted politicians, because it was felt that the latter would manipulate papers for their own political advantages. However, on the more positive side, Radicals felt that the Press was a direct means to convey their ideas to politicians. For their part, politicians were conscious of the growth of a means by which they could sway voters opinions. However, politicians were irritated at the need to court the electorate, as it curtailed their arbitrary behaviour. In short, some politicians greatly disliked the alleged influence of the Press, while others such as Lloyd George deliberately cultivated it.

The notion that the Press could interfere in matters that were not considered their concern, or that correspondents were an irritant, extended in the political sphere to diplomats. That is expressed, for example, in Nevinston's autobiographical writings, when he refers to the 1907 Hague Conference. He recalls that the British representative was very rude to Brailsford and others of the Press. Nevinston believed that many of the diplomats could have practiced the courtesy expressed by the German delegation 'without losing their secretiveness or their reputation for diplomatic arrogance.'¹¹⁶

Unfortunately for the Radicals, it could be argued that their influence through the Press was waning. As the electorate widened, so national politics became more important than local politics, and that in turn reduced the significance of the provincial Press. As the Radicals were stronger in the provincial Press, this development entailed a set-back to their ability to influence politics.

Additionally, the very fact that the Radicals represented a minority opinion, put the Radical Press at a distinct disadvantage, when it came to the matter of exerting influence on the decision-making politicians. The circulation figures of the Radical Press were low, and it could be argued that that reflected the minority views held by the Radicals. It was noticeable that circulation figures fell when the Radical Press took an unpopular stand on political issues. Such were the cases in 1909 and 1911 with the *Nation*, when that publication expounded its views on the navy and on labour matters.¹¹⁷ Also, the advent of the new journalism meant that the idea of communicating opinions was losing ground to a greater emphasis on news and sports coverage. People read what they wanted to read, and not what was necessarily morally best for them, or what was most uplifting. Principles and opinions were less attractive to the mass readership than to those grounded in Victorian and Edwardian Radicalism.

¹¹⁵ J. M. McEwen (ed.), *The Riddell Diaries 1908-1923* (1986), p. 47.

¹¹⁶ Henry W. Nevinston, *More Changes More Chances* (1925), p. 224.

¹¹⁷ Alfred F. Havighurst, *Radical Journalist: H. W. Massingham (1860-1924)* (1974), p. 155.

One could suggest that journalists and politicians did believe that they had an influence on each other, for otherwise they would not have considered it necessary to waste time by meeting. The politicians wanted support for their policies or silence from the Press on political issues, whereas the journalist's felt it necessary to obtain information from those in government so as to make a good story to increase circulation figures.

Politicians favoured some newspapers over others in order to disseminate information. The *Times* was traditionally regarded as being semi-official on matters relating to naval and military issues. The fact that it had a representative occupying a room at the Foreign Office, meant that the paper's views on foreign affairs could be reflecting official viewpoints, and possibly what those in authority wished the Press to know.¹¹⁸ Likewise, between 1906 and 1914, it was noted by J. A. Spender that the *Westminster Gazette* was considered to be 'the organ of Sir Edward Grey.'¹¹⁹

Unquestionably, politicians did attempt to pressurize journalists. Such was the case with C. P. Scott of the *Manchester Guardian* over the 1911 Agadir crisis. Lloyd George explained to Scott, that as the *Manchester Guardian* was taken so much note of in Germany, that Scott ought to ensure that his paper gave the British government support, so that the country appeared united in the face of foreign powers. There was also the Liberal Party to consider, for as Scott himself claimed 'Lloyd George rather laid it on about "*Manchester Guardian*" – it would smash party if we and Government were at odds.'¹²⁰ What leading government politicians wanted, and particularly at such a time of international crisis as Agadir, was a subservient Press. On the Monday following the Mansion House Speech, the *Observer* wrote in the 'correct' attitude 'We must stand with France at any cost against unreasonable demands, no matter of what nature', and the *Manchester Guardian* subsequently commented that that appeared to be Lloyd George's view as well.¹²¹ What is especially surprising about the above, is that Lloyd George was considered to hold impeccable Radical credentials before the Mansion House speech.

The politicians used secrecy and deceit to deflect the journalists from mounting any really effective protests to government foreign policy. The secrecy surrounding the handling of foreign affairs by Sir Edward Grey particularly irked the Radicals. For example, Scott had breakfast with Grey on 25 July 1911, lasting 90 minutes, during which time the Foreign Secretary failed totally to convince the editor of just how serious the international situation had become. Grey did not even mention the protest received from the German ambassador regarding Lloyd George's Mansion House speech.¹²² By being kept in ignorance of the political realities of the moment 'Scott had been misled, not converted.'¹²³ Grey's intention was to minimize criticism of his foreign policy, by simply

¹¹⁸ Trevor Wilson (ed.), *The Political Diaries of C. P. Scott 1911-1928* (1970), p. 92.

¹¹⁹ J. A. Spender, *The Public Life*, vol. 2 (1925), p. 131.

¹²⁰ Trevor Wilson (ed.), *The Political Diaries of C. P. Scott 1911-1928* (1970), p. 46. Diary entry for 22 July 1911.

¹²¹ David Ayerst, *Guardian. Biography of a Newspaper* (1971), p. 367.

¹²² See Trevor Wilson (ed.), *The Political Diaries of C. P. Scott 1911-1928* (1970), pp. 50-1.

¹²³ David Ayerst, *Guardian. Biography of a Newspaper* (1971), p. 368.

keeping everyone else unaware of what was happening. By the time the facts were revealed, the issue was already settled, before there was any time for Radical protests to be mounted and effective. Such was the case in the summer of 1914.

Some of what was said by politicians to journalists was stated in veiled language, so that the implications need to be deciphered first, before questions of influence can be answered. For example, in July 1911, Scott breakfasted with his old friend, Lord Loreburn. They talked of the danger of war with Germany. Loreburn said to Scott 'I advise you to go and see him [i.e. Asquith] at once, but don't tell him I have said anything to you.' Scott inquired 'Is it urgent or will next week do?' The reply was 'Better this week than next; better to-day than to-morrow.' Likewise in 1914 (15 January), Scott was cautioned regarding the issue of the naval estimates by Illingworth: '... much will turn on the nature of the advice you give this morning. Weigh your words: I need not say more.' What adds to the intrigue, is the fact that those written comments were read by Scott in a letter, left on a table, on the very same morning that he breakfasted with Lloyd George and actually saw Illingworth in passing for a few minutes.¹²⁴ A. G. Gardiner was subject to such innuendo. He was on very good terms with Sir John Fisher, and they met regularly, so that the editor received the benefits of the admiral's opinions. Fisher wrote to Gardiner 'Lots of things I remember now I ought to have told you! ... but kindly ... don't remember anything I said!'¹²⁵ One could claim such comments, as being merely examples by those in positions of power, as being manifestations of arrogance in condescension to those in the Press, who were in the unprivileged position of not being 'in the know.' But then, some influence must have been anticipated, otherwise why bother with the Press, unless it was merely to gratify the decision-makers desire for flattery.

Scott believed he had influence with the leading Radical politicians of the day.¹²⁶ During the struggle over the naval estimates in 1914, Scott at one point visited London four times in just ten days, in an endeavour to persuade Lloyd George to stand by his Radical convictions, and even if necessary, resign.¹²⁷ As neither Lloyd George nor Churchill resigned from the government, it clearly showed not only that Radical opinions could be subjected to personal career prospects, but also just how little influence the Radical Press ultimately had with politicians in the decision-making posts. H. N. Brailsford believed that Radicals could achieve their objectives through influencing such politicians. For example, during his passport trial in 1905, he wrote to Gilbert Murray:

It seems to me a bare chance that influence might be brought to get the thing quashed altogether. ... I wonder do you know anyone who could employ any influence with the

¹²⁴ Trevor Wilson (ed.), *The Political Diaries of C. P. Scott 1911-1928* (1970), p. 73.

¹²⁵ Stephen E. Koss, *Fleet Street Radical* (1973), p. 121. Dated 20 June 1909.

¹²⁶ See Trevor Wilson (ed.), *The Political Diaries of C. P. Scott 1911-1928* (1970), p. 23.

¹²⁷ David Ayerst, *Guardian. Biography of a Newspaper* (1971), p. 371.

Government Front Bench?¹²⁸

Murray made an effort on Brailsford's behalf, but to no avail. Where the Radical Press did however have some influence was with the Labour MPs, and with those backbench politicians holding similar Radical opinions and who had not yet achieved power. Brailsford acted as ghost-writer for Keir Hardie in his speech regarding the Tsar's personal responsibility for massacres and deportations to Siberia. The speech reflected an article written in the *Daily News* by Brailsford in early June 1908.¹²⁹

CONCLUSION

The Radical Press suffered from the delusion that the Radical politicians also experienced, namely that they believed that they spoke for a much wider and more influential section of society than was really the case. Though the Radical Press consisted of many journalists who had been or who were MPs, nevertheless they either held no power or, if in high office, were handicapped by their personal career prospects and governmental responsibilities to adhere to specific policies. The Radical Press was small by comparison to the non-Radical Press, its circulation low being restricted by the limited appeal of its ideas. The public were for the most part thrilled by jingoism, and saw in the Anglo-German arms race a re-affirmation of the need to maintain the strength of the British navy vis-à-vis all foreigners. The Radical Press was avidly read by those who already believed in its ideals, but failed to reach those who were unconverted. Consequently, leading politicians took virtually no notice of it, and chose to keep secret what was really happening, until it was too late for the Radical Press to make any protest that would have a significant impact on foreign affairs. Instead, the non-Radical *Times* and the *Westminster Gazette* were favoured by the government. The Radical journalists needed to believe that their opinions counted with politicians in high office, and yet in practice, their outpourings were only listened to by those politicians who were the uninfluential backbenchers. The leading politicians attempted to manipulate the Radical Press to suit their own ends. In crises arising in foreign policy, the politicians wanted the Press to appear to be in step with the government in confronting foreign powers. The absence on occasions of that apparent unity, no doubt led some politicians to feel frustrated enough to wish to believe in Bismarck's 'prescription for keeping the peace of Europe' – namely 'to hang a dozen editors.'¹³⁰

¹²⁸ F. M. Leventhal, *The Last Dissenter* (1985), p. 53.

¹²⁹ *ibid.*, p. 97. Article dated 4 June 1908.

¹³⁰ J. A. Spender, *The Public Life*, vol. 2 (1925), p. 126.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

As cited in the text and notes.

APPENDIX

SOME SIGNIFICANT RADICALS IN THE BRITISH PRESS,
1889-1914

Brailsford,	Henry Noel	(1873-1958)
Dickinson,	Goldsworthy Lowes	(1862-1932)
Ensor,	Sir Robert Charles Kirkwood	(1877-1958)
Gardiner,	Alfred George	(1865-1946)
Hammond,	John Lawrence Le Breton	(1872-1949)
Hirst,	Francis Wrigley	(1873-1953)
Hobhouse,	Leonard Trelawney	(1864-1929)
Labouchère,	Henry Du Pré	(1831-1912)
Massingham,	Henry William	(1860-1924)
Nevinson,	Henry Woodd	(1856-1941)
Perris,	George Herbert	(1866-1920)
Scott,	Charles Prestwich	(1846-1932)
Stead,	William Thomas	(1849-1912)