

**Talking Liberties:
The Rhetoric of Freedom in Post-War British Politics**

Submitted by James George Freeman to the University of Exeter
as a thesis for the degree of
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I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Freeman', with a long horizontal stroke above the name.

Abstract

This thesis places pressure on common distinctions between rhetoric and ideology, ideas and arguments, semantics and form, by examining the use of freedom rhetoric in political speech and propaganda in post-war Britain. To do so it combines a sophisticated statistical analysis of large volumes of text with the qualitative methodologies of rhetorical analysts and political historians.

In particular, it uses custom software written by the author to apply the techniques of corpus linguists, content analysts, and political scientists to a corpus of every speech made in the House of Commons between 1936 and 1990. By integrating data sources, the thesis recovers a partisan variable unrecorded in Hansard that enables the systematic detection of differences between Labour and Conservative MPs' speech for the first time. Chapter one both describes the novel techniques deployed and identifies changes in the use of freedom rhetoric over time as well as partisan sub-languages of debate.

This quantitative analysis provides the context for a detailed qualitative analysis of Conservative party rhetoric between 1945 and 1970 over three further chapters. Combining archival research with theoretical insights from rhetoric and framing scholars, it proposes a series of corrections to the party's post-war historiography, which has often wrongly equated freedom rhetoric with 'neoliberalism' or proto-Thatcherism and therefore misunderstood the complex beliefs and contexts generating this rhetoric. Moreover, because the continued use and adaptation of freedom rhetoric between 1951 and 1970 has been neglected, the thesis argues that historians have mischaracterised post-war Conservative politics as materialistic, underplayed freedom's role in Harold Macmillan's oratory, missed an important moment of transition under Alec Douglas-Home, and falsely charged Edward Heath with either betrayal or insincerity.

These narrower debates provide a new perspective on the bigger question of why freedom persisted as a major concept in political discourse. Over its chapters, the thesis develops the notion of a 'rhetorical culture', which challenges the binary between rhetoric and ideology and can explain Conservative politicians' use of similar rhetoric to articulate dissimilar beliefs.

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Figure 0.1 *News of the World*, 17 Jun 1945

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Figure 0.2 *Daily Herald*, 15 Feb 1950

INTRODUCTION

Talking Liberties

Liberty, next to religion, has been the motive of good deeds and the common pretext of crime, from the sowing of the seed at Athens, two thousand four hundred and sixty years ago, until the ripened harvest was gathered by men of our race. – **Lord Acton, 1877.**¹

!

A Space between Rhetoric and Ideology

Decrying misuse, manipulating polysemy, and proclaiming inheritance are intrinsic to how we talk with political concepts. Politicians were unlikely to have ‘reaped the harvest’ as Lord Acton described if they had not simultaneously selected, spliced, and revived some of the Liberty Tree’s branches whilst ignoring or condemning others. And yet, despite the extent to which these ‘tropes’ structure the use of concepts like freedom in political speech, examination of their role has slipped between scholarly concern with what we mean *by* freedom (at a semantic level) and what we mean *in* saying it (from the perspective of Austin’s speech-act theory or rhetoric).² This thesis addresses that rather elusive space between rhetoric and ideology and the historiographical consequences of simplifying their relationship. But, before posing a series of historical questions which prise that gap open, we must better define its nature by unpicking the connection between freedom and the three tropes shaping its use.

Accusations of misuse are central to theorists’ explanations of why political concepts never reach a universal, stable semantic meaning: according to W.B. Gallie, it was not just the ‘variety of [its] functions’ that produced freedom’s ‘essential contestability’ (the impossibility of objective definition incorporating all

¹ Lord Acton, *The History of Freedom and Other Essays* (London: Macmillan, 1907), p. 1

² A summary of most interpretative traditions addressing either concern is given below. J. L. Austin *How to do Things with Words: the William James Lectures Delivered at Harvard University in 1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962). Skinner regarded both semantics and pragmatics as vital to meaning, but still treats them separately in analysis: Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, Volume One, Kindle Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), locs. 2281, 3272.

facets), but rival groups' continued insistence that their version was primary.³ This notion of irresolvable conflict is at the core of models arguing that liberty's meaning only emerges when it is 'decontested' in the presence of other concepts, such as equality.⁴ But whilst Michael Freeden famously developed this insight into a morphological model of ideologies, which claimed that each arranges the same 'furniture' differently to produce varied 'conceptualisations' of freedom, the question of how politicians exploited the very fact of irresolvable disagreement and the resulting polysemy has received little attention.⁵ It is possible, for instance, to read Harold Wilson's career-long derision of 'Tory Freedom' as indicating that he decontested liberty in the context of social justice. Historians doing so exclusively, though, would miss the phrase's meaning as a subversion of Conservative slogans, a device for uniting a set of disparate promise-versus-reality comparisons, a truncated attack on the Tory *ethos*, and, in later years, a rallying cry that encouraged audiences to recall 'thirteen lost years' under Tory rule. Similarly, whilst Conservative accusations that Liberalism mistook liberty for anarchy can be explained as the results of subordinating liberty to a broader concern with preventing inorganic change, this is to ignore their immediate utility in deflecting Labour's attacks on Baldwin and Chamberlain's interwar records.⁶ We might agree, then, that the continual assertion of misuse is intrinsic to a term's status as a political concept and its translation into rival ideologies, but insist upon adding that agents could hijack this process to pursue immediate rhetorical ends.

Polysemy stored similar political capital. Beyond simply accusing each other of holding faulty beliefs, opponents could tacitly accept the existence of each other's definitions to hit more complex rhetorical targets. Drenched in symbols of class identity, figure 0.1 captures the political potential of 'essential contestability' in an attack on Labour's supposedly self-defeating concept of freedom, whereby liberation from inequality brings a compulsion that renders

³ For the terms original use denoting those with 'no one clearly definable general use': W.B Gallie, 'Essentially Contested Concepts', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society New Series*, 56 (1955), 167-98 at 168; For recent criticism arguing that this makes political debate impossible or pointless other than by conversion or coercion: Terence Ball, 'Confessions of a Conceptual Historian', *British Yearbook of Political Thought*, 6 (2012), 11-31 esp. 21-5

⁴ On the morphology of ideologies and 'decontesting' concepts: Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998 [1996]); *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction*, Kindle Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), loc. 914.

⁵ Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, p. 87.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 348-83, esp. 355.

freedom of choice and democracy defunct. Yet, although the *News of the World* cartoon is not a neutral evaluation of competing definitions – I first found it amongst Churchill's papers – the irony figure it uses to mock Labour's version of liberty expects readers to recognise the polysemy that characterised 'freedom' in mid-twentieth-century British politics, so much so that the signalling of party allegiance is left to stereotypes of demagogic soapbox oratory.⁷ Indeed, unlike attempts to close down that polysemy by simply insisting Labour really meant tyranny, the cartoon perpetuates and exploits Labour's use of 'freedom' to carry out a parallel assault on the Left's *ethos* as short-cited and willing to elide its crude, materialistic class war with public liberation. The narrowing meaning of 'our freedom' as 'me an' you' becomes 'you'll do as you're told' is as much a vehicle to undermine Labour's claim to represent 'the people' as it is a comment on an ideological contradiction.⁸ In short, the cartoon supplements an attack on the validity of a particular arrangement of conceptual furniture with a critique of what this says about the householder.

Such attacks were not limited to the Right. During the 1950 election, *The Daily Herald* found the voter being asked to join the rich, still at their table in the Savoy and seemingly unmoved by austerity. Again manipulating polysemy, rather than supressing it entirely, definitions are the subject of David Low's cartoon, in this case a morally repugnant 'variety' of liberty. Its message hinges on the words 'your liberty', which, in the context of the examples given, satirise the Tory definition as self-interest and strongly imply that attaining it negates the liberty of others. But the reader is also left in little doubt that 'your' is really a code word for the elite. Thus, instead of arguing that the definition of liberty it critiqued was invalid *per se*, the cartoon conceded a plurality of definitions so as to point readers towards a moral dilemma about selfishness, fairness, and class reflected in their chosen 'variety' of liberty.⁹ Beneath their symbolic codes and

⁷ As chapter two shows, the *News of the World's* editor was directly involved in the Conservative campaign. This is a good example of what Richard Toye describes as the 'social meanings' of rhetoric: Richard Toye, *A Short Introduction to Rhetoric*, Kindle Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), loc. 994.

⁸ On the rhetorical construction of 'the people': Michael McGee, 'In Search of 'The People': A Rhetorical Alternative', *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61, 3 (1975), 235-49.

⁹⁹ Ben Jackson identified progressives' strategy of redescribing wealth and property accumulation as 'selfish' and their disputing liberty's definition (although the latter point is made using a US example): 'The Rhetoric of Redistribution' in *In Search of Social Democracy: Responses to Crisis and Modernisation*, edited by John Callaghan, Nina Fishman, Ben Jackson and Martin Mcivorat (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), pp. 233-51 at 238, 244-5; For seminal work on constructing moral audiences: Edwin Black, 'The Second Persona',

appeals to *pathos* (the British prefer humble, local independence to distant luxury, the rich are self-absorbed consumers of imports), both cartoons rely upon freedom's conceptual slipperiness and the existence of alternative definitions.¹⁰ In this sense, each is dependent on the discourse of freedom, rather than simply the ideological perspective they reflected: if Labour had been unable to use freedom rhetoric in 1945 or the Tories forced to surrender the concept by 1950, then neither cartoon would make sense. Indeed, the extent to which they recognise and use polysemy for their own purposes reminds us that agents could take advantage of consequences flowing from the systems typically held to produce semantic meaning.

A similar phenomenon occurs when politicians attempt to persuade others by claiming historical roots for their ideas. As we shall see, the notion of inheritance is important, not only for historians of ideas, but for those arguing that concepts partly derive meaning from their accumulated history. Yet, although the past clearly informed Rhoda Grey's understanding of liberty, in telling the Conservative party conference that 'down the corridor of the centuries men and women are watching us now, wondering whether we shall be worthy one day to take our place by their side as the true guardians of British liberty', she was also constructing a politicised appeal to *pathos* that manipulated a historical narrative from which she assumed her audience derived the meaning of liberty.¹¹ Likewise, when Clement Attlee positioned Democratic Socialism at the head of a timeline stretching back to the 'revolts all over Europe against absolute governments' in 1848 he was doing more than simply expressing Labour's ideological commitment to civil liberties. Without the knowledge that this reference came during his New Year's message a hundred years hence, we would miss the resonance of the Premier's rhetoric. Nor could historians fully comprehend Attlee's words without realising that they enabled him to resolve a rhetorical problem: how to simultaneously give European audiences a moral lead against Communism and rebut his domestic opponents' broadcasts,

Quarterly Journal of Speech, 56, 2 (1970), 109-19; Phillip Wander, 'The Third Persona: An Ideological Turn in Rhetorical Theory', *Central States Speech Journal*, 35, 4 (1984), 197-216.

¹⁰ Mink coats and pearls were a particular target for deriding the rich housewife's one-sided liberty: 'The Thinking Voter', Election Newspaper, 1950, Chelsea, The Peoples History Museum (hereafter PHM), Labour Party Archive (hereafter LPA), General Election 1950 Manifestos/Leaflets Box.

¹¹ Rhoda Grey, Conference Speech, 1948 printed in: Conservative and Unionist Central Office (hereafter CUCO), *Annual Conference Report*, 1948, pp. 135-6.

which had accused Labour of departing from Britain's heritage.¹² But treating these examples of the inheritance trope (or indeed any of the examples above) solely as individual speech acts or devices for accomplishing specific tasks would also strip them of their collective significance: the *form* of these appeals was so often repeated, in-filled with different imagery, deployed to accomplish varied tasks, capable of unifying those with disparate policy stances, and present in both private and public argument that the acts and forms themselves, not just their semantics, break into areas typically reserved for ideology.

I mention misuse, polysemy, and inheritance by way of introduction, not because they alone refuse to be classified either as ideology or a means of expressing this persuasively (metaphors, commonplaces, and rhetorical models all pose similar boundary problems), but because when attached to a concept in speech their triple identity marks out the full extent of these intriguing hybrids: they are at once processes by which a concept's semantic meanings are generated, opportunities for agents to achieve wider rhetorical aims by playing on the results of that process, but also become fused with the concept as fragments of 'ideology' when such opportunities find expression in repeated formulations, such as 'Tory freedom' or 'British liberty'. Whilst analysts can separate them, in the above examples these were three closely-linked, instantaneous facets of the same utterance. Exposing the historiographical consequences of ignoring freedom's ability to straddle and collapse these ideological and rhetorical facets of meaning when deployed in speech or propaganda is this thesis's broadest aim.

This 'space' between rhetoric and ideology, ideas and arguments, pragmatics and semiology, then, is a product of scholars' frameworks failing to comprehend how concepts like freedom (when attached to tropes, metaphors, commonplaces, and rhetorical models) transcend those binaries. Historians have often glimpsed each aspect of political experience by stretching or switching between distinct interpretative toolkits; below it is argued that in doing so we fail to capture how agents experienced and constructed politics through

¹² Clement Attlee, Party Political Broadcast, 3 Jan 1948 reprinted in: 'The "Double Task" of the Labour Government' *The Listener*, 8 Jan 1948, p. 62; Walter Elliot, Party Political Broadcast, 20 Dec 1947 reprinted in: 'The End of the Year', *The Listener*, 25 Dec 1947, p. 1102; Clement Davies, Party Political Broadcast, 18 Nov 1947, reprinted in: 'The Alternative of Liberalism', *The Listener*, 27 Nov 1947, p. 938; On progressives calls for redistribution via national appeals: Jackson, 'The Rhetoric of Redistribution', pp. 239-41.

rhetoric, risk falling into misguided interpretations based on simplistic assumptions about rhetoric as an indicator of, or mask for, ideology, and preserve binaries, even though these become increasingly hazy when exposed to history. Admittedly, American rhetorical theorists have persistently complicated the relationship between their discipline and ideology, but, notwithstanding the related work of Skinner, Pocock, and historians influenced by the linguistic turn discussed below, it is only recently that those studying British political history have begun to pressurise these binaries directly.¹³ Whilst instances of rhetoric often crudely truncate complex arguments and can be underpinned by assumptions that the analyst can reconnect into an abstract system of thought, the exchange between ideology and rhetoric need not be one-way or premised on such categorical divisions. Influenced by the Cambridge School, Richard Toye has argued that ‘we should see rhetoric not merely as a means by which ideology is expressed but as a means by which it is generated’.¹⁴ In specific historical episodes, he claims, it is possible to see the ‘rhetorical process’ acting as a ‘motor’ for innovation, in which contexts, dilemmas, and the need to interrelate political issues demand that politicians develop or clarify their ‘ideas to new contexts of argument’ and, in doing so, collectively shift the terms of debate for future speakers.¹⁵ Moreover, along with Alan Finlayson and James Martin, Toye has begun to argue that ideologies may in part be ‘style[s] of argumentation’, and that ‘ideologies are themselves rhetorical constructs... [which] cannot be separated from the rhetorical structures of which they are composed’.¹⁶

The chapters below both deepen and extend these recent advances. But rather than rely on theoretical discussion, each explores these issues through a series of historical questions that foreground the frailty of distinctions between what politicians said and thought about freedom and what they did with it rhetorically. These questions operate on two levels: First, in order to show why these issues

¹³ Michael Calvin McGee, ‘The “Ideograph”: A Link between Rhetoric and Ideology’, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 66, 1 (1980), 1-16.

¹⁴ Richard Toye, ‘Words of Change: the Rhetoric of Commonwealth, Common Market and Cold War, 1961–3’ in *The Wind of Change: Harold Macmillan and British Decolonization* edited by Larry Butler and Sarah Stockwell (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 140-58 at 141.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 141, 154; For a related thesis: Colin Hay, ‘Narrating Crisis: The Discursive Construction of the “Winter of Discontent”’, *Sociology*, 30 (1996), 253–77.

¹⁶ Toye, *A Short Introduction*, loc. 1135; Alan Finlayson and James Martin, ‘It Ain’t What You Say...’: British Political Studies and the Analysis of Speech and Rhetoric’, *British Politics*, 3 (2008), 445-64.

are more than theoretical problems, the thesis exploits the blurred relationship between ideology and rhetoric to reconsider the narratives historians have constructed about Conservative party history between 1945 and 1970 when using freedom rhetoric as evidence for beliefs. Yet, in contributing to these narrower debates the thesis pursues a wider question: why did freedom persist as a concept in British political discourse? Although pitched at different levels of analysis, the two sets of questions are intrinsically linked: a less-Whiggish explanation of freedom's survival can be built up by re-examining Conservative use of freedom rhetoric during the supposed years of consensus, but the weakness of the party political historiography and its conception of the relationship between ideology and rhetoric can only be exposed through an analysis of scholars' approaches to the concept's wider history.

II

Historians and the 'Persistence' Problem

Historians have rarely confronted the question of freedom's persistence directly because their discussions have also been structured by the three tropes above. James Shotwell's *The Long Way to Freedom* (1960) represented the culmination of a tradition that imagined history as the unfolding realisation of ever wider conceptions of freedom, and which, despite varied models of change, gave Friedrich Hegel, Lord Acton, Guido Ruggiero, and Harold Laski's narratives a shared direction.¹⁷ Yet the assumption that histories of freedom should relate the handing down of Western civilisation's 'preeminent ideal' is not

¹⁷ James Shotwell, *The Long Way to Freedom* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1960); G.W. Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Translated by E.S. Haldane (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Company, 1892-6); Guido Ruggiero made an oft-repeated distinction between the English piecemeal building of constitutional liberty and the abstract French version: *The History of European Liberalism*, Translated by Robin Collingwood (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959 [1927]); Harold Laski, *Political Thought in England* (London: Henry Holt & Company, 1920) but his clearest statement linking the concept's development to socio-economic change was: 'Liberty' in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, edited by E.R.A. Seligman, Volume Nine (London: Macmillan, 1933), 442-447; For roots of modern liberty in the medieval world: A.J. Carlyle, *Political Liberty: A History of the Conception in the Middle Ages and Modern Times* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1944); Leonard Krieger, 'Stages in the Political History of Freedom' in *Liberty*, edited by Carl Friedrich (New York: Atherton Press, 1962), pp. 1-28; This version of history was just as important for socialists as Liberals: Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1974 [1907]); Sidney Webb, *The English Progress Towards Social Democracy*, Fabian Society Tracts, No. 15, (London: The Fabian Society, 1893).

restricted to these classic works.¹⁸ Nor has this narrative become apolitical: Ben Wilson's *What Price Liberty?* (2009) marched readers through a history of British freedom in order to recover our 'cultural attachment' to an ideal that had been 'detached from its moorings' in the contemporary surveillance state.¹⁹ But although Wilson and his reviewers openly permit notions of inheritance to structure their thinking, his analysis also reflects an increasing emphasis on plurality. Throughout the last century, many historians and philosophers devoted their time to delineating families of liberties, such as republican, liberal and idealist, and making distinctions between positive and negative liberty.²⁰ Etymological studies tried to recover these distinctions by tracing the history of associated terms,²¹ and most theorists joined William Connolly in abandoning Felix Oppenheim's search for an 'original' concept, conceding that freedom is always imbued with some contextual connotations.²² Likewise, the idea that differing interpretations of freedom never remain 'hermetically sealed' from one another or from adjacent political concepts has gained assent beyond theorists of ideology.²³ More radically, and often under Foucault's influence, others seek to challenge the dominance of Western conceptions of freedom, especially its

¹⁸ Orlando Patterson, *Freedom: Freedom in the Making of Western Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 1991), p. xi; Ian Carter, Matthew Kramer, Hillel Steiner (Eds.) *Freedom: A Philosophical Anthology* (Malden: Blackwell, 2007), p. xvii;

¹⁹ Ben Wilson, *What Price Liberty?: How Freedom Was Won and Is Being Lost*, Kindle Edition (London: Faber, 2009), locs. 150, 170; The book's reception showed the hold this 'tracing our rights to their sources' narrative still has on British culture: Conor Gearty, 'The Rights Stuff', *The Guardian*, 23 May 2009 available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2009/may/23/what-price-liberty-ben-wilson> [Accessed: Jun 2010]; Peter Wilby, 'Review: What Price Liberty?' *The New Statesman*, 4 Jun 2009, available at: <http://www.newstatesman.com/books/2009/06/liberty-wilson-british-demand> [Accessed: Jun 2010].

²⁰ For recent overviews which acknowledge multiplicity and historicity but still insist they are studying the same ideal: David Schmidtz and Jason Brennan, *A Brief History of Liberty* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010); David Miller, *The Liberty Reader* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), esp. pp. 2-5; Isaiah Berlin, 'Two Concepts of Liberty' (1958) reprinted in: Isaiah Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 118-72; For a historical discussion showing liberty's 'family tree': David Nicholls, 'Positive Liberty: 1880-1914', *American Political Science Review*, 56, 1 (1962), 114-28. Perhaps the most well known project attempting categorisation into families was: Mortimer Adler, *The Idea of Freedom: A Dialectical Examination of the Conceptions of Freedom* (New York: Double Day, 1958).

²¹ Compare for example: C.S. Lewis, *Studies in Words* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), pp. 111-4 with Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Kindle Edition (London: Fourth Estate, 2014 [1988]) locs. 3098-134.

²² William Connolly, *The Terms of Political Discourse* (Lexington: Heath, 1974), pp. 140-141; Schmidtz and Brennan, *A Brief History of Liberty*, p. 16; Felix Oppenheim, *Dimensions of Freedom: An Analysis* (New York: St Martins, 1961); 'Facts' and 'Values' in Politics, *Political Theory*, 1 (1973), 54-78 at 56.

²³ Carter, Kramer and Steiner, *Freedom: A Philosophical Anthology*, p. xviii.

liberal strand.²⁴ However, even if these accounts are more complex and less teleological than those of William Stubbs or J.R Green, they nevertheless maintain that all the permutations they collate express the same unit idea.²⁵ The reason it is ‘impossible to conceive of liberty as a single, unchanging philosophy’, Wilson tells us, is that ‘it only works when it is applied to the confusion of daily life’.²⁶ Context refracts our idea of freedom, but behind the scattered variations rests a stable core.

Although that claim has been challenged, historians of twentieth-century British politics made similar assumptions when writing about freedom’s place in the histories of parties, factions, and policies. Whilst they were never entirely unconcerned with agents’ beliefs, ideology steadily took on a greater explanatory role in historians’ accounts as the influence of Namierite prosopography, Peterhouse high politics, and sociological theory diminished successively.²⁷ Throughout the nineteen-eighties, for example, W.H Greenleaf argued that ‘libertarian’ and ‘collectivist’ strands of thought represented the ‘tension’ at the heart of the British political tradition and read late-nineteenth and twentieth-century history as the story of the latter’s growing dominance.²⁸ As we shall see in chapter two, the chief consequence of this model’s influence on the Conservative party’s historiography has been the identification of ‘libertarian’ and ‘paternalist’ factions, a practice which exemplifies an approach to studying freedom that organises contemporaries’ views along a continuum between two very abstract ideas and constructs narratives through comparisons with predecessors.²⁹ Perhaps the biggest influence on political historians, though,

²⁴ For the best cross-cultural history: Svetlana Boym, *Another Freedom: The Alternative History of an Idea* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010); Johanna Oksala, *Foucault on Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

²⁵ William Stubbs, *The Constitutional History of England: In its Origin and Development* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1875-8); J.R. Green, *A Short History of the English People* (London: Macmillan, 1902 [1892]).

²⁶ Wilson, *What Price Liberty*, loc. 205.

²⁷ Jon Lawrence, ‘Political History’ in *Writing History: Theory and Practice* edited by Stefan Berger, Heiko Feldner, and Kevin Passmore (London: Arnold, 2003), pp. 183-202; Some associated with the high-politics school were always interested in ideas: Michael Bentley, *The Liberal Mind, 1914-1929* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977); For key texts bemoaning lack of interest: Peter Clarke, ‘The Progressive Movement in England,’ *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Fifth Series, 24, 159-181 esp. 159; Michael Freedon, ‘The Stranger at the Feast: Ideology and Public Policy in Twentieth Century Britain,’ *Twentieth Century British History*, 1, 1 (1990), 9-34 esp. 13.

²⁸ W.H. Greenleaf, *The British Political Tradition*, Volume Two (London: Routledge, 1983), pp. xi, 192-3.

²⁹ Chapter two provides an extensive critique of this model. For a very influential (and comparably subtle) use: Harriet Jones, ‘The Conservative Party and the Welfare State, 1942-

was Freeden's use of the morphological model of ideology discussed above to show how changing ideas and allegiances within British Liberalism reflected evolving concepts of freedom.³⁰ His chapters on liberty's role in Conservative and Socialist thought are equally indispensable analyses of how ideologies incorporate concepts differently, and, even if they have not used Freeden's terminology, distinguishing the meanings of liberty for individuals or factions has become commonplace in political histories.³¹ Ben Jackson, for example, has shown that freedom played an important part in progressives' arguments about inequality, especially when they attempted to 'wrest the rhetoric of liberty from the Right' by re-describing dependence on wealthy employers, opportunities for self-development, and lack of fulfilment in the workplace as restrictions on, or conditions for, freedom.³²

Yet, if some historians now regard freedom as a pluralistic concept used across politics, the temptation to trace the roots of particular versions of liberty is an equally strong feature of the historiography. As the following chapters show, the search for neoliberalism or Thatcherism's origins has dominated discussion of freedom in the Conservative party.³³ Nor has work on the Labour party been unaffected: in the early nineties, Nicholas Ellison claimed to be tracing 'the origins of the current shift away from concern for social and economic equality

1955', Unpublished Doctoral Thesis (University of London, 1992), pp. 31-8; For a very recent and problematic example: Richard Wade, *Conservative Economic Policy from Heath in Opposition to Cameron in Coalition* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 10-4; On dangers: John Turner, 'A Land Fit for Tories to Live In', *Contemporary European History*, 4, 2 (1995), 189-208 at 193.

³⁰ Michael Freeden, *Liberalism Divided: A Study in British Political Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986).

³¹ Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, pp. 348-414, 456-82; See chapters two, three and four regarding Conservative uses. For wartime Labour: Stephen Brooke, *Labour's War: The Labour Party During the Second World War* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), pp. 270-90; On differing conceptions between Tawney, Crosland, Cole and Hattersley: Kevin Hickson, 'Equality' in *The Struggle for Labour's Soul: Understanding Labour's Political Thought Since 1945* edited by Raymond Plant, Matt Beech, Kevin Hickson (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 120-36; Roger Wicks, 'Political Ideas and Policy in the Labour Party 1983-1992', Unpublished Doctoral Thesis (Birmingham, 2000), p. 40; On contrasts between these and the New Left: Mark Wickham-Jones, 'The New Left' in *The Struggle for Labour's Soul: Understanding Labour's Political Thought Since 1945* edited by Raymond Plant, Matt Beech, Kevin Hickson (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 24-46 at 32.

³² Ben Jackson, *Equality and the British Left: A Study in Progressive Political Thought, 1900-64* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), pp. 22-4.

³³ On neoliberalism: Richard Cockett, *Thinking the Unthinkable: Think Tanks and the Economic Counter-Revolution* (London: Fontana, 1995); On dangers of this interpretation: Ben Jackson, 'At the Origins of Neo-Liberalism: The Free Economy and the Strong State, 1930-47', *Historical Journal*, 53, 1 (2010), 129-51; For still the most nuanced, but not unproblematic, account of Thatcherism's long-term origins: E.H.H Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism: Conservative Political Ideas in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) pp. 214-39.

to an increasing emphasis on liberty and “equal effective freedom”.³⁴ Furthermore, historians have often evaluated the parties’ uses of freedom. This has been most pronounced in assessments of a perceived gap between Tory rhetoric and policy action, but it also underpins criticisms that Labour missed philosophical opportunities to avoid some of its post-war difficulties in not developing earlier traditions of pluralism.³⁵ So whilst political historians have never simply transposed broader approaches onto their subject, there are strong affinities between how the history of ideas has been written and how ideology has been connected to political history. This means that the criticisms we shall see levelled at the former pose a threat to some – but by no means all – of the scholarship on party politics.

But this affinity also means that neither political historians nor historians of ideas have pursued the question of persistence adequately. This is not to say that scholars have nothing to say on the subject; but, despite recognising divergent and contextualised permutations of freedom, few have problematized why politicians remained so wedded to the concept in its general sense or chose to modify rather than abandon it. For example, with a hint of circular logic, philosophical introductions to ‘freedom’ frequently attribute the value’s prevalence to its automatic implicitness in all arguments about regulation.³⁶ Alternatively, Orlando Patterson approached the development of liberty from a sociological stance drenched in Western triumphalism.³⁷ Having identified its

³⁴ The quotation is from the internal blurb, but summarises neatly the argument made in chapters 5-8: Nicholas Ellison, *Egalitarian Thought and Labour Politics: Retreating Visions* (London: LSE/Routledge, 1994), see pp. 116-17 for liberty’s influence on Tawney. Freedom also implies this: *Ideologies and Political Theory*, p. 473; Noel Thompson, ‘The Centre’ in *The Struggle for Labour’s Soul: Understanding Labour’s Political Thought Since 1945*, edited by Raymond Plant, Matt Beech, Kevin Hickson (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 47-67 at 54, 61; For Hattersely attempting to reclaim freedom rhetoric: Tudor Jones, *Remaking the Labour Party: From Gaitskell to Blair* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 122-3. For a rare warning on simply assuming a lineage in Labour’s thought on freedom: Raymond Plant, ‘Ends, Means and Political Identity’ in *The Struggle for Labour’s Soul: Understanding Labour’s Political Thought Since 1945* edited by Raymond Plant, Matt Beech, Kevin Hickson (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 105-19 at p. 114.

³⁵ Chapters two, three, and four show how fundamental this critique has been to overarching interpretations, but specific examples are: Martin Francis, ‘“Set the People Free”? Conservatives and the State, 1920-1960’ in *The Conservatives and British Society, 1880-1990*, edited by Martin Francis and Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996), pp. 58-77; Jim Tomlinson, ‘“Liberty with Order”: Conservative Economic Policy, 1951-1964’ in *Conservatives and British Society, 1880-1990*, edited by Martin Francis and Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996), pp. 274-88; Andrew Thorpe, *A History of the British Labour Party* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), esp. pp. 101-3.

³⁶ Kramer, *Freedom*, pp. xviii, xix

³⁷ Patterson, *Freedom: Freedom in the Making of Western Culture*.

origins in opposition to slavery, Patterson claimed that freedom's development in the West was due to the greater opportunities offered there, as opposed to a 'still born' situation in the rest of the world. Despite over-emphasising the term's continuity of meaning, this kind of macro-history, which explains freedom's prevalence via its origins, development, and institutionalisation, has some merits.³⁸ However, it also unquestioningly asserts that politicians continue to use a concept simply because their predecessors did, or that arguments and contexts continually force participants to invoke freedom.

Both points are debatable, but there are more interesting questions about freedom's proliferation in political expression than speculating on its distant past. Historians need to shift their attention to the forces and contexts that *sustained* freedom as a useful notion for experiencing and articulating political debate. For instance, when considering British political history, our first questions ought not to be what created or institutionalised freedom, but *how*, and perhaps *why*, was it sustained as part of political language. In other words, we need to problematize freedom's presence in British politics, rather than assume it was entirely the product of a Western ideological baggage that could never have been discarded. Alongside deciphering and categorising freedom's morphology, then, historians must examine its function and utility for political actors in a given period. Thus, the 'persistence' question this thesis wishes to ask of freedom is not where did it originate, or to what lineage of 'freedom' did particular utterances belong, but what sustained the concept in mid-twentieth century British political discourse. Having arrived at that more precise overarching question courtesy of the traditional literature's weaknesses, we can now turn to four scholarly traditions that both support this critique of the history of ideas and begin to suggest a method for exploring freedom's survival.

Of course, the materialist approach to ideology has its own answer to this question: the dominant liberal notion of 'freedom' is a delusion created (and believed) by a society's dominant class to justify and perpetuate its socio-economic arrangements.³⁹ But it is possible to identify socio-economic factors

³⁸ Richard King, 'Review: Patterson. O. 'Freedom: Freedom in the Making of Western Culture', *History and Theory*, 31, 3 (1992), pp. 326-35.

³⁹ For me, the most convincing case is still: Althusser 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)' *La Pense*, 151 (1970), 67-152 translated and republished in: *On Ideology* (London: Verso, 2008 [1971]), pp. 1-60.

driving conceptual change without subscribing to Marxism's deterministic narrative or ignoring the extent to which language constructs material reality. Perhaps the most interesting approach in this regard is *Begriffsgeschichte* (German conceptual history), which was conceived as a means of supplementing social history. Its leading proponent, Reinhart Koselleck, argued that linguistic change could indicate changes in, or attempts to change, social structure: 'moments of duration, change, and futurity contained in a concrete political situation are registered through their linguistic traces', he claimed.⁴⁰ Using dictionaries, Koselleck traced the linguistic history of concepts to identify such changes, but did so with an eye on constructivism. The 'semantic struggle' was itself part of all 'times of crisis', especially since the French revolution when 'positions that were to be secured had first to be formulated linguistically before it was possible to enter or permanently occupy them'.⁴¹ In this sense, he maintains that concepts set the horizon of possibility for agents' experiences.⁴² Although, Koselleck would not reduce history to conceptual history, he argues that we should study the 'tension' between concepts and materiality.⁴³

However, Koselleck's key contribution to this thesis's approach is methodological, particularly his criticism of the history of ideas for treating concepts as constants, which assumed different historical forms, but remained fundamentally unchanging. Whilst *Begriffsgeschichte* arranges its contextually-specific linguistic histories of a term like 'freedom' into a diachronic series, it insists not only that this process should initially be completed without reference to social history, but also that the concept's existence lies solely in these historical manifestations, not in a higher-level idea connecting them. From this perspective, Koselleck highlighted three groups of words: traditional concepts, such as those of Aristotelian constitutional thought 'whose meanings have persisted in part', 'concepts whose content has changed so radically that, despite the existence of the same word as a shell, the meanings are barely comparable', and neologisms like communism 'reacting to specific social or political circumstances that attempt to register or even provoke the novelty of

⁴⁰ Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, Translated by Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004 [1979]), p. 79.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

such circumstances'.⁴⁴ The point of studying a concept diachronically was to identify 'persisting, overlapping, discarded, and new meanings' as words transition between these different states.⁴⁵ In short, the words themselves had a history that could be related to, but was distinct from, the social history they interacted with. Thus, in Koselleck's theory political concepts are not just contestable, but always bundles of history: 'A concept bundles up the variety of historical experience together with a collection of theoretical and practical references into a relation that is given and can be experienced only through the concept'.⁴⁶ We may take two insights from Koselleck then: First, historians of ideas have been wrong to believe a consistent core lies behind contextually-specific expressions of 'freedom'; rather, the term existed only as a series of historically-specific meanings. Second, political concepts collapse this history into one term, not only to remain ambiguous, but to act as tools for understanding and initiating change in the material world.

This move to study concepts not just *in context* but as reliant on context for their meaning took on a particular importance for Quentin Skinner, who, along with Pocock, critiqued the history of ideas through a form of radical contextualism. As directly addressed in this thesis's conclusion, Skinner accused the historians above of reading back an unwarranted unity into classic texts of political theory. For him the work of Hobbes could only be understood as a specific act, written to refute or corroborate specific arguments, not contribute to the unfolding development of a 'unit idea'.⁴⁷ In addition to this historiographical critique, Skinner proposed a model for understanding linguistic change that envisaged agents rhetorically redescribing the meaning of words in response to their needs: for example, merchants slowly legitimised their activities by stretching the application of a religious lexicon.⁴⁸ Although his own history of liberty sought to unearth divergent notions in different periods, Skinner has often been accused of not living up to the promise of radical contextualism.⁴⁹ But whilst Skinner's critique of the historiography is important for this thesis, the underlying

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 83.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 84.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 85.

⁴⁷ Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, esp. chapter four.

⁴⁸ Ibid., locs. 3681-4021.

⁴⁹ Quentin Skinner, *Liberty Before Liberalism* (Cambridge, 1997); Elías José Palti, 'The "Theoretical Revolution" in Intellectual History: From the History of Political Ideas to the History of Political Languages', *History and Theory*, 53 (2014), 387-405.

theory of language he subscribed to is equally crucial. In essence, Skinner pursued the Wittgensteinian proposal that analysts should not only think about the meaning of words, but also their use, through a model of language developed by Austin focused on speech-acts. This theory attempted to elucidate the force behind what a person was doing when they articulated language.⁵⁰ The approach can be suggestive for political history more generally. For example, whereas the policeman in Strawson's famous example uses language to *warn*, the politician uses language to *argue*, *appeal*, *rebuke*, *remind* etc.⁵¹ Perhaps, then, studying the transition of ideas 'from beliefs to arguments' presents an opportunity for historians to gain a fresh understanding of freedom's role in specific speech-acts, whereby its meaning was as much a product of the act as its semantic connotations.⁵²

This focus on language and the refusal to cleanly delineate it from material reality has some similarities with the insights of New Political History as it was formulated in the late eighties. Pioneered by Epstein, Joyce, Vernon and Steadman Jones, NPH contends that individual experiences are mediated through language and narratives, and that 'ideological competition takes place within a shared linguistic framework, which enables and restricts political expression'.⁵³ Epstein's work, despite its focus on the nineteenth century, is of particular importance. His observation that 'ideological struggle often goes on not between two sharply antithetical systems of political reasoning, but rather within a 'shared' idiom or narrative discourse', is instructive for conceptualising the use of freedom in twentieth-century politics, even within the same party.⁵⁴ Just as radicals fought over and resituated the potentially contradictory meanings of French liberty and English constitutional freedom, Conservative

⁵⁰ Austin, *How To Do Things With Words*; John Searle, 'Meaning and Speech Acts,' *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 71, No. 4 (Oct., 1962), 423-32; Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999[1953]), pp. 53-4.

⁵¹ Cited in Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, loc. 3065.

⁵² Alan Finlayson, 'Beliefs to Arguments: Interpretive Methodology and Rhetorical Political Analysis,' *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 9, 4, (2007), 545-63.

⁵³ James Epstein, *Radical Expression: Political Language, Ritual and Symbol in England, 1790-1850*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); Patrick Joyce, *Democratic Subjects: The Self and the Social in Nineteenth Century England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Steadman Jones, G., 'Rethinking Chartism' in *Languages of Class: Studies in English Working Class History*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 90-178; Ryan Vieira, 'Connecting the New Political History with Recent Theories of Temporal Acceleration: Speed, Politics, and the Cultural Imagination of Fin De Sicle Britain.', *History and Theory*, 50 (2011), 379-89 at 374.

⁵⁴ Epstein, *Radical Expression*, p. 28

and Labour politicians disputed the ownership of freedom and set it within party political constructs.⁵⁵

Yet, theoretical work has also moved on from the understanding of language in these works, which sometimes emphasised discursive regimes at the expense of agency. Many theorists working to adapt post-structuralism's insights now argue for a 'performance' or 'practice theory' of language and semiotics that mitigates these concerns. Specifically, drawing on the work of Michael Certeau, they advocate a shift in focus from 'langue' to specific instances of speech, the 'parole'.⁵⁶ In this way, expressions can to some extent become individualised and contextually-dependent enunciations of wider discourses, in which individuals continually reformulate elements. This 'performative turn' is a useful framework for analysing political language, especially political speech. Speech is, by its very nature, a quintessentially performative act, which embodies the moment of, as Spiegel puts it, '... a subject's on-going reformulation of values, priorities, interests, and behaviours in terms provided, but not governed, by available discourses or languages (ie. sign systems)'.⁵⁷ Whether applied to political speech or language in general, these theoretical points are at least suggestive of the benefits of conceptualising the use of language as articulations of broader structures of meaning in specific contexts. This thesis, then, is interested in both how political actors *use* freedom to perform speech-acts and how these uses represent *performances* of a wider, unstable discourse in which rivalry unfolds.

Rhetorical theory is another angle from which freedom's persistence could be explained. Rhetoric has been variously defined. Richards and Finlayson described 'the dress in which ideas are made manifest to us,' whilst Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca preferred to delineate their subject as 'the discursive means of obtaining the adherence of minds'.⁵⁸ The common feature is a focus on the conceiving, structuring and deployment of arguments designed to convince. Indeed, Finlayson imagines the purpose of rhetorical analysis to be

⁵⁵ See particularly: James Epstein, 'Understanding the Cap of Liberty: Symbolic Practice and Social Conflict in Early-Nineteenth-Century England', reprinted in *Radical Expression*, pp. 70-99

⁵⁶ Michel Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California, 1988).

⁵⁷ Gabriel Spiegel, 'Introduction' in *Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing after the Linguistic Turn*, edited by Gabriel Spiegel (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 20.

⁵⁸ Chaïm Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, translated by John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008 [1958]), p. 8.

observing ‘the processes by which political concepts are rhetorically formulated and deployed as ways of grasping a political situation and winning the consent of others’.⁵⁹ Academic interest in rhetoric had fallen into a prolonged decline. However, in the late fifties Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca made the case for its revival as a tool for analysing argumentation. This ‘new rhetoric’ rekindled interest and debate, including revivalist histories of rhetoric, such as that by Brian Vickers.⁶⁰ This recovery has recently coincided with trends towards linguistic analysis in history, and has long been a thriving area of scholarship in the United States. Indeed, American institutions, such as the Presidency, have been re-characterised through a rhetorical paradigm.⁶¹ However, in Britain, rhetoric had not been used as a historical method until very recently and was popularly dismissed as ‘empty words’.⁶² Moreover, the few scholars that have studied British rhetoric in a historical mode identified its height in late-Victorian politics, but then narrated a decline against a background of changing technology and the Press’s repackaging of politics to suit mass consumption.⁶³

There have, of course, been notable exceptions. As long ago as 1983, Michael Bentley labelled political rhetoric an ‘important subject for scholarship’.⁶⁴ Phillip Williamson also focused on Baldwin’s speeches to unearth different understandings of his premiership than traditional biographers.⁶⁵ More broadly, Max Atkinson famously identified the rhetorical formats politicians used to induce applause, and Heritage and Greatbatch tested his findings across televised party conferences.⁶⁶ Away from a conversational analysis approach, Toye assessed Winston Churchill’s changing rhetoric on trade and identified the

⁵⁹ Alan Finlayson, ‘Political Science, Political Ideas and Rhetoric,’ *Economy and Society*, 33, 4, (2004), pp. 528-49 at 541.

⁶⁰ Brian Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988).

⁶¹ Jeffery Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1987).

⁶² Peter Osborne, *The Rise of Political Lying* (London: Free Press, 2005)

⁶³ Henry Colin Matthew, ‘Rhetoric and Politics in Great Britain, 1860-1950,’ in Phillip Waller *Politics and Social Change in Modern Britain* (Brighton: Harvester, 1987), pp. 34-58.

⁶⁴ Michael Bentley. ‘Party, Doctrine, and Thought’ in *High and Low Politics in Modern Britain*, edited by Michael Bentley and John Stevenson (Oxford: Clarendon: 1983), pp.123-53 at p. 137.

⁶⁵ Phillip Williamson, *Stanley Baldwin: Conservative Leadership and National Values* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999)

⁶⁶ Max Atkinson, *Our Masters’ Voices: The Language and Body Language of Politics* (London: Meuthen, 1984); John Heritage & David Greatbatch, ‘Generating Applause: A Study of Rhetoric and Response at Party Political Conferences’, *American Journal of Sociology*, 92, 1, (1986), 110-157.

use of Churchill by more recent politicians.⁶⁷ Toye has also sought to reinterpret Churchill's famous Gestapo speech as an instance of rhetorical failure.⁶⁸ Similarly, Frank Myers has subjected Harold Macmillan's 'winds of change' speech to a thorough rhetorical analysis, showing how its themes and argumentative construction targeted multiple audiences.⁶⁹ Others such as Adrian Beard and Jonathan Charteris-Black have focussed on particular linguistic aspects of British politicians' speech, such as metaphor.⁷⁰ Furthermore, there are signs that the 'technological determinism' offered by Matthew may be challenged.⁷¹ Toye has highlighted the importance of public speech to late-twentieth-century Prime ministers, whilst Jon Lawrence has pointed out that technology had the potential to increase rather than diminish 'demagogic politics'.⁷² However, in this emerging literature there have been few attempts to trace a concept thematically across multiple speakers, audiences and subjects. Instead, work has concentrated on one politician, one subject area, one speech, or one setting.⁷³ Jackson's essay on re-distribution is perhaps the only exception.⁷⁴

There has been more sustained, and theoretically aware, interest in rhetoric from British political science. From this work it is possible to flesh out some fuller methodological options and establish what a rhetorical analysis of freedom might consist of. In broad terms the approach below is to adopt recent work by Atkins and Finlayson to establish stages of analysis, and then to use Perelman's *The New Rhetoric* and key papers in rhetorical theory as a guide to specific features. Finlayson suggests that speeches must first be placed within their rhetorical situation. This means understanding the conventions of the

⁶⁷ Richard Toye, 'The Churchill Syndrome: Reputational Entrepreneurship and the Rhetoric of Foreign Policy since 1945,' *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 10, 3, (2008), 364-78.

⁶⁸ Richard Toye, 'Winston Churchill's Crazy Broadcast,' *Journal of British Studies*, 49, 3, (2010), 655-80

⁶⁹ Frank Myers, 'Harold Macmillan's "Winds of Change" Speech: A Case Study in the Rhetoric of Policy Change', *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, 3, 4 (2000) 555-75.

⁷⁰ Adrian Beard, *The Language of Politics* (Oxon: Routledge, 2000); Jonathon Charteris-Black, *Politicians and Rhetoric: The Persuasive Power of Metaphor*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005)

⁷¹ The phrase is from Jon Lawrence, *Electing Our Masters: The Hustings In British Politics from Hogarth to Blair* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) at p. 97.

⁷² Richard Toye, 'The Rhetorical Premiership: a new perspective on Prime Ministerial Power since 1945', PSA paper, 2010; Lawrence, *Electing Our Masters*, p. 97.

⁷³ Myers, 'Harold Macmillan's "Winds of Change" Speech'; Heritage and Greatbatch, 'Generating Applause'.

⁷⁴ Jackson, 'The Rhetoric of Re-distribution'.

medium, its context, and audience as far as possible.⁷⁵ In regard to freedom, this presents the opportunity to assess changes between different audiences, speakers, and media. Finlayson then proposes that scholars should analyse how speakers define ‘the bone of contention’ to their advantage.⁷⁶ In this sense, historians can examine freedom’s role in helping politicians argue what a debate is really about. Scholars could then assess the techniques used to highlight particular aspects of a debate and frame their arguments accordingly.⁷⁷ Again, freedom has a function in all of these processes. Furthermore, speakers offer different kinds of proof, or what Cicero called commonplaces.⁷⁸ These include arguments by definition, cause, effect, similarity, and difference. How freedom fits into these different typologies of argument is intrinsic to understanding its rhetorical role. Finally, Finlayson suggests an important distinction between the use of arguments to open up a debate or constrain it.⁷⁹ Again we will find freedom being used to achieve both ends. But if these aspects of argument can be categorised as appeals to *logos*, then rhetorical analysis must also take into account appeals to the character of the speaker (*ethos*) and to the character of audiences (*pathos*). Freedom may play a crucial role in both publically constructing a speaker’s values and appealing to the presumed values of an audience. All of these stages are further enhanced by a series of rhetorical devices, in which freedom often plays a leading role. Finlayson concludes that undertaking this analysis in its entirety can elucidate the types of argument used, the redescriptions of concepts employed, and the ‘major tropes, keywords and names that sustain arguments and facilitate meaning capture’.⁸⁰

Judi Atkins applied an alternative framework, which focussed on three contexts influencing the selection of arguments, encouraging their modification and effecting their deployment.⁸¹ First, an ideological context forces the terms of arguments to be coherent with the speaker or audiences’ wider ideology. Second, a context of argumentation determines the type of arguments

⁷⁵ Alan Finlayson, ‘Beliefs to Arguments’ 554.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 554.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 555.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 557.

⁷⁹ Finlayson, ‘Political Science, Political Ideas and Rhetoric’, 540.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ Judi Atkins, ‘Moral Argument and the Justification of Policy: New Labour’s Case for Welfare Reform,’ *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 12., 3 (2010), 408-24.

deployed. Third, the context of ‘hegemonic competition’ encourages arguments to be adjusted so as they undermine a competitor and appeal to electorates. In this respect, rhetoric has strong links to heresthetic understandings of politics, which examine the argumentative tactics deployed to control agendas and redefine policy spaces.⁸² Although Atkins analyses the moral justifications for specific policies through this framework, in a generalised form it can be helpful in understanding how politicians used ‘liberty’ rhetorically. In the context of his wider work on the British Left, Jackson’s study of redistributive rhetoric is a good example of how historians may operationalise Atkin’s model. He has rightly pointed out that Progressives’ rhetorical success in constructing an electoral majority in favour of the welfare state or greater equality did not depend on logical argument alone: by combining *logos* with *ethos* and *pathos* rhetors engaged in a process of ‘packaging, compressing and sometimes even bypassing logical reasoning’ to render arguments ‘accessible and plausible to a target audience’.⁸³ From this position, he showed how those arguing for a redistribution of wealth redescribed the accumulation of property in more affective terms and presented their reasoned case for reducing inequality in terms of opportunity, security, and fairness rather than strict material equality.⁸⁴ It is in this interaction between beliefs and arguments that this thesis finds its answer to why freedom persisted in British political discourse.

III

A Rhetorical Culture

In the chapters below, these insights are brought together in the notion of a rhetorical culture. Before outlining how the thesis gradually fleshes out this concept over four chapters, a summary definition may be helpful. Taking the first of its constituent terms, the research below identifies a set of shared rhetorical resources in the form of tropes, models, and commonplaces, which were so oft-repeated that they formed a stable pool of argumentative tools used by most Conservatives, although not necessarily to articulate similar beliefs. Aside from using the imagery and language of freedom, liberty, and

⁸² Iain McLean, *Rational Choice and British Politics: An analysis of rhetoric and manipulation from Peel to Blair*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001)

⁸³ Jackson, ‘The Rhetoric of Redistribution’, 236.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 242-4.

emancipation more broadly, these tools can be drawn together because they contributed to a consistent overarching speech-act: framing politics as a choice between freedom and unfreedom. I describe this set of tools and framing practices as a culture for two reasons: First, there are grounds for believing that political expression in this period was surprisingly normative and that established associations and formulaic language were very powerful, even resulting in partisan sub-languages for talking about freedom.⁸⁵ Combined with archival evidence, quantitative analysis suggests that the basic unit of rhetoric was larger than single-term ideas and that these arguments were deployed fairly homogeneously. Second, 'culture' also implies the active dissemination of these arguments within the party, the pressures on members and leaders to conform, and a range of assumptions about good argumentation that encouraged the production of freedom rhetoric. Thus, although a rhetorical culture is an analytical tool, it refers to an emergent phenomenon that had real-world expressions and shaped individual Conservatives' rhetoric, albeit very unconsciously and only visible in aggregate.

In the context of the discussion above, four further clarifications are necessary. First, asserting that Conservatives argued through generic modes of expression is *not* to reject Skinner and others' demands that we examine the precise speech-act performed in context. As we shall see, identifying historical specificity of the factors generating this rhetoric is vital to demonstrating that similar rhetoric did not necessarily reflect similar beliefs. Second, although I describe framing as a speech-act, I do so to highlight the pragmatic nature of defining a problem for an audience; the detailed discussion of framing theory below is not an attempt to deeply integrate Skinner or Austin's theory.

Third, the combination of accepting Skinner and Koselleck's critiques of 'unit ideas' and proposing that freedom rhetoric often took the form of larger units of meaning may call into question whether all the statements discussed below can be collated into a rhetorical culture ostensibly concerned with freedom. In extremis, does not strong contextualism mean that I am bringing a group of arguments (and in turn statements of these) together arbitrarily on the basis that

⁸⁵ Freedman has cited a useful definition in this context of culture as: 'symbolic and material goods that societies produce': Freedman, *Ideology*, loc. 990. For a detailed assessment of the utility and debate around the term 'political culture': Ronald Formisano, 'The Concept of Political Culture', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 31, 3 (2001), 393-426.

they share the word ‘freedom’ or some associated imagery? This would be the case if radical contextualism was the whole story; fortunately, it is not. Foucault and others approached this challenge by unearthing the ‘conditions of possibility’ or the symbolic ‘practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak’.⁸⁶ I offer a simpler justification for grouping utterances. What lends coherence to the statements below and justifies their collective study is the way they *behave* as these larger, always contextually-specific units.⁸⁷ Whilst on the one hand ‘freedom’ may well have only existed within wider contexts of meaning (both in the linguistic and pragmatic senses), taking some inspiration from McGee and Teubert (see chapter one) we can recognise that one of the things these phrases or tropes do is assert a *fictitious* unity or connection with the *imagined* history of all past uses. The paradox is that at once each use of the phrase ‘freedom of choice’ is contextually-specific and has already narrowed the meaning of freedom, but at the same time it carries a further layer of meaning in the intrinsic assertion of its affinity, not only with other past instances of ‘freedom of choice’, but with a multitude of other ‘freedom of’ formulations and, ultimately, the wider heritage of connotations drawn from the past uses bundled into its component term ‘freedom’. In short, discourse also generates meaning via intertextuality. Part of how this process works, of course, is that readers and listeners believe the ‘freedom’ in ‘freedom of choice’ resonates upwards to a higher-level term, and it is this act that scholars often mistake as referring up to a core idea, even if they concede that this is essentially contested or irrecoverable. However, the evidence would suggest this act of upwards resonance is a confidence trick as each use really only refers to other already-contextualised uses, each of which attempts the same. Thus, I bring together the statements below because each makes this claim to be talking about (or to be connected to) the same *idea* even though there are good reasons to believe this is a fiction. Put another way, it is the act of manipulating the heritage of past discourse that draws them together.

⁸⁶ Elías José Palti, ‘The “Theoretical Revolution” in Intellectual History: From the History of Political Ideas to the History of Political Languages’, *History and Theory*, 53 (2014), 387-405 at 395; Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Oxon: Routledge, 2002 [1969]), pp. 23-54 at 54.

⁸⁷ By ‘they’ I am not implying any sentiment ability on the part of words! (as Richard Dawkins’s memes are sometimes ascribed with). I use it only to acknowledge that the author lacks control over the meaning of their words for others.

Finally, it should be made clear that, in proposing arguments as the basic unit of rhetoric and refusing to impose a clear distinction between the pictures politicians paint for audiences and their own view of the world, I would not claim that no distinction between beliefs and rhetoric can be maintained. Indeed, part of this thesis' historiographical critique is that historians have anachronistically ascribed beliefs to Conservatives on the basis of their rhetoric. Whilst sympathetic to the view that language is constitutive, agents still believe they know what their arguments mean, even if these are articulated through shared resources which others could potentially use to argue the opposite. On this matter, I largely defer to Skinner's discussion of intention, which concedes that authors' precise motives are likely impossible to recover, but insists that we can say what their *act* is likely to have represented given a context.⁸⁸ In this sense, whilst I would not claim to know precisely what Churchill meant by saying 'set the people free', it is possible to show both how this *need not* mean he subscribed to neoliberalism, if alternative possibilities can be evidenced. Indeed, it is often possible to show that his words were both likely doing something different (reacting or adhering to another argument or specific context) and that some interpretations are unlikely or contradictory.

IV

Thesis Outline

With those caveats in place, we can briefly turn to how this thesis meets its aim of addressing both very specific questions about Conservative post-war politics and a larger historical question concerning freedom in political discourse. The desire for interaction between broad and narrow questions, theory and historiographical debates, has several consequences for the structure of the chapters below. First, because a wider aim is to show how different theoretical perspectives can revise traditional interpretations, historical questions form the backbone of each chapter, not theory. The decision to focus the qualitative analysis below on the Conservative party's post-war history was driven by the reliance of that historiography on a particular use of freedom rhetoric. The opportunities of exploring the resulting narratives' interaction with the broader 'consensus' thesis and search for Thatcherism's roots, provided the best means of showing the potential of theory to revise a historiography based on faulty

⁸⁸ Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, loc. 2899.

assumptions about the link between beliefs and rhetoric. This does not mean that Labour's use of freedom rhetoric was insignificant; indeed, chapter one goes some way to recovering the characteristics of the party's rhetoric quantitatively. However, in order to focus discussion, Labour's very complex critiques are reduced to context. Second, although I have already outlined the notion of a rhetorical culture as a synthesis of existing approaches, the concept's gradual development in response to historical problems is left intact below. Third, whilst the chapters are all closely-related, those covering 1951-70 are designed to be read together because the historiography contains both problematic readings of successive leaders' time in office and an overarching narrative about the period 1951-70 as a whole. To address both aspects, chapters three and four are subdivided to tackle 1951-5 and 1956-64 (chapter three) and then 1964-5 and 1965-70 (chapter four). However, to facilitate a broader critique, an overarching argument runs across both. This results in an extended introduction to chapter three and extended conclusion to chapter four, which frame an argument about the period as a whole.

Chapter one argues that to answer broad questions about freedom's changing usage over time and party historians should combine the techniques and theories of content analysis, political science, and corpus linguistics to study large volumes of speech quantitatively. This hybrid methodology is then applied to study MPs' uses of 'freedom' and 'liberty' in 500 million words of House of Commons debates between 1936 and 1990. The analysis represents an application of corpus linguistics techniques to political texts that goes beyond existing scholarship in scale, theory, and technique. Two technical advances make this possible: First, software written by the author navigates Hansard's raw data dynamically, allowing a far greater analytical fidelity, whereby speeches can be incorporated or excluded from the corpus according to variables. Second, by linking Hansard's metadata with election results, the chapter recovers a partisan variable never recorded in the original source, but which permits the systematic detection of differences between Conservative and Labour parliamentary speech for the first time. The resulting analysis yields vital context for those that follow and macro-level answers to the thesis's core questions. First, it detects signs of politicians' changing usage of 'freedom' and 'liberty', and argues that the inverse trajectories of each could be explained as

products of broadening and narrowing meaning. Second, it deploys corpus linguists' advanced statistical techniques to reveal the quantitative traces of rhetorical cultures in normative patterns of talking about freedom, and, crucially, indications of strong partisan sub-languages that changed over time.

Chapter two questions the notion that similar rhetoric reflected similar ideas, by challenging a common parallel between Tory oratory in 1945-51 and under Thatcher, which rests upon the misplaced assumption that Churchill and others' emancipatory oratory represented neoliberalism (itself often anachronistically defined). Recovering the earlier period's historical specificity undermines this parallel. The historiography offers us a choice between believing that Conservatives' freedom rhetoric represented a conversion to neoliberalism, a cynical cover for consensus, or a genuine belief restrained by electoral necessity. In reality, such rhetoric reflected more complex argumentative traditions, rhetorical dilemmas, and policy prescriptions. Moreover, rather than seeing freedom rhetoric in tension with the party's commitments to full employment and the welfare state, archival evidence reveals a strategy built around the reconciliation of liberty with security. The apparent affinity between freedom rhetoric in the late-forties and mid-seventies can instead be explained as two iterations of a rhetorical culture, consisting of tropes, models, and figures all aiming at a consistent speech-act: framing politics as a battle between freedom and unfreedom. This explanatory model allows us to see within the late-forties party a shared set of rhetorical tools being utilised for disparate aims, but which form the basis on which we should explain freedom's survival in political discourse.

Chapters two and three jointly trace the evolution of this rhetorical culture between 1951 and 1970 in order to dispute a central implication of the parallel considered above: that between Churchill and Thatcher's leaderships there was an interregnum, in which freedom rhetoric either disappeared entirely, was used insincerely and inconsequentially, or was sustained by the pressure of a proto-Thatcherite minority. Instead, each chapter seeks to bifurcate the history of freedom as a rhetorical culture from that of Thatcherism and show successive iterations of the rhetorical culture described in chapter two adapting to change. Within this overarching argument, each chapter challenges the specifics of the existing historiography. Chapter three argues that the 1955 election represented

an important stimulus for freedom rhetoric's adaptation to the politics of prosperity, not a rhetorical end point as some have presumed, before going on to show how Harold Macmillan tailored freedom rhetoric to the causes of Middle Way Conservatism. Chapter four continues the story by detecting a hitherto largely unrecognised moment of rhetorical change under Alec Douglas-Home, before challenging influential accounts of Edward Heath and his party's freedom rhetoric in opposition. It argues that equating freedom rhetoric with neoliberalism has reduced interpretation of 1965-70 to a false choice between reading Heath's oratory as evidence he later betrayed a neoliberal conversion, or that he used such language opportunistically in a concession to the New Right. In fact, Heath inherited much of his oratory from patterns of argument that had been adapted since 1951. Together these two chapters also place limitations on the idea that 1951-70 represented a period of non-ideological, materialistic, or technocratic appeals in which the rhetoric of austerity became irrelevant.

The conclusion brings together these chapters to argue that Conservative party historiography in this period has been dogged by the reading back of later periods' ideas onto earlier rhetoric or assuming irrelevance or insincerity of such rhetoric when no corresponding policies can be found. It then draws together the chapters' contributions to contend that we can only explain freedom's survival in discourse if we treat it as a rhetorical culture, whose unit of analysis steps beyond the notion of atomistic ideas. From this perspective, historians can then explain its persistence as a result of the powerful forces driving a rhetorical inheritance and this group of shared tools ability to adapt to change. Finally, it confronts the question of this rhetorical culture's relationship with ideology, arguing that the research shows that politicians were capable of consciously deploying freedom rhetoric for persuasion but were also deeply invested in it as a frame for understanding their political worlds. Indeed, the evidence suggests that rhetorical cultures, conceived holistically as shared, evolving tools, disseminated and supported by assumptions about effective argument, share many of the characteristics popularly ascribed to ideology.

CHAPTER ONE

Quantitative, Historical Rhetoric

Throughout the autumn and winter of 1950, the BBC's *Third Programme* invited speakers to consider 'the definition of liberty'. Over four months, historians, philosophers, churchmen and poets debated topics from free will to Marx's vision of freedom. Come the New Year, though, Rex Warner concluded the series on a note of caution.¹ 'When speaking of liberty', the English classicist began, 'I cannot imagine myself as one who holds a trumpet poised at his lips, and prepares to blow. I feel more like one who, in a thick mist, attempts to discern some object which he knows to be present, but which still eludes his eye'. Such haziness arose from liberty's propensity to garner admirers across politics: 'Certainly in England there is no political division on the subject of the value of liberty'. 'Conservatives, Liberals and Socialists', he mused, 'all claim to be pursuing the same end by different means. So do Communists. So, I should imagine, do some Fascist propagandists'. However, 'the totally different means employed or advocated by these parties' left the Warner wondering 'whether any sense at all can be made of the matter'.

Over sixty years later, and notwithstanding considerable efforts to disentangle their variegated ideological manifestations, historians still know surprisingly little about freedom and liberty's roles in British political rhetoric and argument. This is especially true of questions concerning the totality of political culture in the long-run: Have twentieth-century politicians always talked about freedom in similar terms and to comparable extents, or did new formulations evolve and usage levels fluctuate over time? Can any change be detected in the genres of argument associated with freedom? Was this rhetoric applicable to all political scenarios, or only some topics and contexts? Historians' reluctance to pose these questions is symptomatic of a deeper ignorance: despite knowing a good deal about theoretical forms or specific use-cases, the collective history of how such 'universal' concepts were deployed remains untold on any real scale. Consequently, historians have been unable to scrutinise generalisations about

¹ Now largely forgotten, Warner was a classicist and accomplished allegorical novelist, best known for *The Wild Goose Chase* (London: The Bodley Head, 1947[1937]), *The Professor* (London: The Bodley Head, 1946[1938]) and *The Aerodrome* (London: Random House, 2007[1941]). Rex Warner, 'The Definition of Liberty: Liberty Must Expand or Perish', *The Listener*, 11 January 1951, p. 58.

the nature of abstract values in political debate. Warner's implication that freedom and liberty function as a shared language is a case in point. Bereft of basic macro-scale information, we simply do not know whether the parties made equal use of 'liberty' or if 'freedom' was captured by one as a partisan concept. In that sense, when attempting to answer even rudimentary questions about freedom and liberty as terms and symbols with *longue durée* rhetorical histories, we have been working in scholarly weather conditions more akin to 'thick mist' than customarily admitted.

This blind-spot stems from constraints on the scale and object of analysis. A speech may be motivated by idiosyncratic ideas and contexts, but it will likely be delivered through rhetorical artefacts (whether single words or larger units), which retain the symbolism, patterns of argument, and disputed claims to ownership acquired from their aggregated past use. The historian is tasked, therefore, with recovering both the specificity of arguments in particular instances and the more holistic, collective histories of the rhetorical resources these draw upon. However, the overly rigid separation of ideas and arguments has focussed historians' attention on the first task, producing increasingly nuanced dissections of what political groupings meant by 'freedom'.² Whilst exposing the heterogeneity of meanings attached to 'unit ideas' and explaining how their interaction justifies diverse policies, this perspective fails to recognise that the significance of words like 'liberty' partly rests in their ability to plaster fictional unities over disparate views, periods and debates in order to conjure precedents, foster group identities, and induct new political controversies into established rhetorical schemes.³ Greater focus on language's constitutive role has brought political historians closer to exploring this manipulation of residual meaning, but New Political History's (NPH) classic statements still implicitly centre debates, institutions, events, or identities as the object of study, showing how each was constructed through language, rather than fully orientating their analysis towards the history of a word, trope, or narrative itself.⁴ Unfortunately,

² Michael Freeden, *Liberalism Divided: A Study in British Political Thought 1914-39* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986); Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996).

³ 'Ideograph' is a term used by McGee for single word concepts of high political and saliency and captures some of this intertextuality: Michael Calvin McGee, 'The "Ideograph": A Link between Rhetoric and Ideology', *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 66, 1 (1980), 1-16.

⁴ This is not to say they do not achieve this in the process, rather it is a comment about the orientation of their analysis: For example on Chartism: Gareth Stedman Jones, *Languages of*

the few 'conceptual histories' which do pursue the stories of 'the terms we use to express our concepts' have often adopted the sociological explanations of change focussed on a relatively narrow, if not elite, evidence base that NPH sought to escape, and rarely integrate their conclusions with accounts of British politics.⁵ Like their historical counterparts, rhetorical scholars' methods mostly suit small-scale analysis of representative examples or micro-histories that eschew efforts at broader explanation.⁶ Commonly focussed on events, individual speakers or speeches, research normally considers rhetorical modes, the construction of identities, and responses to rhetorical problems rather than the long-term history of arguments using large corpora.⁷ Despite yielding valuable insights, the narrowed scope and relatively small numbers of sources involved limit these approaches' ability to answer the questions posed above. Instead, to shift analytical focus onto the use of a term across an entire political

Class: Studies in English Working Class History, 1832-1982 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 90-178; James Epstein, *Radical Expression: Political Language, Ritual, and Symbol in England, 1790-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class, 1840-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); For an influential method considering reception and manipulation of existing identities as well: Jon Lawrence, 'Class and Gender in the Making of Urban Toryism, 1880-1914', *English Historical Review*, 108, 428, (1993), 629-52. A partial exception was Joyce's work on the melodramatic trope: Patrick Joyce 'The Constitution and the Narrative Structure of Victorian Politics' in *Re-reading the Constitution: New Narratives in the Political History of England's Long Nineteenth Century*, edited by James Vernon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 179-203; Examples for mid-to-late twentieth century British politics are rarer: Steven Fielding, 'A Mirror for England? Cinematic Representations of Politicians and Party Politics, circa 1944-1964', *Journal of British Studies*, 47, 1 (2008), 107-28.

⁵ Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, Volume One, Kindle Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), loc. 4913; Admittedly Skinner seeks to contextualise classic texts: Quentin Skinner, *Liberty before Liberalism*, Kindle Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012 [1998]); Reinhart Koselleck, 'Linguistic Change and the History of Events', *Journal of Modern History*, 61 (1989), 649-66 esp. 657-60; Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, Translated by Keith Tribe (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2004[1985]); Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Second Edition, (London: Fourth Estate, 2014[1988]); Zoltán Szucs, 'What does "People" Mean? The Traditions and Horizons of a Political Concept in the Context of the Hungarian Democratic Transition' in *On Politics: Rhetoric, Discourse and Concepts*, edited by Márton Szabó (Budapest: Institute for Political Science HAS, 2006), pp. 5-17; For an example using a wide range of sources, but low in number: Francis Dupuis-Déri, 'The Political Power of Words: The Birth of Pro-democratic Discourse in the Nineteenth Century in the United States and France', *Political Studies*, 52, 1 (2004) 118-34.

⁶ For an example of the latter: Karen Musolf, *From Plymouth to Parliament: A Rhetorical History of Nancy Astor's 1919 Campaign* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999). Jon Lawrence highlighted the curtailed explanatory power of historical scholarship in this mode: 'Political History' in *Writing History: Theory and Practice* edited by Stefan Berger, Heiko Feldner, and Kevin Passmore (London: Arnold, 2003), pp. 183-202 at 194.

⁷ Recent issues of *Quarterly Journal of Speech* demonstrate the variation in modern rhetorical analysis. For scrutiny of individual speech: John Murphy, 'Barack Obama, the Exodus Tradition, and the Joshua Generation', *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 97, 4 (2011), 387-410; For a multi-source study of an issue provoking diverse uses of freedom rhetoric: Stephen Hartnett, "'Tibet Burning": Competing Rhetorics of Liberation, Occupation, Resistance, and Paralysis on the Roof of the World', *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 99, 3 (2013), 283-316.

culture, historians require a dramatically extended evidence base and a methodology suited to the interpretation of vast quantities of speech. Of course, a convincing account must still highlight the specificity of each speech-act, but these must be set within a larger body of texts, not least because linguists have shown that language behaves counter-intuitively when viewed outside idiosyncratic contexts.⁸

The aim of this opening chapter, then, is to ground the close-reading and archival research to come in a better understanding of the broad rhetorical histories of 'freedom' and 'liberty' in British political debate. Two sets of questions guide analysis accordingly: First, what chronologies characterise use of this language over the latter half of the twentieth century, and can they be explained? Second, how were 'freedom' and 'liberty' deployed in arguments, did the parties do so differently, and is it meaningful to talk of a rhetorical culture shaping debate? Because each concerns language's behaviour at the level of the crowd, the chapter implements a macro-scale, quantitative analysis over three stages. Beginning with methodology, parts one to three argue that, if they are to study rhetoric quantitatively, historians must carefully integrate developments in content analysis and political science with corpus linguists' approaches to language at scale. The former demonstrate the possibilities of connecting language to political variables, but the latter provides technical and theoretical perspectives on form and semantics that should alter our view of argumentation. Having spliced these methods, part four situates politicians' uses of 'liberty' and 'freedom' within wider British English. Although limited compared to the corpora which follow, the largest datasets available suggest that the twentieth century saw 'freedom' reverse 'liberty's' dominance, with wartime acting as a catalyst for a series of changes in usage.

Both trends are investigated more fully in part five via the chapter's main corpus: the first quantitative study of all 500 million words of Commons debates recorded in Hansard 1936-90 capable of revealing linguistic differences between parties. Using bespoke software, analysis finds that 'liberty' not only decreased in usage, but narrowed in meaning and gradually became disconnected from many other elements of political discourse. 'Freedom'

⁸ Fully discussed below, but see: John Sinclair, *Corpus, Concordance, Collocation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

experienced rather the opposite, taking on broader meaning after World War Two. Innovatively linking corpus linguists' techniques with party variables reveals that both Labour and Conservative MPs made fairly equal use of this rhetoric, but the detection of partisan collocations and formulaic sequences suggests that speakers inhabited different sub-cultures of argumentation. Perhaps it is the clarity of these signals, though, that leads to the most surprising discovery: a network of established associations and patterns of argument subject to broad shifts and group clustering, but remarkably coherent across half-a-billion words. Without denying agency, the evidence suggests that oratorical novelty and difference must be set against weighty, normative rhetorical cultures in which the unit of meaning can stretch beyond single terms. Thus, when subsequent chapters investigate precisely how and why groups or individuals cried 'freedom' and 'liberty' to achieve rhetorical success, this must be in the knowledge that politicians argued in a manner more akin to the herd than lone rangers.

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Content Analysis

Having diagnosed a weakness in the scale of historical and rhetorical analysis, we must be equally circumspect about the proposed solution and reflect critically on the theory of using computers to interrogate such large volumes of text statistically. Political historians and scholars of rhetoric have underused quantitative methodologies now common in related disciplines.⁹ In particular, political scientists have increasingly adopted approaches associated with content analysis (CA), which treats texts as messages to be examined for information about their content, sender and audience. What distinguishes the methodology is an aspiration to repeatability and the aim of quantitatively summarising, rather than documenting, the text.¹⁰ Normally this involves 'coding' a text for a linguistic feature, word, or category of words, before making statistical comparisons to other texts. For historians, often rightly sceptical of

⁹ For a reflection on the historical profession's relationship with computers, and quantification generally, see: William Speck, 'History and computing: some reflections on the past decade', *History and Computing*, 6, 1 (1994), 28-32; or Ian Anderson's essay 'History and Computing' available at:

http://www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/articles/history_and_computing.html

[Accessed: Aug 2013].

¹⁰ Klaus Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology* (California: Sage, 2004), p. 18.

claims to such scientific validity, CA can appear riddled with pitfalls and interpretive fallacies reminiscent of earlier attempts to quantify history.¹¹ Yet, when examining a large number of speeches, the methods developed by these scholars could be adapted as good practice, even if we place a different emphasis on the data produced and remain wary of interpretations isolated from close-reading.

In fact, the blindness of political history to CA is ironic; the latter's practitioners often see their methodological origins in the former, and, despite its remarkably inter-disciplinary evolution, politics has been the subject of key CA works: Harold Laswell's seminal research on propaganda, credited with defining key methodological problems and standards, has been followed by numerous studies of American political texts.¹² In contrast, work on British politics had, until recently, focussed on election manifestos.¹³ The most well-known, the Comparative Manifesto Project, trained coders to divide over 2,000 manifestos into discrete segments and assign these to coding scheme categories.¹⁴ Many political scientists use the international data, although it is critiqued for its reliance on the subjective judgements inherent in manual coding.¹⁵ Notwithstanding this oft-cited weakness, such methods remain popular: the UK Policy Agendas Project recently contextualised the US Policy Agenda Project's topic scheme and manually applied the codebook to the Queen's Speech, Budget debates and legislation to evidence agenda-setting.¹⁶ Indeed, a minority

¹¹ This is not to say many of those involved are not aware of these difficulties; reflexivity has been encouraged through interaction with Discourse Analysis: Yoskiko Herrera and Bear Braumoeller, 'Symposium: Discourse and Content Analysis', *Qualitative Methods*, 2, 1 (2004), 15-9.

¹² Kimberly Neuendorf lists the quantitative history of the mid-twentieth century, particularly the cliometrics of Robert Fogel, and rhetoric as shaping influences on content analysis alongside biblical concordances, legal indexing and cryptography: Kimberley Neuendorf, *The Content Analysis Guidebook* (London: Sage, 2002), p. 31; Harold Laswell et al, *Language of Politics: Studies in Quantitative Semantics* (New York: George W. Stuart, 1949); Such as: Frank Klingberg, 'The Historical Alternation of Moods in American Foreign Policy', *World Politics*, 4, 2 (1952), 239-73.

¹³ Richard Rose, *Do Parties Make a Difference?*, Second Edition (London: Macmillan, 1984).

¹⁴ Currently hosted at: <https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu/> [Accessed: May 2013].

¹⁵ Kenneth Benoit, Michael Laver, and Slava Mikhaylov, 'Treating Words as Data with Error: Estimating Uncertainty in the Comparative Manifesto Project Measures', *American Journal of Political Science*, 53, 2 (2009), 495-513; Slava Mikhaylov, Michael Laver, and Kenneth Benoit, 'Coder Reliability and Misclassification in the Human Coding of Party Manifestos', *Political Analysis*, 20, 1 (2012), 78-91.

¹⁶ Peter John, Anthony Bertelli, Will Jennings and Shaun Bevan, *Policy Agendas in British Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Will Jennings, Shaun Bevan and Peter John, 'The British Government's Political Agenda: the Speech from the Throne, 1911-2008', *Political Studies*, 59, 1 (2011), 74-98; See their website: <http://policyagendasuk.wordpress.com/> [Accessed: May 2013].

of political historians, such as Paul Readman, have used comparable methods to study rhetoric in nineteenth century election addresses.¹⁷ However, the inherent costs and restrictions on corpus size imposed by hand coding mean that innovation has been directed elsewhere.

Computers provide an opportunity to mitigate the expense and alleged subjectivity of coding teams by automatically labelling segments of a text according to rules or word-lists contained in custom 'dictionaries'. The information generated can be manipulated to characterise texts and monitor the changing use of a category over time or speaker. Early work analysed the concept of wealth in American party platforms, and Roderick Hart has regularly interrogated the style of presidential speech and keywords in American politics.¹⁸ The core insight – that word-frequency profiles are reasonably indicative of topics under discussion, themes, or group membership – has subsequently been applied to a range of texts, including news reports, which some even claim can be used to predict events.¹⁹ Less provocatively, automation in Britain was driven by attempts to extract policy positions from manifestos. Michael Laver and John Garry assigned a series of words to categories, such as 'reduce state involvement in the economy', which then formed a dictionary used to code 1992 election manifestos and estimate policy

¹⁷ Paul Readman, 'The Conservative Party, Patriotism, and British Politics: The Case of the General Election of 1900', *Journal of British Studies*, 40, 1 (2001), 107-45; Others simply count the number of speaking engagements: Joseph Meisel, 'Words by the Numbers: a Quantitative Analysis and Comparison of the Oratorical Careers of William Ewart Gladstone and Winston Spencer Churchill', *Historical Research*, 73, 182 (2000), 262-95.

¹⁸ J. Zvi Namenwirth, 'Some Long and Short-Term Trends in One American Political Value: A Computer Analysis of Concern with Wealth in 62 Party Platforms,' in *The Analysis of Communication Content* edited by George Gerbner et al. (New York: Wiley, 1969), pp. 223-41; J. Zvi Namenwirth and Harold Lasswell, *The Changing Language of American Values: A Computer Study of Selected Party Platforms* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1970); Roderick Hart, *Verbal Style and the Presidency: A Computer-Based Analysis* (Orlando, Florida: Academic Press, 1984); Roderick Hart, *Campaign Talk: Why Elections Are Good for Us* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Roderick Hart, *Political Keywords: Using Language That Uses Us* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Phillip Stone, Robert Bales, J. Zvi Namenwirth, and Daniel Ogilvie, 'The General Inquirer: A Computer System for Content Analysis and Retrieval Based on the Sentence as a Unit of Information', *Behavioural Science*, 7 (1962), 484-94. There are many other examples using Hart's program DICTON a list of which can be found at: <http://www.dictionsoftware.com/published-studies/> [Accessed: Nov 2013].

¹⁹ On interpreting events data: Philip Schrod, Shannon Davis, Judith Weddle, 'Political Science: KEDS—A Program for the Machine Coding of Event Data', *Social Science Computer Review*, 12, 4 (1994), 561-87; Robert Hogenraad, 'The Words that Predict the Outbreak of Wars', *Empirical Studies of the Arts*, 21, 1 (2003) 5-20.

positions.²⁰ As is common in much of this literature, the quantitative analysis was then compared to expert surveys or manual coding to establish validity.

With greater access to CA software, a variety of scholars, including some interested in rhetoric, have taken up these analytical tools.²¹ In 2011, for example, Elvin T. Lim joined Hart to analyse 27,000 segments of Presidential speech, press articles, and letters, and revealed change in ‘temporal’ and ‘spatial’ terms over time, context and speaker.²² Previously, Lim had used the most famous of these programs, the Harvard General Inquirer (GI).²³ Developed in the 1960s, the GI tags words against a set of pre-assigned categories, such as ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ words.²⁴ Combining the results with readability statistics, Lim presented quantitative evidence for the anti-intellectualisation of Presidential speech. Outside the American context, Luke Blaxill applied frequency counts to late nineteenth-century election speeches, whilst others have quantitatively tested partisan use of eighteenth-century metaphors or studied rhetoric on European unification.²⁵

Meanwhile, ‘dictionaries’ have become domain specific, partly in recognition that application outside their intended field risks inaccuracy.²⁶ By refining existing sentiment dictionaries, Young and Soroka created the Lexicoder

²⁰ Michael Laver and John Garry, ‘Estimating Policy Positions from Texts’, *American Journal of Political Science*, 44, 3 (2000), 619-34.

²¹ For a useful, but outdated, review of the software available see: Melina Alexa and Cornelia Zuell, ‘Text Analysis Software: Commonalities, Differences and Limitations: The Results of a Review’, *Quality & Quantity: International Journal of Methodology*, 34, 3 (2000), 299-321; For development of the field more broadly: Burt Monroe and Phillip Schrodt, ‘Introduction to the Special Issue: The Statistical Analysis of Political Text’, *Political Analysis*, 16 (2008), 351-55.

²² Roderick Hart and Elvin Lim, ‘Tracking the Language of Space and Time, 1948-2008’ *Journal of Contemporary History*, 46, 3 (2011), 591-609.

²³ Elvin Lim, *The Anti-Intellectual Presidency* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

²⁴ Phillip Stone, Dexter Dunphy, Marshall Smith and Daniel Ogilvie, *The General Inquirer: A Computer Approach to Content Analysis* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1966); Early reviews were mixed: George Psathas, ‘The General Inquirer: Useful or Not?’, *Computers and the Humanities*, 3, 3 (1969), 163-74; Charles Kadushin, Joseph Lovett and James Merriman, ‘Reviews: Literary Analysis with the Aid of the Computer: Review Symposium’, *Computers and the Humanities*, 2, 4 (1968), 177-202.

²⁵ D. Scully and Bradley Pasanek, ‘Meaning and Mining: The Impact of Implicit Assumptions in Data Mining for the Humanities’, *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, 23, 4 (2008), 409-24; Christl’ De Landtsheer, ‘The Political Rhetoric of a Unified Europe,’ in *Politically Speaking: A Worldwide Examination of Language Used in the Public Sphere* edited by Ofer Feldman and Christl’ De Landtsheer (Westport, Praeger, 1998), pp. 129-45; Luke Blaxill, ‘The Language of British Electoral Politics 1880-1910’, Unpublished Doctoral Thesis (Kings College London, 2012).

²⁶ Justin Grimmer and Brandon Stewart, ‘Text as Data: The Promise and Pitfalls of Automatic Content Analysis Methods for Political Texts’, *Political Analysis*, 21, 3 (2013) 1-31; For a specific example in the field of finance: Tim Loughran and Bill McDonald, ‘When is a liability not a liability? Textual Analysis, Dictionaries and 10-Ks’, *The Journal of Finance*, 66, 1 (2011), 35-65.

Sentiment Dictionary (LSD).²⁷ Like Young and Soroka's work, which performed impressively against manual coders when gauging the negative or positive tone of political news, many recent dictionary-based approaches assign weighted scores to words as a means to measure the abstract qualities of texts.²⁸ However, opening up the more elusive properties of political reporting, writing, and speech to analysis has highlighted an Achilles heel: findings are inherently difficult to validate against human counterparts, who often disagree over binary allocations, let alone rankings along abstract scales.²⁹ In search of easily verifiable results, much of the political science literature now grounds automation in manual coding via 'supervised' learning. Implementations vary, but most involve the researcher coding a portion of the corpus by hand to create training data. Taking this sample's word frequencies and category-breakdown as inputs, computers then 'learn' a series of probability-based rules in order to predict which category a previously unseen text should be assigned to.³⁰ Naturally, success hinges on several preconditions (accurately coding a genuinely random sample from a stable corpus) as well as some fictitious working assumptions (independent probabilities, when word choices are innately inter-dependent); but, as Grimmer and Stewart point out, the process forces researchers to develop explicit categories and defines a success-failure criterion by which to judge an algorithm's performance.³¹

Advances in computer science have enabled some scholars working on these problems to eliminate the *a priori* assignment of words to conceptual categories and move towards 'unsupervised' machine learning. A noteworthy example, sitting on the boundary between supervised and unsupervised methods, is the *Wordscores* algorithm. This places texts along a scale, such as left-right, by comparing them to a set of reference documents that represent said dimension, before outputting a score based on lexical resemblance. Benoit and Laver first

²⁷ Lori Young and Stuart Soroka, 'Affective News: The Automated Coding of Sentiment in Political Texts', *Political Communication*, 29 (2012), 205–31.

²⁸ Not all research has followed this route: Paul Kellstedt use dictionaries to measure public opinion on racial issues, and Young and Soroka have turned their attention to refining policy topic dictionaries: Quinn Albaugh, Julie Sevenans, Stuart Soroka, and Peter John Loewen, 'The Automated Coding of Policy Agendas: A Dictionary-Based Approach' Paper given to 6th annual Comparative Agendas Project (CAP) conference, Antwerp, June 27-29 2013 and available at: <http://www.lexicoder.com/docs/CAP2013v2.pdf> [Accessed: May 2014].

²⁹ Grimmer and Stewart, 'Text as Data'.

³⁰ Or the proportion falling into each.

³¹ In fact, despite its simplifying assumptions, one of the most frequently used machine-learning algorithms has a very good predictive capacity.

used this scaling technique to compare the political positions of British parties in their 1992 and 1997 manifestos, and later applied it to Irish Parliamentary speech.³² Indeed, despite criticism regarding its dependence on the selection of representative reference texts and unsuitability for diachronic analysis, *Wordscores* has seen some historical use: Armèn Hakhverdian, for example, placed British budget speeches from 1956-2006 on a left-right spectrum.³³ Similarly, in endeavouring to circumvent *Wordscores*' limitations, the authors of *Wordfish* advocate wholly unsupervised ideological scaling through an algorithm that manipulates word frequency distribution patterns alone.³⁴ Although *Wordscores* and *Wordfish* are amongst the most sophisticated efforts to use words as data, their creators share an expedient – but consciously naïve – assumption with almost all researchers discussed above: that similar lexical choices reflect similar political positions.

A minority eschew word frequencies altogether and instead look to Natural Language Processing for help quantifying the relationships between words in a text.³⁵ Topic modelling, for example, identifies statistically significant clusters of words based on recurring connections across documents. One of the few examples of this approach being applied to British politics is research that examines the 'lexical cohesion' of groups of words in Margaret Thatcher's political speech.³⁶ Klebanov, Diermeier and Beigman developed an algorithm that uses a range of measures (relatedness in lexical dictionaries, co-concurrence and distance within the text) to compare word pairs and identify associated groups.³⁷ The posited semantic sets, classes of metaphor, were then compared to those identified by rhetorical scholars.³⁸ Certainly, moves towards automated clustering are noteworthy; they begin to break the dominant bag-of-words model implicit in the programs outlined hitherto, whereby all

³² Michael Laver and Kenneth Benoit, 'Locating TDs in Policy Spaces: Wordscoring Dail Speeches', *Irish Political Studies*, 17, 1 (2002), 59-73.

³³ Will Lowe, 'Understanding Word Scores', *Political Analysis*, 16 (2008), 356–71.

³⁴ Jonathan Slapin and Proksch Sven-Oliver, 'A Scaling Model for Estimating Time-Series Party Positions From Texts', *American Journal of Political Science*, 52, 3 (2008), 705-22.

³⁵ Monroe and Schrodt, 'Introduction to the Special Issue', 354.

³⁶ Beata Beigman Klebanov, Daniel Diermeier, and Eyal Beigman, 'Lexical Cohesion Analysis of Political Speech', *Political Analysis*, 16 (2008) 447-63.

³⁷ In this case the well-established WORDNET available at: <http://wordnet.princeton.edu/> [Accessed: May 2014].

³⁸ The reference work used was: Jonathan Charteris-Black, *Politicians and Rhetoric: The Persuasive Power of Metaphor* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

structural information is lost in favour of the apparent predictive power of frequencies alone.

However, there has also been a tendency to regard these 'unsupervised' approaches as entirely removed from, even rivals to, methods that highlight researchers' subjective choices.³⁹ Such a position is untenable. Pure unsupervised machine learning will remain a mirage because, no matter how objectively computers implement binary instructions, all algorithms necessarily encode their authors' design assumptions.⁴⁰ Indeed, comparing dictionary-based and unsupervised methods from a Popperian standpoint, the latter perform poorly in terms of highlighting absences against openly stated observables.⁴¹ Nor would 'objective' automation break the hermeneutic circle: having detected them, researchers still need to decide what statistical clusters represent.⁴² On this point, Robert Hogenraad et al return to a helpful division between categories (groups of synonyms) and themes. Because the latter contain closely associated words that, whilst not simply interchangeable, refer to the same issue, they argue that themes necessitate research, interpretation, and, ultimately, argument to elucidate underlying connections. However, even though Hoegenraad is probably correct that researchers' choices have normally been driven less by the requirements of their questions or texts than sheer methodological preference, there is an emerging consensus that these techniques are not alternatives, but complementary: some are apt for testing a *priori* hypotheses, others crucial in exposing unexpected connections.⁴³

Yet, having suggested quantitative tools for tackling rhetorical-cum-historical questions, the scholarship reviewed thus far rarely confronts the problem it frequently poses as a solution to: how can we apply these methods to truly enormous volumes of text? In the British tradition, the cause of neglect is

³⁹ For seeing the two as competitors (and ultimately favouring supervised approaches) see: Dustin Hillard, Stephen Purpura and John Wilkerson, 'Computer-Assisted Topic Classification for Mixed-Methods Social Science Research', *Journal of Information Technology and Politics*, 4, 4 (2007), 31-46.

⁴⁰ Scully and Pasanek, 'Meaning and mining', 412.

⁴¹ Peter Mohler and Cornelia Zuell, 'Observe! A Popperian Critique of Automatic Content Analysis' Journées Internationales d'Analyse Statistique des Données Textuelles (JADT 2000): Available at: <http://lexicométrica.univ-paris3.fr/jadt/jadt2000/pdf/10/10.pdf> [Accessed: Oct 2013]

⁴² Robert Hogenraad, Dean McKenzie and Normand Péladeau, 'Force and Influence in Content Analysis: The Production of New Social Knowledge', *Quality & Quantity*, 37 (2003), 221-38 at 223.

⁴³ Ibid.

perhaps twofold: First, a paucity of suitably large, accessible and digitised sources. Second, the role most political scientists assign language – an indicator of exterior variables – centres research on validating inferential models, rather than extending the coverage of datasets backwards to identify change over time or patterns within political language. Hence CA, especially in political science garb, can only act as a partial inspiration for quantitative histories of rhetoric. For support in examining language itself over millions of words, historians need to incorporate somewhat parallel developments in linguistics.

II

Corpus Linguistics

From its origins in the work of Firth, Halliday and Sinclair on naturally occurring language, corpus linguistics has expanded both with technological improvements and in reaction to the precluding focus of Chomskyan theorists on single sentences or invented examples.⁴⁴ Unlike many disciplines, the field has been equally driven by practical and conceptual outputs: the development of better dictionaries and speech-recognition technologies sit alongside new theoretical models of language as scholarly aims.⁴⁵ Together, these varied applications have funded the growth of electronic corpora, from the million words of the original Brown corpus to the 100 million that now constitute the British National Corpus.⁴⁶ Throughout the last four decades, researchers involved in these projects have considered how best to amass collections of text and exploit them statistically.⁴⁷ So, although only sporadically interested in

⁴⁴ Michael Stubbs, *Text and Corpus Analysis* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp. 22-5; For theoretical justification: John Firth, *Papers in Linguistics 1934-51* (London: Oxford University Press, 1957); Sinclair put this into practice, pioneering the use of electronic corpora: Sinclair, *Corpus, Concordance, Collocation*, esp. pp. 4-8 for critique.

⁴⁵ For dictionaries see: Patrick Hanks, 'The Impact of Corpora on Dictionaries' in *Contemporary Corpus Linguistics*, edited by Paul Baker (London: Continuum, 2009), pp. 214-36; For impact on translation: Richard Xiao and Ming Yue, 'Using Corpora in Translation Studies: The State of the Art' in *Contemporary Corpus Linguistics*, edited by Paul Baker (London: Continuum, 2009), pp. 237-61.

⁴⁶ W. Nelson Francis, 'A Standard Corpus of Edited Present Day American English', *College English*, 26 (1965), 267-73, reprinted in *Corpus Linguistics: Readings in a Widening Discipline* edited by Geoffrey Sampson and Diana McCarthy (London: Continuum, 2004), pp. 27-34; Gavin Burnage and Dominic Dunlop, 'Encoding the British National Corpus', in *English Language Corpora: Design, Analysis and Exploitation: Papers from the Thirteenth International Conference on English Language Research on Computerized Corpora, Nijmegen 1992*, edited by Jan Aarts, Pieter de Haan and Nelleke Oostdijk (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1993); Available at: <http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/docs/Burnage93a.htm> [Accessed: Oct 2013].

⁴⁷ John Sinclair, *Corpus Concordance Collocation*, pp. 13-26.

overtly political texts, John Sinclair and others have pioneered techniques for analysing the relationships between words.⁴⁸ In particular, this thesis draws upon methods for displaying concordances (queries set within a line of their original context), identifying collocations (pairs of words that co-occur with statistically meaningful regularity) and isolating formulaic sequences (repeated expressions).⁴⁹ Six concordance lines are displayed in Concordance 1.1 to illustrate these and the supporting concepts of lemmas (a set of closely related word-forms), nodes (the organising term) and spans (the number of words each side of the node). Whilst helpfully depicting these and subsequent terminology, manually examining concordances, even with sophisticated re-organisation and annotation, is impractical for large corpora. Discussion below, therefore, mostly detects these phenomena computationally. Because the statistical processes entailed are central to discrete claims being made, rather than outline detailed procedural histories here, the relevant explanation is given immediately prior to first use.

Concordance 1.1 *Example Selections of the Lemma FREE in Conservative Hansard 1971*

Line	← Span →	Node	← Span →
1	the changing position <u>of the</u>	free	<u>enterprise</u> system it was important
2	and the mechanism <u>of the</u>	free	<u>market</u> which we on the
3	would claim that in a	free	<u>society</u> provided the difference
4	minister <u>believes in competition</u> and	freedom	<u>of choice</u> if this is <u>allowed</u>
5	<u>customers</u> as unfairly <u>restricting their</u>	freedom	<u>of choice</u> to get what
6	<u>monopoly</u> is a <u>restriction on</u>	freedom	<u>of choice</u> and on the

Note: Span = 5, Underline = collocation, Borders = formulaic expression, Highlight = hypothesised semantic preference.

But corpus linguistics is not just a repository of techniques; the insistence on studying language in its practised form has produced conceptual machinery attuned to understanding argumentation at a macro-scale. Collapsing the classic dichotomy between form and meaning has been central to the Neo-Firthian agenda: for example, rather than viewing lexical and syntactic choices

⁴⁸ For a useful, but outdated, summary of the statistical techniques: Michael Oakes, *Statistics for Corpus Linguistics* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998).

⁴⁹ On collocation: David Oakey, 'Fixed Collocational Patterns in Isolexical and Isotextual Versions of a Corpus', in *Contemporary Corpus Linguistics*, edited by Paul Baker (London: Continuum, 2009), pp. 140-58. On variation: Michael Oakes, 'Corpus Linguistics and Language Variation', in *Contemporary Corpus Linguistics*, edited by Paul Baker (London: Continuum, 2009), pp. 159-83.

as independent, corpus studies revealed they were highly correlated.⁵⁰ In fact, it appears that word choices and grammatical structures are often co-selected, and many linguists now see lemmas not as mere 'slot fillers', but as active participants in shaping grammar.⁵¹ Moreover, a lemma's various word forms frequently correlate with different syntactic structures, and, in this way, each permutation 'has its own grammar' contributing to meaning.⁵² Related corpus-driven research has used statistical collocation to build on this theme of interdependence by showing that 'lexical elements are selected more than one at a time' and that each choice impinges on subsequent ones.⁵³ The 'often' and 'frequently' in the sentences above are deliberate; a defining characteristic of the tradition is a probabilistic analysis, in which patterns are common but never absolute. Sinclair formalised these discoveries in a distinction between moments in a text when authors are permitted a relatively open choice of following elements and others when such decisions are restricted in practice.⁵⁴

As a result of this work, it is now common to champion the phrase as the primary carrier of meaning, even if its exact demarcation is disputed.⁵⁵ Gill Francis posited a continuum between highly fixed idioms – 'the ayes have it' is a Parliamentary example – and 'fuzzy' patterns that barely contain their variation. Along this cline, idioms that permit a measure of surrounding variation shade into 'semi-prepackaged phrases', whereby a set of synonyms perform equivalent roles in a common framework.⁵⁶ Thus, data-driven studies of collocations and colligations (co-occurrence of a node with abstract grammatical categories) have provided crucial supporting evidence for research grouped under the monolithic heading of 'formulaic sequences', which argues that

⁵⁰ Gill Francis, 'Nominal Group Heads and Clause Structure', *Word*, 42, 2 (1991), 144-56.

⁵¹ Sinclair, *Corpus Concordance Collocation*, p. 6; F.G.A.M Aarts, 'On the Distribution of Noun-Phrase Types in English Clause Structure', *Lingua*, 26 (1971), 281-93; Gill Francis 'A Corpus Driven Approach to Grammar: Principles, Methods and Examples' in *Text and Technology: In Honor of John Sinclair*, edited by Monar Baker, Gill Francis, Elena Tognini-Bonelli (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1993), pp. 137-56, esp. 139-43.

⁵² The quote is from: Stubbs, *Text and Corpus Analysis*, p. 40; John Sinclair, 'Shared Knowledge' in *Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics 1991* (Washington D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1991) pp. 489-500, at pp. 494-6.

⁵³ Stubbs, *Text and Corpus Analysis*, p. 38; Francis 'A Corpus Driven Approach', p. 143.

⁵⁴ Sinclair sees interpretation of texts needing to cleanly switch between analysis based on the 'open choice' and 'idiom' principles: Sinclair, *Corpus Concordance Collocation*, pp. 109-14

⁵⁵ Michael Stubbs, 'The Search for Units of Meaning: Sinclair on Empirical Semantics', *Applied Linguistics*, 30, 1 (2009), 115-37 at 122-5.

⁵⁶ Francis, 'A Corpus Driven Approach', pp. 143-5.

between thirty-three and fifty per cent of language is, in natural use, routine.⁵⁷ Sheer prevalence alone is not what renders these elements significant. Whether neatly encapsulating abstract concepts or prevalent truisms, those working in the area argue that multi-word patterns of varying lengths and fixities function as signs of social acceptance, as well as serving a practical function, particularly in speech, by offering a processing advantage.⁵⁸ Unlike Orwell, then, who contemptuously diagnosed idioms as symptoms of creative malaise, corpus-linguists regard formulaic sequences as expedient transmitters of meaning.⁵⁹

With a similar emphasis on diffusion and interdependence, collocations have also been studied in pursuit of the semantic dimensions of Firth's dictum, 'you shall know a word by the company it keeps'. Owing much to Malinowski, the recognition that 'there are always semantic relations between node and collocates, and among the collocates themselves' has generated two, albeit regularly muddled, concepts: *semantic preference* and *semantic prosody* (where prosody denotes an effect stretching across multiple units).⁶⁰ Semantic preference highlights that a node word or lexical unit's collocates often cluster to represent a semantic field.⁶¹ Our concordance data, for example, hints that the lemma FREE collocates with the semantic field of business. Although many corpus linguists would link semantic preference with meaning, the strongest connection lies in the work of Michael Hoey, who, with some qualifications, argues that repeated association with a semantic field eventuates a 'priming' effect: 'as the word is learnt through encounters with it in speech and writing, it is loaded with the cumulative effects of those encounters such that it is part of

⁵⁷ The exact status of each category is complex: lexical bundles, for instance, are unbroken strings of three words or more meeting a threshold frequency over 5 or more texts: Douglas Biber, Susan Conrad and Viviana Cortes, 'If You Look at... Lexical Bundles in University Teaching and Textbooks', *Applied Linguistics*, 25, 3 (2004), 371-405 at 376-7.

⁵⁸ Kathy Conklin and Norbert Schmitt, 'Formulaic Sequences: Are They Processed More Quickly than Nonformulaic Language by Native and Nonnative Speakers?', *Applied Linguistics*, 29, 1 (2008), 72-89; David Oahey, 'Fixed Collocational Patterns', p. 144.

⁵⁹ Orwell called them 'phrases tacked together like the sections of a pre-fabricated hen-house': George Orwell, 'Politics and the English Language' (1946) reprinted in *Why I Write* (London: Penguin, 2004), pp. 102-20 at 105.

⁶⁰ Michael Stubbs, 'Two Quantitative Methods of Studying Phraseology in English' *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* 7, 2 (2002), 215-44 at 225; For the distinctions see: Monika Bednarek, 'Semantic Preference and Semantic Prosody Re-Examined', *Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory*, 4, 2 (2008), 119-39.

⁶¹ Stubbs, 'In Search for Units', 125.

our knowledge of the word that it co-occurs with other words'.⁶² Whether explaining the effect psychologically or discursively like Wolfgang Teubert, there is a degree of consensus that if 'a discourse object is constituted by all that has been said about it' studying preference can illuminate meaning.⁶³

In contrast, the evolving definition of semantic prosody has provoked sharp disagreement. Originally, the term denoted affective meanings transferred onto a node through habitual interaction with collocates normally negative, positive or neutral in character. For example, Sinclair and Bill Louw showed respectively that 'happening' and 'utterly' had more negative prosodies than dictionary definitions implied.⁶⁴ Despite holding little affective meaning in isolation, Louw argued that these words' collocations colored them so much they retained negative prosody even in a-typical company. This remains a popular, if problematic, notion, not least because some terms with negative collocations can sustain positive connotations ('heal', 'relieve', 'alleviate').⁶⁵ But contemporary scholars also divide over whether prosodies should remain binary (negative-positive), become specific ('frustrated' or 'optimistic'), or encompass non-evaluative emotions. More fundamentally, Sinclair and Stubbs' later writings redefined prosody as rooted in pragmatics. The collocational aspect of prosody is, in their view, subsumed by semantic preference; a move much-resisted because it cuts prosody adrift from its corpus moorings.

Unresolved definitions aside, these significant contributions to linguistics suggest that quantitative approaches and Neo-Firthian theory are the twin products of a mutually sustaining reaction. For this reason, transplanting corpus techniques in isolation risks ignoring significant premises, and, in this respect, attempts to use frequencies, collocations and concordances in Critical

⁶² See Michael Hoey, 'Lexical Priming and Literary Creativity' in *Text, Discourse and Corpora*, edited by Michael Hoey, Michaela Mahlberg, Michael Stubbs and Wolfgang Teubert (London: Continuum, 2007), pp. 7-29; Although the quote is from: Michael Hoey, 'Lexical priming and the properties of text' available at: <http://www.monabaker.com/tsresources/LexicalPrimingandthePropertiesofText.htm> [Accessed: May 2013].

⁶³ Wolfgang Teubert, 'Parole Linguistics and the Diachronic Dimension of Discourse' in *Text, Discourse and Corpora*, edited by Michael Hoey, Michaela Mahlberg, Michael Stubbs and Wolfgang Teubert, (London: Continuum, 2007), pp. 57-87 at 68.

⁶⁴ Louw showed how poets manipulate this via a study of Larkin's 'First Sight': William Louw, 'Irony in the Text or insincerity in the writer? The diagnostic potential of semantic preference', (1993) reprinted in: *Corpus Linguistics: Readings in a Widening Discipline*, edited by Geoffrey Sampson and Diana McCarthy (London: Continuum, 2004), pp. 229-42.

⁶⁵ Monika Bednarek, 'Semantic Preference and Semantic Prosody Re-Examined', 130-3.

Discourse Analysis (CDA) provide both a model and some warnings for splicing corpora into political history. In hindsight, Firth anticipated many points of contact, but Michael Stubbs is normally credited with bridging CDA and corpus studies.⁶⁶ Stubbs agreed that language encodes experience, but doubly positioned his research as an empirical investigation of Foucault's 'discourse' and as a response to early CDA's limited sources and apparatus.⁶⁷ Thus, his research attempted to convert frequency, collocation, and formulaic sequence research into evidence for covert attitudes, implicit messages, and disparities between discourse and experience.⁶⁸ Stubbs argues, for example, that frequencies can indicate both the 'keyness' of a term for a society and disclose how sub-groups conceive issues. Over time, new or strengthened collocations can signal the arrival of fresh concepts or the shifting meaning of others, and the range of collocations may hint at the corresponding breadth of associations accumulated by keywords like 'work'. Perhaps closer to CDA's agenda, Stubbs suggested that fixed expressions could reflect societies' 'unexamined concepts' and that negative prosodies transmit covert messages.

With some exceptions, it took until the early 2000s for discourse analysts to prescribe corpora as inoculations against perceived selectivity biases.⁶⁹ Amongst the first was Norman Fairclough's *New Labour, New Language*, which included frequency case studies of keywords, such as 'exclusion' and 'work', based on comparative 'corpora'.⁷⁰ More recently, acting under the combined aegis of Stubbs, Hardt-Mautner, and especially Douglas Biber's seminal work on genre and register, CDA researchers have examined the discourse of sleaze, corruption, asylum-seeking, and immigration.⁷¹ Political rhetoric has also

⁶⁶ For comments on Firth: Gerlinde Mautner, 'Corpora and Critical Discourse Analysis' in *Contemporary Corpus Linguistics*, edited by Paul Baker (London: Continuum, 2009), pp. 32-46.

⁶⁷ Michael Stubbs, 'Grammar, Text, and Ideology: Computer-assisted Methods in the Linguistics of Representation', *Applied Linguistics*, 15, 2 (1994), 201-23; Keywords are a favourite of CDA: See the analysis of 'enterprise' in Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language* (London: Longman, 1995), pp. 112-29.

⁶⁸ Stubbs, *Text and Corpus Analysis*, pp. 157-95; For a broader summary see: Susan Hunston, *Corpora in Applied Linguistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 109-23.

⁶⁹ For exceptions, see the collection but esp. Ramesh Krishnamurthy, 'Ethnic, Racial and Tribal: The Language of Racism?' in *Texts and Practices: Readings in Critical Discourse Analysis*, edited by Carmen Rosa Caldas-Coulthard and Malcolm Coulthard (London: Routledge, 1996) pp. 129-49; Gerlinde Hardt-Mautner [known as Gerlinde Mautner post-1995], *Only Connect. Critical Discourse Analysis and Corpus Linguistics*, UCREL Technical Paper 6 (Lancaster: Lancaster University, 1995), Available at <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/papers/techpaper/vol6.pdf>, [Accessed: Oct 2013].

⁷⁰ Norman Fairclough, *New Labour, New Language* (London: Routledge, 2000).

⁷¹ Hardt-Mautner, *Only Connect*; Biber used Factor analysis to show the independent change in

been a point of interaction.⁷² Teubert, for example, identified groups of ‘stigma’ and ‘banner’ words as sites of conflict in Eurosceptic discourse, and John Flowerdew used collocations to expose the ‘myth’ of a British legacy (essentially western liberal values) imposed on Hong Kong by its last governor’s public statements.⁷³ Explicitly combining corpus-informed CDA with rhetoric, Alan Partington and John Morley show how comparing lexical bundles between corpora can indicate speakers’ strategies.⁷⁴ However, this exchange of ideas has been lopsided: CDA research generally underuses statistical techniques and its ‘corpora’ normally fall short of the designs or size that characterise those inspired by Sinclair.⁷⁵

Moreover, having turned towards discourse and meaning, corpus linguists only gradually matured their interpretative frameworks. Wolfgang Teubert, who in leveraging the distinction between *parole* and *langue* takes a social constructionist position focussed on intertextuality, is perhaps the most significant figure for historians in this regard. For Teubert, ‘any new text entered into the discourse should not be viewed as an intentional act of creation. Rather, it should be explained as a recombination or permutation of text segments already found in previous texts, plus, possibly, some new text

genres: Douglas Biber and Edward Finegan, ‘Historical Drift in Three English Genres’, in *Synchronic and Diachronic Approaches to Linguistic Variation and Change*, edited by Thomas J. Walsh (Washington D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1989), pp. 22-36; Debbie Orpin, ‘Corpus Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis: Examining the Ideology of Sleaze’, *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 10, 1 (2005), 37–61; Paul Baker, and Tony McEnery, ‘A Corpus-based Approach to Discourses of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in UN and Newspaper Texts’, *Journal of Language and Politics*, 4, 2 (2005) 197-226; Alison Piper, ‘Some have Credit Cards and others have Giro Cheques: ‘Individuals’ and ‘People’ as Lifelong Learners in Late Modernity’, *Discourse and Society*, 11 (2000), 515-42.

⁷² Amir Salama, ‘The Rhetoric of Collocational, Intertextual and Institutional Pluralization in Obama’s Cairo speech: A Discourse-Analytical Approach’, *Critical Discourse Studies*, 9, 3 (2012), 211-29.

⁷³ Wolfgang Teubert, ‘A Province of a Federal Superstate, Ruled by an Unelected Bureaucracy: Keywords of the Eurosceptic Discourse in Britain’ in *Attitudes Towards Europe: Language in the Unification Process* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000) pp. 45-86; John Flowerdew, ‘The Discourse of Colonial Withdrawal: A Case Study in the Creation of Mythic Discourse’, *Discourse and Society*, 8 (1997), 453-77; Particularly noteworthy is his recognition that ‘freedom’ cuts across all four of the semantic fields Patten used (economics, democracy, individuality, rule of law) – a phenomena he follows Fairclough in labelling ‘ambivalence potential’ at 470-1.

⁷⁴ Alan Partington and John Morley, ‘From Frequency to Ideology: Investigating Word and Cluster/Bundle Frequency in Political Debate’, TALC 2002 Conference Proceedings; Mixed with Conversation Analysis: Alan Partington, *The Linguistics of Political Argumentation: The Spin-doctor and the Wolf-pack at the White House* (London: Routledge, 2003).

⁷⁵ Paul Baker, Costas Gabrielatos, Majid Khosravini, Michal Krzyzanowski, Tony McEnery, and Ruth Wodak, ‘A Useful Methodological Synergy? Combining Critical Discourse Analysis and Corpus Linguistics to Examine Discourses of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the UK Press’, *Discourse and Society*, 19, 3 (2008), 273-306, at 275-6.

segments (neologisms)'.⁷⁶ The result is discourse reimagined as an evolving, self-sustaining system, driven by a Darwinian motor: some elements are perpetuated by future texts; others vanish with few repercussions.⁷⁷ Corpus linguistics should, therefore, be concerned both with uncovering the synchronic and diachronic facets of meaning, the latter reconceptualised as 'everything that has been said about [a term] up to the moment when the text in which it occurs was entered into the discourse'.⁷⁸ Whilst there is a broader lineage of diachronic corpus research, Teubert's ideas readily find common ground with historians who insist that discourse is more unstable than traditionally permitted.⁷⁹ The broader lesson, though, is that exchanges between corpus linguistics and other disciplines are most productive when the former's techniques are implemented fully and matched with interpretive frameworks capable of narrowing the gap between data and discourse.

III

A Method for Quantitative, Historical Rhetoric

The challenge in concluding these review sections, then, is twofold. Handling them as separate but related perspectives on a single historical problem, we must first blend and jointly evaluate the techniques and models of content analysis and corpus linguistics. Each can then be linked with the notion of a rhetorical culture. Although their objectives differ, such concurrency is vital because the disconnection of political scientists and content analysts from corpus linguistics is detrimental: an exclusive focus on one risks missing relevant problems, solutions and debates in the other.⁸⁰ Fundamentally, CL and CA test intuitive theories through the systematic exploration of large volumes of text. Researchers in both fields face difficult decisions when making

⁷⁶ Michael Teubert, 'Parole Linguistics and the Diachronic Dimension of Discourse', p. 67.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 80.

⁷⁸ Ibid; Teubert put this into practice by showing the evolution of 'work' and 'property' in Church texts, along with the transition between natural and human rights based arguments: 'A Province of a Federal Superstate, Ruled by an Unelected Bureaucracy: Keywords of the Eurosceptic Discourse in Britain' in *Attitudes Towards Europe: Language in the Unification Process* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000) pp. 45-86.

⁷⁹ Alan Partington, 'Corpus Evidence of Language Change: The Case of the Intensifier' in *Text and Technology: In Honor of John Sinclair*, edited by Mona Baker, Gill Francis, Elena Tognini-Bonelli (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1993), pp. 177-92.

⁸⁰ One partial exception: Richard Toye, *A Short Introduction To Rhetoric* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); For a more general assessment of computers aiding or inhibiting qualitative data analysis in a very different area of research see: Nick Blismas and Andrew Dainty, 'Computer-aided Qualitative Data Analysis: Panacea or Paradox?', *Building Research and Information*, 31, 6 (2003), 455-63.

representative selections of text and dealing with the challenges Optical Character Recognition (OCR), word-stemming, text-cleaning, and digital curation present.⁸¹ Beyond these shared technical challenges, both remain tinged with positivist heritages, which underplay the subjectivity involved in designing algorithms and dictionaries.⁸² All text-mining techniques make working assumptions about their corpus and implicitly subscribe to models of language, and this is a particular risk when comparing corpora from different domains or using one statistical measure in isolation.⁸³ So although the wider availability of software and pre-packaged corpora is welcome, the danger is that these assumptions are hidden from the researcher, who may be tempted to shape projects around software capabilities, instead of tailoring methods to a question. Despite aspirations to transcend close readings, then, quantitative work necessitates equally detailed scrutiny of processes, data, and interpretative leaps; it is neither the timesaving nor objective alternative to hermeneutics that scholars live in hope or fear of.⁸⁴

It is also legitimate to question how much numbers really tell us about rhetoric. Word frequencies alone reveal little about arguments or ideologies: meaning can arise from the relationships between words (a point made dissimilarly by philosophers from Frege onwards) or factors external to words' semantic meanings, such as Wittgenstein's language games or Austin's speech-acts. As Skinner points out, disagreements about a term's meaning could relate to 'the criteria for applying the word', 'whether the agreed criteria are present in a given set of circumstances', or over the 'range of speech acts the word can be used to perform'.⁸⁵ The extent to which these are recoverable, even manually, is itself questionable, although Skinner argues the changes caused by such disagreements are visible in derivations or new affective meanings.⁸⁶ But even if we resolved to treat meaning as an emergent phenomenon, drawing in all of these perspectives, our concept of argument stubbornly resists definition: Where does one begin or end? Should a text's arguments be subdivided or

⁸¹ An infamous example is the Old English 'f' being read as 's'.

⁸² A point shown in comparisons between manual and automated coding: Mike Conway 'The Subjective Precision of Computers: A Methodological Comparison with Human Coding In Content Analysis', *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 83, 1 (2006), 186-200; Scully and Pasanek, 'Meaning and Mining', 412.

⁸³ Scully and Pasanek, 'Meaning and Mining', 411.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 417.

⁸⁵ Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, loc. 4489.

⁸⁶ This is his idea of rhetorical 're-description'.

analysed holistically? Do arguments encompass only premises, conclusions and commonplaces, or all the means of persuasion?⁸⁷ Theory aside, words, like speeches, have unequal impact; the addition of 'not' can alter meaning entirely, and, because language displays so much variation, researchers can easily neglect relevant features.

At this point, the research below must be distinguished from Luke Blaxill's on late-nineteenth-century elections.⁸⁸ Although an important example of quantitative methods potential to challenge established narratives, Blaxill's research has limitations. Using newspaper reports to construct (a comparably small) corpora of electoral speech means that, aside from the issue of accuracy, he is always studying incomplete speeches and cannot know for certain whether a topic was discussed.⁸⁹ With his judicious caveats and countermeasures, this would not be an issue if Blaxill's claims were limited to political discourse as reported in the Press or its ability to set the agenda. Yet, his innovative regional corpora are used as proxies for measuring change in the presence or absence of topics in the speeches themselves. Indeed, contrary to the founding principle of the method he draws upon, Blaxill insists that 'core content is unaffected' by the form of expression.⁹⁰ Instead, like political scientists, Blaxill mainly uses word frequencies to study the 'visibility' politicians gave to topics, not their use of language to construct these: 'flag', for example, is one of a group of terms used to denote the Empire's importance as a political issue. However, unlike political scientists, who go to considerable lengths to remove confirmation-bias by validating dictionaries, Blaxill states that the choice of indicative words 'is mostly a matter of historical judgement' from reading the sources.⁹¹ These limitations ultimately stem from the use of corpus linguists' methods to approach language from the perspective of content analysts. Whilst

⁸⁷ Constructing a combined framework of meaning has been the focus of Stubbs and Sinclair's later work: Michael Stubbs, 'On Texts, Corpora and Models of Language' in *Text, Discourse and Corpora*, edited by Michael Hoey, Michaela Mahlberg, Michael Stubbs and Wolfgang Teubert, (London: Continuum, 2007), pp. 127-62.

⁸⁸ Luke Blaxill, 'Quantifying the Language of British Politics, 1880-1910', *Historical Research*, 86, 232, (2013), 313-41; which draws substantially on his thesis cited above.

⁸⁹ His national corpus was 1.5 million words, and his very novel regional corpora use 50,000 words per party per election. The defences (that reporting was thorough and contemporaries consumed speeches in written form) are well-made out, but hardly resolve the limitation.

⁹⁰ Blaxill, 'Quantifying Language', 321.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 325. His method would be greatly strengthened by the supervised learning techniques above.

the research below shares Blaxill's aims, then, it approaches the task rather differently.

Both the theoretical and implementation problems above can be solved, so long as the aim is contribution not resolution to historical and theoretical debate and a deep methodological integration. Ultimately, word frequencies do indicate one facet of speech: usage. For those concerned with political argument, the use of words to communicate is interesting in itself, not just as a blurry mirror of an ideology or a topic's importance set apart from its articulation. Frequency might suggest the building blocks of popular arguments or highlight trends that elude manual detection. But historians must also embrace a more realistic understanding of language; we cannot merely defend the bag-of-words model. Corpus linguistics suggests that the 'way that you say it' – in both a lexical and syntactic sense – is far more constrained, probabilistic, and formulaic than hitherto realised. It is imperative, then, to look beyond single words as the atoms of arguments and avoid conceiving lexis and form as independent routes to meaning. Hence, the statistical tools of collocation and formulaic sequence detection, with their emphasis on form and dispersed meaning, are necessary counterpoints to the objections raised above. That said, merging linguistics, political science and content analysis is not a defensive action or solely a means to improve answers to the questions rhetorical scholars already ask; the mixture should permeate that framework and extend its possibilities. Just as in linguistics, scale could help reimagine the components of rhetoric. For example, if expression is 'chunked', perhaps whole arguments can be examined as products, or even instances, of formulaic sequences? Mirroring the demise of a dichotomy between form and semantics, evidence that patterns of logic are co-selected with rhetorical strategies would further undermine a view of rhetoric as merely clothing *a priori* ideas. Similarly, if recurrent expressions were found in significant numbers across sub-groups, these might form one element of a rhetorical culture previously hidden beneath masses of data. Investigators could even test whether groups use the same keywords, but gather these into different lexical bundles. Yet, the real explanatory force comes in reinserting history, discourse, and political science variables: Have collocations and formulaic sequences shifted over time, and, if so, are any of these changes indicative of evolving rhetoric? Borrowing methods from political science, we

might look for differences across partisan and topic variables and ask whether different contexts produce statistically dissimilar rhetoric. In return, the notion of rhetorical imperative could help explain these differences and linguistic phenomena. Perhaps formulaic sequences not only save time, but act as truncated syllogisms? Could the re-use of arguments, fuelled by perceived past rhetorical successes or group-norms, help explain the intertextuality powering Teubert's Darwinian theory of discourse? In its full form, then, the synthesis of methods provokes new questions linked to the concept of a rhetorical culture outlined above.

Besides instilling a diachronic element absent in most of the work above, history fulfils two roles. First, traditional historical methods provide vital context for both the findings and source material of automated techniques; subsequent chapters conduct detailed analysis of speeches and the archival traces of their authorship to demonstrate the rhetorical advantages the language identified quantitatively afforded speakers in specific scenarios. Therefore, the potential weaknesses of automated analysis should be viewed alongside, perhaps even as a counterbalance to, established 'close-reading' methodologies. Nor would the computational analysis below be possible without historical knowledge: the subtleties of Hansard complicate the simplest calculation. Second, history provides the motivation for splicing approaches normally confined to disciplinary agendas. Admittedly, historians need to avoid becoming methodologically capricious; but the complexity of the past and the wish to confront language as both an abstract system and reflection-cum-constructor of an earlier world can justify heterogeneity, if the adoption is critically informed. With that in mind, the following data experiments conform to a series of 'best practices'.⁹² For ease of reference, and as a final prelude to analysis proper, these can be summarised as:

1. Make methodological assumptions, corpus construction, and digital conversion processes explicit.
2. Tailor programs to corpus and question (all programs used, excepting archive web-interfaces, were designed and coded by the author and their performance manually tested for accuracy).

⁹² A fusion of techniques means a fusion of best practices, so those adopted closely mirror Sculley and Pasanek, and Grimmer and Stewarts' suggestions in their articles cited above.

3. Use a range of tests to examine each issue, report results even when contradictory, and validate where necessary.
4. Ockham's Razor should guide movement between data, results and interpretation.
5. Quantitative methods supplement rather than replace close-reading.

IV

Freedom and Liberty in British English

Despite its specialised terminology, conventions and rhetorical situations, the vocabulary of politics never resides in a vacuum; it is deeply enmeshed in a language system as a whole.⁹³ Hence, the preliminary stages in analysing politicians' use of 'freedom' and 'liberty' involve sketching those terms' broader histories in British English and situating their occurrence in political texts against other registers. Regarding the latter, comparing the three overtly political corpora constructed for this thesis to the British National Corpus (BNC) is instructive.⁹⁴ Table 1.1 contains a snapshot of the different registers of English in the BNC and the respective occurrences of 'liberty' and 'freedom' per million words. Over a roughly equivalent time period, the Hansard corpus described below shows elevated average rates for both liberty (17.89) and freedom (99.08) compared to the BNC samples.⁹⁵ In fact, individual years and the average result for the entire corpus 1936-1990 far outstrip all the general registers, and reviewing the higher BNC rates, such as that for academic texts, suggests that legal or political science publications account for many occurrences. Because they fall outside the BNC timeframe, the party conference corpora are less directly comparable, but the extreme differences between them and the BNC registers suggest the basic intuition that language in a political mode displays a concentrated use of freedom and liberty is well founded. Unfortunately, frequency rates alone cannot divulge whether those terms are used significantly differently. Whilst it is possible to calculate the

⁹³ Of course, like politicians this life often has ramifications in the political realm.

⁹⁴ A relevant outline of the BNC construction principles can be found at: <http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/> [Accessed: Nov 2013]

⁹⁵ The figures are not directly comparable because the BNC was constructed via samples of genres. The BNC also includes a small amount of political speech across its categories.

varying strengths of collocations across corpora, the technical challenges in ensuring comparability mean that this thesis generally focusses on differences within and between the parliamentary corpus, rather than speculating on semantic differences between this and wider British English.

That said, those corpora's frequency rates can be set against a long-term story of changing usage levels, but, because the BNC was designed as a synchronic collection, we need to look at a consciously diachronic corpus. Now containing 468,491,999,592 words of published English, the Google N-Gram project is one alternative.⁹⁶ Sponsored by Google, doctoral students from the Harvard Cultural Observatory created a time series database recording frequency data, normalised by annual totals, for every word and combination of less than five words in 4,541,627 books spanning 1800-2000.⁹⁷ In terms of size, the project is unrivalled, but, like any vast dataset, several factors limit its usage. Works included were selected from a broader digitised collection of 15 million books based on high-quality character recognition and metadata about author, subject and publication date. Yet, neither the OCR nor the metadata used to date books is 100% accurate, and the corpus reflects the acquisition biases of source libraries.⁹⁸ Moreover, some argue the changing nature of publications renders earlier and later years incomparable. The study's authors attempt to mitigate this via a sub-corpus, the English One Million, which represents a more balanced profile of subjects published in any year. Whilst the research below is based on the 2012 British English sub-corpus of texts published in the UK, none of the trends reported disappeared in the English One Million. The biggest limitation, though, is that copyright prevents access to the raw texts, rendering scholars unable to reproduce results, apply tests of statistical significance confidently, or insert new variables.

Google's dataset, therefore, requires corroboration and is limited to identifying broad indicative trends. That is not to say these are uninformative: for example,

⁹⁶ Available at: <http://www.culturomics.org> [Accessed: May 2013]; and in a more accessible form from: <http://books.google.com/ngrams> [Accessed: May 2013]; Published as: Jean-Baptiste Michel, Yuan Kui Shen, Aviva Presser Aiden, Adrian Veres, Matthew Gray, The Google Books Team, Joseph Pickett, Dale Hoiberg, Dan Clancy, Peter Norvig, Jon Orwant, Steven Pinker, Martin Nowak, and Erez Lieberman Aiden, 'Quantitative Analysis of Culture Using Millions of Digitized Books', *Science*, (Published online 2010), 176-82.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 176.

⁹⁸ The authors detail these problems in their online supplementary materials, but the second edition of the corpus, which is used here, featured improved OCR technology.

Figure 1.1 shows the frequency of ‘freedom’ and ‘liberty’ as percentages of the total British English corpus for 1800-2000. The data suggests that, in general usage, ‘freedom’ surpassed ‘liberty’ as a common lexical choice in the first decades of the twentieth century and that the latter experienced a sustained decline. Closer inspection of the twentieth century data in Figure 1.2 highlights patterns within this overarching trend: the most pronounced being that ‘freedom’ experienced peaks during wartime.⁹⁹ Furthermore, as shown in Figure 1.3, this frequency data neatly tracks other words that one might predict would increase during wartime. These similarities could either be a coincidence or represent a distortion caused by the systemic biases outlined above. On the other hand, the results chime with how many qualitative sources suggest events were represented in Britain before, during and after those conflicts.

Plural word-forms share some of these general characteristics, but often assume different chronologies: ‘freedoms’ increased dramatically during the forties, and the decline of ‘liberties’ has been slower and interrupted by a mid-century renaissance. Both trends repay further analysis. For example, one might assume references to Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms speech or the Atlantic Charter are likely causes of the former, but the evidence indicates these were part of a bigger move to collectivise freedom, which included ‘democratic freedoms’ and ‘new freedoms’ during the war and was sustained afterwards by the ‘fundamental freedoms’ enshrined in the UN’s charter. Similarly, although a good proportion of the mid-century resurgence in ‘liberties’ can be attributed to ‘liberties of the + NOUN’ formulations, internally these divide chronologically with ‘liberties of the people’ and ‘liberties of the subject’ preceding a later rise in ‘liberties of the individual’. Some of these differences are of clearer significance. Figure 1.5 presents data for what might loosely be regarded as indicators of active and passive conceptual variations. Applying a moving average shows that the more positive formulation, ‘freedom to’, overtook its negative counterpart, ‘freedom from’, in the late sixties. In contrast, even if the potentially misleading phrase ‘at liberty to’ is included, only on two occasions (1903 and

⁹⁹ In the 2009 edition of the corpus ‘liberty’ experienced similar, if less pronounced peaks.

1984) has 'liberty to' outranked 'liberty of', and neither escape the term's downwards velocity.¹⁰⁰

Researchers can also track a range of phrases within the same semantic field. Figure 1.6, which compares terms from post-war economics, shows the birth of phrases like 'free enterprise' and 'planned economy' between 1935 and 1944, which experienced period highs before relative lulls in the mid-fifties. These patterns speak to very different historical problems. We could speculate, for example, that the delayed wartime peaks of 'free enterprise' and 'free economy' compared to 'freedom' mark their importance in debate about the post-war world. Whereas, although seemingly of little ideological significance, the transition from 'system of free enterprise' to 'free enterprise system' evidences a clustering phenomenon vital in describing the behaviour of political language as an evolving system. In either mode, caution must remain the keynote. Without the raw text there is little historians can do to further narrow Google's corpus or disambiguate word senses. Thus, no matter how alluringly some trends in the corpus echo historical intuition, conclusions are premature. Whilst it provides much needed context and lines of inquiry, even the largest available dataset cannot substitute for a narrower study of political corpora designed to fit between this macro scale and individual speeches.

¹⁰⁰ Subtracting the potentially misleading phrase 'at liberty to' further highlights the dominance of 'liberty of'. Depending on your view of language, those results either explain or reflect the common view that liberty is a more negative vision of freedom.

TABLE 1.1 Rate per Million Words in British National Corpus Registers and Political Corpora

Register	liberty	freedom
BNC Spoken	5.42	17.97
BNC Fiction	9.68	34.38
BNC Magazine	10.33	51.98
BNC Newspaper	10.80	55.32
BNC Non-Academic	12.91	74.69
BNC Academic	32.92	104.62
BNC <u>Misc</u>	12.24	63.02
BNC All	14.12	60.57
Hansard Corpus 1975-1990	17.89	99.08
CON Conference Speeches	85.67	392.24
LAB Conference Speeches	38.64	192.98

BNC data taken from <http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/>, For Party Conference Corpora see Appendix A

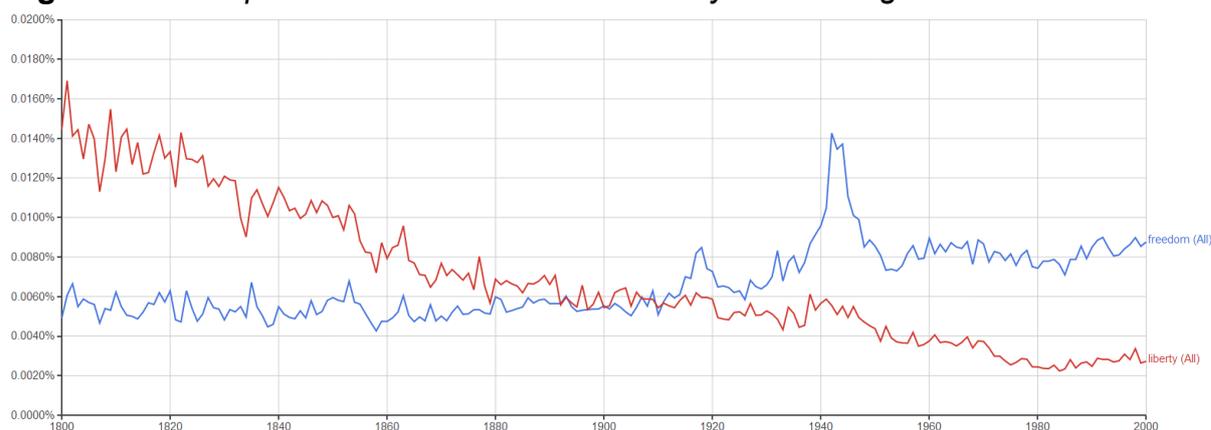
Figure 1.1 Frequencies of 'Freedom' and 'Liberty' British English 1800 – 2000

Figure 1.2 *Frequencies of 'Freedom' and 'Liberty' British English 1900 – 2000*

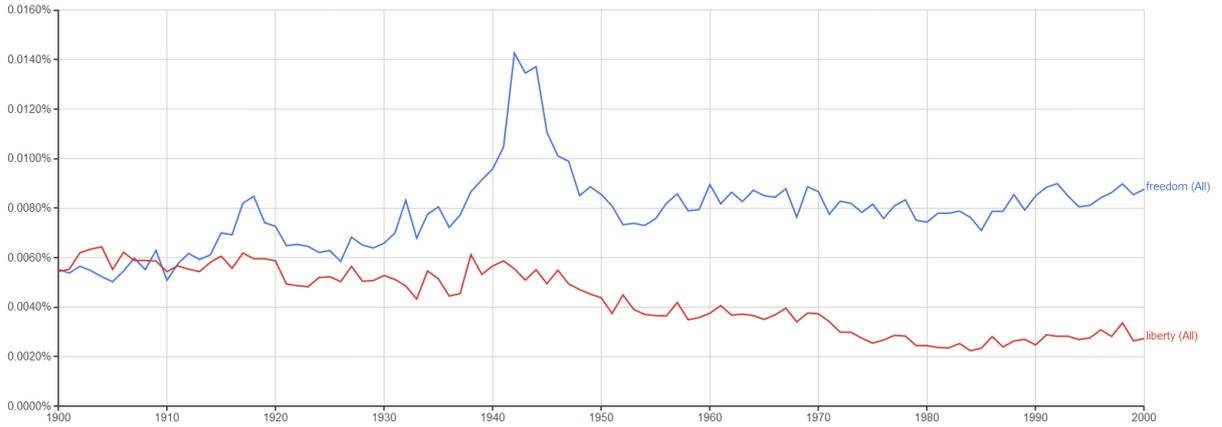


Figure 1.3 *Frequencies of 'freedom' and War-related Terms British English 1900-2000, MAV (1)*

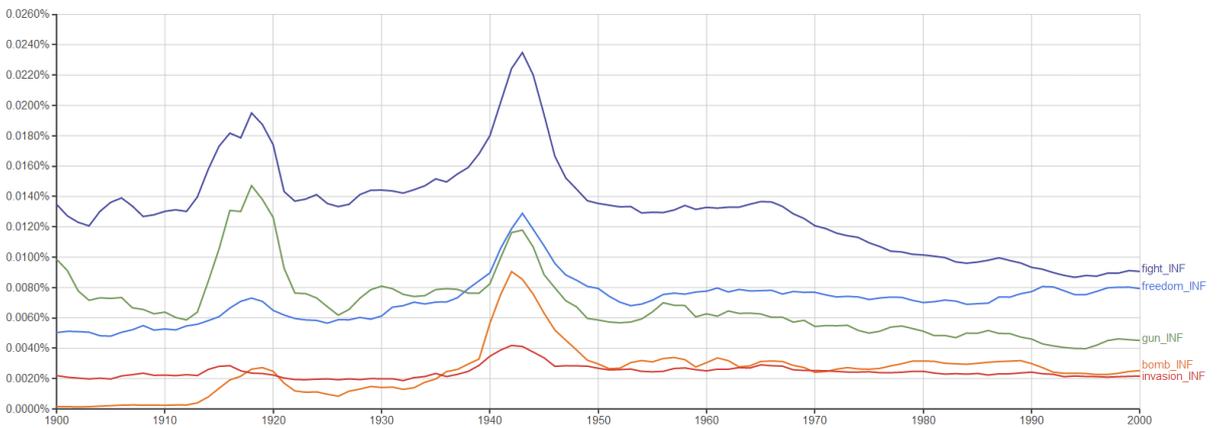


Figure 1.4 *Frequencies of 'freedoms' and 'liberties' British English 1900-2000*

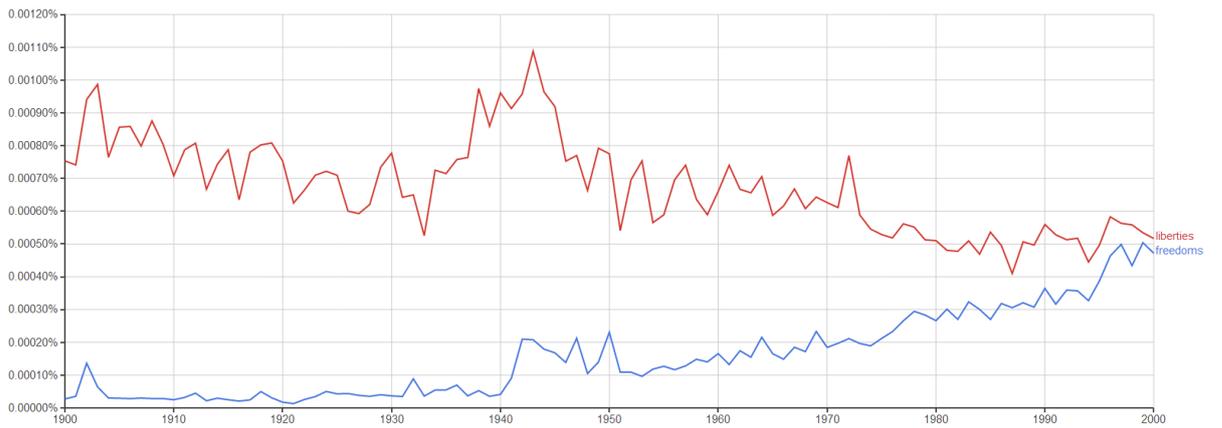


Figure 1.5 *Frequencies of Positive and Negative Formulations British English 1900-2000 MAV (1)*

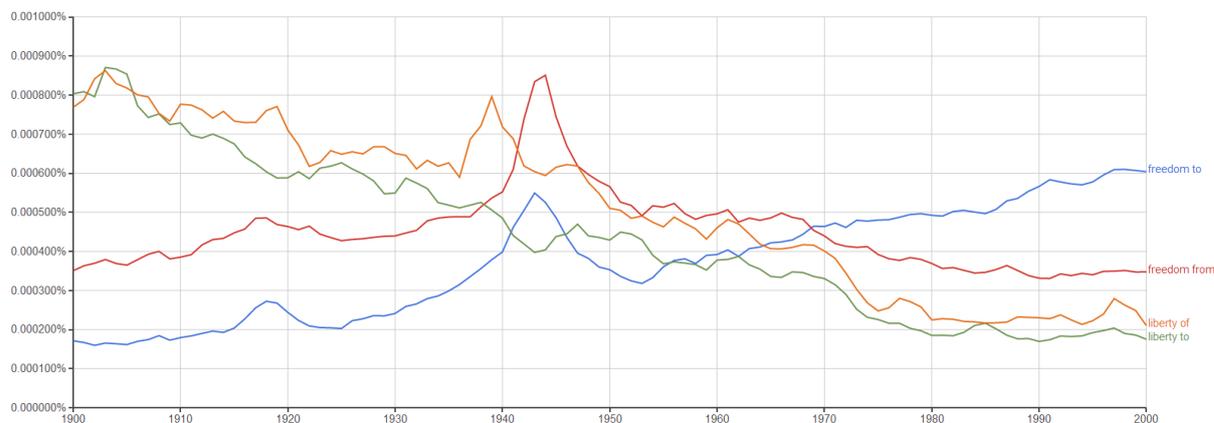
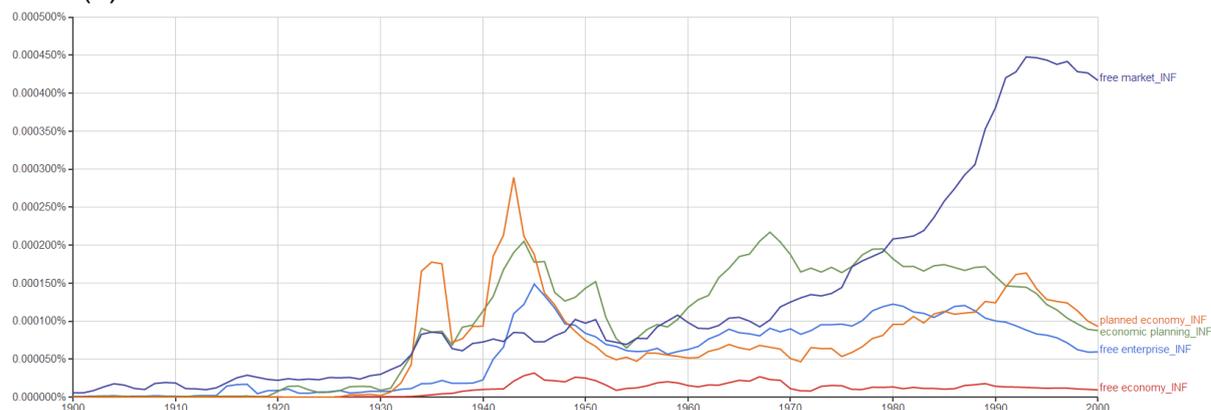


Figure 1.6 *Frequencies of Selected Post-War Economics Phrases 1900-2000 MAV (1)*



However, there are datasets between the scale of those below and the ‘culturomics’ offered by Google that could support or refute some of the trends identified. Used alongside the above corpora, online newspaper archives present an opportunity to diminish potential acquisition biases, and, given the omission of newspapers from Google’s dataset, act as relatively independent tests.¹⁰¹ *The Times Digital Archive*, for example, is a searchable database of the weekday publication from 1785 to 1985.¹⁰² Figure 1.7 shows the percentage of articles in which ‘liberty’ or ‘freedom’ occurred between 1900 and 1985. Frequency was normalised to account for factors like paper rationing or printing strikes. Unfortunately, the technical limitations of the *Daily Express* and *Daily*

¹⁰¹ One caveat is that newspapers reflect other texts which they report.

¹⁰² The Times Digital Archive: Available at: <http://gale.cengage.co.uk/times.aspx/> Daily Express and Mirror archives were accessed via UK Press Online: <http://www.ukpressonline.co.uk/> [All Accessed: Oct 2013].

Mirror archives – chosen as tabloid comparators – mean that Figures 1.8 and 1.9 present data normalised by pages. Unlike the raw word frequency counts used in Google’s data, collecting data by page or article emphasises widely distributed over concentrated use. Whilst this limits the distortive impact of one source on the overall total, the compromise is that newspapers can only act as crude barometers.

Nonetheless, Figures 1.7 to 1.9 broadly reflect the data presented in Figure 1.2. The decline of ‘liberty’ in favour of ‘freedom’ is present, although all three hint at a revival in both terms between the late sixties and mid-seventies. Having witnessed the common outlines of these trends in four separate corpora we can be more confident of their existence, and reappearance across three units of analysis (actual frequency, articles and pages) reduces the likelihood that either is a product of concentrated use. Because they are internal and relative, these patterns are fairly immune from the distortions involved in normalising the data. The same cannot be said of the temptation to identify differences between newspapers. For example, although the results are often higher for the *Daily Express* than the *Daily Mirror* this could reflect a wider distribution over pages, not greater usage. The most complex aspect to interpret, though, is whether this data reliably corroborates the wartime highs seen above. All newspapers reduced their content in reaction to newsprint rationing both during and after WWII.¹⁰³ Raw counts show the spike from 1939 to 1945 needs to be understood as a percentage rise; ‘freedom’ and ‘liberty’ actually appeared on fewer pages and in fewer articles than the previous seven year period. Showing these concentrations was, of course, one advantage of normalising the results, and it is potentially significant that ‘freedom’ and ‘liberty’ were retained beyond what their pre-war levels would imply. However, it is difficult to distinguish between genuine increases in the terms’ salience versus editorial decisions about what type of article to publish in reduced space. Such doubts are eased by counterexamples: in all three newspapers, the 1918 spike for ‘freedom’ is attributable to actual frequency rises alone and the same is true for ‘liberty’ in *The Times*. The year 1939 in the *Daily Mirror* and *The Times* also experienced real increases in ‘freedom’ despite reduced articles or pages, as did 1940 in the

¹⁰³ Total articles in *The Times* shrank from 91,583 in 1938 to a low of 42,087 four years later, whereas by 1943 the *Daily Mirror* had lost around 72% of its 1938 page count and Beaverbrook’s *Daily Express* nearer 80%.

Daily Express. On balance, the safest interpretation is to acknowledge the rise, but treat it as a complex phenomenon likely emphasised by the expanding length of newspapers in the thirties and subsequent restriction.

So although discussion has thus far been constrained to somewhat unsophisticated indicators of frequency, the scale of the BNC, Google corpora, and newspaper archives lends vital context to the narrower research below. Subsequent interpretation will need to account for the inverse trajectories of ‘freedom’ and ‘liberty’ in British English, recognise that related word-forms and phrases experienced different chronologies, and remain aware that these figure disproportionately in political speech. On the other hand, the design of the Hansard corpus used in this chapter and the statistical tools applied to it is motivated by larger datasets’ inability to facilitate the project outlined in part one of this chapter. In that sense, the aim of analysis below is not to simply confirm or refute broader trends; instead, it begins to explain and nuance them, add others and posit links to rhetorical strategies. In short, part five asks *how* groups of politicians used this language rather than simply *how much*. The techniques needed to answer those questions herald a concurrent shift from using corpora to test intuition towards allowing them to direct the narrative.

Figure 1.7 *The Times: Percentage of Articles 1900-1984*

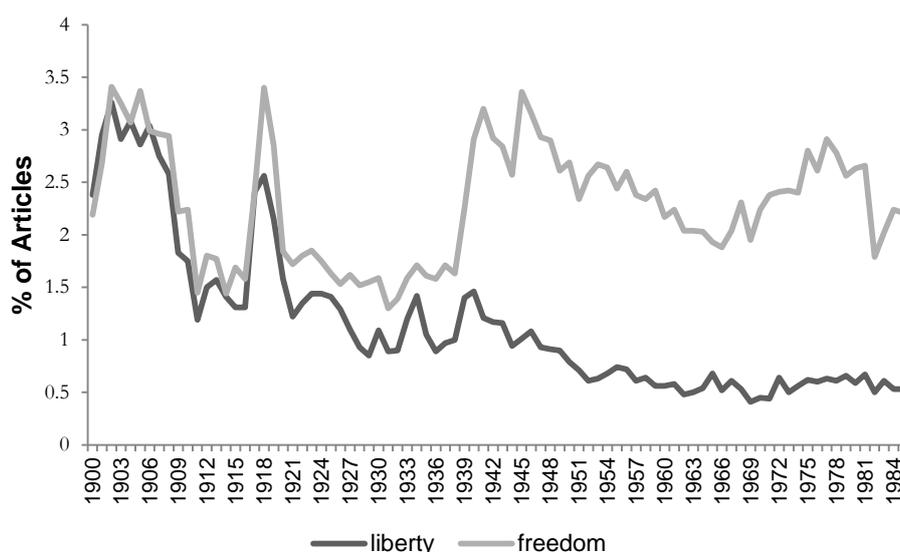


Figure 1.8 *Daily Express: Percentage of Pages 1900-1985*

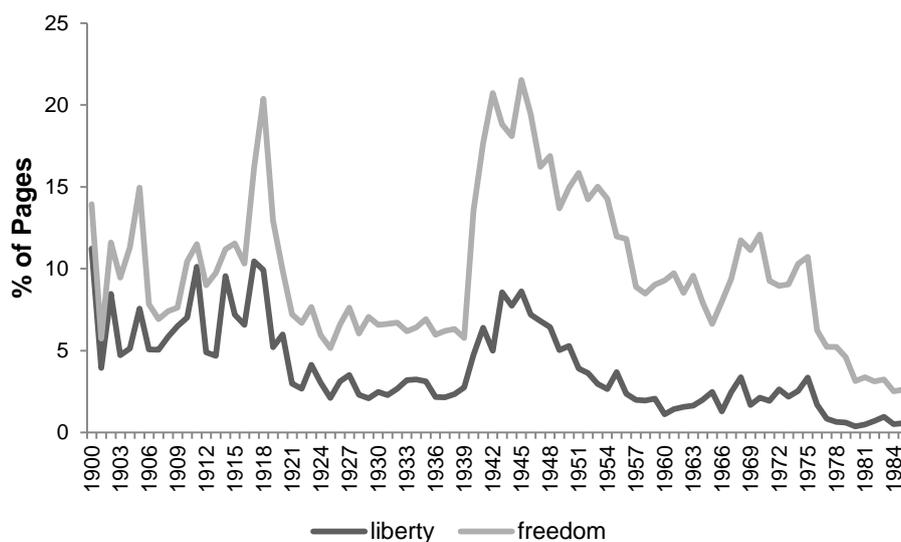
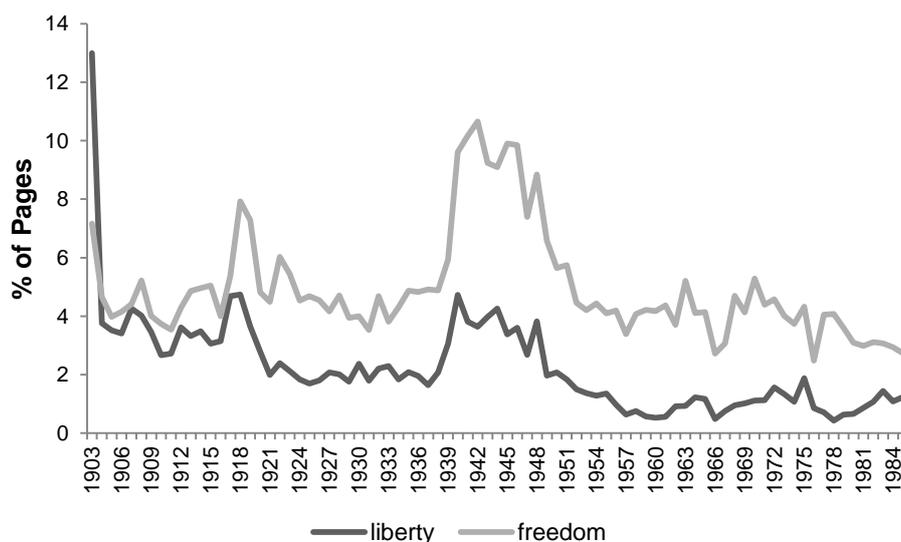


Figure 1.9 *Daily Mirror: Percentage of Pages 1903-1985*



V

Parliamentary Rhetoric

Although the competing battlegrounds of the airwaves, press conferences and television interviews diminished its pre-eminence, for much of the twentieth-century the House of Commons remained a focal point for the public perception of political argument. Consequently, its debates, transcribed in Hansard, are an obvious place to witness politicians' use of liberty and freedom in practice.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ This is true to a lesser extent for the House of Lords. Even though much of the rhetorical context identified is applicable to the upper house, the study below is exclusively focused on the Commons, partly as a means of reducing the corpora to a manageable size but largely

Yet, a combination of formal and unwritten conventions demand that Members' speeches be read as products of perhaps the most complex rhetorical environment in British politics. The debating chamber stages a variety of rhetorical acts, from ministerial statements to dialogical – or pseudo-dialogical – legislative readings, motions and Prime Minister's Questions. Members also speak to a multifaceted audience: whilst the Commons is a place of inter and intra party competition, often facilitating personal and group confrontations, it is also a site of co-operation and compromise where speakers mix personal and party *ethos* with wider representative claims and appeals.¹⁰⁵ As public records, speeches also outlast their delivery, and some gain wide exposure through a variety of media. So although used here as a route into political discourse, any quantitative interpretation of Commons debates must conceive the language and arguments contained in them as products of a particular institution.

Historical treatment of that institution and the sources it created has been mixed. Biographers continually grapple with the question of whether their subject was a successful House of Commons performer,¹⁰⁶ and the debates themselves endure as a source for studying political history.¹⁰⁷ Although historians have neglected its role, culture and practices for large swathes of the twentieth century, Parliament's major crises, prominent factions, roles and evolving procedures have received some attention.¹⁰⁸ Two decades ago, Waller examined the humour and 'club atmosphere' of the house, whilst Harrison

because of the supremacy of the lower house in the 20th century. Hereafter, references to 'Hansard' and 'Parliamentary speech' refer only to House of Commons debates.

¹⁰⁵ Cornelia Ilie, 'Analytical perspectives on parliamentary and extra-parliamentary discourses', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 42 (2010), 879-84.

¹⁰⁶ See many of the profiles in the ODNB reprinted in: Hugo Young, *Political Lives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Phillip Norton (ed.), *Eminent Parliamentarians: The Speaker's Lectures* (London: Biteback, 2012); Richard A. Butler, *The Art of Memory: Friends in Perspective* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982), see pp. 79-95 for Aneurin Bevan.

¹⁰⁷ Phillip Williamson, *Stanley Baldwin: Conservative Leadership and National Values* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); See the use in: Paul Addison, *The Road to 1945* (London: Quartet Books, 1977), pp. 223-5 on Beveridge Report debate; On austerity: Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity Britain: Rationing, Controls and Consumption 1939-1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 214-17.

¹⁰⁸ On events: Kevin Jefferys, 'May 1940: The Downfall of Neville Chamberlain', *Parliamentary History*, 10 (1991), 363-78; John Rasmussen, 'Party Discipline in Wartime: The Downfall of the Chamberlain Government', *Journal of Politics*, 32 (1970), 379-406; On roles: James Lynskey, 'Backbench Tactics and Parliamentary Party Structure (1945-57)', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 27 (1973-4), 28-37; John Sainty, 'Assistant Whips 1922-1964', *Parliamentary History*, 4 (1985), 201-4; On factions: Jack Brand, 'Faction as Its Own Reward: Groups in the British Parliament 1945-86', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 42 (1989), 148-64; For a useful but now outdated bibliography see: Stuart Ball, 'The British Parliament 1900-1951: A Bibliography', *Parliamentary History*, 10 (1991), 379-86; 'Parliament and Politics, 1900-1951', *Parliamentary History*, 10, 2 (1991), 243-76.

examined the role of female MPs.¹⁰⁹ More recently, Mari Takayanagi has shed light on the committee roles of women members, and Toye has assessed the impact of suffrage and Labour MPs on the culture of the Commons.¹¹⁰ Whilst this scholarship is extending our knowledge of the symbolic and ritual in parliamentary politics, the language and argumentative strategies deployed in the Commons have not received sufficient historical consideration.

This is not to say this complex rhetorical environment has been neglected elsewhere. On the contrary, over the last decade political scientists and socio-linguists have developed significant theoretical perspectives on parliamentary rhetoric. In particular, scholars have identified overlapping regimes of institutionalised power and legitimisation, operating through procedures and speech.¹¹¹ Rather than passive actors in these structures, socio-linguists have shown that politicians abide by speaking conventions, but regularly use, bend or break them to their advantage.¹¹² Yet, very little of this research has taken a quantitative or historical standpoint and most examines recent debate at a relatively small scale.¹¹³ Few, if any, attempts have been made to study broad trends in parliamentary language or argument over extended timeframes, and the possibilities arising from integrating Hansard with non-corpora datasets to create new variables have gone unnoticed. It is the design of precisely that kind of study to which attention now turns.

¹⁰⁹ P.J. Waller, 'Laughter in the House: A Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Parliamentary Survey,' *Twentieth Century British History*, 4, 1 (1994), 4-37; Brian Harrison, 'Women in a Men's House: the Women MPs, 1919-1945', *Historical Journal*, 29, 3 (1986), 623-54.

¹¹⁰ Mari Takayanagi, "'They have Made Their Mark Entirely Out of Proportion to Their Numbers': Women and Parliamentary Committees, c. 1919-1945' in *The Aftermath of Suffrage: Women, Gender, and Politics in Britain, 1918-1945*, edited by Julie Gottlieb and Richard Toye (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 181-202; Richard Toye, 'Perfectly Parliamentary'? The Labour Party and the House of Commons in the Inter-war Years', *Twentieth Century British History*, 25, 1 (2014), 1-29; 'The Rhetorical Culture of the House of Commons after 1918', *History*, 99, 335 (2014), 270-98.

¹¹¹ Jack Brand, *British Parliamentary Parties: Policy and Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); Paul Chilton outlines how political speech pursues strategies of coercion, legitimisation, and misinformation in *Analysing Political Discourse: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 42-7.

¹¹² Cornelia Ilie, 'Strategic uses of Parliamentary forms of address: The case of the U.K. Parliament and the Swedish Riksdag', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 42 (2010), 885-911; 'Insulting as (un)parliamentary Practice in the British and Swedish Parliaments: a rhetorical approach' in *Cross Cultural Perspectives on Parliamentary Discourse*, edited by Paul. Bayley (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2004), pp. 45-86.

¹¹³ The work of Paul Bayley is an example: Paul Bayley, Cinzia Bevitori, and Elisabetta Zoni, 'Threat and Fear in Parliamentary Debates in Britain, Germany and Italy' in *Cross Cultural Perspectives on Parliamentary Discourse*, edited by Paul. Bayley (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2004), pp. 185-236.

Studying Hansard Quantitatively

Hansard has been published in a digital format for some time, and many historians will be familiar with the searchable edition available online.¹¹⁴ Most of this data stems from the Hansard Digitisation Project, which first used OCR to digitise Hansard in 2005, although a number of projects are refining aspects of it.¹¹⁵ Despite making Parliamentary debates more accessible for quotation, the dataset has not been utilised in the same way that scholars cited above analysed manifestos. The main exception is an unpublished paper by Jonathon Bright, which outlines some of the broad dynamics of parliamentary debate between 1936 and 2000 using similar corpus to that below.¹¹⁶ Whilst attempting to monitor changes in topics discussed, Bright focussed on the act of speaking, rather than tracking linguistic or rhetorical change in the speeches themselves. He is primarily interested in the changing number and length of speeches and interruptions, the career length of individuals, and gender differentials. The research below focuses squarely on the content of debate, and when it does consider these broader diagnostics it is only as variables. The key variable of party affiliation was also unavailable in Bright's work. Another, more problematic, exception is recent work by Business scholar Lew Perren and collaborators, who used Hansard to analyse terms associated with entrepreneurship, small businesses, and innovation.¹¹⁷ Unfortunately, their methodology of extracting only those speeches that contain their target term from the Millbank Systems website is fundamentally flawed. Without total word counts for the entire corpus they are unable to normalise results, seriously distorting the chronologies reported. Moreover, without this information the

¹¹⁴ <http://www.hansard-archive.parliament.uk/>; <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/> [Accessed: Nov 2013].

¹¹⁵ http://www.cilip.org.uk/get-involved/special-interest-groups/government/Documents/hansard_digitisation.pdf [Accessed: Nov 2013].

¹¹⁶ Armèn Hakhverdian, 'Capturing Government Policy on the Left–Right Scale: Evidence from the United Kingdom, 1956–2006', *Political Studies*, 57 (2009), 720-45; Johnathon Bright, 'The Dynamics of Parliamentary Discourse in the UK: 1936-2011', unpublished but available at: <http://ipp.oii.ox.ac.uk/2012/programme-2012/track-b-policy/panel-6b-legislation-and-public-policy/jonathan-bright-the-dynamics-of> [Accessed: Nov 2013].

¹¹⁷ Lew Perren and Jonathan Sapsed, 'Innovation as Politics: The Rise and Reshaping of Innovation in UK Parliamentary Discourse, 1960-2005', *Research Policy*, 42 (2013), 1815-28; Lew Perren and Charles Dannreuther, 'Political Signification of the Entrepreneur: Temporal Analysis of Constructs, Agency and Reification', *International Small Business Journal*, 31, 6 (2012), 603-28; Lew Perren and Charles Dannreuther, *Political Economy of the Small Firm* (Oxon: Routledge, 2013), pp. 50-54.

statistical measures they describe cannot be applied accurately.¹¹⁸ Despite contemporary interest in 'big data' analysis, historians have yet to grapple with older sources like Hansard that fit that definition.¹¹⁹

Arguably, there are good reasons for this. Though frequently assumed to be, Hansard reports are not strictly verbatim. Comparing Hansard with recordings shows that, in addition to removing references to giving-way, the Speaker, or his shouting 'order', stenographers and editors filter reformulations, incomplete utterances, pauses, and fillers.¹²⁰ Slips from formal convention are sometimes corrected and a 'house style' eliminates contractions, promotes conservative grammatical constructions, and omits or changes a limited number of adverbials, determiners, modals and multi-part verbs.¹²¹ Most are fairly minor symptoms of Hansard's purpose as a decontextualized, written report rather than idyllic transcript for linguists, but the impact on a project depends upon its intended object of research: a conversation-analysis inspired study of verbal performance, interruptions or impersonal pronouns might be risky, as would conclusions premised entirely on the power of a single adverbial. However, even those critical of Hansard's credentials as a transcript admit the changes are unlikely to affect studies focussed on discourses rather than performance. Indeed, compared to other sources for historical speech, such as edited newspaper reports, Hansard is remarkably accurate.¹²² For the present study, there is no evidence that Hansard's editors alter the significant lexical choices

¹¹⁸ Most of their work covers only the latter years of the period below. Some statements suggest the Z, T and MI tests have not been applied as intended by their developers: for example, Z-scoring requires that the overall frequencies of *both* node term and potential collocates are known, as well as the total words for the corpus. Throughout their published work, the methodology of extracts from the web (rather than full XML corpus) is used without addressing this critical issue. At some points, it appears that BNC has been used as a substitute for the expected frequency statistics.

¹¹⁹ The definition of big-data is normally that the size of such data makes it unwieldy for analysis. Whilst this is an unsatisfactory definition, it is a product of the emerging field and a desire to keep it relative to computing technology.

¹²⁰ Stef Slembrouck, 'The Parliamentary Hansard "Verbatim" Report: the Written Construction of Spoken Discourse', *Language and Literature*, 1, 2, (1992), 101-19; Sandra Mollin, 'The Hansard hazard: gauging the accuracy of British parliamentary transcripts' *Corpora*, 2, 2, 187-210.

¹²¹ Mollin has shown, for example, that 'look at' is replaced by 'consider' or 'examine', and 'make sure' is swapped with 'ensure'.

¹²² In fact, the brief examples given by Mollin demonstrate how far the majority of formulations are preserved, and her blanket judgement that Hansard is a 'nightmare' for linguists seems far too strong for a study based on a not unproblematic comparison of just four hours of debate. Mollin appears unaware of the full extent of the corpora and the XML versions which resolve many of the additional difficulties she cites. Although impossible to compare to what was actually said, brief investigation suggests the sample rates Mollin gives are inaccurate for the historical corpus as a whole.

discussed, and the variation and partisan effects described below weaken any thesis that they exert a homogenising authorship. That said, in light of earlier theoretical concern regarding subtleties of form, the possibility of distortion is accounted for, chiefly when interpreting evidence for formulaic sequences.

Practicalities also account for Hansard's neglect. To properly interrogate the source, researchers must distinguish between the content Hansard records. For example, academics interested in speech need to carefully filter written answers and division lists. There are also well-known issues surrounding identification of individuals, who occasionally appear under different titles.¹²³ Nor has Hansard been immune from the generic difficulties of accurate text-recognition that hinder all large digitisation projects. The tallest barrier, however, remains the sheer size of the data. Many expensive, commercial programs become slow or unresponsive when searching one year's worth of raw Hansard for a single term, let alone searching for multiple terms across all fifty-four years simultaneously. Moreover, to release the full potential of Hansard data, researchers need to be able to quickly test theories, visualise results, precisely define and adjust inputs, target discrete elements of Hansard, and export their work into statistical packages.

Corpus Creation

Engineering this wish-list for a complex, multi-authored, text like Hansard is challenging. The raw data used to construct the corpus consisted of XML data files that power the Public Whip website.¹²⁴ These are a processed subset of the entire Hansard dataset published by Parliament, which have been 'parsed' to allow the isolation of Hansard's 'spoken' content and identify individual members. Each speech is tagged with a Hansard ID number, which alters whenever a Member changes party or constituency. Importantly, access to this data in full allows researchers to calculate the total word count for House of Commons debates and thus display queries as an accurate percentage of total speech.¹²⁵ The most basic program written by the author used the XML tags to

¹²³ Devising methods of improving this has been the aim of AHRC funded projects and the data available on Public Whip.org. The issue was mitigated below by relying on IDs not names.

¹²⁴ <http://ukparse.kforge.net/parlparse/> [Accessed: Nov 2013] or <http://www.publicwhip.org.uk/project/code.php> [Accessed: Sep 2014]

¹²⁵ This is one of several reasons why testing these hypotheses through the Millbank systems site would not be accurate.

extract individual speeches.¹²⁶ The software then performed standard text cleaning to ensure consistency before splitting the text into words and calculating the total word count.¹²⁷ At this point, program behaviour varies according to input: the default routine, for example, removes very common words and calculates frequency statistics for individual terms; other versions split the text into two-word chunks, creating bi-grams, and so on. Either way, the process was repeated for every speech event identified to calculate annualised frequency statistics for Hansard between 1936 and 1990 and store these in a database. A custom graphing program then reproduced normalised data. Beyond this basic frequency functionality, a suite of more complex programs performed custom tasks, such as extracting the context around a keyword or pinpointing its position within a speech. Designed to work with Hansard, these programs had the key advantage that, instead of loading the entire text into third-party software, each ‘crawled’ through debates and dynamically included or excluded speeches based on associated metadata and user input.

The research below capitalised on this to create a parallel dataset that split the corpus along party lines. Whilst the metadata for very recent years contains a party identifier, the vast majority of historical data does not record MPs’ affiliations. Nor does Hansard itself, and this has inhibited analysis of potentially the most interesting variable affecting speakers’ linguistic choices. The metadata contains the full names of speakers, but this is difficult to link consistently with a party, not least because of the potential for differences in spelling and format. More fundamentally a publically available list of all relevant MPs and parties did not exist in a digital form. However, the metadata did reliably link Hansard IDs to constituencies, which provided an opportunity to check the result of the relevant election in each constituency and infer MPs’ political allegiances. This was not a simple process, however. First, a dataset that accurately and fully records election results by constituency in a consistent format covering the entire period was not readily available digitally.¹²⁸ One such

¹²⁶ Speeches are defined here as periods of uninterrupted speech.

¹²⁷ There are some limitations to the process, although the advantage of automating the process is that consistency is maintained. For example, hyphenated words are split, and the removal of apostrophes temporarily results in extra single-letter ‘words’, although these are later removed.

¹²⁸ A number of options were considered. Craig’s election results are not, to my knowledge, available in a digital form, but were used for manual checking and validation: Fredrick Craig, *British Parliamentary Election Results 1918-1949* (Chichester: Chichester Parliamentary Research, 1983); Fredrick Craig, *British Parliamentary Election Results 1950-1970* (Chichester:

dataset that does cover the entire period, and had been checked against contemporary records, is that produced by Richard Kimber.¹²⁹ A bespoke program extracted the winner of every constituency at general elections between 1935 and 1990 and mapped the results onto Hansard IDs. Again this process presented difficulties, as constituency names often altered with boundary changes and required careful disambiguation. A further program was able to reduce over 1,000 identification errors to just one, and successfully associate nearly 7,000 speakers with their constituencies to infer their party affiliation via election results.¹³⁰ Moreover, because the system relies on Hansard IDs, rather than names, the identification is dynamic. When members were elected in by-elections, or crossed the floor, a new Hansard ID ensured the change was detected and their party determined by their affiliation at the following general election, or a fall-back list if this was inappropriate.¹³¹ Having accurately linked Hansard IDs with party affiliations, customised versions of the programs described above could assign each speech to the correct sub-corpora (Conservative, Labour and Others) and store data accordingly.¹³² When applied to every speech, the larger corpus of 3,023,754 speeches is effectively split into the three partisan sub-corpora that enable the comparative analysis below.¹³³

Validation and Controls

The total word data presented in Figure 1.10 closely matches the results achieved by Bright. This is a strong indication that independently written programs extract speeches accurately from Hansard.¹³⁴ Despite fluctuations, partly caused by election recesses, the volume of Commons speech has increased gradually over time. It is important to note that the analysis below controls for this and similar differences between the parties by discussing trends as percentages of total corpus or sub-corpora speech. As a failsafe, and to test if any of the patterns identified were a product of increased opportunity to

Political Reference Publications, 1971); Fredrick Craig, *British Parliamentary Election Results 1974-1983* (Chichester: Chichester Parliamentary Research, 1984).

¹²⁹ <http://www.politicsresources.net/area/uk/edates.htm> [Accessed: Nov 2013].

¹³⁰ The remaining error is because Hansard itself has an error in the ID number.

¹³¹ This was the case when an MP won a by election or crossed the floor but did not win or maintain that allegiance at the following general election.

¹³² 'Other' is a holding category until full disambiguation of minor parties is attempted. In future, the variants of the Liberal party will need to be carefully separated.

¹³³ Conservative: 1,387,523; Labour: 1,327,767; Other: 308,464

¹³⁴ Bright used a longer data-set (1936-2000), but his annualised totals are in line with those presented here.

speak, most trends were checked for correlation with total word counts; no significant effects were detected. A randomised examination of 100 links between Hansard ID and party affiliations confirmed the process was robust and revealed no party-identification errors. Figure 1.10 also shows the combined partisan sub-corpora overlaid against their parent corpus, revealing that most speeches are incorporated into the partisan statistics. The exceptions, notably in the late thirties, are those where no Hansard ID was recorded. Figure 1.11 suggests that this did not disadvantage one party disproportionately, and the relative percentage each sub-corpus contributed to the overall corpora remained relatively stable in the long term. Further scrutiny shows that the greater proportion of speech recorded as ‘other’ in the thirties and early forties was mainly due to the number of Liberal MPs, standing under various labels. Some of the fluctuations in Conservative totals appear to suggest Tory MPs spoke more in government than in opposition, but this is less true for Labour.

Figure 1.10 *Total Word Counts Hansard Corpus 1936-1990*

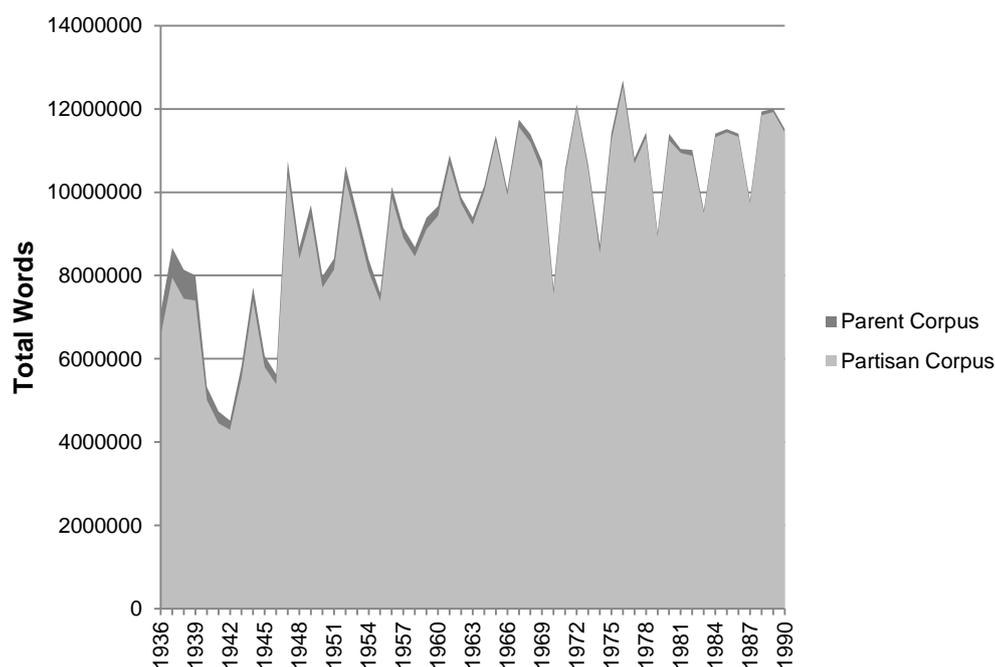
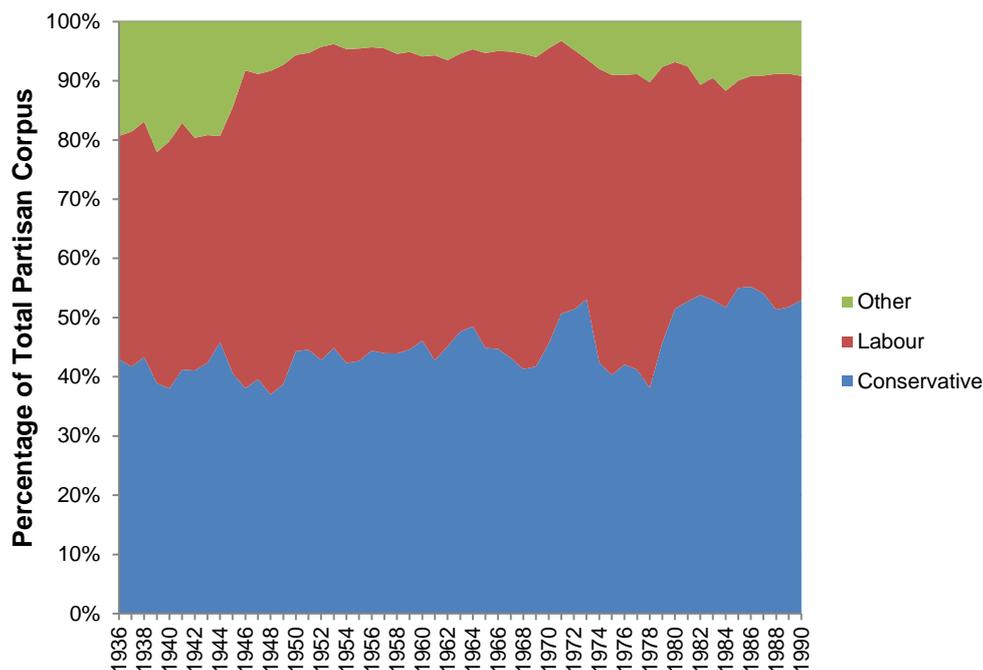


Figure 1.11 *Partisan Sub-Corpora Composition 1936-1990*



Defining Target Terms

The dissection of this data proceeds on four fronts, with time-series and distribution investigations followed by collocation and formulaic sequence detection. Whilst these techniques structure analysis, each contributes to this chapter's two central questions: how has rhetoric using 'freedom' and 'liberty' changed over time, and are there any differences between how politicians used the words, particularly across parties? Perhaps the most crucial step in transitioning between a corpus and sound historical answers to those questions is the design of search-terms. Thus far, definition of 'emancipatory', 'freedom' or 'liberties' based rhetoric has been left open, partly because clear-cut delineation risks closing off counter-intuitive aspects of language. For example, freedom is expressed both literally and metaphorically in political discourse, and subsequent chapters provide strong reasons to think that politicians often talked about freedoms indirectly through rich oppositional imagery, such as restriction and control or tyranny and dictatorship. It also seems clear that studying languages of debate or concepts entails multiple terms, and, at the very least, scholars want to consider synonyms, plurals and variants and should include autonoms or typical oppositions. To manage this complexity, chapters two, three, and four use traditional historical and rhetorical methods to consider evidence of metaphorical languages of restriction, control and release, and the

use of bigger units such as character tropes or narratives to talk about freedom and liberty. In this more methodologically focussed chapter, analysis is constrained to the narrower set of terms directly entailed by those concepts. Of course, that variation remains substantial and presents some serious challenges: both freedom and liberty have word-senses that are not overtly political, and this study wishes to avoid tracking politicians' use of 'free of charge'. At the same time, historians must balance interest in discrete word-forms or word-senses with the need to track the fluctuating use of this rhetoric more generally and avoid preconceptions.

To achieve this, both parent and sub-corpora can be queried to compare specific terms or phrases, as well as collections of these representing a linguistic feature or group of words. The latter all operate via a system similar to the dictionaries used in content analysis, which tell software what to include or exclude from a query. In addition, many of the tests below permitted a restricted type of lemma to act as search objects. This functionality is basic and compiles results for different word-forms rather than lemmatising the text. Linguists disagree on precisely what lemmas should include, and the two studied below, FREED and LIBERT, are deliberately incomplete: they collate 'freedom', with 'freedoms' and 'freed', and 'liberty' with 'liberties', whilst excluding 'free' and 'liberate' and variations like 'liberated' or 'liberators'. Hence, both function as controlled word-stems rather than strict lemmas.¹³⁵ These decisions can be justified on practical and theoretical grounds. Because their primary use is to flag chronological and distributional differences, it was important to narrow the possibility of ambiguous word-senses like those mentioned above regarding 'free'. Moreover, it is apparent that 'liberate' has far more emancipatory connotations than 'liberty' and 'liberties', and therefore will require separate investigation. Although these choices reduce the impact of unrelated or ambiguous meaning-senses of freedom, LIBERT presents a tougher challenge due to phrases like 'taking liberties' and 'at liberty to'. To mitigate these risks, the research adopted two safeguards. First, reading large sections of the text, concordance lines, collocation and formulaic sequence data flagged candidate non-political word-senses and their characteristic form. Second, all the trends identified were retested to ensure comparable results after having excluded

¹³⁵ The label is retained here because the process is so controlled it cannot really be considered word stemming or wildcarding.

those potentially misleading combinations, even though this probably also omitted some instances human-coders would include. The chief protection, though, is diversity: considering a range of specific word-forms, formulations and semantic contexts alongside the frequency of broader lemmas, means that we can be confident the effects discussed relate to recognisably political word-senses.

Time Series and Frequency

With corpus, tools, and subject of interest better defined, discussion can now test whether the chronological patterns identified in British English are present in House of Commons speech. Figure 1.12 suggests that the overarching trends are reflected in the corpus: as seen in the Google and newspaper datasets, ‘freedom’ experienced a rise during WWII, which then receded in the post-war period, whilst ‘liberty’ saw a sustained decline over the corpus. There are, however, some points of difference, especially between the Hansard and Google corpora. In the former, subsequent to its wartime increase, ‘freedom’ exhibits further frequency spikes during the mid-fifties, seventies and again in the final years covered by the corpus. These later rises barely register in the Google NGram corpus, although they do appear in *The Times* and *Daily Mirror* data. The differences might suggest periods of heightened political salience within society-wide trends, which are too brief to impact on English at large, but can be seen in political speech and reporting. Similarly, the decline of ‘liberty’ appears delayed in the Hansard corpus.

Expanding the search-terms to FREED and LIBERT lemmas and introducing partisan variables sheds further light on both disparities. Figure 1.13 shows the FREED lemma across the two main parties’ corpora. For a concept often regarded as the rhetorical property of right-wing politicians and economists, FREED’s broadly equal use between the two main parties is surprising. Indeed, at significant moments, Labour MPs have used this language more than their Tory rivals. To pin-down this chronology, Figure 1.14 removes the moving average to present raw data. It suggests the wartime increase for Labour speakers took place earlier than that seen in Conservative speech and occurred in three distinct spikes (1939, 1942, and 1945-6). Whilst Tory figures declined in the post-war period until 1966, FREED increased as a proportion of Labour MPs’

speech in the late fifties and again in the early seventies. Figure 1.14 suggests these rises are best interpreted as flash points – signals of more intense use, likely related to specific legislation going through the Commons. By contrast, results from the Conservative corpus imply a relatively stable period of use post-war, preceding a dramatic return to wartime levels in the mid-seventies. Although the histories of LIBERT across the two parties once again show chronological differences, their general outline is dominated by decline (Figure 1.15). That said, LIBERT has consistently represented a higher proportion of Labour party speech than Conservative, and whilst the curves are similar, the Labour corpus was more affected by rises in the mid-fifties and eighties.

Splitting these lemmas back into their constituent parts emphasises both the similarities and differences between MPs usage levels. As shown in Figure 1.16, 'liberties' has experienced a decline, but, unlike the Google corpus, the data shows rejuvenation from the mid-seventies into the early eighties. However, the Hansard corpus can also add depth to this story; Figure 1.17 strongly suggests this overall rise was disproportionately due to increases in Labour speakers' use of 'liberties'. Similarly, although the trajectory of 'freedoms' largely reflects that seen in wider British English, and was seemingly used to roughly equivalent extents by both parties, its initial rise in Labour speech predates that in the Conservative corpus. The symptoms of a dramatic shift in the type of arguments made using freedom in the post-war period also reappear. Figure 1.18, for example, shows the very different trajectories of 'freedom to' and 'freedom from' discussed above in relation to Google's corpus. In support, Figure 1.19 shows that the increasing dominance of the first formulation is a trend contributed to by both parties, even if Labour's results periodically experienced greater oscillation. The raw numbers also hint at some interesting features: both parties seemed to experience far larger variation in their 'freedom to' results than 'freedom from', and, once again, the wartime increase in 'freedom from' in the Labour corpus preceded their opponents by a year.

In general terms, then, the Hansard corpus and its partisan sub-corpora constructed here confirm many of the patterns reflected in the Google and newspaper datasets. There is mounting evidence for significant changes in language throughout the twentieth century, some of which, such as the

increasing supremacy of 'freedom to', are suggestive of shifting argumentative patterns in post-war political culture. In respect of chronology, the remaining task is to step beyond recognising liberty's decline and freedom's expansion in terms of frequency and use the more advanced techniques of collocation and formulaic sequences to both explain and further interrogate these trends. Notwithstanding the differences identified, perhaps the most surprising feature of this language in a political context is the similarity between party usage levels. This is not to say *how* politicians used these terms, or what that use represented, was neutral or unpartisan, but the statistics do suggest that neither party dominated this discourse completely. As we shall see, if there is evidence for partisan rhetoric, it is in specific patterns of use, associations, and formulations rather than overall frequency levels.

Figure 1.12 Frequency of 'freedom' and 'liberty' in Hansard 1936-90 MAV (3)

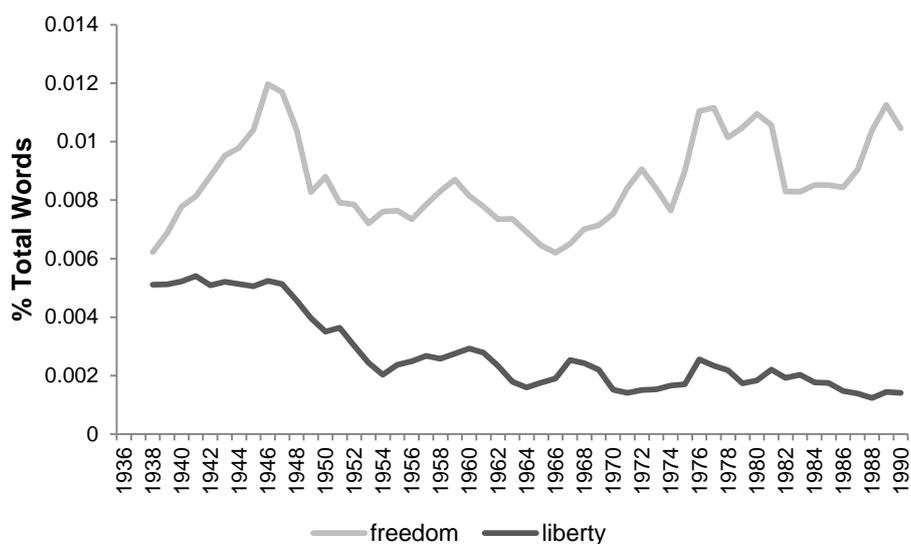


Figure 1.13 *Frequency of FREED in Hansard 1936-90 MAv (3)*

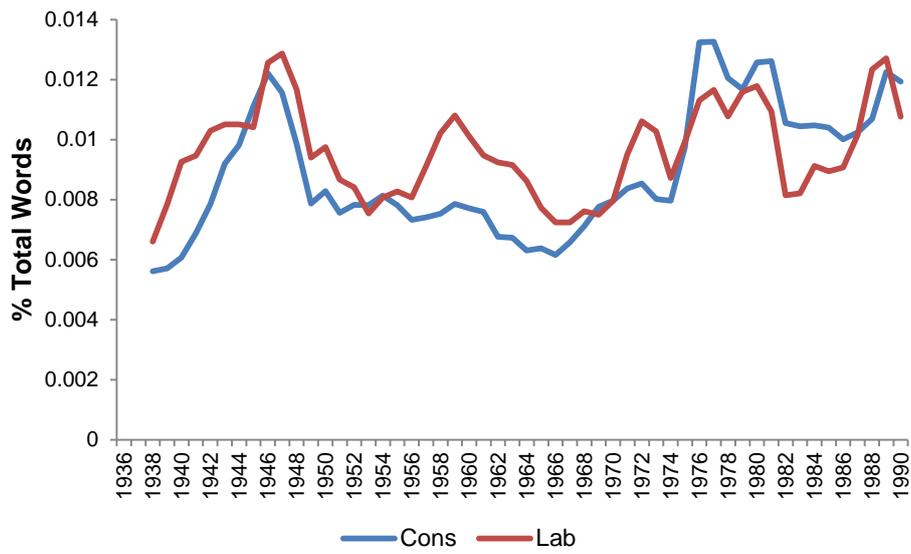


Figure 1.14 *Frequency of FREED in Hansard 1936-90*

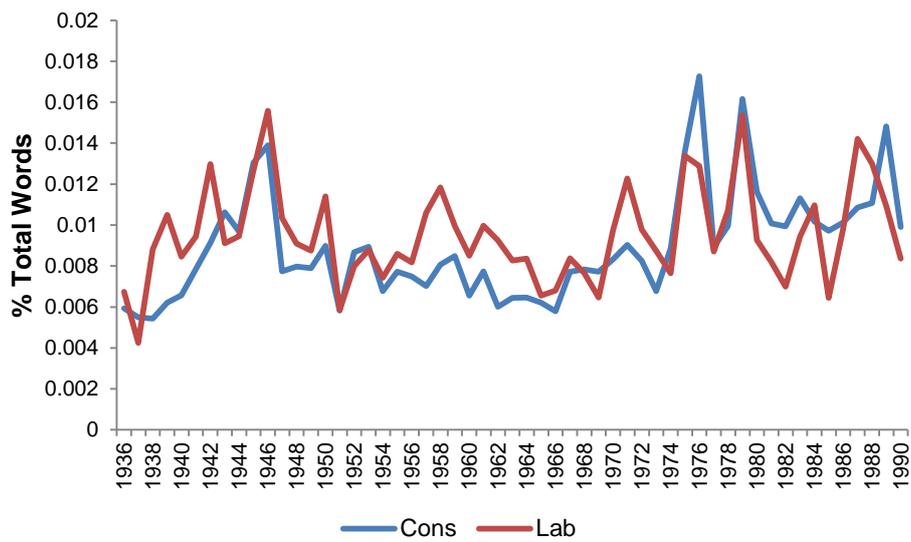


Figure 1.15 Frequency of *LIBERT* in Hansard 1936-90 MAV (3)

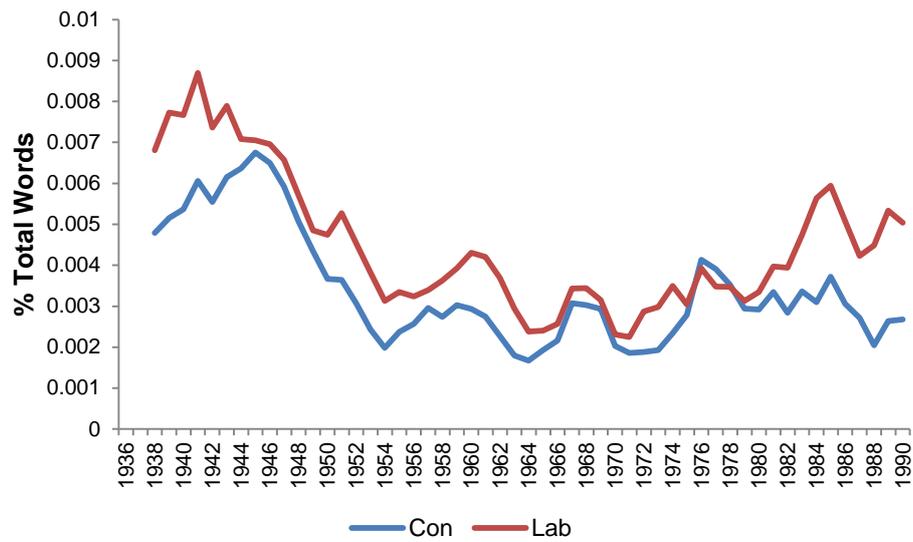


Figure 1.16 Frequency of 'liberties' and 'freedoms' in Hansard 1936-90 MAV (3)

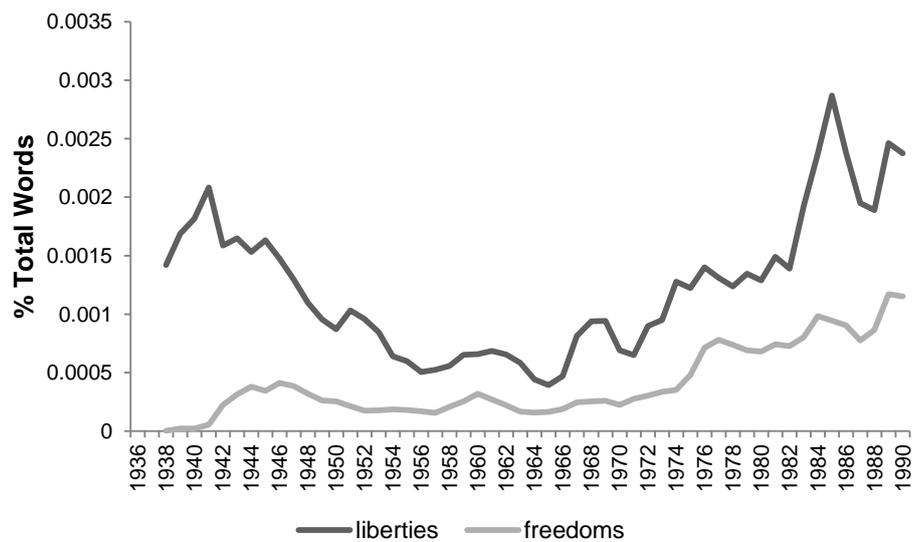


Figure 1.17 *Liberties and Freedoms in Partisan Corpora 1936-90 MAV (3)*

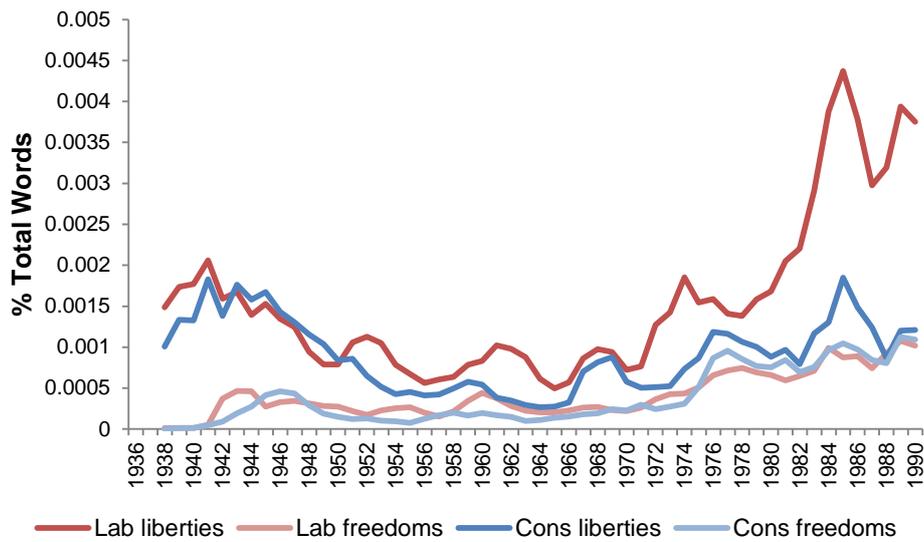


Figure 1.18 *Frequency of 'freedom to' and 'freedom from' in Hansard 1936-90 MAV (3)*

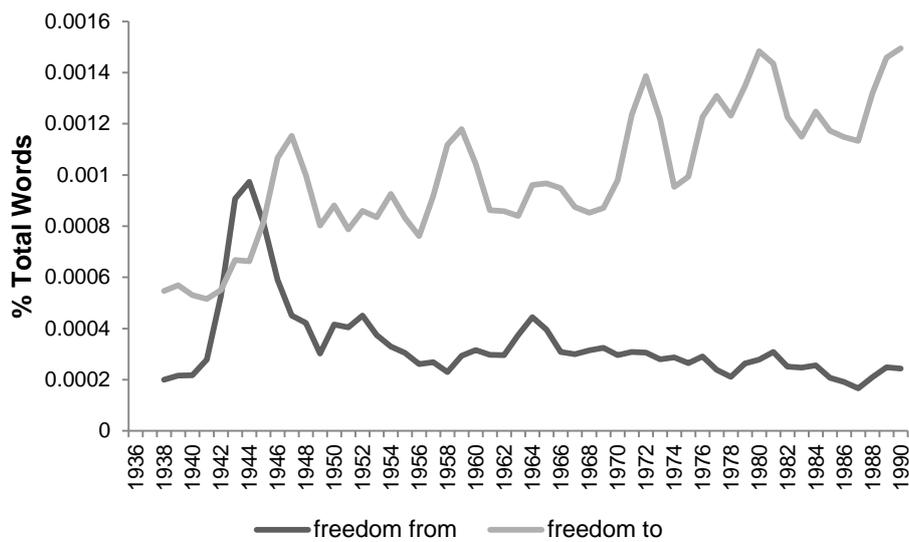
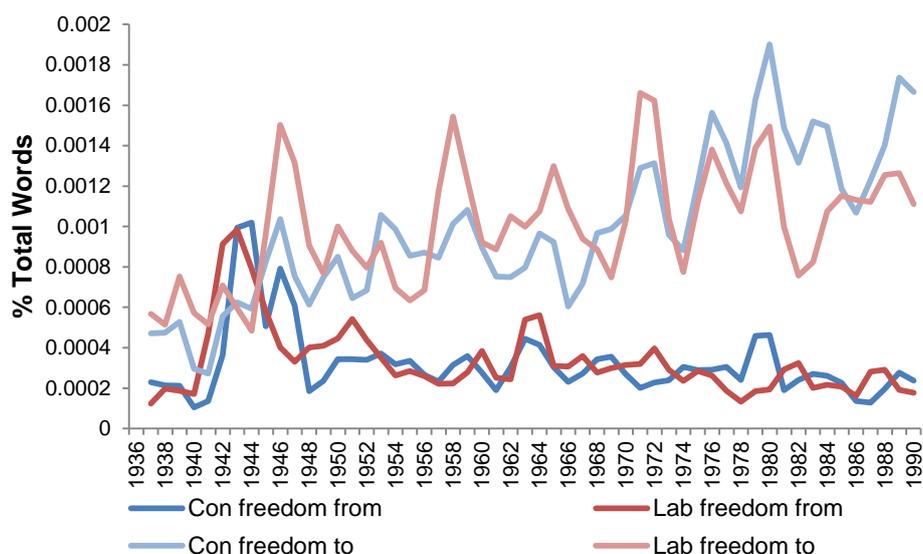


Figure 1.19 *Partisan Use of 'freedom from' and 'freedom to' 1936-90 MAV (2)*

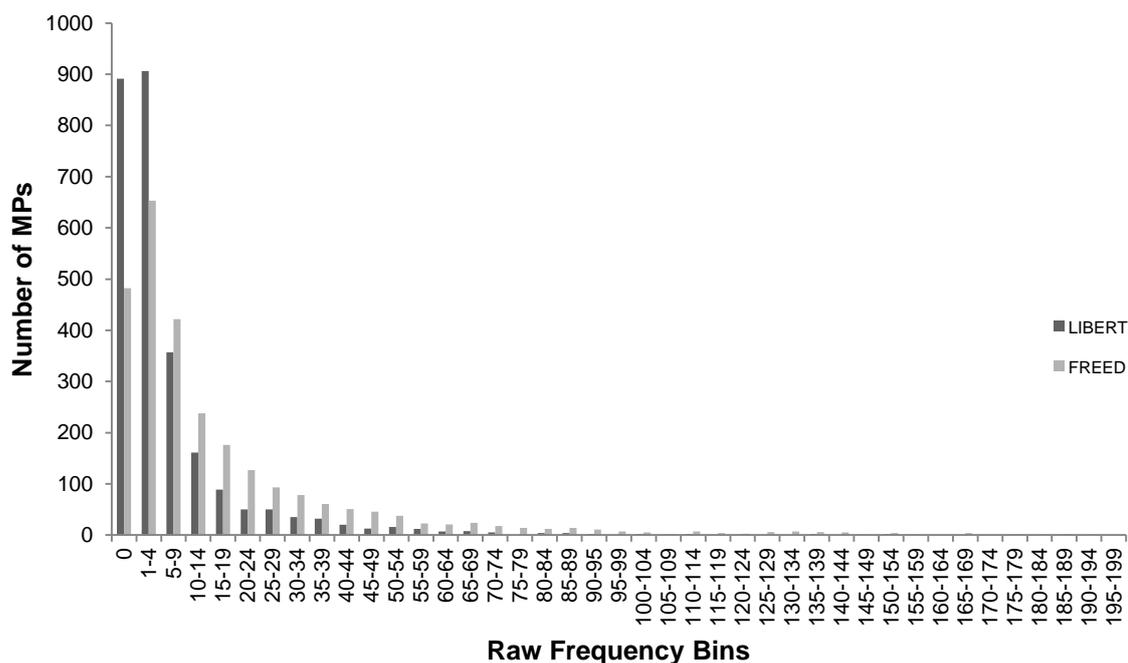


Distribution

Even though frequency counts are informative by themselves, examining this data's distribution across the corpora affords deeper understanding of who deployed this language and when. Because the corpus represents a collection of individuals' speeches, it is important to know whether FREED and LIBERT lemmas were evenly dispersed amongst MPs. To do so, the corpora must be deconstructed and statistics calculated for each Member, taking into account their changing identities in Hansard. No researcher could attempt such a task manually, so a custom program tracked each MP's career to generate 2,679 sub-corpora representing every Member's collated contributions to Hansard 1936-1990. On that basis, it was possible to breakdown the frequency statistics above across the population by computing each individual's use of keywords. This manipulation had some limitations: Firstly, although steps were taken to ensure the metadata used was accurate, the size of the corpus renders checking all cases impractical. Secondly, the individual statistics do not necessarily reflect speakers' linguistic habits per se, but the language of their time in Parliament and the Commons debates they participated in. It is also worth remembering that the right to speak is determined by institutional roles.¹³⁶

¹³⁶ Although, the results printed below are based on raw frequencies to make them more intelligible, normalising in terms of total words spoken produces a distribution with very similar characteristics.

That said, the histograms shown in Figure 1.20 clearly demonstrate that FREED and LIBERT lemmas are not normally distributed across speakers; instead, both are positively skewed. For the sake of space, the histograms' right-hand tails are truncated (they would otherwise extend to 418 and 234 for FREED and LIBERT respectively). The majority of parliamentarians used this language on at least one occasion: 66% of Members were recorded using the lemma LIBERT, whilst 82% mentioned FREED. However, the figures fall away quite dramatically, with only a third of speakers using FREED fifteen or more times and only 14% using LIBERT to that extent. In fact, just 857 speakers (31% of members) account for 90% of the total frequency of LIBERT and 40% of speakers for the same percentage of FREED. This impression is confirmed by the descriptive statistics in Table 1.2, which show large standard deviations indicating a wide spread away from the means. Significant positive kurtosis and skew point to distortion by outliers and a general lean towards lower use, although higher results on both counts suggest LIBERT's distribution is less normal than FREED. There is also some evidence for inter-party differences: it appears that Conservatives both used LIBERT less over their careers and encompassed more variation within their ranks. Labour speakers, on average, also use FREED more during their careers - a claim endorsed by higher range and upper quartile (Q3) figures. Similarly, only 10% of Conservatives used LIBERT more than fifteen times, whereas the number is six percentage points higher for Labour. Because the kurtosis figures suggest Labour's results are less affected by outliers, there is little evidence the difference in usage levels seen visually in Figures 1.15 to 1.17 are products of a few exceptional Labour speakers.

Figure 1.20 *Lemma Frequency over Members' Careers (Range 0-199)*

Possible partisan differences aside, the key message is that some Members use this language disproportionately. To political historians, of course, these outliers are potentially interesting: could these Members have anything in common? Unfortunately, questions like 'who used these terms the most' highlight the level of interpretation involved in quantitative measures. Raw frequency counting advantages those with long parliamentary careers, especially Members who held institutional roles affording more opportunities to speak. On the other hand, normalising purely by total words recorded inflates those with very low overall word counts. Table 1.3 adopts a compromise by setting an inclusion threshold, which requires an MP's raw frequency to be within the top 1% of the population, but ranking qualifying speakers according to normalised percentages. Balanced in this way, backbenchers can still outrank ministers, but the effect of low word counts is minimised.

Some of the results are surprising, although they can be explained with reference either to specific circumstances or the trends already identified above. For example, many of the high users of LIBERT trained as lawyers, and some of these (Paget, Bell and Silverman) campaigned against capital punishment by drawing upon civil liberties arguments. Likewise, Fenner Brockway's ranking is probably due to his articulating anti-conscription, anti-imperialist stances, and

both he and David Winnick staunchly advocated human rights. As we shall see in chapter four, Ronald Bell's position in both columns, on the other hand, can partly be attributed to his opposing race relations legislation. These idiosyncrasies aside, the results confirm aspects of the findings above: Labour Members dominate the LIBERT rankings 17 to 9, but this is more balanced for FREED at 14 to 11. Comparing well-known individuals both affirms and gives pause to public memory of their rhetoric. Churchill and Thatcher, for example, were clearly significant users of this language, but their image as voices for liberty must be set within the context of equally loud champions on the Left.¹³⁷ The main conclusion, though, is that outliers reasonably reflect the wider inter-party distribution and can be explained as the product of individual rhetorical styles or policy interests.

TABLE 1.2 *Descriptive Statistics about Speakers Careers by Lemma and Corpus*

Lemma	Mean	Range	Q3	Std Deviation	Variation Coefficient	Kurtosis	Skew
LIBERT Con	5.82	187	6	13.57	2.32	59.21	6.23
LIBERT Lab	8.86	234	9	19.03	2.14	37.06	5.07
LIBERT All	7.47	234	7	16.73	2.23	46.04	5.58
FREED Con	16.37	413	19	27.82	1.69	43.45	4.78
FREED Lab	21.06	418	25	36.09	1.71	30.47	4.41
FREED All	17.84	418	21	31.38	1.75	35.24	4.62

¹³⁷ Thatcher once made the comparison between herself and Churchill on this basis: Margaret Thatcher, 'Winston Churchill Memorial Lecture: 'Europe - The Obligations of Liberty', 18 Oct 1979, Available at: <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/speeches/displaydocument.asp?docid=104149> [Accessed: Nov 2013].

TABLE 1.3 *Top 1% Users of libert and freed Normalised by Total Words 1936-90*

Rank	LIBERT (Raw Freq > 75)	FREED (Raw Freq > 142)
1	Archibald Southby (91) (Con)	Norman Buchan (335) (Lab)
2	Fenner Brockway (135) (Lab)	Ivan Lawrence (208) (Con)
3	Ivan Lawrence (179) (Con)	Ronald Bell (220) (Con)
4	David Winnick (105) (Lab)	Robert Hughes (169) (Lab)
5	Reginald Paget (159) (Lab)	Neil Kinnock (156) (Lab)
6	Clive Soley (85) (Lab)	Clement Davies (185) (Lib)
7	Clement Davies (123) (Lib)	Margaret Thatcher (413) (Con)
8	Patrick Gordon Walker (89) (Lab)	Eric Heffer (192) (Lab)
9	Samuel Silverman (234) (Lab)	Teddy Taylor (179) (Con)
10	Norman St John-Stevas (Con)	Winston Churchill (278) (Con)
11	Roy Hattersley (149) (Lab)	Harold Lever (144) (Lab)
12	John Fraser (80) (Lab)	Robert Carr (143) (Con)
13	Herbert Morrison (212) (Lab)	Reginald Maudling (212) (Con)
14	Charles Hale (136) (Lab)	Horace King (183) (Lab)
15	Ronald Bell (81) (Con)	Eric Fletcher (167) (Lab)
16	Eldon Griffiths (100) (Con)	Michael Foot (331) (Lab)
17	Gerald Kaufman (86) (Lab)	Herbert Morrison (225) (Lab)
18	R.A. Butler (187) (Con)	William Ross (201) (Unionist)
19	Tony Benn (114) (Lab)	Alan Lennox-Boyd (150) (Con)
20	James Ede (150) (Lab)	Harold Wilson (418) (Lab)
21	Aneurin Bevan (114) (Lab)	Geoffrey Howe (188) (Con)
22	Eric Fletcher (93) (Lab)	Roy Hattersley (150) (Lab)
23	Michael Maitland Stewart (117) (Lab)	Anthony Eden (169) (Con)
24	Michael Foot (153) (Lab)	Samuel Silverman (177) (Lab)
25	Margaret Thatcher (102) (Con)	Michael Maitland Stewart (166) (Lab)
26	Winston Churchill (83) (Con)	Edward Heath (153) (Con)
27	John Boyd-Carpenter (85)(Con)	James Callaghan (153) (Lab)

A closely related facet of these terms' distribution within a rhetorical culture is whether they were used in isolation or tended to cluster together. We might predict, for example, that most days' sittings will contain few, if any, occurrences, but some will experience spikes due to particularly relevant business in the House. A complementary hypothesis could be that keywords are generally used more than once in building an argument or to engage with opponents' speeches. The data broadly suggests some clustering: the majority of FREED use occurred in 1,196 of the 8,562 days, and, with just 532 days accounting for 51% its total frequency, LIBERT appears even more concentrated. In fact, the vast majority (82%) of days that recorded any FREED lemma saw it used more than once, and in over half this was greater than four times. The LIBERT lemma was more likely to be used in isolation (39%), and three quarters of days were below four, whereas for FREED this figure was seven. However,

this is a mixed picture: whilst there are some extreme outliers, these are few in number and do not suggest the annualised frequency data charted above regularly hides ‘freak’ debates. Similarly, Table 1.4 shows results from a comparable analysis based on speeches rather than days. In sum, most mentions of FREED and LIBERT occurred in separate speeches, although the former’s slightly higher mean suggests it was more susceptible to concentrations, whereas shaper kurtosis and positive skew for LIBERT hint at relative isolation. Once again, there is some evidence of weak partisan differences in a higher upper quartile and mean for Labour, which combines with reduced kurtosis and skew to suggest the party’s speakers were more prone to concentrated use of both terms.

TABLE 1.4 *Descriptive Statistics – Frequency Concentration in Speeches*

Lemma	Mean	Range	Q3	Std Deviation	Variation Coefficient	Kurtosis	Skew
LIBERT Cons	1.43	33	1	1.15	0.8	133.41	7.41
LIBERT Lab	1.54	31	2	1.37	0.89	88.5	6.61
LIBERT All	1.5	33	2	1.3	0.86	98.81	6.88
FREED Cons	1.48	23	1	1.25	0.84	48.39	5.53
FREED Lab	1.63	19	2	1.45	0.88	27.79	4.36
FREED All	1.55	23	2	1.34	0.86	36.18	4.86

Perhaps the most fine-grain measure of distribution, and one of particular interest to rhetorical scholars, is at what point during their speeches Members use these terms. For example, were ‘freedom’ or ‘liberty’ distributed evenly throughout speeches, or did these words mass at the beginning, middle or end? To answer this question, a custom program read every speech recorded in Hansard 1936-90 longer than 250 words and calculated how far into each the variations of LIBERT and FREED occurred. The results are reproduced as a histogram in Figure 1.21, displaying the distance into speech as a percentage. Although the effect is subtle graphically, speeches’ final three tenths experience a 40.2% rise for FREED and 63.5% rise for LIBERT, and much of this is due to the final tenth. Conversely, the initial tenth of a speech was less likely to include either lemma. Does this suggest ‘freedom’ and ‘liberty’ are more commonly found towards the end of parliamentary speeches? Not necessarily; one alternative explanation of this effect is the definition of a speech as a period of uninterrupted delivery. If an MP is interrupted or gives-way to a question, even

for a single line, their speech is split in two. Although this would imply that FREED and LIBERT are more common just before a speaker is interrupted, it could artificially inflate the final percentile and underrepresent the middle third.

Happily, additional programming can remove interruptions and generate statistics for each speech in its entirety. Figure 1.22 represents the output of the same program redesigned to deal with interruptions by checking for, and compiling, nearby previous and subsequent ‘speeches’ attributed to the same speaker. Because the software only collated these in a strictly controlled manner, manual checks confirmed this was a reliable way of reconstructing a speech. That said, it is not a panacea and is motivated by some thought-provoking assumptions about what is meant by a ‘complete’ Commons speech. Another way to think about this data, therefore, is as a proxy for portions of time holding the floor of the House. Either way, the results show that interruptions are not responsible for the effect above; suppressing them only emphasises the final tenth for both terms. LIBERT, in particular, also begins to show signs of a bimodal distribution, with elevated results in the second tenth of a speech.

Certainly, it is important not to overplay the data’s strength, but Members’ speaking habits over fifty-four years suggests these lemmas are more likely to occur during stages of a speech traditionally associated with summation.

Figure 1.21 *Distance into Speeches >250 Words (With Interruptions)*

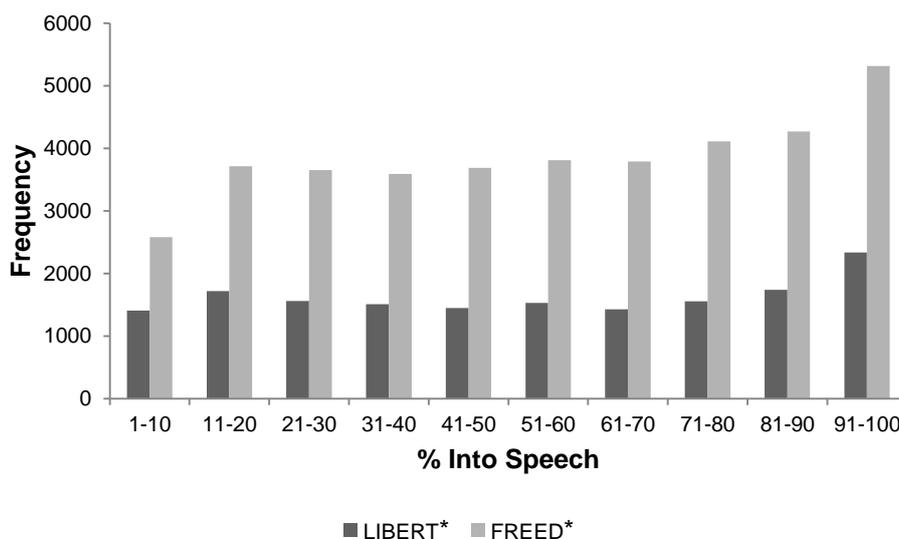
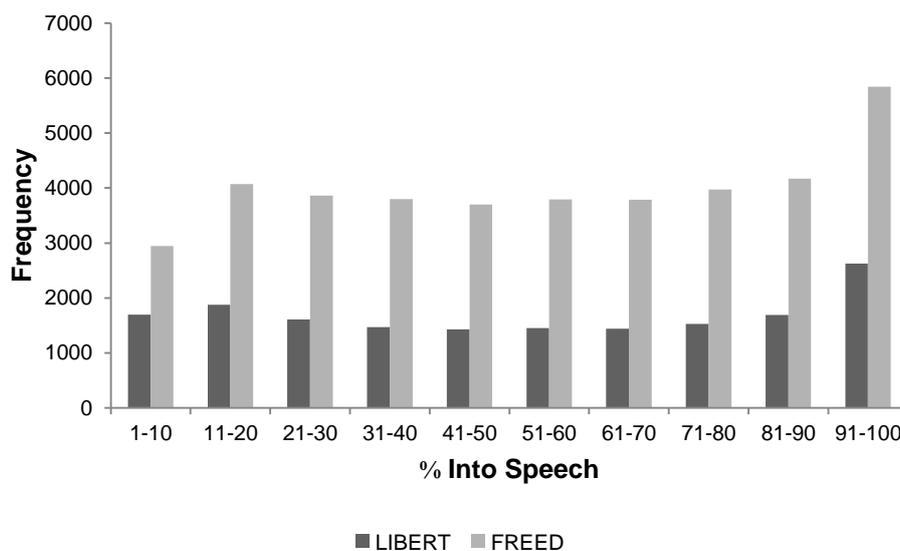


Figure 1.22 *Distance into Speeches >250 Words (Supressing Interruptions)*

Moving away from individual speeches, distribution data begins to reveal the topics this language was commonly used to debate. Figures 1.23 to 1.25, which subdivide lemma frequencies into meta-topics, were generated by combining manual and automated solutions to the practical problem of assigning a subject to every speech in fifty-four years' worth of debates. Hansard provides historians with structured data about topics under consideration in the form of major or minor headings. When systematically extracted, these headers are normally sufficient to identify the broad subject of the debate, statement, or question a speech contributed to.¹³⁸ The challenge is consistently coding headings into stable categories. Pursuing a degree of externality, the top-level topics developed by the UK Policy Agendas Project were used to manually allocate headings to nineteen subject groupings.¹³⁹ Custom software then split the data according to the coding scheme, having located each instance of a lemma in relation to its headings. Given the size of the task and level of information available, this was not a full implementation: the top-level headings amalgamated the 225 sub-topics the Policy Agendas Project lists, and only eleven sample years (at five year intervals from 1936) were included. Debates, of course, can span several categories; therefore, multiple group membership was permitted for headings like 'Labour and Productivity', where both

¹³⁸ Of course, a speaker could have veered from the parameters of debate, or only focussed on one aspect; in that sense, this is a summary measure relying on scale for its salience.

¹³⁹ The full codebook is available at: <http://policyagendasuk.wordpress.com/> [Accessed: December 2013].

'Macroeconomics' and 'Labour and Employment' are implied. Whilst this thesis' scope prohibits more rigorous manual coding, involving multiple coders basing decisions on the full text of speeches, sample verification indicates this was a robust method of making 11,216 and 4,907 topic classifications for FREED and LIBERT respectively.

Figures 1.23-5 demonstrate that the frequency statistics discussed above were unevenly distributed across topics. Without similarly disaggregated total word counts for each, it is difficult to know whether peaks for 'International Affairs' and 'Macroeconomics' simply reflect greater discussion on those subjects or genuinely disproportional use. However, comparing the percentage of a lemma's frequency each topic represented suggests that LIBERT's use was concentrated over fewer subjects than FREED, and that 'Law, Crime and Family', 'Defence', 'Labour and Employment', 'Banking, Finance and Domestic Commerce', 'Health', and 'Civil Rights, Minorities and Immigration' were all of greater importance. In contrast, 'International Affairs' and 'Macroeconomics' contributed a higher proportion of FREED's usage than LIBERT's, as did 'Education and Culture', 'Transportation' and 'Community Development and Housing'. Thus, not only did FREED and LIBERT experience disparate levels of use, this occurred across different topics. One might expect the variation already seen between parties to be reflected similarly. In fact, Figures 1.24 and 1.25 show only minor differences, suggesting that the parties used this language to discuss similar topics. Certainly Parliamentary speech offers little evidence that Tories used 'freedom' to talk about the economy and Labour the welfare state considerably more than their opponents.

Figure 1.23 *Frequencies of Lemmas by Topic*

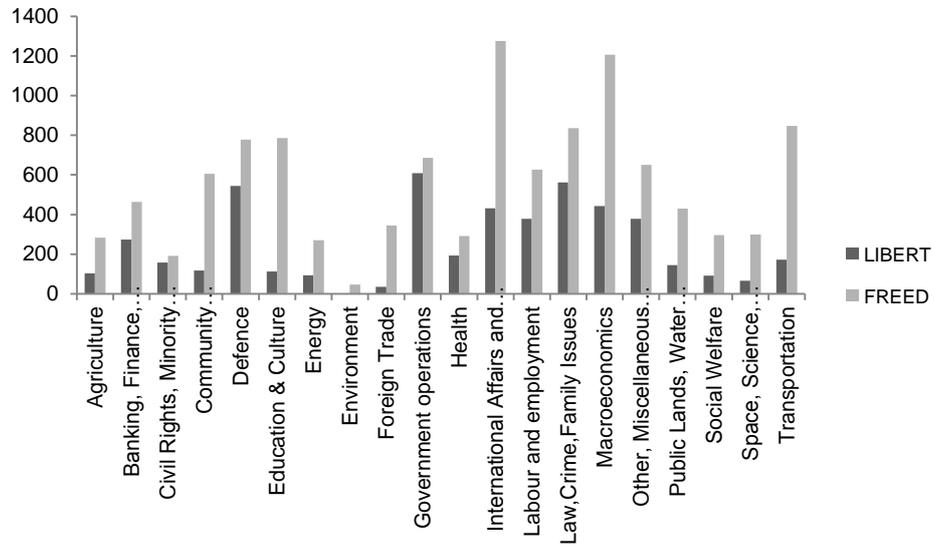


Figure 1.24 *Frequency of FREED by Topic*

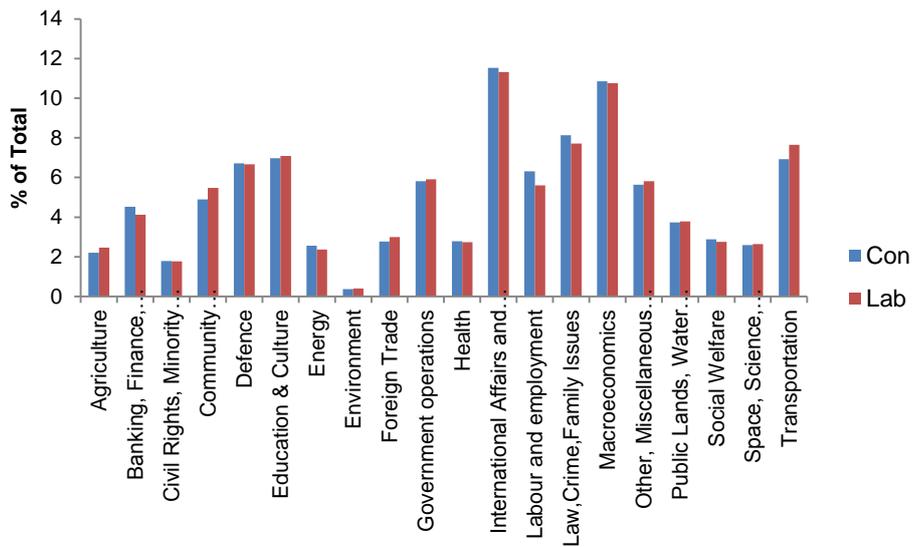
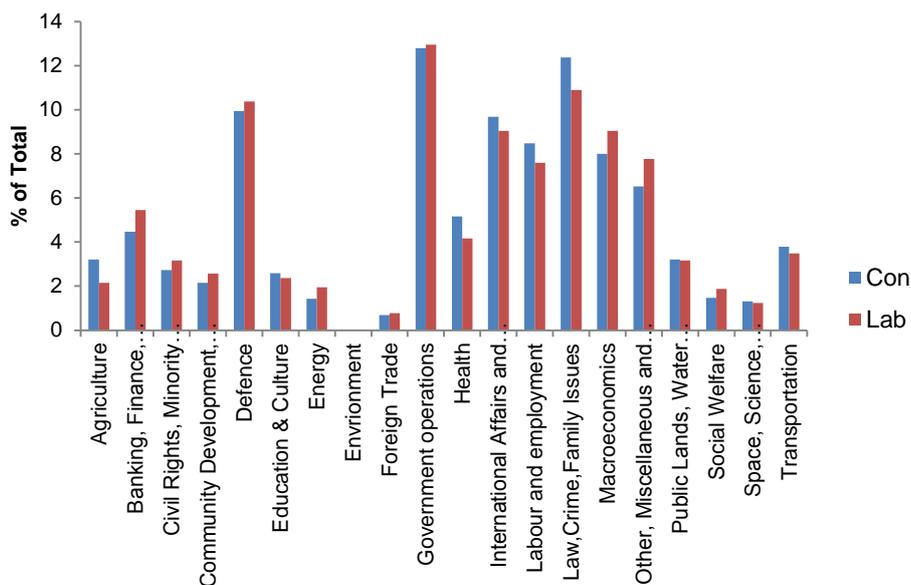


Figure 1.25 *Frequency of LIBERT by Topic*

The Semantic Environment

If studying distributions affords a better overview of their rhetorical setting, analysing lemmas' immediate contexts is the key to understanding *how* they were used. Indeed, the long-term history of these words' semantic environments may explain their overall trajectories. For example, if we adopt Teubert's notion of discourse as a system of inter-textual survival, we might conceptualise LIBERT's continued decline as a struggle to sustain repetition and permutation. Diminishing variation amongst a lemma's immediate neighbouring terms could be both a symptom and cause of such decay: as a term's meaning becomes ever more restricted to certain company, its overall use could become limited. Conversely, when keywords increase in frequency this might partly be attributed to extended semantic reach, reflected in greater variation in surrounding terms. To investigate, Figures 1.26 to 1.28 chart the diffusion of words surrounding LIBERT and FREED. The data in Figure 1.26 was acquired using a custom program to capture the context surrounding each occurrence of the lemmas. Processed largely according to the steps outlined above, sub-routines then calculated the frequency of words occurring within a range of spans, revealing the proportion of the node lemma's context each accounted for. Two overall trends are apparent: at its extremes, LIBERT has gone from needing sixty-four different terms to account for 75% of its surrounding context in 1938, to just four in 1985. In contrast, the semantic context of FREED has become considerably more fragmented. These trends persist in Figure 1.27,

despite reducing the threshold to 50% and widening the span either side of the node. Only when introducing a very wide span do LIBERT'S figures stabilise, and even then FREED continues to see greater dispersion over time.

Analysing the fluctuating percentage of a lemma's neighbouring words which were duplicates, ignoring how many instances each represents individually, offers further insights. The results, shown in Figure 1.28, lead to a refined interpretation of the trends just identified. Unexpectedly, the context surrounding FREED has become less diverse over time, with the proportion of duplicates increasing. However, the raw data suggests this was mostly a function of increasing usage, which led to the repetition of similar contexts rather than the addition of new ones. Terms adjacent to LIBERT have also become less diverse over time, and, significantly, both these patterns remain even when the span is widened to three words. Taken together, these measures suggest two different phenomena: FREED has experienced a reduction in the diversity of its neighbouring language, but become far more balanced internally; its usage became spread over more of its lexical contexts, justly described as broader use, even though this has not been matched with ever-increasing diversity.¹⁴⁰ Language surrounding LIBERT, on the other hand, became simultaneously less diverse and increasingly dominated, in terms of frequency, by a few words.

Such trends warrant closer scrutiny. Table 1.5 compares the breakdown of terms that constitute LIBERT'S immediate context (a single word either side) for 1936 and 1990. The forty terms listed were arrived at by reviewing the top twenty words for each year and topping up the nineties results when some were already encompassed in the 1936 list. The biggest shift between the start and end of the corpus was the growing dominance of 'civil', which increased its share by forty-two percentage points. Consequently, several other modifiers, such as 'individual', 'political', 'personal' and 'private', have been squeezed or vanished completely. In the wake of their retreat, new, but weaker, sub-species like 'economic' have emerged, and there are traces of an altered discursive framework in the increased weight of 'rights', 'universal', 'principles' and 'basic'. Indeed, some signs point to LIBERT'S growing role as a convenient label for a group of stable, well-rehearsed arguments, whereby 'issues', 'aspect', 'involved', 'grounds', 'argument', 'views' and 'tenets' complete the formula 'civil

¹⁴⁰ This is not to say the words themselves remained the same.

liberties + ____'. Overall, these changes suggest a qualitative shift in MPs' use of LIBERT accompanied reduced overall frequency and the ascendancy of one semantic context in particular.

Table 1.6, in contrast, shows the semantic currents propelling the use of FREED over three sample decades. Because the data is organised by the right-most column – the difference between the end and start numbers – terms making up a higher proportion of FREED'S context in the forties appear towards the top, whilst those making a bigger contribution in the eighties fall to the bottom. Colour coding indicates the direction of change on the previous decade. Some differences can be explained contextually: the influence of foreign affairs and decolonisation clearly shaped results associated with the forties. But there is also evidence for the introduction of new sub-concepts like 'freedom of information' and the fading of older ones like 'freedom from want'. Some of these, such as 'order', 'personal', 'commercial' and 'academic', gained prominence during the middle decade but later fell back. Others, including 'choice', 'rights' and 'individual', continually strengthened across all three decades. Some features also suggest bigger shifts in how arguments were constructed: the declining percentages associated with 'liberty' and 'freedom' itself are likely reflective of a move away from listing freedoms as was common in the forties. More elusive is an explanation for the consistent increases in 'principle', 'important' and 'fundamental', which perhaps imply a firmer, more binary stance than 'belief' or 'complete'.¹⁴¹ Whilst it is hard to characterise these changes collectively, it is striking that many of the terms experiencing negative change refer to traditional freedoms, whereas those growing in prominence extend the concept to choice, health or localism.

¹⁴¹ Binary in the sense that 'complete' was commonly used when advising against 'complete freedom'.

Figure 1.26 *Numbers of Terms Accounting for 75% Total, Span (1)*

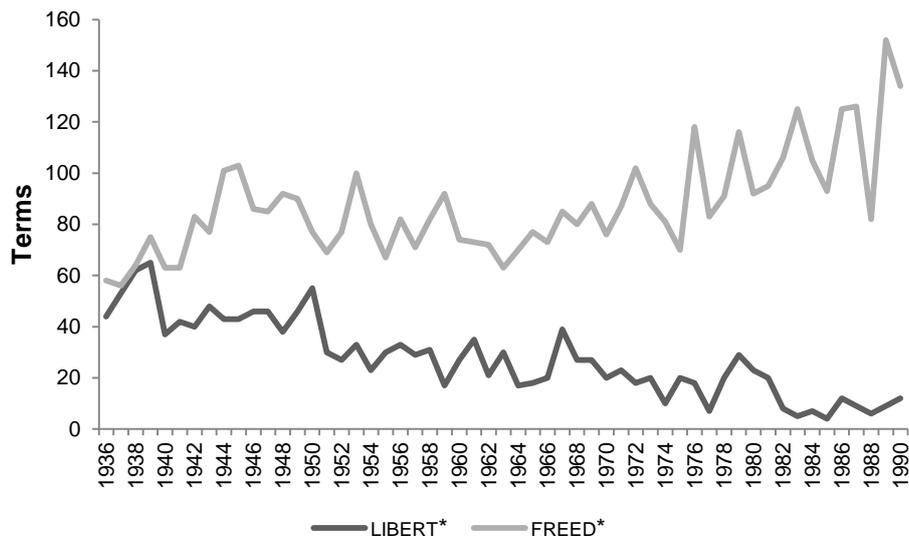


Figure 1.27 *Numbers of Terms Accounting for 50% Total, Span (5)*

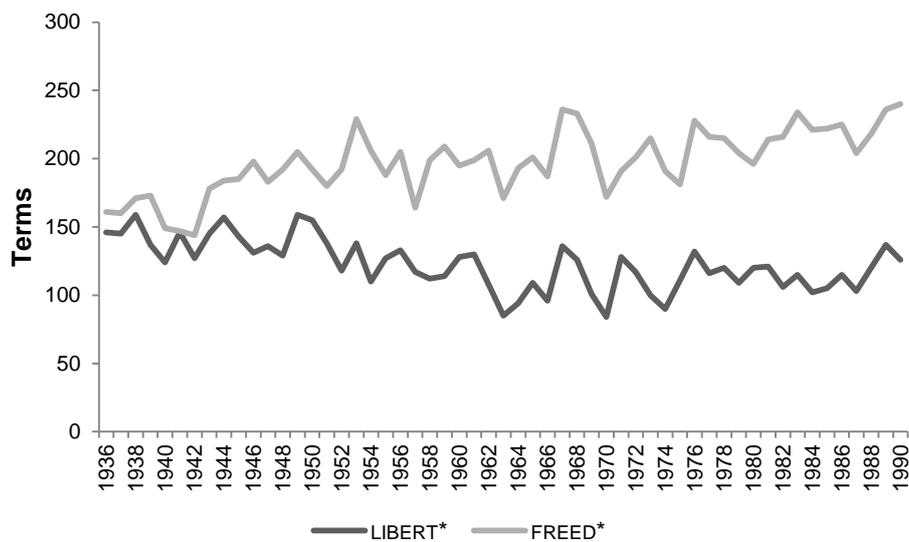


Figure 1.28 *Duplicate Terms Normalised by Total Words in Spans MAV(2)*

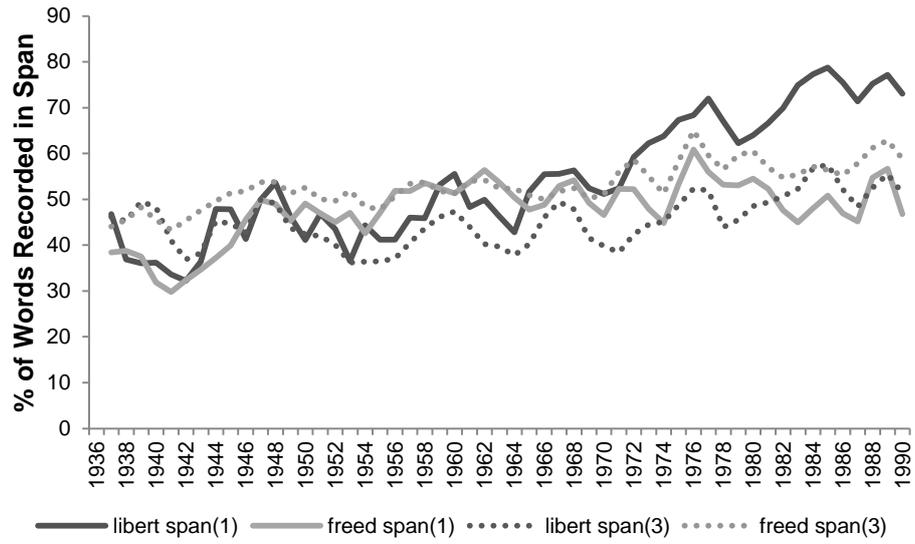


TABLE 1.5 Proportion of Terms Within 1 Word Span of LIBERT

Term	1936	1990
<i>civil</i>	18.18	60.26
<i>individual</i>	6.41	3.05
<i>political</i>	6.41	1.74
<i>greater</i>	3.74	0 (<i>great</i> 0.87)
<i>democratic</i>	3.74	0
<i>british</i>	3.2	0
<i>personal</i>	2.67	0.43
<i>constitutional</i>	2.67	0
<i>public</i>	2.13	0
<i>complete</i>	2.13	0
<i>religious</i>	1.6	2.18
<i>perfect</i>	1.6	0
<i>private</i>	1.6	0
<i>want</i>	1.6	0
<i>preserve</i>	1.06	0
<i>loving</i>	1.06	0
<i>fundamental</i>	1.06	0
<i>safeguards</i>	0.53	0
<i>parochial</i>	0.53	0
<i>human</i>	0.53	0.43
<i>economic</i>	0.53	1.74
<i>life</i>	0	1.31
<i>aspect</i>	0	0.87
<i>issues</i>	0	0.87
<i>basic</i>	0	0.87
<i>rights</i>	0	0.87
<i>enjoy</i>	0 (<i>enjoyed</i> 0.53)	0.43
<i>amendment</i>	0	0.43
<i>remand</i>	0	0.43
<i>universal</i>	0	0.43
<i>argument</i>	0	0.43
<i>risking</i>	0	0.43
<i>principles</i>	0	0.43
<i>involved</i>	0	0.43
<i>enterprise</i>	0	0.43
<i>defend</i>	0.53	0.43
<i>grounds</i>	0	0.43
<i>spirit</i>	0	0.43
<i>views</i>	0	0.43
<i>tenets</i>	0	0.43

TABLE 1.6 Percentage of Terms within 5 Word Span of FREED

Term	1940-49	1960-69	1980-89	Diff.
<i>freedom</i>	1.94	1.52	1.28	-0.66
<i>complete</i>	0.75	0.71	0.19	-0.56
<i>world</i>	0.67	0.24	0.12	-0.55
<i>war</i>	0.57	0.05	0.05	-0.52
<i>india</i>	0.49	0.04	0.004	-0.486
<i>want</i>	0.85	0.35	0.37	-0.48
<i>liberty</i>	0.7	0.29	0.24	-0.46
<i>country</i>	0.73	0.46	0.35	-0.38
<i>independence</i>	0.59	0.4	0.21	-0.38
<i>great</i>	0.5	0.31	0.2	-0.3
<i>political</i>	0.55	0.53	0.28	-0.27
<i>press</i>	1	0.72	0.77	-0.23
<i>democracy</i>	0.78	0.25	0.61	-0.17
<i>believe</i>	0.47	0.36	0.36	-0.11
<i>order</i>	0.19	0.26	0.1	-0.09
<i>action</i>	0.41	0.67	0.32	-0.09
<i>justice</i>	0.26	0.13	0.22	-0.04
<i>personal</i>	0.27	0.4	0.24	-0.03
<i>greater</i>	0.73	0.87	0.71	-0.02
<i>trade</i>	0.3	0.25	0.29	-0.01
<i>given</i>	0.48	0.61	0.48	0
<i>way</i>	0.21	0.32	0.21	0
<i>berlin</i>	0.003	0.25	0.01	0.007
<i>hunger</i>	0	0.33	0.008	0.008
<i>giving</i>	0.22	0.28	0.23	0.01
<i>british</i>	0.24	0.2	0.25	0.01
<i>expression</i>	0.39	0.33	0.42	0.03
<i>does</i>	0.26	0.23	0.29	0.03
<i>human</i>	0.25	0.34	0.3	0.05
<i>west</i>	0.01	0.31	0.06	0.05
<i>enjoy</i>	0.17	0.21	0.25	0.08
<i>use</i>	0.13	0.18	0.21	0.08
<i>peace</i>	0.29	0.2	0.37	0.08
<i>principle</i>	0.11	0.19	0.21	0.1
<i>association</i>	0.14	0.14	0.25	0.11
<i>people</i>	0.99	0.98	1.11	0.12
<i>campaign</i>	0.01	0.27	0.15	0.14
<i>defence</i>	0.07	0.14	0.22	0.15
<i>new</i>	0.19	0.28	0.34	0.15
<i>movement</i>	0.33	0.49	0.49	0.16
<i>clinical</i>	0.04	0.03	0.21	0.17
<i>choose</i>	0.1	0.14	0.27	0.17
<i>important</i>	0.09	0.17	0.26	0.17
<i>fundamental</i>	0.15	0.23	0.35	0.2
<i>commercial</i>	0.05	0.51	0.26	0.21
<i>individual</i>	0.81	0.97	1.03	0.22
<i>act</i>	0.05	0.12	0.27	0.22
<i>right</i>	0.46	0.55	0.75	0.29

<i>law</i>	0.07	0.18	0.36	0.29
<i>speech</i>	0.73	1.03	1.07	0.34
<i>authorities</i>	0.12	0.5	0.56	0.44
<i>academic</i>	0.06	0.74	0.57	0.51
<i>government</i>	0.43	0.44	1.06	0.63
<i>rights</i>	0.39	0.46	1.08	0.69
<i>local</i>	0.16	0.55	0.93	0.77
<i>choice</i>	0.75	1.33	1.66	0.91
<i>information</i>	0.06	0.02	1.04	0.98

Collocations

A vital step in linking the changing semantic preference of these words with a historical narrative is to arrive at a firmer measure of their connection. Whilst broadly indicating the fluctuating diversity or changing profile of a term's immediate context, none of these statistics accurately measure the strength of association between words. As corpus linguists point out, this is because strength of association (collocability) is not linearly reflected in frequency; instead, to detect genuine collocations, researchers must account for the probability that target words co-occurred with others in a given span by chance. Berry-Rogghe's Z-Score formula is normally recognised as the earliest attempt to identify true collocates on this basis, and, although alternatives have been developed, the Z-Score is used here because its operations are fairly intuitive and its limitations well known.¹⁴² The formula takes the raw frequencies of two words expressed as $f(x)$ and $f(y)$. The next step is to calculate the probability of finding word y next to x , using N to represent the total words in the corpus:

$$p(y) = \frac{f(y)}{N - f(x)}$$

This probability can then be used to compute how many times the words could be expected co-occur purely by chance within the span ($|D|$) permitted:

¹⁴² Godelieve Berry-Rogghe, 'The Computation of Collocations and their Relevance in Lexical Studies' in *The Computer and Literary Studies*, edited by Adam Aitken, Richard Bailey and Neil Hamilton-Smith (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1973), pp. 103-12; Darren Pearce, 'A Comparative Evaluation of Collocation Extraction Techniques' (Paper available at: <http://www.lrec-conf.org/proceedings/lrec2002/pdf/169.pdf> [Accessed: Nov 2013].); Michael Oakes, *Statistics for Corpus Linguistics*, pp. 163-6; The Z-score (and the popular MI score) both potentially inflate the strength of low frequency co-occurrences. The thresholds described above are designed to mitigate this. Geoff Barnbrook, *Language and Computers: A Practical Introduction to the Computer Analysis of Language* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996), pp. 94-8.

$$\hat{f}(x, y) = p(y) * f(x) * |D|$$

Finally, the expected frequency, $\hat{f}(x, y)$, can be compared to the actual frequency of co-occurrence within that span to arrive at a score of strength (z):

$$z = \frac{f(x, y) - \hat{f}(x, y)}{\sqrt{\hat{f}(x, y) * (1 - p(y))}}$$

To apply this function, the computer takes a node term as input, locates every instance in Hansard and captures surrounding words within a given span. When converted into frequency counts and combined with those for the entire corpus, this data enables the software to output Z-Scores for each word that ever co-occurred with the node. In addition to the inbuilt binomial test, which ensures only Z-Scores higher than 2.576 are deemed statistically significant, one further threshold is required because the rarity or misspelling of some words can distort the strength of collocations. Unless stated otherwise, the tests below require terms to co-occur inside the desired span at least five times across a corpus before becoming collocation candidates. Besides the programming challenge of implementing it efficiently over half-a-billion words, the main limitation of Z-scoring is that words cannot collocate with themselves. Aside from this, the test is suitable for cross-corpora comparison, provided the sensitive span and threshold variables are held constant. Three points are worth noting, however: First, like the other statistical measures used henceforth, collocations form between specific word-forms rather than lemmas. Second, the statistic deliberately rewards words that have some sort of dependency relationship: for example, ‘economic freedom’ is a significant collocation, but it is weakened by the high-frequency of ‘economic’ without ‘freedom’. Third, because the calculation is performed for every term co-occurring with either ‘freedom’ or ‘liberty’, the dataset speaks rather more holistically than it could when querying predetermined candidates alone. Whilst clearly advantageous, one consequence is that the data becomes more difficult to display; hence, tables hereafter show only extracts.

Normally used to identify relationships across, or differences between, syncretic corpora, introducing partisan variables exposes the real power of collocation as an indicator of how words are used differently in practice. Table 1.7 allows us to

see not only the words most strongly associated with ‘freedom’, but the differing strength of those relationships between Conservative and Labour speakers. ‘Choice’, ‘choose’ and ‘individual’, for example, all collocate very strongly with freedom generally, but especially so in Conservative speech. Meanwhile, ‘democracy’ and ‘independence’ are stronger collocations in the Labour corpus. Some large differences are the products of very specific issues: for example, ‘testamentary’ refers mainly to the 1938 Inheritance Act and ‘marelatlou’ to the Marelatlou Freedom Party of Lesotho. Other differences are consistent, such as the strength of ‘movement’, ‘manoeuvre’, and ‘navigation’ in Conservative speech, but more difficult to explain. Collocations almost exclusive to one party normally relate to the specific rhetorical angles each adopted: the high scores for ‘conservative’, ‘tory’, ‘works’, ‘talk’ and ‘slogan’ in the Labour corpus are indicative of speakers mocking their opponents’ campaign rhetoric in the fifties. Meanwhile, Conservative collocations with ‘deregulation’, ‘prosperity’ and ‘enterprise’ hint at freedom’s centrality to their underlying economic critique, although the connections are not as strong as one might expect. The data also highlights strong party-neutral associations. ‘Loving’, ‘expression’, ‘personal’, ‘seas’ and ‘denial’ were amongst those collocations holding little partisan sway and indicate that party associations mixed with a more general lexis.

Most intriguing, though, are differences in imagery associated with ‘freedom’: the Labour corpus produced stronger collocations for ‘torch’ and ‘flame’, whilst Conservative speakers preferred ‘citadel’, ‘bastions’ and ‘bulwark’. Similarly, words used to describe the negation or defence of freedom separate along partisan lines. In keeping with the rather spatial/construction metaphors just listed, Tory speeches produced strong collocations between ‘freedom’ and ‘intrusion’, ‘erosion’ and ‘encroachment’, and the actions applied to freedom were notably backward looking (‘restore’, ‘preserve’). Conservative threats to freedom were also more likely to be framed in classic liberal oppositions to that value (‘tyranny’, ‘oppression’), whilst Labour scored highly for ‘fighters’, ‘fighting’, ‘enslavement’, ‘struggle’ and ‘enhance’, in keeping with a generally more abstract and emancipatory set of associations. The significance, if any, of stronger Conservative collocations between freedom and ‘fetter’, ‘denies’, ‘restriction’ and ‘restricting’ on the one hand, and ‘interference’, ‘interfere’, ‘infringement’ and ‘restrict’ for Labour on the other, requires further investigation

and corroboration. The real import of these results, however, is that the language connected with 'freedom' does appear to have had a partisan streak, even if overall usage levels of the term itself were similar.

Table 1.8 contains equivalent data for 'liberty', but now showing only the strongest twenty collocations for each party. Again there are signs that Labour and Conservative speech produced different semantic preferences: collocation with 'civil' is 120% stronger in the Labour corpus, which is also more concerned to delimit 'political', 'religious' and 'economic' variants. Similarly, higher results for 'choose', 'prosperity', and 'private' mark out the Conservative data. Moreover, whilst 'enterprise' is a significant collocation in Tory speech (3.95), the words actually repel each other in the Labour corpus (-0.95). Other disparities suggest distinct approaches to the concept: collocations with 'ordered', 'order', 'incompatible' and 'balance' highlight the Tory tendency to conceive liberty as one part of a duality, whereas 'real', 'maximum', 'unrestricted' hint at Labour concerns with extent. Minor differences in word-form sometimes produced big differences in collocability: 'individual' was about 6% stronger in Conservative speech, but the plural 'individuals' was significantly elevated in those produced by Labour MPs. This may seem arbitrary, but when coupled with raised collocations for 'private' in Tory speech versus 'human', 'people', 'democracy', 'democratic' and 'social' in Labour's corpus it adds to evidence of varying conceptions of whom liberty applied to. Again, some collocations remained strong but neutral: 'personal', 'ancient', 'precious' join 'safeguarding' and 'conserve' as shared associations, and both corpora confirm that 'liberty' is talked about as being under threat, normally using a variety of metaphors about territory ('invasion', 'impinge' 'encroachment', 'intrusion'), loss ('deprivation', 'deprive') or restraint ('restricts', 'curtailment'). Conservative speakers applied a similar archaic language of fortification, but elevated scores for 'infraction', 'endangered', 'deprive', along with 'eternal', 'fight' and 'fighting', suggest a more abstract cause or series of 'rights' in Labour speech. The parties may have also presented themselves differently: in particular, Tories cast themselves as 'custodians', 'guardians' and 'believers' in 'Englishman' and 'English' liberty.

Given the forces encouraging variation, the very fact that statistical associations are visible is remarkable, let alone any of these strengths. The opportunities for

repeated co-occurrences to be lost amongst the natural variation of thousands of speakers, topics and debates, hundreds of thousands of speeches, and millions of words are enormous. At the same time, unless we believe they systematically edited-in differences, the existence of significant disparities between the partisan corpora strongly suggests this effect was not the work of Hansard's stenographers.¹⁴³ The remaining explanation is important evidence in favour of discursive structures, often theorised but rarely shown at scale: there are a series of common semantic connections that define how politicians talked about 'liberty' and 'freedom'. Moreover, it appears these existed both as a shared, cross-party discourse, and as sub-cultures organised around the two major parties. Again, the emergence of distinct partisan semantic preferences is against the odds: intra-party variation, MPs' speaking habits, and institutional pressures might have been assumed to suppress any 'partisan style'. Ultimately, the interpretation of what each collocation means has to be contextual – my confidence in proposing those above is in part due to the archival materials of subsequent chapters – but the quantitative data does make one point independently: the influence of the tribe over how politicians speak is extraordinarily strong.

¹⁴³ Similar collocation patterning in party conference corpora rules this out entirely.

TABLE 1.7 *Word Collocation Strength in Hansard 1936-1990 Span (4) Threshold (5)*

Collocation	Conservative	Labour	Party Diff
<i>freedom ↔ choice</i>	484.44	465.97	
<i>freedom ↔ fighters</i>	210.25	249.50	
<i>freedom ↔ press</i>	192.22	245.62	
<i>freedom ↔ liberty</i>	184.03	235.80	
<i>freedom ↔ academic</i>	188.42	197.34	
<i>freedom ↔ loving</i>	186.21	187.69	
<i>freedom ↔ individual</i>	213.82	155.90	
<i>freedom ↔ expression</i>	168.74	169.81	
<i>freedom ↔ democracy</i>	156.32	180.62	
<i>freedom ↔ greater</i>	169.07	128.27	
<i>freedom ↔ movement</i>	138.14	124.90	
<i>freedom ↔ complete</i>	125.20	136.20	
<i>freedom ↔ manoeuvre</i>	149.96	108.70	
<i>freedom ↔ independence</i>	109.66	131.12	
<i>freedom ↔ clinical</i>	114.65	118.49	
<i>freedom ↔ worship</i>	111.38	97.50	
<i>freedom ↔ speech</i>	108.54	99.39	
<i>freedom ↔ hunger</i>	83.18	104.53	
<i>freedom ↔ editorial</i>	80.96	96.99	
<i>freedom ↔ navigation</i>	105.28	71.61	
<i>freedom ↔ restrict</i>	79.40	91.84	
<i>freedom ↔ preserve</i>	91.26	77.28	
<i>freedom ↔ interference</i>	71.89	95.23	
<i>freedom ↔ enjoy</i>	81.23	76.56	
<i>freedom ↔ choose</i>	95.47	61.02	
<i>freedom ↔ infringement</i>	65.53	88.23	
<i>freedom ↔ personal</i>	74.97	74.35	
<i>freedom ↔ action</i>	84.77	63.51	
<i>freedom ↔ peace</i>	98.68	47.27	
<i>freedom ↔ freedoms</i>	91.73	48.17	
<i>freedom ↔ religious</i>	67.55	72.06	
<i>freedom ↔ seas</i>	69.10	70.03	
<i>freedom ↔ religion</i>	85.96	52.72	
<i>freedom ↔ testamentary</i>	36.90	99.24	
<i>freedom ↔ interfere</i>	47.55	86.09	
<i>freedom ↔ conscience</i>	82.21	46.25	
<i>freedom ↔ dash</i>	74.52	53.35	
<i>freedom ↔ commercial</i>	57.83	69.76	
<i>freedom ↔ marematlou</i>	122.80	0.00	
<i>freedom ↔ berliners</i>	53.54	65.31	
<i>freedom ↔ political</i>	48.37	69.03	
<i>freedom ↔ denial</i>	56.60	56.53	
<i>freedom ↔ rights</i>	53.80	56.22	

TABLE 1.8 Word Collocation Strength in Hansard 1936-1990 Span (4) Threshold (5)

Collocation	Conservative	Labour	Party Diff
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>infringement</i>	439.8254299	302.9079423	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>encroachments</i>	93.75112108	45.71841501	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>citadel</i>	49.25646829	9.602066221	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>lifeblood</i>	34.15365706	0	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>curtailment</i>	61.46974514	31.93091985	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>bulwark</i>	76.20861557	47.10804975	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>deprivation</i>	107.0931344	78.79339096	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>custodians</i>	52.33462332	24.56589878	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>restricts</i>	27.39321829	0	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>infringed</i>	59.62564867	33.38425926	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>incompatible</i>	25.57350042	0	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>guardians</i>	44.39929436	19.42432596	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>bastions</i>	66.55941954	42.04932157	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>interference</i>	127.7493316	104.7690625	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>encroachment</i>	98.6360669	76.5733323	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>bastion</i>	66.66633683	44.83576846	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>intrusion</i>	56.81090109	35.43674376	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>believer</i>	27.81642462	8.300866123	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>citizen</i>	58.30896348	38.92575228	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>protect</i>	35.99878356	17.34572943	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>traditions</i>	14.57239809	30.88528998	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>individuals</i>	6.760515426	24.85508175	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>dignity</i>	11.77851739	30.80729598	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>eternal</i>	82.72585212	102.4900404	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>defend</i>	22.35623886	42.92827822	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>statue</i>	36.49401844	58.05891973	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>unrestricted</i>	0	21.73652201	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>deprive</i>	17.22588634	39.20096191	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>endangered</i>	0	24.53292502	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>fight</i>	9.622115368	39.93425776	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>political</i>	14.05772767	45.37337726	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>religious</i>	14.26988867	46.54187238	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>invasion</i>	30.24594272	65.00726123	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>human</i>	41.42340242	79.89730673	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>impinge</i>	0	38.59592252	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>fighting</i>	7.646834342	46.73871861	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>freedom</i>	184.044786	235.8126641	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>loving</i>	39.95899436	94.9514187	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>democracy</i>	58.24135372	121.0156383	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>civil</i>	56.4614314	123.8686571	
<i>liberty</i> ↔ <i>infraction</i>	0	72.91375448	

Change Over Time

However, instead of reading them as evidence for the dead hand of discourse circumscribing the possible connections a speaker could draw, collocations can highlight the fluidity of political rhetoric as a series of group-wide responses and long-term changes. Introducing time variables suggests that the links between words have fluctuated in strength, emerged, or disappeared throughout the twentieth century. Presenting this data is especially difficult since printing the results below in tabular form would require 378,540 cells. Therefore, Table 1.9 summarises an extract from this dataset as miniature, single-cell line graphs (Sparklines). Lacking scale and axis markers, Sparklines are not tools for detailed analysis, but they do characterise the level of change in data and can helpfully identify chronologies worth pursuing.¹⁴⁴ For example, some pairs of words, such as ‘*freedom↔editorial*’ and ‘*freedom↔press*’, experienced significant spikes of association related to short-term issues or legislation. In other cases, recurring debates have led to periodic strengthening of collocations: the peaks of ‘*freedom↔clinical*’, ‘*freedom↔navigation*’, and ‘*freedom↔seas*’ are all linked to specific genres of debates, notably the Suez crisis in the case of the latter’s first dramatic spike. Other connections exhibit longer-lasting waves of collocation (‘*freedom↔academic*’ and ‘*freedom↔fighters*’) reflecting protracted issues or patterns of talking about ‘freedom’ that lasted a decade or so. Reasonably regular fluctuations also characterise much of this data: the results for ‘*freedom↔preserve*’ and ‘*freedom↔restrict*’, for example, indicate their association was rekindled periodically. Long-term change is most visible in the results for ‘*freedom↔loving*’ and ‘*freedom↔rights*’, which indicate opposite trajectories in terms of collocability.

Some of these changes are worth looking at in closer detail because they bear a strong relation to the discussion below. Two of the biggest changes over time have been in the strength of collocation between ‘freedom’ and ‘choice’ or ‘individual’. Figures 1.29 and 1.30 show the raw data for the latter overlaid with a moving average. This history of the collocation ‘*freedom↔individual*’ in the

¹⁴⁴ Deciding upon a scale is very difficult for such a wide ranging dataset – the results shown are only indirectly comparable between parties because they show the change within the corpora of each.

Conservative corpus suggests that we should attribute its increasing strength to a series of punctuations of increased collocability in the late forties, mid-fifties, mid-late-sixties and especially in the mid-seventies. This fits well with the archival research into the Conservative party's campaign strategies discussed in subsequent chapters and suggests the association experienced bouts of increased salience within a general upwards trends after the mid-fifties. Moreover, comparison with the Labour corpus reveals that aside from wartime, the Conservative collocation with 'individual' only became consistently stronger from the mid-seventies. The relationship between 'freedom' and 'choice' shown in Figure 1.31 has also strengthened over the twentieth century, but with a more regular rhythm to its fluctuations. Importantly, though, both 'freedom↔choice' and 'freedom↔individual' are good examples of a more general feature across the dataset: both experienced increases during the latter half of WWII. Despite subsequent fluctuations, this appears to have been a formative period from which the associations experienced subsequent growth.

Two final examples from the Conservative corpus show the re-orientation of freedom rhetoric described in later chapters. Figure 1.33 shows the focus of Tory rhetoric on 'restoring' freedoms which had allegedly been lost under Labour. This rhetorical strategy accelerated as the party took office and started 'restoring' freedoms, but became less prominent after 1955. This is not to say the languages of austerity did not carry over into prosperity: Figure 1.34 reveals the origins of the party's interest in 'consumer freedom' in the early fifties and its survival into the seventies. More research is needed to pick apart this dataset, especially in pin-pointing the precise chronological differences between parties or linking the histories of individual collocations to contemporary debates and events. That said, the central message is clear: the network of semantic associations was unstable. Political language is subject to group behaviour and fashion, whereby associations cluster and repeat, but this discourse is not impervious to change: language users may have behaved like a herd, but that group could slowly alter patterns of association over time or rapidly integrate new idioms in response to events or in pursuing new rhetorical strategies.

Figure 1.29 Collocation Strength of 'freedom' and 'individual' in Conservative Hansard 1936-90

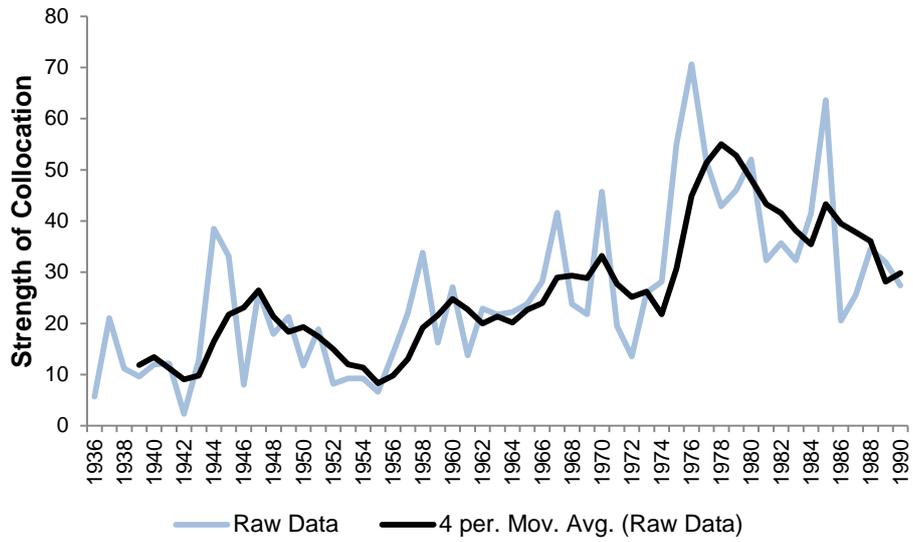


Figure 1.30 Collocation Strength of 'freedom' and 'individual' in Labour Hansard 1936-90

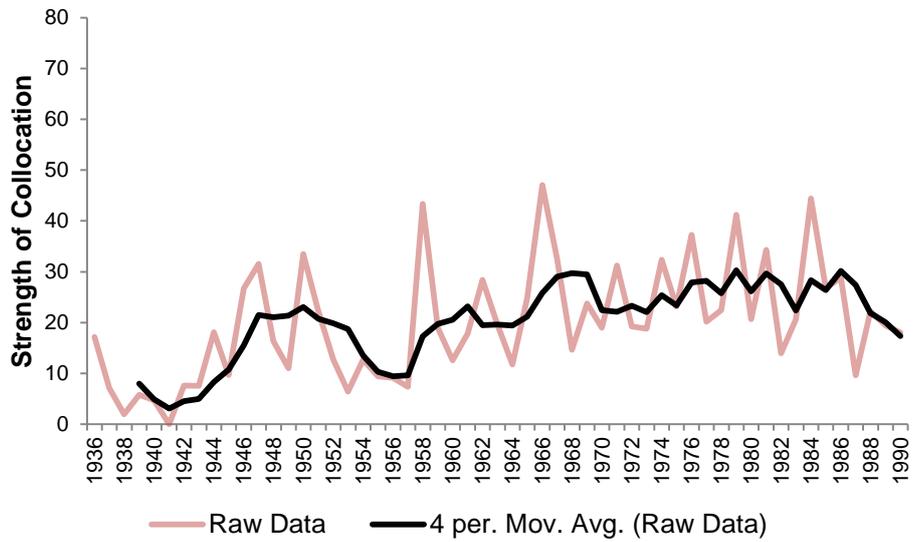


Figure 1.31 Collocation Strength of 'freedom' and 'choice' in Conservative Hansard 1936-90

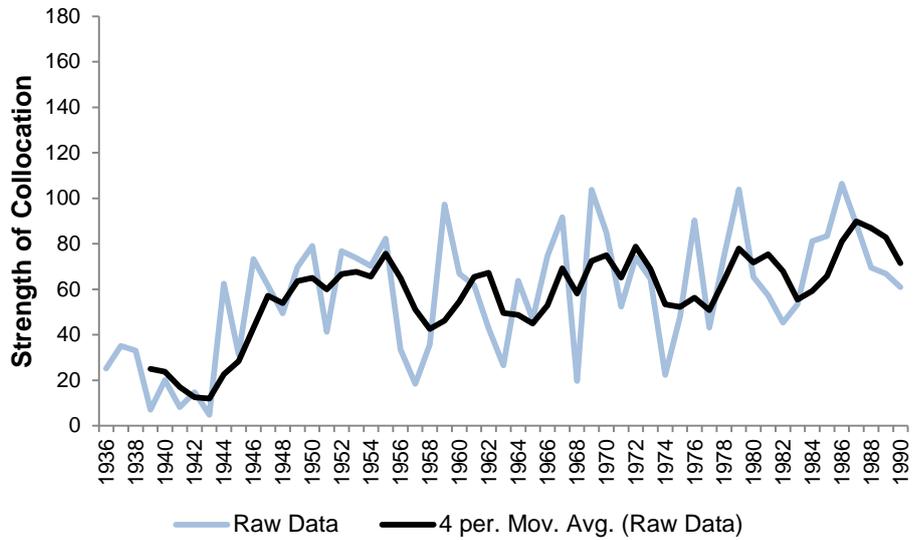


Figure 1.32 Collocation Strength of 'freedom' and 'choice' in Labour Hansard 1936-90

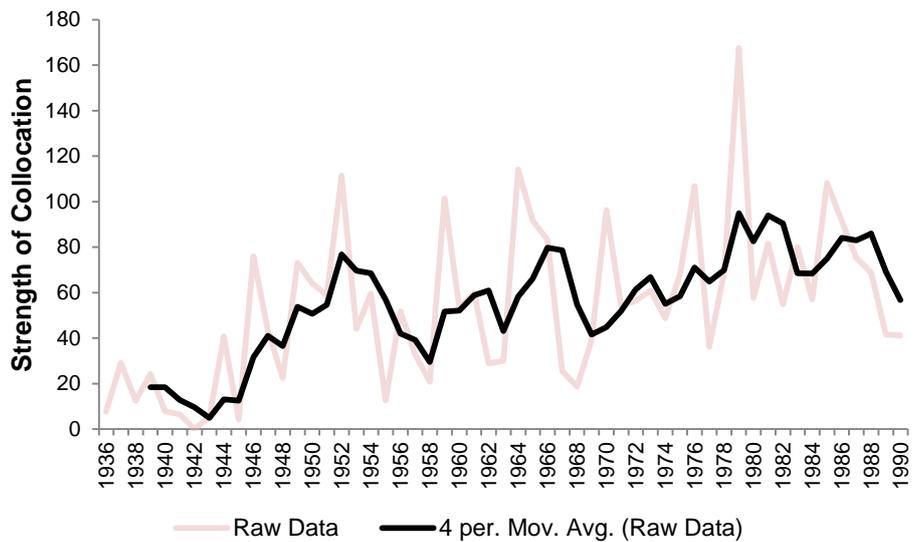


Figure 1.33 Collocation Strength of 'freedom' and 'restore' in Conservative Hansard 1936-90

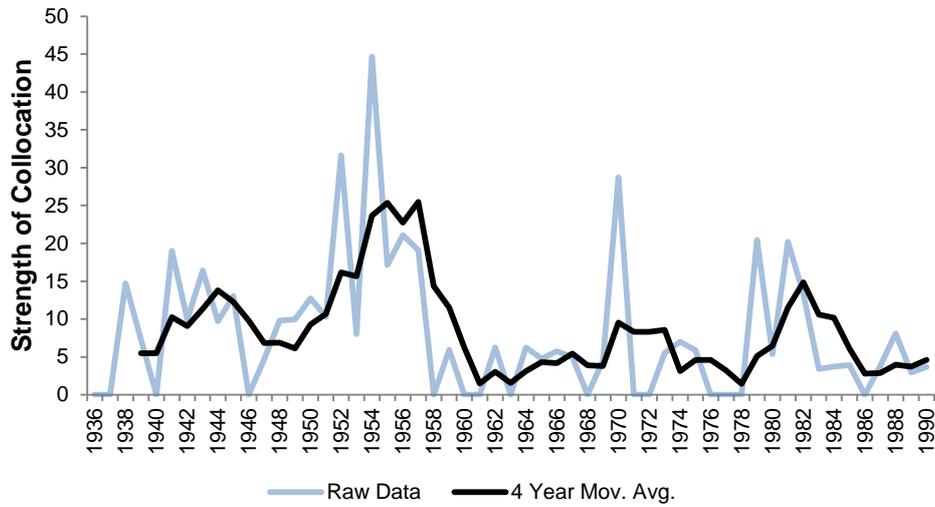


Figure 1.34 Collocation Strength of 'freedom' and 'consumer' in Conservative Hansard 1936-90

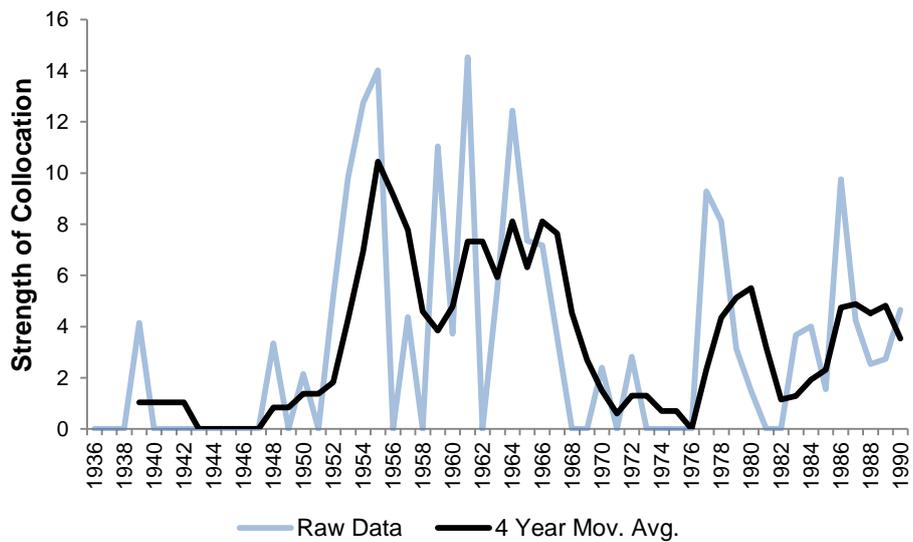
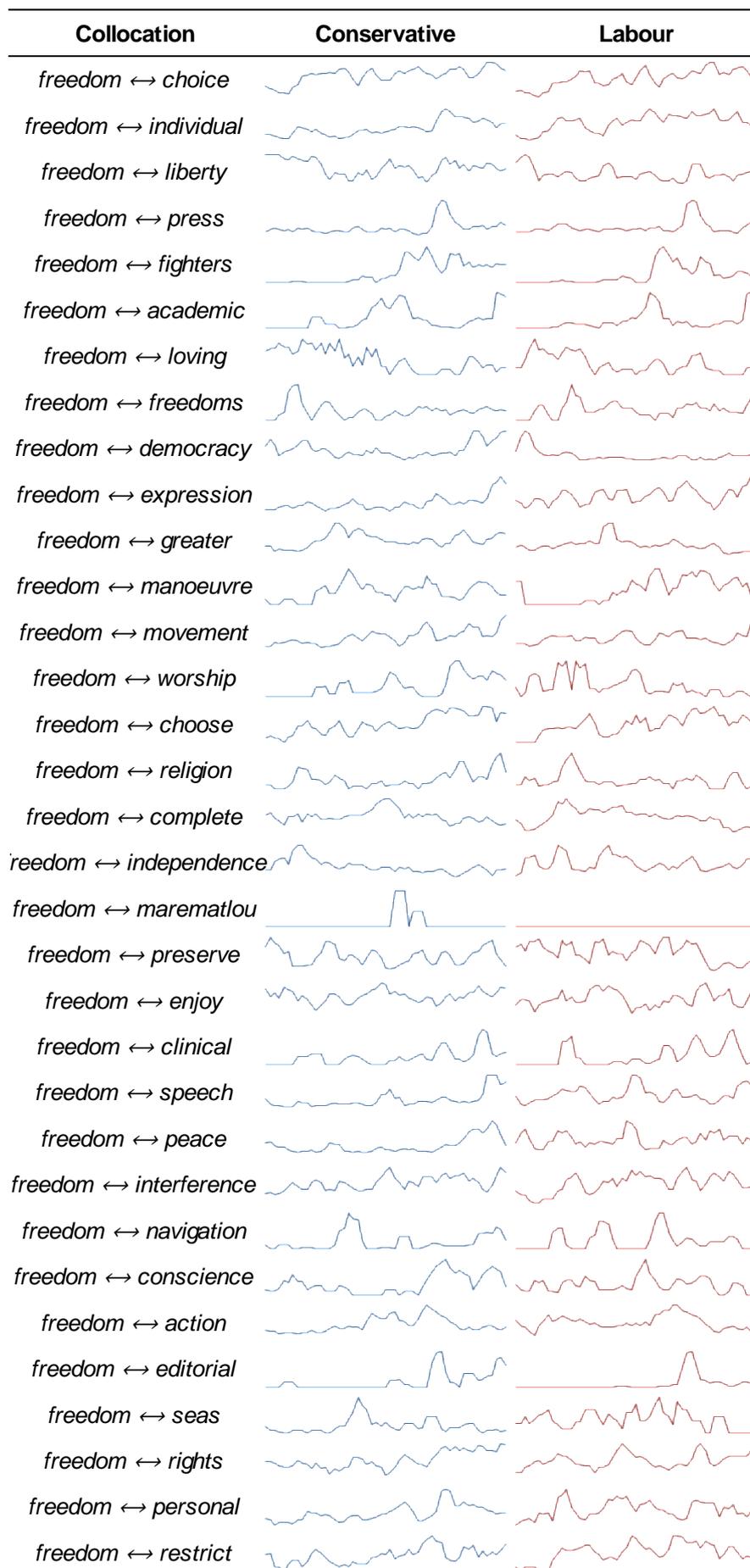


TABLE 1.9 Collocation Strength 1936-1990 Threshold (5) MAv(3)

Formulaic Sequences

Studied at scale, collocations expose the semantic relationships binding a region of political discourse together. That said, because semantics and form generate meaning collaboratively, such associations cannot remain isolated from the compositional structures they occurred in. Although concerns about the impact of minor edits to Hansard may have justified neglecting form hitherto, the final layer in any depiction of freedom and liberties rhetoric at scale must identify those sequences of words that cling together to represent the smallest chunks of argumentation. Collocation can, potentially, be helpful in exploring this structural aspect of rhetoric, but whether it is used to study semantic preference or formulaic language hinges on the method of detection. Berry-Rogghe's formula efficiently quantifies relationships between two words regularly separated by others within a span, but indifference to structure blinds the technique to precisely repeated sequences. Moreover, using probability to distinguish significant co-occurrences means that the family of Mutual Information measures, which succeeded Z-Scoring, are ill-suited to extracting multiword collocations featuring terms very likely to occur elsewhere.¹⁴⁵ The problem is that, unlike in the rest of this chapter, common words are now crucial in revealing the tightly circumscribed structures politicians built around 'freedom' and 'liberty'.

To analyse nuances of form, we need to look to a tool originally developed by Kenji Kita et al for identifying idioms helpful to non-native speakers.¹⁴⁶ The Cost Criteria procedure automatically detects strings of words repeated together so regularly that speakers are, in practice, deploying them as a single unit. Specifically, the final score for a sequence $K(a)$ attempts to measure the reduced processing cost (or advantage) speakers experience by treating words as a single unit. The formula begins with the simplifying assumption that the

¹⁴⁵ Kenji Kita, Yasuhiko Kato, Takashi Omoto, and Yoneo Yang, 'Automatically Extracting Collocations From Corpora for Language Learning', Paper presented at 1st International Conference on Teaching and Language Corpora, Lancaster 1994 reprinted in: *Corpus Linguistics: Readings in a Widening Discipline*, edited by Geoffrey Sampson and Diana McCarthy (London: Continuum, 2004), pp. 258-66 at 260.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.; The authors published a refined method in: Kenji Kita and Hiroaki Ogata, 'Collocations in Language Learning: Corpus-Based Automatic Compilation of Collocations and Bilingual Collocations Concordancer', *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 10, 3 (1997), 229-38.

'cost' of processing a single word is one.¹⁴⁷ Hence the initial cost *saved* will be the length of the sequence minus one:

$$K(a) = (|a| - 1)$$

This is multiplied by the frequency of that sequence $f(a)$ to calculate the total 'cost reduction' the sequence affords over a corpus:

$$K(a) = (|a| - 1) \times f(a)$$

Yet, sheer frequency misleadingly skews scores in favour of the shortest permutations of sequences because these would always be more numerous than longer ones, even if they rarely occurred outside them. As the status of 'collocation' should only be assigned to sequences in their fullest form, the frequency multiplier must be reduced by the number of larger sequences the phrase occurs within that are also candidate sequences:

$$K(a) = (|a| - 1) \times (f(a) - f(b))$$

Of course, it is easy to think of examples where sub-sequences are both formulaic sequences themselves and building blocks for larger ones. One advantage of Kita's algorithm is that if a shorter sub-sequence occurs in other contexts that are not regular enough to become collocations themselves then its score reflects this and it remains an independent collocation.¹⁴⁸ For instance, 'freedom of' is likely a collocation, but we also want to ensure the fuller collocation 'freedom of speech' is captured and ranked in a comparable way to its sub-string. This is a crucial step towards autonomously testing where in a phrase like 'freedom of speech is fundamental' the formulaic element stops and the idiosyncratic begins.

Implementing Kita's algorithm for every possible sequence involving 'freedom' or 'liberty' in 500 million words of text was challenging. Aside from some thresholds, the software written took only a target term, and then, in a similar

¹⁴⁷ Precisely what 'processing' is in a cognitive sense remains the subject of debate, but a time advantage has been shown experimentally: Kathy Conklin and Norbert Schmitt, 'Formulaic Sequences: Are They Processed More Quickly than Nonformulaic Language by Native and Nonnative Speakers?', *Applied Linguistics*, 29, 1 (2008), 72-89.

¹⁴⁸ Obviously, if the researchers interest is in sub-strings only occurring in longer sequences the formula needs adjustment to cope with such 'nested collocations': Katerina Frantzi and Sophia Ananiadou 'Extracting Nested Collocations', in *COLING '96 Proceedings of the 16th Conference on Computational Linguistics*, 1, pp. 41-46.

manner to Z-Scoring above, extracted the extended context surrounding every occurrence of this node.¹⁴⁹ Next, each of these lines was broken into every possible combination involving the node. The frequency of each sequence over the corpus was then calculated, before those meeting a threshold were assigned a provisional Cost Score as candidate sequences. For each candidate sequence exceeding a threshold score, membership of longer sequences was checked and a final adjusted score output as per Kita's formula. The sequences identified, could then be ranked, annualised, and split by party. It is worth repeating that the computer was only given a target and thresholds; because the software had no prior knowledge of any common grouping of words, grammar, or indication of where a phrase should stop, the list printed in Table 1.10 emerged much as if someone without knowledge of word boundaries had derived lexical units by recurrence alone.

Without putting too much pressure on this measure, two brief points can be made. The headline finding is that freedom rhetoric was heavily formulaic. Around 45% of the recorded Conservative mentions of 'freedom' were one of the formulaic sequences identified across the corpora. For Labour the number was even higher at 60%. This is a striking result given that those numbers are based on just over 200 different formulations and around 20,000 different instances were recorded for each party. The percentages are lower for 'liberty' and 'liberties', but remain important evidence that political language is far less open-ended than may be casually imagined.¹⁵⁰ What is perhaps most surprising, however, is that the phrases shown in Table 1.10 also reveal some partisan divisions: it appears some phrases were formulaic for Conservatives and not for Labour, or, more commonly, one party extended a common sequence further than its opponent. For example, we can see evidence for Labour's rhetoric on 'tory freedom' and for its MPs questioning the reality of freedom ('there is no freedom') or even the building blocks of partisan arguments: 'freedom from want' achieved the threshold of formulaic sequence only in the Labour corpus, as did the characteristic combination 'freedom and democracy'. Freedom of choice formulations were split between the parties, but the Conservatives

¹⁴⁹ This was a 20 word span either side, which places a very generous theoretical limit of 41 words on the length of formulaic sequences possible.

¹⁵⁰ For 'liberties' 25% of Conservative uses contained a formulaic sequence, the figure for Labour was slightly less at 19%.

account for the great majority of variations of this phrase in the data as a whole. Typical Tory formulae also emerge: ‘freedom under the law’ and ‘the defence of freedom’ were important constructions for Conservative speakers inside and outside Parliament, but for Kita’s algorithm to detect them independent of any knowledge of grammar, let alone party philosophy, demonstrates how normative Conservative rhetoric could be.

TABLE 1.10 *Formulaic Sequences in Hansard 1936-90*

Formulaic Sequence	Conservative	Labour	Party Diff
the FREEDOM of the	354	0	
FREEDOM of the individual and	228	0	
peace and FREEDOM	220	0	
and FREEDOM of the	213	0	
FREEDOM under the law	204	0	
with the FREEDOM of	201	0	
FREEDOM of speech in	192	0	
FREEDOM of choice and	384	195	
the principle of FREEDOM	186	0	
the FREEDOM of action	174	0	
the defence of FREEDOM	168	0	
and FREEDOM of choice	168	0	
the FREEDOM to choose	165	0	
FREEDOM of choice for	294	132	
FREEDOM of action of	153	0	
principle of FREEDOM of	153	0	
FREEDOM of navigation	152	0	
FREEDOM and justice	146	0	
greater FREEDOM in	142	0	
our FREEDOM of	140	0	
FREEDOM for the	330	494	
FREEDOM from want	0	164	
and FREEDOM of	394	560	
FREEDOM of movement of	0	171	
there is no FREEDOM	0	177	
of FREEDOM and democracy	0	177	
FREEDOM of choice	592	780	
tory FREEDOM	0	188	
FREEDOM for local authorities	0	201	
interference with the FREEDOM of	0	204	
about FREEDOM of	0	214	
with the FREEDOM of the	204	432	
FREEDOM to local authorities	0	228	
FREEDOM of choice for the	0	232	
interfere with the FREEDOM of	0	240	
the FREEDOM of local authorities	0	244	
for the FREEDOM of the	0	276	
a FREEDOM of information act	0	296	
about the FREEDOM of the	0	328	
the FREEDOM of the press and	0	450	

Freedom's Rise, Liberty's Atrophy

Armed with these more powerful tools, we can return a final time to the question of freedom's expansion and liberty's demise. In addition to characterising the trend in respect of frequency, breadth, and diversity of usage, quantitative techniques can begin to indicate how these words related to political discourse as a whole. For example, it might be supposed that one of the causes underlying increasing frequency is a higher number of strong connections with other words. Conversely, a symptom of isolation within a political discourse could be a decreasing number of significant collocations with other terms. Figure 1.35 shows data from Hansard on the number of significant collocations for both 'liberty' and 'freedom' between 1936 and 1990 organised by party. The results lend support to the view that liberty's relative frequency decline coincided with either a flat-lining number of collocations or an active decline in the case of the Labour corpus. 'Freedom', on the other hand, experienced a wartime rise in the total number of significant collocations, which was sustained afterwards and actually rose again in the Conservative corpus from the mid-seventies.

Figure 1.36 largely corroborates this pattern in showing the number of formulaic sequences identified. It could be reasoned that as a term becomes more widely connected to political discourse and used in a greater number of contexts, the tendency for it to form formulaic expressions increases – a spiralling effect that helps it permeate and further increase in frequency. This appears to be true for 'freedom': although there are chronological differences between the parties, initially 'freedom' featured in a similar number of formulaic sequences to 'liberty', but broke away in the mid-twentieth century to follow a gradually upward path which mirrored that for semantic collocations. Meanwhile, 'liberty' saw a decline from the mid-teens to just one or sometimes no formulaic sequences detected. Whilst it would be inappropriate to place too much weight on this alone, alongside the other evidence presented, the corpus tells a story of 'liberty' participating within a smaller subset of discourse and experiencing very much the opposite of 'freedom's increasing connection to other parts of language.

Figure 1.35 *Collocations in Hansard 1936-90 Span (4) Threshold (5)*

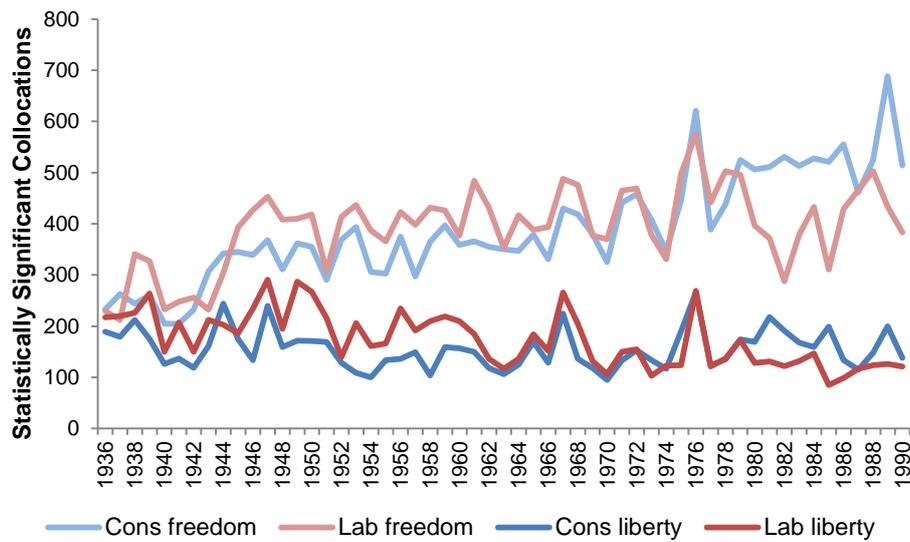
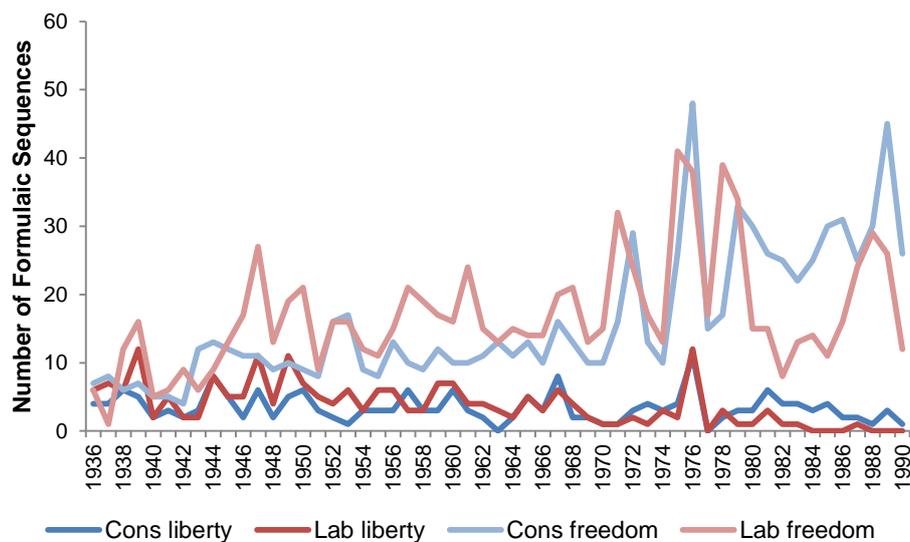


Figure 1.36 *Formulaic Sequences 1936-90 (Cost Score > 10)*



VI

Conclusion

Rex Warner's imagery of reaching through a 'thick mist' persists because it speaks to a problem rather well: historians may have had plenty of intuition about the sets of questions that opened this chapter, but they had little convincing evidence or ability to test their hunches at scale. For many investigations this would probably matter little; whilst it is certainly useful to

position them within a broader context, the core materials of any analysis of Churchill, Hayek, and Thatcher's ideas or rhetoric will rightly remain their individual writings, speeches, or actions. The underlying rationale for such studies is that each had a unique, or particularly influential, interpretation setting them apart the crowd. Historians have also successfully shown how ideas changed or language filtered politics without resorting to mass corpora. This chapter simply claims that if political historians are to pursue discourse we need to recognise that, from the perspective of the crowd, political language can look very different. Corpus linguistics has repeatedly shown how formulaic and unexpected the relationships between words can be at scale, and there is no reason to assume that political language is immune from their conclusions. The motivation for using quantitative methods to study political rhetoric was, therefore, threefold: gaps in our knowledge required scale, many studies pioneering work on political language reflect only one of its dimensions, and the need to study argumentation as practiced by the majority of its users rather than in a minority of set pieces. One solution, it has been argued, is to critically adopt a quantitative methodology that mixes advanced linguistics with political science variables, but which ultimately supplements and informs, rather than replaces, close reading in a wider project.

This chapter has both implemented that methodology and described the dynamics of discourse within which politicians strove for rhetorical success. The initial results revealed a very different picture of freedom and liberties based language than might have been predicted. The biggest meta-trend is the increasing dominance of 'freedom' over 'liberty'. This has been explained not only in terms of frequency, but as narrowing or widening linguistic breadth, strengthening or weakening connections with other words, and a reduction or expansion in the number of formulaic sequences. In sum, there is good evidence that the overall frequency trajectory can partly be explained as a model of rhetorical growth and stagnation driven by intertextuality and permutation. Although untangling cause and effect is difficult, a key finding is that 'liberty' was not only used less, but cut a lonelier figure in terms of its relationships with broader political discourse. At the same time, 'freedom' has expanded the range of semantic associations and gathered ever more formulaic language, arguably aiding repetition.

In respect of the two main parties, we can conclude with some confidence that, despite nuanced chronologies and moments of heightened partisan use, this rhetoric was deployed to a similar extent on similar topics. However, the evidence of collocations and formulaic sequences suggests that the rhetorical landscapes into which these terms were inserted had both shared and partisan topographies. The most significant findings, though, concern political discourse as a system: twentieth-century politicians spoke about freedom and liberty in a remarkably uniform manner, even if the distribution evidence suggests that there are some disparities in how often individuals did so. On the one hand, then, normativity is the keynote: the power of political affiliation appears to have been strong enough to produce sub-languages with stable, partisan networks of association and phraseology. Indeed, the findings above lend a quantitative edge to Skinner's critique of the 'unit idea': collocations and formulaic sequences question whether we can continue referring to 'freedom' or 'liberty' as atomistic ideas when the evidence suggests that a repeated set of arguments or contexts structured their use. On the other hand, the degree of change over time present in all areas of the analysis above brings the transitory nature of these connections to the fore; political discourse was a system capable of both rapid change and longer-term evolution. Regarding the Conservative party, then, what needs explaining over the next three chapters is how this change could happen at the level of the group; the answer I suggest is that much of the data above represents the quantitative footprint of an evolving rhetorical culture.

CHAPTER TWO

The Rhetorical Culture of ‘Set the People Free’, 1945-51

I am only able to speak with first-hand experience of the industrial north, but I am convinced that people there will only vote for us in sufficient numbers (a) if they are afraid of the future under socialism, and (b) if we can offer them another theme – and quite a different theme. That theme, as you say, must be freedom. Set the people free, and they will do what no government can do for them. – **Richard Law to Winston Churchill, 17 January 1950.**¹

Presentation and Philosophy: Though the policies touched on need relatively few large changes in laws, they do call for substantial changes in attitude... The character of our approach is dominated by liberty, realism, caring, the market, patriotism, quality and less government. Not all these can be encapsulated in one phrase, though we should strive to find one. In the meanwhile we can, and I believe, should ourselves as a party explain the intimate links between economic, social, cultural and political freedoms; the dependence of real freedom on the rule of law and on decentralised ownership of resources... – **Keith Joseph, 4 April 1975.**²

‘All our policies were right, all your presentation was wrong’, Margaret Thatcher truculently told the remnants of Edward Heath’s government now sat in her Shadow Cabinet.³ Gathered in Central Office on 11 April 1975, the Leader’s Consultative Committee was at loggerheads over Keith Joseph’s contentious paper, ‘Towards the Definition of Policy’, which insisted that the new Opposition break decisively from the post-war consensus. Yet, both Joseph’s memorandum and the ensuing confrontations between proto ‘wets’ and ‘dries’ harboured an agreed subtext: Conservatism had suffered a rhetorical defeat. Indeed, the CPS Chairman’s plea to revitalise the party’s *ethos* as Liberty’s guardians and build a theme around interdependent freedoms escaped the criticism levelled at his substantive proposals. Similar prescriptions litter the 1975-9 Opposition’s papers, and, even when wrapping policies in more tangible

¹ Richard Law to Winston Churchill, 17 Jan 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/89, folios 28-9.

² Presented by Angus Maude and Sir Keith Joseph, only the latter claimed authorship: ‘Notes Towards the Definition of Policy’, 4 Apr 1975, Thatcher MSS, Shadow Cabinet Papers, LCC 75/71, p. 19.

³ She had also been a member as Education Secretary 1970-4; Lord Hailsham, Diary Entry 11 Apr 1975, Churchill Archive Centre (C.A.C), Hailsham MSS, (1/1/10); Shadow Cabinet Minutes, 11 Apr 1975, Thatcher MSS, LCC 75; Geoffrey Lewis, *Lord Hailsham: A Life* (London: Cape, 1997), pp. 325-6.

'packaging', quests for a 'central, idealistic theme' returned to the conclusion that 'freedom is vital for us: for freedom, and freedom to choose, is our moral base as equality is that of Socialism'.⁴ Notwithstanding genuine ideological zeal, Thatcher's advisors hoped that cloaking themselves in 'freedom' would redress Heath's rhetorical failures, turn the 'semantic battle' against 'socialistic and *dirigiste* ideas... deeply assimilated into national thought-ways', and establish a new, post-consensus identity.⁵

Doubtless that reboot was successful; freedom and Thatcherism are linked in contemporary, scholarly and public memory.⁶ But freedom was not a new rhetorical panacea: a quarter-century earlier, Richard Law, the former Foreign Office Minister, urged Churchill to bring the 1945-51 Opposition's programme together under a similar banner.⁷ This lesser-known strategic resemblance underlies the widely-acknowledged parallel between Conservatives' freedom rhetoric at either end of the supposed post-war consensus.⁸ Yet, whilst

⁴ Geoffrey Howe, 'Party Strategy, Policy and Organisation', Aug 1976, Thatcher MSS, (2/1/3/9); Angus Maude, Rhodes Boyson, David Howell, Nigel Lawson, Norman Tebbit, 'Themes', Paper to Steering Committee, 16 Feb 1978, Thatcher MSS, (2/6/1/233); Thatcher recognised that control of language was important: 'Competitive Enterprise or State Bureaucracy', *The Guardian*, 1 Jul 1975, p. 10.

⁵ Thatcher believed Labour's defeat was a 'total necessity' because 'people could so easily destroy their own freedom and not realise what they had lost, until it was too late': Thatcher to Lord Hailsham, 16 Feb 1975, C.A.C, Hailsham MSS, (1/1/9); For quote: Centre for Policy Studies, *Objectives and Style* (London: Centre for Policy Studies, 1975), p. 4; On 'semantic battle': Nigel Lawson, 'Thoughts on the Coming Battle', 15 Oct 1973 (re-circulated in 1975), Thatcher MSS (2/6/1/246), p. 2; For Thatcherism as narration and its use of freedom: Robert Saunders, "'Crisis? What Crisis?'" Thatcherism and the Seventies' in *Making Thatcher's Britain* edited by Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 25-42 esp. 34.

⁶ For contemporary assessments: Thomas Edwin Utle, 'The Significance of Mrs Thatcher', in *Conservative Essays* edited by Maurice Cowling (London: Cassell, 1978), pp. 41-51 at 50-1; Robert Behrens, *The Conservative Party in Opposition 1974-77: a Critical Analysis* (Coventry: Lancaster Polytechnic, 1977), p. 19; Phillip Norton and Arthur Aughey, *Conservatives and Conservatism* (London: Maurice Temple Smith, 1981), pp. 86-9; Obituaries illustrate the hold on popular memory: 'Freedom Fighter' was the cover and leader title for *The Economist*, 13 April 2013; On Thatcherism as reconfigured vocabulary: Mark Garnett and Lord Gilmour, 'Thatcherism and the Conservative Tradition' in *The Conservatives and British Society, 1880-1990*, edited by Martin Francis and Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996), pp. 78-93.

⁷ Law was author of *Return from Utopia* (London: Faber, 1950) Notwithstanding important differences, a stronger case can be made for 'neoliberal' influence than Tory rhetoric generally: Richard Cockett, *Thinking the Unthinkable: Think Tanks and the Economic Counter-Revolution* (London: Fontana, 1995), pp. 98-9.

⁸ Martin Francis, "'Set the People Free"? Conservatives and the State, 1920-1960' in *The Conservatives and British Society, 1880-1990*, edited by Martin Francis and Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996), pp. 58-77 at 73; David Willetts, 'The New Conservatism? 1945-1951' in *Recovering Power: The Conservatives in Opposition Since 1867*, edited by Stuart Ball and Anthony Seldon (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 169-91 at 181; Robert Blake, *The Conservative Party from Peel to Thatcher* (London: Fontana, 1985 [1970]), p. 365; John Barnes, 'Ideology and Factions' in *Conservative Century: The*

immunising historians against Thatcherism's self-proclaimed novelty, comparisons between the two oppositions' rhetoric taint the earlier period, the subject of this chapter, with history yet to pass.⁹ In particular, most accounts cite late-forties freedom rhetoric as a proxy for century-long ideological tussles between 'libertarian' and 'paternalist' instincts, frequently historiographically inseparable from hunts for Thatcherism's purported 'neoliberal' roots.¹⁰ Consequently, those listening for the 'voice' of modern Conservatism in the aftermath of 1945 expend little analysis on the form of arguments as delivered and remain deaf to the rhetorical functions speakers expected 'freedom' to fulfil.¹¹ Such neglect tips efforts to historicise later developments into anachronism, leading many to conclude that Churchill's party's rhetoric was contrived since few correspondingly 'neoliberal' actions were forthcoming in government.¹² On the other hand, privileging policy (dis)continuities over the tropes, meta-themes, and rhetorical models that later periods inherited from 1945-51 wrongly separates periods of Conservative critique, implying emancipatory oratory skipped a generation and ignoring comparable rhetoric under Eden, Macmillan, Douglas-Home and Heath.¹³ Thus, historians have – somewhat paradoxically – both perceived too much crude similarity between 1945 and 1975 and missed nuanced stabilities across the intervening years.

In reassessing Conservatives' use of freedom as a rhetorical tool between 1945 and 1951, this chapter reconciles those conflicting shortcomings. There were important continuities in Tory oratory from the forties through to the mid-

Conservative Party Since 1900, edited by Anthony Seldon and Stuart Ball (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 315-46 at 335.

⁹ On strategic disassociation from consensus see: Richard Toye, 'From "Consensus" to "Common Ground": The Rhetoric of the Postwar Settlement and its Collapse', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 48, 1 (2013), 3-23.

¹⁰ Willetts, 'The New Conservatism? 1945-1951'; E.H.H. Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism: Conservative Political Ideas in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 214-39; Cockett, *Thinking the Unthinkable*, pp. 94-6; On dangers of theoretical anachronism: Ben Jackson, 'At the Origins of Neo-Liberalism: The Free Economy and the Strong State, 1930-47', *Historical Journal*, 53, 1 (2010), 129-51; An exception is: Richard Toye, 'Winston Churchill's "Crazy Broadcast"', *Journal of British Studies*, 49, 3 (2010), 655-80.

¹¹ Willetts, 'The New Conservatism?', p. 190.

¹² On the latter point: Andrew Gamble, *The Conservative Nation* (London: Routledge, 1974), pp. 56-8; Peter Dorey, *British Conservatism: the Politics and Philosophy of Inequality* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), p. 123; For the case Tories Governments did live up their rhetoric but were constrained by public opinion and the Cold War: Michael Kandiah, 'Conservative Leaders, Strategy – and "Consensus"? 1945-1965' in *The Myth of Consensus: New Views on British History, 1945-64*, edited by Harriet Jones and Michael Kandiah (Palgrave: Basingstoke, 1996), pp. 58-78 at 67-72.

¹³ Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain: Rationing, Controls and Consumption 1939-55* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 242, 254-5.

seventies, but the search for later decades' 'neoliberalism' in 1945-51 has misplaced those connections and distorted the historical specificity of the earlier period's rhetoric. Rather than express the intellectual trends that partly inspired Thatcher's speeches, freedom rhetoric in the forties was primarily a response to immediate contexts. Hayek's *Road to Serfdom* (1944) did not 'motiv[at] Churchill's campaign in 1945' as commonly assumed; Labour's alleged threat to liberty arose from wider argumentative traditions selected to meet unique electoral imperatives.¹⁴ Likewise, instead of restating those themes in defeat, Tories tailored their freedom rhetoric to the new parameters of post-war politics, building appeals to counter vulnerabilities and opponents' expected arguments.¹⁵ Furthermore, in the context of late-forties politics, Conservatives were not the confident de-controllers normally imagined.¹⁶ Fearing public retribution, many sought refuge in freedom's ambiguity and considered their party's stance on controls a liability.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the rhetoric of release was far from feigned. Churchill's call to 'set the people free' encoded Tory solutions to late-forties Britain's trade and production crises: retrenchment to dampen inflation, and incentivising tax cuts.¹⁸ But with their pre-war record under attack, tactical silence on where 'drastic cuts' would fall drew Conservatives into a spiral of emancipatory rhetoric, which disingenuously squared the circle of

¹⁴ For quote: Barnes, 'Ideology and Factions', p. 335; Harriet Jones, 'A Bloodless Counter-Revolution: The Conservative Party and the Defence of Inequality, 1945-51' in *The Myth of Consensus: New Views on British History, 1945-64*, edited by Harriet Jones and Michael Kandiah (Palgrave: Basingstoke, 1996), pp. 1-16 at 6; Friedrich A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, (London: Routledge, 2001 [1944]).

¹⁵ For excessive continuity between 1945 and subsequent opposition: Willetts, 'The New Conservatism?', p. 171; John Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden* (Harlow: Longman, 1995), p. 164; For an interpretation citing freedom rhetoric to evidence a 'neo-liberal' rejection of consensus after 1947: Nigel Harris, *Competition and the Corporate Society: British Conservatives, The State and Industry, 1945-1964* (Oxon: Routledge, 2006[1972]); Harriet Jones acknowledges attempts to temper what she reductively labels 'neoliberalism' to electoral reality in social policy terms (as humanised capitalism), but neglects to demonstrate how this was achieved rhetorically: 'The Cold War and the Santa Claus Syndrome', in *The Conservatives and British Society, 1880-1990*, edited by Martin Francis and Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996), pp. 240-54.

¹⁶ Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'Rationing, Austerity and the Conservative Party Recovery after 1945', *Historical Journal*, 37, 1 (1994), 173-97.

¹⁷ Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, pp. 169-71; Willetts, 'The New Conservatism', p. 183; Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, pp. 214-26.

¹⁸ Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, pp. 56-8.

maintained social services and falling expenditure by liberating Britain from costly bureaucracy.¹⁹

Yet, whilst it reflected more substantive plans than hitherto appreciated, the Opposition's rhetoric did not convey a 'reinvigorated neo-liberal Conservatism' or proto-Thatcherism.²⁰ Because economic and political contexts fuelled freedom rhetoric, rather than abstract theories of the State, contemporaries rejected the contradiction subsequently detected between 'setting the people free' and accepting parts of the 'Attleean settlement'.²¹ Late-forties Conservatives could contemplate economies, but sincerely claim that freedom was compatible with – even necessary for – full employment and extensive social services.²² Instead of reluctantly tolerating an inherent conflict between their 'neoliberal' beliefs and the welfare state for electoral advantage, Conservatives saw both philosophical imperatives and rhetorical opportunities in exposing Labour's 'false choice' between liberty and security.²³ Moreover, Churchill's party used freedom rhetoric to advance causes incompatible with 'neoliberalism', especially its later New Right manifestation.²⁴ Attempting to repair relations with Trade Unionists, Tories repositioned socialism as threat to Unions' liberty, whilst others subverted the language of free trade to recast attacks on imperial preference as diminishing Britain's 'freedom to discriminate'. Thus, closer analysis of speech-writing, rhetorical strategizing, and arguments as delivered suggests that freedom rhetoric was more reactive, tentative, and sincere than normally acknowledged; more compatible with a protectionist, interventionist, welfare state than 'neoliberal' labels allow; and more rooted in its economic and political contexts than comparisons with later periods justify.

¹⁹ Previous scholarship wrongly accepted this was an entirely honest belief: J.D. Hoffman, *The Conservative Party in Opposition 1945-51* (London: MacGibbon, 1964), p. 194; Ramsden follows him: *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, p. 167.

²⁰ Jones, 'The Cold War and the Santa Claus Syndrome', p. 242; Thatcherism as defined in: *Ideologies of Conservatism*, p. 216.

²¹ Jones, 'The Cold War and the Santa Claus Syndrome', p. 243; Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, p. 167.

²² As Jackson highlights (and as pointed out below), Hayek and others were by no means against these objectives in the forties. However, this is a subtle rarely recognised by historians or contemporary politicians using their work to attack these two aims: 'At the Origins of Neo-Liberalism', 140-7.

²³ Jones, 'The Cold War and the Santa Claus Syndrome'.

²⁴ Several elements of Green's definition of Thatcherism clash with this reading: 'reduction of the Welfare State', curbing powers of Trade Unions, and preferring low inflation over full employment: *Ideologies of Conservatism*, p. 216.

How, then, should we explain the apparent affinity between Thatcher's claims in 1975 that the 'free economy... guarantees our liberties' and those she heard in the same conference hall twenty-nine years prior? For that matter, why did 'freedom' permeate so many debates between 1945 and 1951, and how could Tories sound so similar, despite advocating different policies? The answers lie in shifting attention to what politicians were *doing* with their words and the *form* of their rhetoric, rather than presuming similar oratory necessarily reflected equivalent policy positions. Although evidencing its survival between 1951 and 1975 is the burden of subsequent chapters, this chapter detects in late-forties Conservatism a rhetorical culture that connects Churchill and Thatcher's Oppositions without ignoring the intervening years or the historical specificity stressed above. Its defining characteristic was the rhetorical act of framing politics as a choice between freedom and hyperbolic states of unfreedom. Persistent tropes, commonplaces, and targeted appeals to *pathos* and *ethos* rendered that frame a persuasive political divide and formed a pool of shared rhetorical resources, which transcended debates or speakers. Tories could put differing conceptions of freedom to disparate ends, but share in the frame, models, and figures that mediated politics, blurring distinctions between ideology and rhetoric. For many of these rhetorical tools, 1945-51 was either formative or witnessed the acceleration of long-term trends: across the party, speakers increasingly expressed the basic frame using a politics-as-balance model to claim the centre ground. Meanwhile, maturing concepts like 'free enterprise' and 'the free society' joined older constitutional and religious formulas (translated into economic dictums) in a language of debate that marshalled emerging vocabularies of choice, opportunity and incentives into an overarching frame. But to call these shared patterns of argument a 'rhetorical culture' implies dissemination and raises a final question: why did politicians speak through those collective resources? Assumptions about good rhetorical strategy partly explain elites' motivations, but forties Conservatism also inducted its membership into shared modes of arguing, fostered a group identity as Britain's liberators, and manufactured a complementary *ethos* of resistance. In turn, the rank-and-file re-consumed their leaders' rhetoric and initiated a feedback loop by demanding more. Late-forties freedom rhetoric was, therefore, one very contextually specific expression of a wider culture of argument, both linguistic and sociological in nature.

On the one hand, then, this chapter dismisses its introduction's opening parallel by recovering greater historical specificity in the beliefs and contexts motivating late-forties freedom rhetoric. On the other, by showing that those idiosyncratic arguments were expressed through more homogenous models, tropes and figures seeking to frame politics advantageously, it aims to describe the use and dissemination of a set of rhetorical practices, which chapters three and four can identify throughout post-war Conservative oratory and thereby historicise the rallying cries of 1945 and 1975 as iterations of a rhetorical culture that remained buoyant during the intervening period. Those twin aims are reached over ten stages: Two preliminary discussions cover the historiographical critique and methodological premises underlying this and subsequent chapters, allowing a blend of historical and rhetorical analysis to then reset our understanding of 1945. Five subsequent sections take the story up to 1951, examining the shared use of rhetorical models and tropes to talk about domestic economics, before focussing on the party's rhetorical strategy to expose the more complex beliefs and assumptions motivating appeals. In light of this, Conservatives' purpose in highlighting Labour's threat to civil liberties is reconsidered, followed by an analysis of decidedly un-'neoliberal' uses of freedom regarding Trade Unions and imperial preference. A final section recovers the assumptions that encouraged this frame's adoption, the structures for its dissemination, and the feedback-loop that sustained it, before the chapter concludes by assessing these sections' collective impact on historical and rhetorical scholarship.

!

A Distorted Historiography

Although researchers have mapped the philosophical contours of Conservative liberty, its relation to property, and role in defending inequality, controversy has focussed on the status of freedom within different Conservatisms.²⁵ Because they chiefly treated rhetoric as a witness to ideology, these debates filtered historians' perceptions of Tory oratory and propaganda. In particular, two influential historical agendas incorporate wider characterisations of the party's

²⁵ For helpful ideological maps: Norton and Aughey, *Conservatives and Conservatism*, pp. 15-52; Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998 [1996]), pp. 317-48; John Barnes, 'Ideology and Factions', esp. 333-4 on property; On inequality and freedom: Dorey, *British Conservatism*, pp. 18-22; Kevin Hickson, 'Inequality' in *The Political Thought of the Conservative Party Since 1945*, edited by Kevin Hickson (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 178-94 at 185,188,190.

thought as anti-rationalist, Statecraft or hegemonic project.²⁶ The first explains the evolution of Conservative ideology using a model epitomised, if not initiated, by W.H. Greenleaf, which constructs an internal tension between 'libertarian' and 'paternalist' strands, before arranging policy, factions and periods along this axis.²⁷ Harriet Jones and Hartmut Kopsch, for example, characterised mid-twentieth-century Conservatives' views on social policy using that duality, and R.A Butler's New Conservatism or Harold Macmillan's Middle Way were prone to similar interpretation.²⁸ Often, the accompanying chronology alleged a late-nineteenth-century swing away from paternalism towards free markets, culminating in interwar Britain's purportedly *laissez-faire* economics.²⁹ Subsequent defeat in 1945 necessitated jettisoning the 'libertarian' component, heralding a return to active-state Conservatism only terminated by Thatcher's ascension in 1975. This timeline rarely escaped political myths, not least those of a hungry, liberal-market thirties, post-war consensus, and a Tory party twice transformed in defeat. Although most historians now adopt a more nuanced narrative and definitions, the terminology remains influential, and freedom rhetoric still attracts historical attention as an indicator of speakers' positions along a libertarian-paternalist cline, despite the danger of reducing Conservatives' post-war history to a 'titanic struggle' between two traditions.³⁰

²⁶ On anti-rationalism: Michael Oakshot, *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays* (London: Methuen, 1962); On Statecraft: Jim Bullpitt, 'The Discipline of the New Democracy: Mrs Thatcher's Domestic Statecraft', *Political Studies*, 34, 1 (1986), 19-39. For hegemony: Andrew Gamble, *The Free Economy and the Strong State: The Politics of Thatcherism* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994 [1988]), pp. 1-11.

²⁷ Greenleaf did not just apply this model to Conservatism: *The British Political Tradition* (London: Routledge, 1983), vol. 2, pp. 192-3; More complex models: Norton and Aughey, *Conservatives and Conservatism*, pp. 53-89; Paul Whiteley, Patrick Seyed and Jeremy Richardson, *True Blues: The Politics of Conservative Party Membership* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 53; Harriet Jones attributes the distinction to: John Selim Saloma, 'British Conservatism and the Welfare State: An Analysis of the Policy Process within the Conservative Party', Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, (Cambridge, 1962), Ch. 2.

²⁸ Harriet Jones, 'The Conservative Party and the Welfare State, 1942-1955,' unpublished Doctoral Thesis., (University of London, 1992), pp. 31-8; Hartmut Kopsch, 'The Approach of the Conservative Party to Social Policy During World War Two', unpublished Doctoral Thesis, (University of London, 1970), pp. 11-63; Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, pp. 38-57; Hoffman, *The Conservative Party in Opposition*, p. 210; Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, pp. 163-8.

²⁹ Blake, *The Conservative Party from Peel to Thatcher*, pp. 202-70; Anthony Seldon, 'Conservative Century' in *Conservative Century: The Conservative Party Since 1900*, edited by Anthony Seldon and Stuart Ball (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 41-6; For a very different narrative attached to the same terminology: Harris, *Competition and the Corporate Society*, p. 80.

³⁰ For recent users: Robert. M. Page, 'The Conservative Party and the Welfare State since 1945' in *The Conservative Party and Social Policy*, edited by Hugh Bochel (Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2011), pp. 23-41 at p. 24; Richard Wade, *Conservative Economic Policy from*

Unfortunately, rather than question the linkage between freedom rhetoric and liberal-market ideas, scholars challenged that polarity by exposing a gap between words and policy-level action. Jim Tomlinson, for example, was unable to divine a consistently 'neoliberal' or interventionist stance in post-war Conservatives' political economy. Instead, driven by the competing imperatives captured in Butler's dictum 'liberty with order', policy 'lurched from expedient to expedient'.³¹ Martin Francis further undermined the model's neat periodization and coherency by revealing equally inconsistent attitudes towards the State across concurrent policy questions.³² Whilst historians had underplayed the importance of 'libertarian rhetoric' to the 1945-51 Opposition, which was 'much less collectivist' than its 1930s pariah, Francis argued that Tory ministers were more paternalist in government than their grassroots wished and that the party's 'libertarian' credentials were ambiguous regarding public morality: voicing general support for, but not implementing, liberalised gambling laws; tightening legislation on prostitution; and refusing to support Wolfenden's recommendation to partly decriminalise homosexuality.³³ Similarly, although Mark Jarvis detected some decisive 'libertarian' victories, such as commercial television, he concluded that Tories' had mixed feelings towards "permissive legislation".³⁴ For these historians, Conservatives *could* act in keeping with either tradition, but were guided by *Realpolitik*, not fixed loyalties or a desire to turn rhetoric into policy.

Unconvinced by erraticism, others invoked more complex models of rhetoric's relationship with ideology to explain such fickle allegiance to liberty.

Heath in Opposition to Cameron in Coalition (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 10-14; Peter Dorey, *British Conservatism*; On dangers: John Turner, 'A Land Fit for Tories to Live In', *Contemporary European History*, 4, 2 (1995), 189-208 at 193; Even accounts rejecting this narrative apply its labels: Tim Bale, *The Conservatives Since 1945: The Drivers of Party Change* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 45.

³¹ Jim Tomlinson, "'Liberty with Order': Conservative Economic Policy, 1951-1964' in *Conservatives and British Society, 1880-1990*, edited by Martin Francis and Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996), pp. 274-288; For an interpretation of the ROBOT proposals avoiding neo-liberalism: Jim Bullpit and Peter Burnham, 'Operation Robot and the British Political Economy in the Early-1950s: The Politics of Market Strategies', *Contemporary British History*, 13, 1 (1999), 1-31; For a comparable tension between ideology and pragmatism regarding Trade Unions: Peter Dorey, 'Individual Liberty versus Industrial Order: Conservatives and the Trade Union Closed Shop 1946-90', *Contemporary British History*, 23, 2 (2009), 221-44.

³² Francis, "'Set the People Free"?'; Harriet Jones maintained that individuals held both views: 'The Conservative Party and the Welfare State', p. 23; Bale also denies uniform factions: *The Conservative Party Since 1945*, p. 84.

³³ Francis, "'Set the People Free"?', pp. 59,70.

³⁴ Mark Jarvis, *Conservative Governments, Morality and Social Change in Affluent Britain 1957-64* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp. 11-12, 107-8, 165.

Acknowledging the case for a 'liberal invasion' of Conservative philosophy, Ewen Green argued that Greenleaf's vocabulary could be retained if individuals' disparate inclinations hid an underlying predictability.³⁵ He saw conflicting 'libertarian' and 'paternalist' rhetoric as proxies for a deeper 'fulcrum of intra-party debate', since which of their Janus-faces Conservatives turned to an issue depended not on their attitudes to the State, but on how effective they deemed the relevant institutions of civil society (voluntary bodies, industry, trade unions, cooperatives) to be.³⁶ On different grounds, Michael Freedon also stepped beyond 'the chimera of conservative dualism', which emerged, he argued, as a means to fight Liberals and Socialists instantaneously, after late-nineteenth-century progressives threatened to democratise State power.³⁷ For Freedon, the apparent dissonance between 'libertarian' and 'paternalist' traditions is resolved by viewing neither as central to Conservatism; instead, each was a means of defending core ideological commitments to preserving social order and resisting inorganic change. Conservatives' rhetoric on the limited State was thus symptomatic of an 'eagerness to hurl all possible intellectual counter-arguments at the socialists'.³⁸ Freedon's approach is more Gramscian than Green's, but both pin rhetorical evidence onto a layered model of ideology, whereby freedom is enlisted to gain public support for, or represents a refraction of, inner components.³⁹

Similar dualisms have influenced a second historiographical agenda shaping scholars' interpretations of freedom rhetoric: the hunt for Thatcherism's origins and explanations of its apparent contradictions.⁴⁰ In these debates, bursts of freedom rhetoric between 1945 and 1970 supposedly foreshadowed developments in the seventies and eighties, allowing historians to read

³⁵ Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism*, pp. 248, 240-79 at 240-1, 261; In his earlier work Green ascribed to the 'two souls' theory above, explaining the balance between libertarian and paternalism as competing strategies to win middle and working class support respectively: E.H.H. Green, 'The Conservative Party, the State and the Electorate, 1945-64' in *Party, State, and Society: Electoral Behavior in Britain since 1820*, edited by Jon Lawrence and Miles Taylor (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1997), pp. 176-200 at 180.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 279; For the adoption of Green's view: Stuart Ball, *Portrait of a Party: The Conservative Party in Britain 1918-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 27-8.

³⁷ Freedon, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, pp. 373-7.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 354, 374, 378.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 318; One difference is that Freedon reads the preservation of social order as an ideological commitment, not means to hegemony.

⁴⁰ On contradictions: John Charmley, *A History of Conservative Politics 1900-1996* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998 [1996]), p. 201; Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), p. 15; Gamble, *The Free Economy and the Strong State*, p. 36.

Thatcher's speeches as reviving 'the libertarian rhetoric of the late forties' and identify the New Conservatism embodied in 1947's *Industrial Charter* as 'the definitive point at which the Conservative Party became the party of freedom and the free market'.⁴¹ The most influential attempt to historicise Thatcherism came from Green, who argued that, although monetarism was a novel ingredient, the liberal-market critique at Thatcherism's core was 'prefigured' by a persistent undercurrent of 'protests against the "post-war settlement"' within the party, sporadically embraced in the late forties, shunned or appeased by the leadership throughout the fifties, but which gained ground under Heath.⁴² Although his thesis incorporates contextual factors, like many, Green links freedom rhetoric with liberal market dissent from consensus to find an 'almost ready-made audience for the Thatcherite agenda' beneath the post-war leadership.⁴³ Even if recent attempts to soften disjuncture between pre and post 1975 policy avoid the libertarian-paternalist dichotomy and prefer to highlight dormant ideological justifications awaiting favourable socio-economic contexts, the urge to find precedents for Thatcherism within Conservatism still colours readings of mid-century freedom rhetoric.⁴⁴

Contrary interpretations had equally distortive effects. For example, commentators inclined to declare Thatcherism an aberration treat the mounting rhetoric of 'free-market zealots' as symbolic of caving resistance to a minority, liberal invasion.⁴⁵ But discontinuity can be read both ways and some deliberately downplay post-war freedom rhetoric's significance in favour of consensus. Norman Barry's championing of Thatcherism as an expression of freedom, speciously lacking after 1945, is a version of the thesis that Thatcher restored traditional Conservatism to a party led wayward by 'false conclusions'

⁴¹ Francis, "'Set the People Free"?", p. 73; Willetts, 'The New Conservatism? 1945-1951', p. 181; For earlier rhetorical precedents: Stephen Evans, 'Thatcher and the Victorians: A Suitable Case for Comparison?', *History*, 82, 268 (1997), 601-20.

⁴² Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism*, pp. 214-39.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 246; Blake, *The Conservative Party from Peel to Thatcher*, p. 365; Barnes, 'Ideology and Factions', p. 335.

⁴⁴ Stephen Evans, 'The Not So Odd Couple: Margaret Thatcher and One Nation Conservatism', *Contemporary British History*, 23, 1 (2009), 101-21; Aled Davies, "'Right to Buy': The Development of a Conservative Housing Policy, 1945-1980", *Contemporary British History*, 27, 4 (2013), 421-44; Chris Cooper, 'Little Local Difficulties Revisited: Peter Thorneycroft, the 1958 Treasury Resignations and the Origins of Thatcherism', *Contemporary British History*, 25, 2 (2011), 227-50.

⁴⁵ Garnett and Gilmour, 'Thatcherism and the Conservative Tradition', p. 84. For a stronger version: Andrew Denham and Mark Garnett, 'Sir Keith Joseph and the Undoing of British Conservatism', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 7, 1 (2002), 57-75.

drawn from electoral defeat.⁴⁶ More complex is Andrew Gamble's Gramscian interpretation of Thatcherism as a project to re-establish Conservative hegemony around the 'paradox' of 'a free economy and a strong state'.⁴⁷ Instead of finding a party infected with nineteenth-century liberalism, Gamble considered the New Right to be a Conservative modification of liberal-market ideas in response to a zombie post-war consensus, discredited by the seventies economic climate.⁴⁸ Consequently, he accused the emancipatory orators of 1945-51 of 'talk[ing] one language to their supporters, and prepar[ing] to learn another when they returned to power' – regarding them as false-prophets, merely ill-adapted to the 'new politics of power'.⁴⁹ Still, conflicting interpretation trumps methodological resemblance: despite similar emphasis on context, Freedon and Eccleshall place Thatcherism at the zenith of longer continuities, interpreting the Iron Lady's 'libertarian' rhetoric as outer armour protecting core values like inequality.⁵⁰ Our view of freedom rhetoric has, therefore, been shaped by the narratives we cite in support of.

Of course, the chronologies historians construct using (or questioning) the 'libertarian' versus 'paternalist' model partly determines where they locate Thatcherism's origins; in this sense, the two research questions are interdependent. Likewise, contributions to either often draw upon ahistorical definitions of neoliberalism and a simplified narrative of its 'long march' to influence, exemplified by Richard Cockett's *Thinking the Unthinkable* (1994).⁵¹ Although it is very tempting to see a glinting body of stable counter-theory beneath consensus, to which Tories' rhetoric must have been referring, close examination of their early positions cautions against assuming equivalence between academics' work in the thirties and forties and neoliberalism's eventual form. Ben Jackson rightly highlights that Hayek, Lippmann and Popper initially held centralised planning as the primary threat to individual freedom, not the

⁴⁶ Norman Barry, 'New Right' in *The Political Thought of the Conservative Party Since 1945*, edited by Kevin Hickson, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 28-50; Andrew Roberts, *Eminent Churchillians* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1994), pp. 252-3.

⁴⁷ Gamble, *The Free Economy and the Strong State*, p. 36.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 37, 44-5.

⁴⁹ Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, p. 57; Anthony Seldon similarly saw propaganda distorting 'underlying continuity': *Churchill's Indian Summer: The Conservative Government 1951-55* (London: Hodden & Stoughten, 1981), p. 18.

⁵⁰ Freedon, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, p. 386; Robert Eccleshall, 'The Doing of Conservatism', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 5, 3 (2000), 275-87.

⁵¹ The quote, cited in Jackson, is from the broader study: David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neo-Liberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 40; Cockett, *Thinking the Unthinkable*.

welfare state, and reminds us that early neoliberals, who countenanced more State intervention than remembered, often allied themselves with progressives' aims.⁵² Given the evolution of neoliberal thought and that Thatcherism is now rarely seen as a wholly neoliberal construction, we ought to consider whether designating either period's rhetoric 'libertarian' or 'neoliberal' implies a similarly unhistorical image of stability.⁵³

Excepting efforts to contextualise early neoliberalism, the historiographical agendas above still blinker many historians' vision of post-war Tory oratory and propaganda on freedom. The resulting weaknesses can be summarised threefold: First, analysis skips detailed interrogation of Conservatives' arguments as deployed, reducing their words to Thatcherite precedent, sign of 'libertarian' dominance, or one edge of a fissure between promises and practice. Second, the significance assigned to individuals' uses of freedom has been bent, heightened, or reduced according to the demands of established narratives. Citing Churchill's Gestapo broadcast, not as a complex appeal to Liberals with precedent, but as evidence of Hayekian influence is just one example.⁵⁴ Third, those few who briefly examine the period's rhetoric for its own sake do so only tangentially, forsaking theory that sheds light on this rhetoric's purpose and neglecting the speech-writing process that rooted it in immediate contexts.⁵⁵ Even those adopting a layered model of ideology to account for 'libertarian rhetoric' stay silent on freedom's supposed efficacy as a rhetorical shield for core beliefs. Therefore, whilst connecting rhetoric to wider debates is desirable, analysis must temporarily unshackle itself from their influence and overriding concern with ideology to recover historical specificity whilst positing

⁵² Jackson, 'At the Origins of Neo-Liberalism'; Rachel. S. Turner, 'The 'Rebirth of Liberalism': The Origins of Neo-Liberal Ideology', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 12, 1 (2007), 67-83.

⁵³ Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, 'Neo-Liberalism and Morality in the Making of Thatcherite Social Policy', *Historical Journal*, 55, 2 (2012), 497-520.

⁵⁴ For an exception contextualising forties rhetoric see: Toye, 'Winston Churchill's Crazy Broadcast'.

⁵⁵ Matthew Cragoe, "'We Like Local Patriotism": The Conservative Party and the Discourse of Decentralisation, 1947-51', *English Historical Review*, 498 (2007), 965-85; For a cursory analysis of the international context's influence: Michael Kandiah, 'The Conservative Party and the early Cold War: the construction of "New Conservatism"' in *Cold War Britain: New Perspectives*, edited by Michael F. Hopkins, Michael D. Kandiah, Gillian Staerck, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 30-8. One exception is: Toye, 'Winston Churchill's "Crazy Broadcast"'; See also: Richard Toye, *The Roar of the Lion: The Untold Story of Churchill's World War II Speeches*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Richard Toye, "'I am a Liberal as much as a Tory": Winston Churchill and the memory of 1906', *Journal of Liberal History*, 54 (2007), 38-45. Gamble's discussion of the independent trader is lost in his overall narrative: *The Conservative Nation*, pp. 54-9.

new continuities around form and function. A more nuanced understanding of how Tories were utilising ‘freedom’ as more than a passive reflection of beliefs is a prerequisite for escaping those narratives. Therefore, in addition to those outlined in this thesis’s introduction and the technical figures of speech which are discussed as required, the concept of framing needs brief evaluation because it describes the end to which much of this rhetoric was put.

II Framing

Conservatives did not simply talk about freedom; talking about freedom performed rhetorical work for Conservatives. In the speeches and propaganda discussed below, ‘freedom’ and ‘liberty’ helped Tories advantageously define the political ‘bone of contention’, a task long considered vital to winning debates and elucidated by several strands of theory.⁵⁶ To Roman orators this meant selecting the required form of argument; for them, choosing to contest facts, definitions, judgement of an act, or its relevance were crucial decisions in ‘stasis theory’.⁵⁷ By contrast, modern analysts, such as Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, shift attention away from the classification of ideal-type arguments to investigate how particular aspects of a dilemma are drawn to an audience’s attention and others repressed.⁵⁸ As Alan Finlayson points out, these mechanics of emphasis are critical when moving between a dispute’s specifics and wider contexts, a movement which arguably describes the principal relationship of ideology to policy, or appeals from either to moral frameworks.⁵⁹ Yet, despite resurging interest in rhetoric, the practices through which politicians shape their

⁵⁶ The extent to which Aristotle can be regarded as a forerunner of Roman theorists is debated: Yameng Liu, ‘Aristotle and the Stasis Theory: A Re-examination’, *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, 21, 1 (1991), 53-9; Quentin Skinner’s concept of rhetorical redescription is a comparable concept to framing: Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, Volume One, Kindle Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), loc. 4969-70. Burke’s ‘Terministic Screens’ are related filters, albeit with quite a different emphasis and with an ethical role in his dramatist project as ‘deflectors’ of reality: Kenneth Burke, ‘Terministic Screens’ in *Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature and Method* (Berkeley: University of California, 1966), pp. 44-62.

⁵⁷ Janet Davies, ‘Stasis Theory’ in *Encyclopaedia of Rhetoric and Composition: Communication from Ancient Times to the Information Age*, edited by Theresa Enos, Kindle edition (London: Routledge, 2010 [1996]), loc. 28181-283.

⁵⁸ Chaïm Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, translated by John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008 [1958]), pp. 115-20.

⁵⁹ Alan Finlayson, ‘From Beliefs to Arguments: Interpretive Methodology and Rhetorical Political Analysis,’ *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 9, 4 (2007), 545–63 at 555; Judi Atkins, ‘Moral Argument and the Justification of Policy: New Labour’s Case for Welfare Reform,’ *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 12, 3 (2010), 408-24.

audiences' perceptions of issues have received little consideration in a historical mode.

Analogous practices have, however, been explored under the guise of 'framing'. Evading neat definition, framing's central premise is that language can problematize and present issues differently, and a cross-disciplinary literature claims that a speaker's choice of words affect their audience's interpretations, opinions and decisions.⁶⁰ Researchers commonly distinguish between 'devices embedded in political discourse' and frames operating as 'internal structures of the mind'.⁶¹ The former, labelled 'frames in communication', are the 'words, images, phrases, and presentation styles that a speaker uses when relaying information' – whether they be a politician, campaign group or media outlet – to promote 'particular definitions and interpretations of political issues' that advantageously 'give meaning to an unfolding strip of events'.⁶² This notion of 'central organising idea[s] or story line[s]' transmitted between actors is mostly applied to elite discourse: typical studies consider the rhetoric of those opposing affirmative action and abortion or media outlets' conscious and unconscious use of frames.⁶³ However, the concept's roots lie in research examining individuals' mental construction of choices. Referred to as 'frames in thought', Erving Goffman, a much-cited sociologist, argued that individuals require such frames to comprehend complex phenomena, and psychologists, such as Kahneman and Tversky, showed evaluations of risk were affected by varying the

⁶⁰ Brian Schaffner and Patrick Sellers (eds), *Winning with Words: The Origins and Impact of Political Framing* (London: Routledge, 2010); Robert Entman, *Projections of Power: Framing News, Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2004).

⁶¹ Donald Kinder and Lynn Sanders, 'Mimicking Political Debate with Survey Questions: The Case of White Opinion on Affirmative Action for Blacks', *Social Cognition*, 8 (1990), 73-103 at 74; Dietram Scheufele, 'Framing as a Theory of Media Effects', *Journal of Communication*, 49, 1 (1999), 103–22 at 106; James Druckman, 'The Implications of Framing Effects for Citizen Competence', *Political Behaviour*, 23, 3 (2001), 225-56 at 228.

⁶² Dhavan Shah, Mark Watts, David Domke and David Fan, 'News Framing and Cueing of Issue Regimes: Explaining Clinton's Public Approval in Spite of Scandal', *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 66, 3 (2002), 339–70 at 343; William Gamson and Andre Modigliani, 'The Changing Culture of Affirmative Action' in *Research in Political Sociology*, Volume Three, edited by Richard Braungart (Greenwich: JAI Press, 1987), pp. 137–77 reprinted in: *Equal Employment Opportunity: Labor Market Discrimination and Public Policy* edited by Paul Burnstien (New York: Aldine De Gruyter, 1994), pp. 373-94 at p. 376.

⁶³ Gamson and Modigliani, 'The Changing Culture of Affirmative Action', quote at p. 376; S.J. Ball-Rokeach, Gerard Power, K. Kendall Guthrie, H. Ross Waring, 'Value-Framing Abortion in the United States: an Application of Media System Dependency Theory', *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 2, 3 (1990), 249-73; Holli Semetko and Patti Valkenburg, 'Framing European politics: A Content Analysis of Press and Television News', *Journal of Communication*, 50, 2 (2000), 93-109.

presentation of identical scenarios.⁶⁴ However, whilst researchers have studied interviewees' rationalisations of political dilemmas, their work has had less impact on political scholarship than frames in communication.⁶⁵

A key contention, though, is that frames in communication influence frames in thought, and the literature draws another distinction between 'equivalency framing' and 'emphasis framing' to characterise this 'framing effect'.⁶⁶ The narrower concept, equivalency framing, denotes variable responses to scenarios where only the language expressing logically-equivalent choices alters. For instance, relabeling inheritance tax a 'death' or 'estate' tax inversely alters public approval.⁶⁷ Yet, because political debate rarely reflects strict equivalencies, many understand framing as a broader effect (emphasis framing), whereby speakers highlight 'aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient' to 'promote a particular definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation' in the hope that audiences will make judgements accordingly.⁶⁸ Some hold to looser interpretations of emphasis framing as an 'organising idea' or narrative, but most agree that frames are not single arguments, but package structures which rarely endorse just one course of action.⁶⁹ Using a range of methods, political scientists have supplied empirical evidence for both framing effects and demonstrated their variable duration.⁷⁰ Jacoby, for example, scrutinized polling data to show that support for government spending increased when citing specific incidences, whereas others found that news reports framing Ku Klux Klan rallies as a civil liberties issue encouraged greater audience tolerance compared to those who

⁶⁴ Erving Goffman, *Frame analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (Boston: North Eastern University Press, 1986 [1974]); Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, 'Choices, Values, and Frames', *American Psychologist*, 39, 4 (1984), 341–50.

⁶⁵ Dennis Chong, 'How People Think, Reason, and Feel about Rights and Liberties', *American Journal of Political Science*, 37, 3 (1993), 867-99.

⁶⁶ Druckman, 'The Implications of Framing Effects', 228.

⁶⁷ Brian Schaffner and Mary Layton Atkinson, 'Taxing Death or Estates? When Frames Influence Citizens' Issue Beliefs' in *Winning With Words: The Origins and Impact of Political Framing*, edited by Brian Schaffner and Patrick Sellers (London: Routledge, 2010), pp. 121-35.

⁶⁸ Druckman, 'The Implications of Framing Effects', 230; for quote: Robert Entman, 'Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm', *Journal of Communication*, 43, 4 (1993), 51-8 at 52.

⁶⁹ Joseph Cappella and Kathleen Jamieson, *Spiral of Cynicism: The Press and the Public Good* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 39; Gamson and Modigliani, 'The Changing Culture of Affirmative Action', p. 143.

⁷⁰ Sophie Lecheler and Claes de Vreese, 'Getting Real: The Duration of Framing Effects', *Journal of Communication*, 61, 5 (2011), 959-83.

viewed reports set in a public order context.⁷¹ Less intuitively, frames have been linked to partisanship: George Lakoff, a cognitive linguist, maintained that competing metaphors of parenting structured disagreements between Democrats and Republicans.⁷² Recent work has moved beyond establishing frames' existence to theorise their varying saliency and introduce moderating and mediating factors, such as issue ambivalence, frame repetition, and audiences' comparative evaluation of rival frames.⁷³

Adopted critically, framing offers historians a conceptual vocabulary for understanding how politicians use language to control the terms of debate. Although fragmentation is the field's biggest challenge (related concepts like 'agenda setting' and 'priming' prompt calls for synthesis),⁷⁴ three substantive limitations are particularly relevant. First, experimental conditions artificially expose respondents to the same message in ahistorical contexts, and, despite use of case-studies to validate models, frames are rarely treated as historical phenomena. Second, although we know that individuals adopt frames from the media, politicians, or peer groups, the contexts influencing frame authorship have received comparably little attention in a US-centric literature.⁷⁵ Third, the scholarship has not fully discovered connections with traditional rhetorical studies: the relevance of figures, audience, *logos*, *pathos* and *ethos* in constructing salient frames remains ill-explored. Therefore, by asking how politicians framed debates in the past, historians can both supplement

⁷¹ William Jacoby, 'Issue Framing and Public Opinion on Government Spending', *American Journal of Political Science*, 44, 4 (2000), 750-67; Thomas Nelson, Rosalee Clawson and Zoe Oxley, 'Media Framing of a Civil Liberties Conflict and its Effect on Tolerance', *American Political Science Review*, 91, 3 (1997), 567-83.

⁷² George Lakoff, *Don't Think of an Elephant: Know Your Values and Frame the Debate* (White River Junction, Vt: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2004); George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think* (London, University of Chicago Press, 2002).

⁷³ Porismita Borah, 'Conceptual Issues in Framing Theory: A Systematic Examination of a Decade's Literature', *Journal of Communication*, 61, 2 (2011), 246-63 at 256; Paul M. Sniderman and Sean M. Theriault, 'The Structure of Political Argument and the Logic of Issue Framing' in *Studies in Public Opinion: Attitudes, Nonattitudes, Measurement Error and Change*, edited by Willem E. Saris and Paul M. Sniderman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 133-65.

⁷⁴ Scheufele, 'Framing as a Theory of Media Effects', 103; Shanto Iyengar, 'Framing Research: The Next Steps' in *Winning with Words: The Origins and Impact of Political Framing*, edited by Brian F. Schaffner and Patrick J. Sellers (London: Routledge, 2010) pp. 185-91.

⁷⁵ Pamela J. Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese., *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content* (New York: Longman, 1996 [1991]); Entman, *Projections of Power*, John Greenaway, 'How policy framing is as important as the policy content: The story of the English and Welsh Licensing Act 2003', *British Politics*, 6, 4 (2011), 408-429; Alan Finlayson, "'What's the Problem?': Political Theory, Rhetoric and Problem-Setting", *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 9, 4 (2006), 541-557.

theoretical work and broaden their discipline's narrow use of rhetoric by considering its role in advantageously constructing politics for audiences, either in terms of defining issues and choices or highlighting aspects of policy through organising narratives. Accordingly, the object of study below is more than a series of arguments containing 'liberty' or 'freedom'. Instead, elements of late-Victorian rhetoric are collated to study a rhetorical act, more specifically the speech-act of restructuring an audience's perception of politics around a basic frame, freedom versus unfreedom, and rendering this a persuasive political divide through the cumulative force of rhetorical figures, commonplaces and tropes. Furthermore, analysis also historicises that emphasis frame, charting its evolution in shifting political contexts; identifying the imagined audiences and rhetorical imperatives shaping its use; showing its dissemination and modification across party subgroups; and – as in the following section – watching its collapse under attack.

III

Re-reading 1945

Tracing that frame back to 1945 is not to deny that appeals to 'freedom' and 'liberty' had deeper roots in Conservatism. Opposing measures to reduce drunkenness and prostitution, late-Victorian Tories accused Liberals of betraying their radical commitment to Liberty under the influence of non-conformism and cast themselves as her protectors.⁷⁶ Suitably manipulated, that assumed identity reached beyond domestic issues: the 1900 election saw Unionist rhetoric mesh liberty with patriotism, exporting British freedoms to defend their government's actions in the South African Republics. Six years later Tories subverted Lloyd George's attacks on the use of Chinese labourers in South African mines by anointing him the unemployed's free-trade slaver.⁷⁷ Moreover, long before Churchill, Conservative leaders had combined nationalism and freedom to emotively frame debates. Arthur Balfour, for example, stirred an ancient commitment to liberty with an old rivalry to explain

⁷⁶ Jon Lawrence, *Speaking for the People Party: Language and Popular Politics in England, 1867-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 107; Jon Lawrence, 'Class and Gender in the Making of Urban Toryism, 1880-1914', *English Historical Review*, 108, 428 (1993), 629-52 at 635-39.

⁷⁷ Paul Readman, 'The Conservative Party, Patriotism, and British Politics: The Case of the General Election of 1900', *Journal of British Studies*, 40, 1 (2001), 107-45 at 120-1; James Thompson, 'Pictorial Lies'? – Posters and Politics in Britain c.1880–1914', *Past and Present*, 197, 1 (2007), 177-210 at 197.

why the English would never accept a tax on food: 'theoretical equality' was 'burned into [the French]', whereas 'an Englishman cares little for speculative equality, what he wants is liberty'.⁷⁸ Like later Conservatives, Stanley Baldwin, master of repurposing national narratives to fit Tory values, inserted freedom into rhetorical models of balance, expounding the virtues of 'the English Secret' as 'freedom, ordered freedom, within the law, with force in the background and not in the foreground: a society in which authority and freedom are blended in due proportion...'.⁷⁹ The Cold War era's aggressive mantras also had precursors: throughout the interwar years, Conservatives developed stronger critiques of bureaucracy, and attacks on a restrictive Socialism sat alongside denunciations of Labour as Bolsheviks in waiting.⁸⁰

Novelties in post-war Conservative speech, 'freedom' and 'liberty' were not. But whilst overplaying differences between 1939 and 1945 is unwise, so too is overstretching lines of continuity. Rhetoric absorbed political context, articulated dissimilar beliefs, served different functions, and varied in prominence. The notion of speakers arguing through a rhetorical culture (itself iterating rather than remaining static) captures that exchange between idiosyncratic contexts and rhetorical ancestry, but some boundaries must be placed on how far analysis can follow constituent elements back into the past. This chapter's primary tasks are to describe the network of tropes, models and figures that Tories used to frame mid-to-late-forties politics, explore their dissemination, and explain their usage as responses to contexts and expressions of beliefs not necessarily equitable with those later producing similar rhetoric. Whilst

⁷⁸ Arthur Balfour, Conference Speech, Sheffield, 1 Oct 1903, British Political Speech Archive. Available at: www.britishpoliticalspeech.org [Accessed: Nov 2012].

⁷⁹ In this last speech as Prime Minister: Stanley Baldwin, Broadcast, 1937. Available at: www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/voiceshist/baldwin/index.html [accessed: Nov 2012]; For further examples: Stanley Baldwin, *This Torch of Freedom* (London: Hodder, 1937). As we shall see, Tories claimed still earlier roots for this model.

⁸⁰ The Posters in the Conservative Party Archive demonstrate these thematic continuities: Available via: <http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/cpa/collections/posters-collection>. [Last Accessed: Nov 2013]; For an account of Conservatives' attitudes towards bureaucracy, albeit skewed by the narratives above: John Greenaway, 'Conservatism and Bureaucracy', *History of Political Thought*, 13, 1 (1992), 129-60; On inter-war scepticism of State action: Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism*, p. 98, 160-1, 242; On proto-communists: Neal Robert McCrillis, *The British Conservative Party in the Age of Universal Suffrage: Popular Conservatism, 1918 – 1929* (Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 1998), pp. 76-8, 125; Maurice Cowling found competing methods of resistance to socialism: *The Impact of Labour: The Beginning of Modern British Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 3, 168-9, 142, 416; Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism*, pp. 119-21; Beyond the party: Alan Sykes 'Radical Conservatism and the Working Classes in Edwardian England: The Case of the Workers Defence Union' *English Historical Review*, 113, 454 (1998), 1180-1209 at 1198-9; Matthew Paris, 'Red Menace! Russia and British Juvenile Fiction', *Contemporary British History*, 19, 2 (2005), 117-32.

precedents are important in achieving those aims, its analysis is more synchronic than the following chapters', which trace a rhetorical continuity forwards to 1970. The positioning of 1945 as an analytical beginning needs defending: First, research presented in chapter one supports this chronology by suggesting mid-century changes in freedom rhetoric. Second, the historiographical impetus of these chapters is to extricate freedom's rhetorical history from the ideological (dis)continuities imposed on a post-war periodization. Third, describing Conservatives' shared frame and rhetorical tools between 1945 and 1951 and their subsequent evolution is not to claim that this periodization corresponds to the absolute beginning or end of that rhetorical culture; instead of embarking on another (potentially misguided) search for 'origins', one possible continuity – a snapshot – is studied to better understand how politicians repurpose rhetorical resources to meet contextual needs. Within those parameters, the remainder of this section reinterprets the rhetoric of 1945 as a conscious choice to frame politics as a battle for freedom in response not to 'neoliberal' ideas, but specific rhetorical imperatives.

Whatever its rhetorical antecedents, the Conservative party of 1945 was unwilling to linger in the pre-war world. Indeed, fears that appeasement had tarnished interwar achievements rendered Chamberlain's successors more reliant on freedom to express their political identity and conjure future-gazing spectres. Accordingly, Conservatives sought to divide politics between freedom and state socialism.⁸¹ Launching their election campaign on 4 June, Churchill proclaimed that rift using near-*antimetabole*: 'it is not alone that property, in all its forms, is struck at, but that liberty, in all its forms, is challenged by the fundamental conceptions of Socialism'.⁸² A few lines later, his allegation that Labour would have to 'fall back on some form of Gestapo' emotively charged this binary rhetorical model.⁸³ But despite backfiring, Churchill's infamous

⁸¹ Bale, *The Conservatives Since 1945*, pp. 28-9; Andrew Thorpe, *Parties at War: Political Organization in Second World War Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 30-32; Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, pp. 209-212.

⁸² Winston Churchill, Broadcast 4 June 1945 in *Churchill Speaks 1897-1963: Collected Speeches in Peace and War*, edited by Robert Rhodes James (Leicester: Windward, 1981), pp. 864-867 at 865.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 866.

phrase was not a one-off blunder,⁸⁴ and the broadcast toned down drafts that warned of the ‘policeman’s knock’:

The family are gathered around the hearth after the day’s work is done. Suddenly there is knock at the door. There is an awful pause. Then some child opens the door. In stalks the State, represented by the policeman. Somebody has done something wrong, or said something wrong in the streets, or said something wrong which his children have reported. Perhaps he has done worse. Perhaps he had organized a political party or group to criticize the local ~~gauliter~~ Socialist council. Off he goes into the night and no one knows whether they will ever see him again. That is total Socialism in action against resistance, and without that kind of authority, no complete system of Socialism could survive. It was not for nothing that Hitler called his party National Socialists.⁸⁵

That this menacing passage was cut, yet saved for future broadcasts, suggests both perceived limits of acceptable comparison and Churchill’s commitment to this line of argument. But, the version delivered also lost the parallel’s fuller rationale. Churchill had intended a long, patriotic comparison with Britain’s depoliticised police to follow his warning, and the caveat ‘I am quite willing to admit that these are theoretical and academic arguments’ would have prefixed his assurance that, ‘...our present opponents or assailants would be, I am sure, knowing many of them, shocked to see where they are going, and where they are trying to lead us’.⁸⁶ Indeed, the drafting process suggests that the ‘Gestapo’ analogy represented not a throw-away stunt, but the apex of a conscious decision to frame politics.⁸⁷

Historians overestimate the influence of early ‘neoliberals’ in that decision by speculating that Churchill was swayed by Ralph Assheton, the party’s Chairman, who included ‘Hayekian’ critiques in pre-election speeches and circulated *The Road to Serfdom*.⁸⁸ But claims to Hayek’s influence need

⁸⁴ He defended the claim in broadcasts and repeated it a month later on London’s Blackheath road: ‘Crowds Cheer and Jeer’, *The Manchester Guardian*, 5 Jul 1945, p. 5.

⁸⁵ Portions of Unused Broadcast, Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/209B, folios 114-115.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, folio 116.

⁸⁷ As slip: Robert McAllum and Alison Readman, *The British General Election of 1945* (London: Frank Cass, 1964[1947]), pp. 142-4

⁸⁸ Paul Addison, *Churchill on the Home Front* (London: Pimlico, 1993), p. 383; Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, p. 212; Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism*, p. 220; Cockett

tempering: in March 1942, Churchill predicted the election would be fought on the 'issues of socialism and free enterprise' and was potentially aware of theoretical debate over planning via Harold Laski's pamphlets or Walter Lippmann, the American 'popular economist', whom he tried to meet in 1944.⁸⁹ Moreover, whilst Conservatives' arguments crudely resemble the Austrian economist's thesis – planned economies would drift into totalitarianism – historians should be wary of post-hoc similarities and recognise pre-war precedents or wider contemporary tropes.⁹⁰ In fact, the frame deployed in 1945 was established before Hayek published or Assheton became Chairman. On 17 February 1944, Churchill gathered his advisors for a rare 'talk about party matters' and Common Wealth's by-election threat.⁹¹ Equating Richard Acland's party with 'elementary socialism', the conclave endorsed Beaverbrook's memoranda (used in January at Skipton), which recommended opposing a

claimed Churchill's broadcast 'no more than an exaggerated version of the Hayekian thesis': *Thinking the Unthinkable*, pp. 92-5 esp. 94; Bale, *The Conservatives Since 1945*, p. 29; Harriet Jones, 'The Post-War Consensus: Thesis, Antithesis, Synthesis?' in *The Contemporary History Handbook*, edited by Brian Brivati, Julia Buxton and Anthony Seldon (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), pp. 41-49 at p. 46; Kandiah, 'Conservative Leaders, Strategy', p. 58; But see: Jackson, 'At the Origins of Neo-Liberalism' on the complexity of Hayek and other early 'neo-liberal' views, and Toye, 'Winston Churchill's "Crazy Broadcast"', 665-6 for helpful caveats.⁸⁹ Churchill to Harold Laski, 25 Mar 1942, Churchill Papers, CHAR 20/53B, folio 158; Laski also sent Churchill copies of his *Will Planning Restrict Freedom?* (London: Architectural Press, 1944); On Lippmann: B.C. Sendall to John Martin, 3 Nov 1944, Churchill Papers, CHAR 20/198A, folio 46; Churchill to private office, Churchill Papers, CHAR 20/198A, folio 50; B. C Sendall to John Martin, 8 Jan 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 20/198A, folio 51; Lippmann was impressed with the Ministry of Information, but not that Churchill and Eden had been too busy to meet: Lord Halifax telegram to Foreign Office, Churchill Papers, CHAR 20/198A, folios 48-49; Churchill's private office indicated Lippmann's work 'helpful' to their cause; On Lippmann's background; Craufurd Goodwin, 'Walter Lippmann: The Making of a Public Economist', *History of Political Economy*, 45, 5 (2013), 92-113.

⁹⁰ Green inaccurately cites Jones to mistakenly claim Assheton wrote the outline notes: Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism*, p. 220; Jones, 'Conservative Party and the Welfare State', pp. 105-8; Assheton sent suggestions for Churchill's later broadcasts and notes on freedom for Churchill's conference speech, but not for 4 June: Assheton to Churchill, 9 Mar 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/207A, folio 110; Churchill liked Assheton's 22 Apr 1945 speech: Churchill to Assheton, 19 Apr 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 20/195A, folio 28; On the party's relationship with Hayek see: Jeremy Shearmur, 'Hayek, The Road to Serfdom, and the British Conservatives', *Journal of the History of Economic Thought*, 28, 3 (2006), 309-14; The copy Hayek sent Churchill was put in a cupboard: John Colville to Hayek, 16 Mar 1944, Churchill Papers, CHAR 2/523, folio 17; Nor is there evidence Churchill read the copy Waldron Smithers sent him or that he even read the letter (his PPS replied he was out of the country): Waldron Smithers to Churchill, 9 Oct 1944, Churchill Papers, CHAR 2/497, folios 31-2; If made, the case for influence should be started from 1935 when Lionel Robbins sent Churchill Hayek's work on Soviet Russia: Lionel Robbins to Churchill, 15 Feb 1935, Churchill Papers, CHAR 2/234, folio 65; For Liberal and Tory pre-war precedents treating nationalisation as confiscation on the path to directed labour: James Kidd, *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 5th Series*, vol. 140, 5 Apr 1921, cols. 186-91 at 187, 190; Sir Beddoe Rees, *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 5th Series*, vol. 173, 16 May 1924, cols. 1745-50 at 1750.

⁹¹ Anthony Eden, Lord Beaverbrook, Brendon Bracken, James Stuart and Thomas Dugdale attended: 'Meeting held at 10 Downing Street', 17 Feb 1944, Churchill Papers, CHAR 2/507, folio 11.

'paradise for bureaucrats' on the grounds of 'individual freedom'.⁹² 'Common ownership' – 'only a new word for "nationalisation"' – meant that 'officialdom would be larger than ever after the war; the country would be permanently controlled and held down by orders, decrees and regulations galore; and our way of life completely dominated by State officials'.⁹³ Churchill's 21 March 1943 broadcast contained the model response: 'We must be aware of trying to build a society in which nobody counts for anything except a politician or an official... I say 'trying to build' because of all races in the world our people would be the last to consent to being governed by a bureaucracy. Freedom is their lifeblood'.⁹⁴ Moreover, in 1943 the party's Subcommittee on Industry denounced nationalisation on similar lines: 'It is quite true that if the whole of British industry were put under State control, it would be possible for the State to offer a guarantee that no one would be unemployed – subject to accepting totalitarianism and slave conditions of labour'.⁹⁵ But having defeated such evils abroad, it would be a shameful irony if Britain 'choose to submit [herself] to a totalitarian industrial system', which offered 'merely bare security against unemployment' when she also needed 'freedom for people to change their jobs, freedom to negotiate wages, and freedom from the dead hand of centralised control imposing conditions on the average man without regard to his like or dislikes – as in Germany'.⁹⁶ At most, then, Hayek further justified a pre-existing strategy, rekindled to oppose Common Wealth and redirected to attack a purposely-exaggerated vision of Labour's nationalisation proposals.⁹⁷

These precedents are significant because Conservatives' similar warnings did not represent a conversion to 'neoliberal' thought, even though this was neither monolithic nor identical with later positions.⁹⁸ For example, alongside free

⁹² Lord Beaverbrook to Churchill, 9 Feb 1944, 'An Analysis of Sir Richard Acland's Book "How it can be done"', c. Jul 1943, Churchill Papers, CHAR 2/507, folios 30-2.

⁹³ Lord Beaverbrook to Churchill, 'A Paradise for Bureaucrats', c. Jul 1943, Churchill Papers, CHAR 2/507, folio 34.

⁹⁴ Ibid; Winston Churchill, *A Four Years' Plan for Britain* (London: The Times, 1943), p. 6; Lords Keynes and Cherwell had significant input into the broadcast. Drafts cast 'a state in which all industry is planned, initiated, built up and run by committees of officials and civil servants' as 'totalitarianism': Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/193A, folios 240-1.

⁹⁵ CUCO, *Work: The Future of British Industry* (London: CUCO, 1943), pp. 39-40.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 40.

⁹⁷ Churchill to Lord Margesson, 9 Jul 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/209B, folio 178.

⁹⁸ On heterodoxy of neoliberalism: Jackson, 'At the Origins of Neoliberalism'; Green mistakenly elides 'essentially a libertarian' argument for incentives and anti-Beveridge universalism with Hayek's work: 'The Conservative Party', p. 179; Tory opposition to nationalisation was primarily on the grounds it was a stalking horse for direction of labour, but this was an established

market commitments, the Subcommittee on Industry's report countenanced government bulk-purchasing, proposed permanent controls on industries' locations, defended monopolistic practices, and sanctioned state action to ensure industry was run in 'the national interest'.⁹⁹ Moreover, compared to the later New Right, it is important to remember that even Assheton advocated 'Parliamentary control of monopolies', although whether he was proposing Hayek's solution of regulating natural monopolies or Henry Simons and others' advocacy of public ownership was unclear.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, like Hayek, supposed right-wingers were not against all planning: Oliver Lyttelton argued that 'the choice [was] not between Socialist planning on the one hand and no planning on the other, but between State regimentation...[and] freedom for individuals and individual industries to work out their own solutions to their problems... within the broad framework of the Government's policy'.¹⁰¹ However, Lyttelton's main criticism of socialist planning was its technical feasibility, a stance neoliberals abandoned a decade earlier. Indeed, as Minister for Production he had been closer to Robbins than Hayek on demand management, complaining that Churchill's four year plan 'was not nearly long enough'.¹⁰² Nor should we forget that in the thirties Churchill recognised the incompatibility of democracy and central stewardship of the economy, but arrived at the opposite solution to neoliberals: an economic sub-parliament, freed of electoral constraints.¹⁰³ So notwithstanding their common defence of free enterprise, the rhetorical intersection of a party and intellectual grouping must not be mistaken for the latter injecting ideas akin to eighties neoliberalism into the former.

critique from the 1920s: Lord Salisbury to Churchill, 11 Oct 1943, Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/192C, folios 320-4.

⁹⁹ CUCO, *Work: The Future of British Industry*, pp. 34, 36, 38. For Hayek's opposition to monopoly and 'national interest' objectives like full employment: *The Road to Serfdom*, pp. 45-58, 105-22, 202-3, 211-2.

¹⁰⁰ Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, pp. 203-4; See Jackson, 'On the Origins of Neoliberalism', 143-4; Assheton's precise meaning is unclear, but his juxtaposition of this statement with 'free enterprise' and assertion that control had been the case since Elizabeth I does not suggest he meant breaking monopolies up: Assheton to Churchill, 9 Mar 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/207A, folio 110.

¹⁰¹ Oliver Lyttelton to Churchill, 26 Jun 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/209B, folios 162-4 at 164.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, folios 162-4; Oliver Lyttelton to Churchill, 11 Mar 1943, Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/193C, folios 216-8 at 217.

¹⁰³ Winston Churchill, *Parliamentary Government and the Economic Problem* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930); Those advocating a good deal of State intervention were also capable of raising 'liberty' objections: Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism*, p. 160-1.

Regardless, Geoffrey Lloyd's memorandum, which structured Churchill's opening broadcast, shows that freedom rhetoric was as much a response to political context, as economic evangelism.¹⁰⁴ Intriguingly, although they relate to the 4 June speech, the new Minister for Information's notes reveal the wider campaign's strategy:

Individual Liberty: Apart from the untimeliness of experiments with Socialism, great emphasis must be laid on its threat to individual liberty. If it be true that certain tenets of Socialism have been used for the purpose of winning the war, it is equally true that they have involved the loss of liberty which we know they inevitably must. It is physically impossible for a State to take control of the industrial and economic life of a nation without also taking control of the people. To talk of "public ownership and the State being the instrument of the will of the people" is humbug, and must be denounced for what it is. The people today are sick of control. Let them once understand that Socialism is inseparable from control and they will, I am sure, reject it. But before doing so they want an assurance that they will be protected from hardship not arising from their own neglect, and that they will not become the easy prey of the unscrupulous.¹⁰⁵

A shorter set of bullets accompanied Lloyd's memorandum, advising 'emphasis on freedom but not all controls can be abolished at once'.¹⁰⁶ Hence, the voice behind the broadcast was a minor Tory minister, not, as Attlee alleged in the fallout, Lord Beaverbrook. Beyond authorship, the point is that leading Conservatives were well aware of the rhetorical imperatives to frame the election using freedom, as well as the accompanying dangers: First, freedom enabled Tories to attack socialism on principle rather than efficiency, which would have proven difficult given Labour's conflation of a successful war

¹⁰⁴ Lloyd's importance to the campaign or broadcasts has never been recognised: Jones, 'Conservative Party and the Welfare State', p. 106; Green, 'The Conservative Party', p. 179; Toye, 'Winston Churchill's "Crazy Broadcast"'.
¹⁰⁵ The notes are marked 'Given to Mr Churchill by Mr Geoffrey Lloyd' and Churchill's broadcast follows their structure: 'General Election Issues Note for Mr Lloyd', Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/208 A, folios 76-77; Lloyd was liaising with Captain Phillip Dunn (News of the World Chairman) and Churchill lunched with both at Chequers towards the end of May: Geoffrey Lloyd to Churchill, 22 May 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 20/198A, folio 57; Lloyd collaborated with Butler at Central Office on propaganda from April: R A Butler to Churchill, 4 Apr 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 2/548B, folio 246.

¹⁰⁶ 'Notes', Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/208A, folio 20.

economy with peacetime socialism. Second, the argument that economic control *inevitably* led to totalitarianism was targeted at an audience presumed to be weary with control, but who mistakenly believed socialism was compatible with freedom. According to Lloyd, Tories merely needed to connect Labour's programme with voters' experiences of diminished liberty under wartime regulations and debunk their opponents' claims that State control was 'public' – an attack more akin to criticism of Rousseau than market choice.¹⁰⁷ In expectation that voters might flinch at the removal of protective controls, a related strategy balanced this focus on release with reassurances of social security, transitory controls, and anti-cartel messages. Churchill's broadcasts were thus products of a risk-assessed, context-specific rhetorical strategy, not flashes of Hayekian inspiration.

But leaders selected these strategies under considerable constraints. They adopted the frame partly as a pre-emptive defence, designed to deflect debate away from Conservatives' pre-war records or critiques of Churchill as dictator.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, Beaverbrook's curt evaluation of Central Office's recommendations following by-election defeats in 1944 reveals the leadership's limited room to extend pledges given in Churchill's March 1943 broadcast, despite awareness of their vulnerability:

The memorandum is of no value. It is based upon the supposed "lack of a positive policy on home affairs". But there is no such lack. The Conservative Party has... an excellent programme which can be interpreted in the broadest sense and with a wealth of detail... More than that the Party does not want. More than that would, in fact, be an embarrassment to it. *The case is in our hands. Where we are in default is the exposition of the case* [my emphasis].¹⁰⁹

So, when R.A Butler enquired about 'the theme-song of the election and the note to be struck', the answer would be defensive and suited to attacking the

¹⁰⁷ An electorate weary with control was a shared assumption: Lord Cherwell to Churchill, Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/207A, folio 113-4.

¹⁰⁸ 'General Election Issues Note for Mr Lloyd', Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/208A, folio 78; Churchill, Beaverbrook and Eden predicted this line of attack and urged the selection of young candidates who could disassociate themselves from pre-1939: Lord Beaverbrook to Churchill, Churchill Papers, CHAR 2/545, folio 40; On the impact of 1930s foreign policy: Scott Kelly, "The Ghost of Neville Chamberlain": Guilty Men and the 1945 Election', *Conservative History Journal*, 5 (2005), 18-24; Drafts confirm the latter fear: Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/209B, folio 171.

¹⁰⁹ Lord Beaverbrook to Churchill, 20 Jan 1944, Churchill Papers, CHAR 2/509A-B, folio 21.

extent of Labour's proposals rather than outbidding them.¹¹⁰ Broader electoral stratagems were another factor, particularly attempts to attract new and Liberal voters. As Toye writes, Churchill's initial broadcast both appealed to shared liberal values and chastised Sinclair's party for abandoning a government embodying said ideals.¹¹¹ This was a tactical move, not a selfless desire for unity. On 17 March, Churchill informed Lord Croft that he was not contemplating a coalition, but reminded the Under-Secretary of State for War of 'the advantage of having "Socialists v. the rest" rather than "Tories v. the rest"'.¹¹² Freedom was the pivot on which Churchill sought to construct such a divide, making socialism the election issue and diminishing the Liberals' distinctiveness. Likewise, the perception of 'an enormous vote unattached to any particular party' shaped Churchill's rhetoric: 'it would seem in our interest', he told Margesson, 'that the Labour programme of nationalisation should be stated at its highest as this will alarm more new voters than it will attract'.¹¹³ Therefore, several very contextual rhetorical constraints and imperatives committed senior Tories to framing the election as choice between freedom and tyrannous socialism.

Yet, if the specificities of the 1945 election generated this frame, it was sustained by a commonplace that still underpinned Conservatives' rhetorical culture in 1970: an argument of direction. Derided as 'slippery-slope' fallacies, arguments of direction guard against a mirror technique of breaking ends down into innumerable means to lessen impact.¹¹⁴ Their essence lies in asserting interdependence between each stage and subsequent highly-undesirable, inevitable developments. Political mainstays, arguments of direction have consequences and prerequisites: speakers must successfully allege their opponent is (knowingly or unknowingly) constructing an argument of stages to hide an end that is universally accepted as negative. In doing so, orators trade on their credibility to undermine an opponent's *ethos*. Next, to establish interdependent stages and ends, speakers invoke cause-effect chains or cite comparisons. Either presents risks: because they must assert that there 'can be no stopping on the way', users may pursue logic into absurdity, but risk nullifying any grounds for comparison by dampening the consequences their

¹¹⁰ R.A Butler to Churchill, 4 Apr 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 2/548B, folio 246.

¹¹¹ Toye, 'Winston Churchill's "Crazy Broadcast"', 658-59, 668.

¹¹² Churchill to Lord Croft, 17 Mar 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/207, folio 122.

¹¹³ Ibid.; Churchill to Lord Margesson, 9 Jul 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/209B, folio 178.

¹¹⁴ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*, pp. 281-7.

parallel suggests.¹¹⁵ Whilst hosting other tropes and appeals to a national *pathos* in 1945, arguments of direction gave the freedom versus unfreedom frame both its salience and inherent weakness.

A good example of politicians condensing these assumptions is the lesser-told story of Churchill's second broadcast and its attempt to defend the first.¹¹⁶ Two days prior to the 13 June address, Jock Colville, Winston's Assistant Private Secretary, sent dictated fragments for fact-checking, before Lloyd redrafted these overnight 'as a basis' for the speech.¹¹⁷ Initially, the now-ridiculed charge was flatly defended: Churchill was 'glad the word "Gestapo" stung, because it will show a lot of harmless and worthy people the way they are going...'.¹¹⁸ Subsequent edits favoured reasserting that 'if and when the plans... came into force in their entirety... all effective and healthy opposition and the natural change of parties in office from time to time would necessarily come to an end, and a political police would be required to enforce an absolute and permanent system upon the nation'.¹¹⁹ But the underlying argument of direction is especially clear in Lloyd's original version of the defence:

I never suggested in that speech that the benign and gentlemanly Mr Attlee, if returned to power, would appear on the scene with a Gestapo in his pocket... My complaint about the leaders of the Labour Party is that they are wedded to, or forced by their Party to adopt, theoretical policies the results of which they have not attempted to foresee. The stream that flows from the hills has no idea of the size of the river when it reaches the sea. Similarly the Socialist leaders do not seem to realise that the system of nationalisation which they advocate, if developed to the full as their Party desires, would end in this country becoming completely State controlled. Individual freedom would disappear...¹²⁰

Here, as in the broadcast itself, nationalisation was the stage supposedly leading to totalitarian ends. This was a specificity which the 4 June speech downplayed, but, unlike Hayek's critique that the requirements of a single,

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 284.

¹¹⁶ For an account: Toye, *The Roar of the Lion*, pp. 222-3.

¹¹⁷ Geoffrey Lloyd to Churchill, 12 Jun 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/208B, folios 183-200.

¹¹⁸ Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/208B, folios 101-115 at 106.

¹¹⁹ 'Mr Churchill's Second Broadcast', *The Times*, 14 Jun 1945, p. 4.

¹²⁰ Geoffrey Lloyd to Churchill, 12 Jun 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/208B, folios 195-6.

stable plan conflicted with democracy, Churchill's public words left the links between nationalisation, planning and totalitarianism unstated.¹²¹ Instead, attacks on *ethos* replaced *logos* to establish a hidden direction of travel.¹²² Accordingly, Labour's 'revolutionary aims [had] been somewhat watered down in the last few days, to make them less repulsive to the electorate', and whilst 'Socialist leaders [sought] to present themselves as no more than harmless and well-meaning philanthropists and progressives', they were simultaneously theoretically naive, compelled by a revolutionary conference, and infiltrated with conspirators.¹²³ With some hesitancy, Churchill personalised the attack, using Beaverbrook-supplied quotations to claim 'men like Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Herbert Morrison have shown... that they would sweep away the power of Parliament...'.¹²⁴ The corollary was a rejuvenated counter-*ethos*. Lloyd and Edward Grigg recommended a *proleptic* passage reminding the electorate of their leader's prophetic track-record, but, in the event, Churchill stressed his record as a realist, Liberal social reformer, launching into a catalogue of achievements from the line: 'I am as much opposed to the creation of a complete Socialist system as I am in favour of the immense social reforms...'.¹²⁵ Passion for reform justified his warnings: the 'full four years work' awaiting the nation was 'why [he had] censured in the most severe terms the Socialist effort to drag their long-term fads and wavy Utopias across the practical path of need and duty'. Arguments of direction, then, became increasingly important as a defence of the overarching frame's centrepiece and more removed from supposed academic parallels, leaning on *ethos* for credibility.

Importantly, these were not the 'eccentricities' of a war-weary leader cumbersomely returning to partisan politics; national and constituency campaigners fought with similar weaponry.¹²⁶ Often portrayed as a progressive Cassandra, Butler told an Essex meeting that 'the English people will never be regimented' and would 'sink back to some low level of creeping species' under

¹²¹ Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, pp. 59-104 esp. 71-73.

¹²² On the role of *pathos*: Toye, 'Winston Churchill's "Crazy Broadcast"', 669.

¹²³ 'Mr Churchill's Second Broadcast', *The Times*, 14 Jun 1945, p. 4.

¹²⁴ 'First Draft Complete', Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/208B, folios 209-223 at 213; Lord Beaverbrook to Churchill, 4 Jun 1945, CHAR 209/B, folio 133.

¹²⁵ Geoffrey Lloyd to Churchill, 12 Jun 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/208B, folios 183-200 at 195-6; Sir Edward Grigg to Churchill, 12 Jun 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/208B, folio 164; 'Mr Churchill's Second Broadcast', *The Times*, 14 Jun 1945, p. 4.

¹²⁶ Hoffman, *The Conservative Party*, p. 29.

Socialism.¹²⁷ Elsewhere, Captain Waterhouse raised Churchill's *hyperbole*, hurling accusations that concentration camps would be introduced,¹²⁸ and, on the campaign's final night, 1,500 people gathered to hear (over fireworks, stink-bombs and bottle throwing) Slough's Tory candidate predict the Socialists 'would in five years destroy the greater part of the freedom we enjoy today'.¹²⁹ Smaller, unreported rallies conveyed similar sentiments. At Fulham, the announcer hailed over crowds waiting for Churchill to pass: '...Liberty, freedom of speech... freedom of worship... fought to defend these things... fight to defend it from the government officials of tomorrow... We want the country to be a free one...'.¹³⁰ Speaking that evening at the local Women's Association, Bill Astor posed the rhetorical question, 'are we going to sacrifice our freedom to get full employment in a slave state? That's what they did in Germany!'¹³¹ Such appeals to vote consistently with war aims were common: 'After ripping the Gestapo out of the still beating heart of Germany, will you stand for a Gestapo under another name at home?', asked the *Daily Express*.¹³² Although the 'other' would revert to Soviet Russia, hanging contemporary nationalistic tropes on the basic frame remained a trait of Conservative argumentation.¹³³

Further distinctions from 'neoliberal' critiques lay beneath anti-Germanism. David Eccles linked planning with Hitler's Reich (figure 2.1) and insisted 'German thinkers invented this system [of complete control] in terms of the machine age, and the Russians developed their Communism from the German

¹²⁷ *The Manchester Guardian*, 11 Jun 1945, p. 3; Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, pp. 38-39; In fact, this was quite a feature of Butler's rhetoric: R.A. Butler, Speech to Yorkshire Conservatives, Leeds, 2 Mar 1945, reported in 'More Liberty and Less Control', *The Manchester Guardian*, 3 Mar 1945, p. 6.

¹²⁸ *The Times*, 29 Jun 1945, p. 8.

¹²⁹ *Daily Mail*, 5 Jul 1945, p. 4.

¹³⁰ 'A Report on the General Election June-July 1945', Mass Observation Archive, File Report 2268, p. 29.

¹³¹ He was the local candidate: *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹³² 'Opinion', *Daily Express*, 5 Jun 1945, p. 2; Churchill's correspondents made the link: Major-General Sir Hugh Tudor to Churchill, 28 May 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 20/201/6, folio 1; Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* also opens with a critique of Nazi Germany; For logic applied to controls: E.D. Winson, 'Soldier Vote', *The Daily Mail*, 27 Jun 1945; The Assheton speech which Churchill liked in April 1945 made similar claims about 'fighting against totalitarianism in Germany' quoted in: 'Mr. Assheton Hoists a Socialist Bogy', *The Manchester Guardian*, 23 Apr 1945, p. 3.

¹³³ Germany was preferred not simply because Russia had been an ally, but because of the perceived strength of nationalisation in Russia: Aubrey Jones, Speech to Defeated Candidates Conference, 5 Oct 1945, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/1A, folio 166; Charles Curran, Speech to Defeated Candidates Conference, 5 Oct 1945, Churchill Papers CHUR 2/1A, folio 194-5 at 195.

thinkers'.¹³⁴ But, because he advocated a 'marriage between liberty and economic planning', history deemed the latter totalitarian only in socialist hands.¹³⁵ 'You will have noticed', the future Middle Way acolyte wrote, 'that every revolution which has been begun in the name of the proletariat has ended in dictatorship. Why are the Left always driven to this form of violence?' Eccles's answer drew upon the anti-idealist tradition alluded to by Lloyd, which juxtaposed One Nation, patriotic Conservatism with foreign Jacobinism bent on remaking society according to minority ideology: '...because they will not fit their ideas to the passions, desires and traditions of the men and women in the country concerned. And when the clash comes they are forced to take violent measures to eliminate the conscientious-objectors to Communism, to National Socialism or any other brand of Socialism, in the vain and barbarous hope that out of coercion will be born a good society'.¹³⁶ Since Britain's annals were filled not only with the 'struggle to free the individual from the arbitrary power of the executive', but also with traditions 'tolerating the natural differences which will always exist', it would be difficult for 'one section of our population... to force their ideas down British throats'.¹³⁷ It was in this nationalistic, organic tradition that Assheton and Churchill rejected 'German-made doctrines of Karl Marx' in favour of Beaconsfield's "Imperium et Libertas" and Randolph Churchill's "Trust the People".¹³⁸ Thus, unlike Hayek, Conservative arguments of direction focussed on who wielded planning and utilised an older concoction of anti-idealism, *ethos*, and *pathos*, fortified with pseudo-historicism to elide freedom as a frame for winning the war into a frame for winning the election. The risk, of course, was that the context lending historical lessons potency also created conditions in which labelling colleagues totalitarians smacked of scaremongering.¹³⁹

¹³⁴ David Eccles, *Your Generation* (London: McCorquodale, 1945), p. 7.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹³⁸ Assheton to Churchill, 10 Mar 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/207A, folios 99-100; Drafts include a veiled reference to Soviet Russia: 'we have no need to seek the advice of even our most honoured Allies as to how we should conduct ourselves in regards to our own affairs': Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/207A, folio 77; Churchill had made similar points using Disraeli's saying 'Nations are governed by force or by tradition': Churchill, *A Four Years' Plan for Britain*, p. 6; Such references undermine Dorey's juxtaposition of Tory Democracy with allegedly proto-neoliberalism: *British Conservatism*, p. 112.

¹³⁹ Mass Observation evidence supports this reasoning: 'People who've been your colleagues all these years and worked hard with you don't change into the Gestapo overnight' quoted in: 'Youth and the Election', Mass Observation Archives, File Report 2257, p. 4.

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Figure 2.1 David Eccles, *Your Generation* (1945)

However, Conservatives also framed the election as a more visceral choice between perpetual wartime restriction and peacetime release. Beaverbrook, who Morrison christened ‘prince of the anti-controllers’, headed this campaign, announcing his ‘five freedoms’:

Freedom from the nuisance of the identity card. Freedom from the tyranny of queuing. Freedom for women to go back and rebuild their homes. Freedom for the returning soldier to start his own business. Freedom for statesmen to conduct foreign policy without the intervention of irresponsible men who are not even standing for Parliament.¹⁴⁰

Excepting his trailing reference to Laski, Beaverbrook aimed to taint Labour with the negative aspects of the home front. But the press baron was sufficiently astute, and his *anaphoric* rhetoric flexible enough, to counter cries of ‘*laissez-faire*’, nimbly adding a classic liberal (and by now Labour) caveat, ‘I want freedom from cartels and monopolies’, before returning to his theme at Battersea.¹⁴¹ Again, Conservatives relied on *ethos* to foster suspicion of Labour’s intentions and relocate wartime controls into a freedom versus dictatorship binary. The manifesto promised to guard the ‘country against those who, under guise of war necessity, would like to impose upon Britain for their

¹⁴⁰ ‘Lord Beaverbrook’s Five Freedoms: Premier a “Real Liberal” at Heart’, *The Manchester Guardian*, 28 Jun 1945, p. 8.

¹⁴¹ ‘Lord Beaverbrook’s Stormy Meeting’, *The Manchester Guardian*, 19 Jun 1945, p. 6.

own purposes a permanent system of bureaucratic control, reeking of totalitarianism'.¹⁴² Less-dramatic voices struggled to escape this frame. Anthony Eden's broadcast presaged a 'middle way' between uncontrolled free enterprise and 'bureaucratic tyranny', but the Foreign Secretary still painted socialists as needlessly extreme, alleging Cripps held control in unhealthy admiration.¹⁴³

Just as Churchill's Gestapo charge relied upon a commonplace that would outlast its archetypal instance, attacks on wartime controls were underpinned by more permanent rhetorical practices. The British Council's cameras captured the power of combining these attacks with *staccato* delivery. 'I believe in being governed. But not in being spoon fed; and kicked; and patted; and cursed; and praised; and directed; and fined; and licenced; and exhorted all of the time', John Profumo barked from a Kettering theatre's stage.¹⁴⁴ Such *accumulatio* patterns were integral to anti-controllers' case: repetition imitated orders and sonically animated the oppressive weight of restrictions, forcing the audience to dwell on them. Words filling-out these structures targeted resentment, interspersing patronising parental metaphors ('endless regimentation, endless do's and don'ts, musts and must-nots. Go here. Go there. Do as you are told...') with an emerging discourse of the imposingly-inefficient state and its collaborators ('Queues at the bureaucrats counters, waiting – not even for something useful like fish – but for forms to fill up, instructions to be obeyed. Inspectors everywhere, helped along by the narks').¹⁴⁵ Absurdity and sarcasm also engineered irreverence. On 5 June, *The Daily Mail's* 'Control Corner' announced: 'No longer can Granny be drafted to the coal mines, and elderly girls are once again free to choose how they shall earn their subsidised bread and controlled fats. Such is the latest dangerous drift back to freedom. Take heart, though, little bureaucrats. Maybe you have a middle-aged female enemy who has not yet reached her 51st birthday. If so, she is still at your mercy'.¹⁴⁶ In each case, the rhetorical figures embody, magnify and perpetuate the emotions of decontrol so neatly that the appeal to *pathos* becomes inseparable from the policy only implicitly advocated.

¹⁴² 'Mr Churchill's Declaration of Policy to the Electors', Conservative Party Manifesto, 1945. Available at: <http://www.politicsresources.net/area/uk/man/con45.htm> [accessed: Nov 2012].

¹⁴³ *The Times*, 28 June 1945, p. 8.

¹⁴⁴ John Profumo, Speech at Corby, June 1945. Available at: <http://film.britishcouncil.org> [Accessed: Nov 2013].

¹⁴⁵ 'Opinion', *Daily Express*, 14 Jun 1945, p. 2.

¹⁴⁶ Lane Norcott, 'Control Corner', *Daily Mail*, 5 Jun 1945, p. 2.

Given the totality of defeat such rhetoric has fairly been labelled ineffective; however, some target audiences internalised the frame, whilst disassociating themselves from its perceived excesses.¹⁴⁷ On 7 June, a Manchester chemist wrote in his diary that he had met a potential Liberal voter who, although disliking Churchill's tone, was 'convinced that public control would lead to totalitarianism in this country' and would vote Tory.¹⁴⁸ In Wiltshire, two elderly ex-Liberals were overheard having a similar conversation, during which the husband dismissed 'that nonsense... about the Gestapo', but conceded 'no sane man or woman can deny that the Socialist Policy is turning towards control. Control of business and control of the individual'. His wife's recalling Bevin gloating as Minister of Labour 'that we should all have to do as he dictates' suggests attacks on *ethos* were not entirely misplaced.¹⁴⁹ Indeed, suspicion of Labour's intentions converted the previously 'pinkish' respondent F25B, who 'decided to vote Conservative, because I still feel there is still a chance of some personal freedom under the Conservatives, and there'll be none under Labour...'.¹⁵⁰ Liberal and floating voters aside, Mass Observation's interviewers found Conservative supporters adopting or defending their party's narrative: 'I certainly don't want to be treated like a slave', one man with 'strong Conservative principles' said. 'We've had enough of that in war time. People who are going to vote Labour can't realise what it'll mean'.¹⁵¹ Supporters who admitted 'the secret police part was rubbish' explained Churchill really meant 'that if industry and other concerns do get nationalised we'll have so many inspectors and officials poking their noses into our affairs'.¹⁵² So, whilst there is little reason to doubt that his opening broadcast was widely condemned by a

¹⁴⁷ Charmley, *A History of Conservative Politics*, p. 120; Henry Pelling, *The Labour Governments* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1984), p. 22; Seldon, *Churchill's Indian Summer*, p. 6; For polling: Addison, *The Road to 1945*, p. 256; For the view the result did not represent an overwhelming swing left: Steven Fielding, 'What Did "The People" Want?: The Meaning of the 1945 General Election', *Historical Journal*, 35, 3 (1992), 623-639.

¹⁴⁸ Diary entry, 7 Jun 1945, Mass Observation Archives (5088).

¹⁴⁹ Diary entry, 5 Jun 1945, Mass Observation Archives (5128).

¹⁵⁰ Diary entry, 5 Jun 1945, Mass Observation Archives (5283); The respondent elided Morrison quotations with Laski: Respondent F25B, 'A Report on the General Election June-July 1945', Mass Observation Archives, File Report 2268, p. 100; Diary entry, 5 Jun 1945, Mass Observation Archives (5283).

¹⁵¹ Respondent M2OA in 'A Report on the General Election June-July 1945', Mass Observation Archives, File Report 2268, p. 100; Further examples: Diary entry, 4 Jun 1945, Mass Observation Archives (5098); Diary entry, 5 Jun 1945, Mass Observation Archives (5132).

¹⁵² 'Youth and the Election', Mass Observation Archives, File Report 2257, p. 4.

sceptical electorate,¹⁵³ we should remember voters could adopt Churchill's frame and generate their own arguments in support, whilst rejecting his words.

Defeat was not for want of dissemination; Conservatives had established 'the framework of [the] election, [as] socialisation versus private enterprise'.¹⁵⁴ Instead, when evaluating this frame comparatively, voters downgraded its saliency.¹⁵⁵ Only 17% of Tory supporters voted out of fear of socialism and only 9% because they were in favour of freedom and enterprise.¹⁵⁶ Churchill's daughter spotted this weakness, telling her father that, although his broadcast may convince wavering voters, who 'certainly wouldn't tolerate any form of totalitarianism', she worried electors would not 'understand how what you say would really be so. Because Socialism as practised in the war, did no one any harm, and quite a lot of people good'.¹⁵⁷ So even if the noxious word 'Gestapo' allowed related appeals to be dismissed by association, it was the frame itself that collapsed; largely because its supporting argument of direction leant heavily upon attacks on *ethos*, which Labour, in Churchill's words, 'turned against me as if I had meant that Mr. Attlee could be a Fuehrer or the genial Mr. Bevin a Goering except in bulk, or Mr. Morrison a Himmler'. Privately, he, like the electorate, recognised 'none of them could have played these parts'.¹⁵⁸

Defeat mattered to Churchill and Lloyd (who lost his Birmingham seat); but for present purposes the rhetoric of 1945 is significant because in it we glimpse the specificity of ideas and contexts driving it and the underlying basis of a rhetorical culture. Despite pretending he was 'forced into... doctrinaire discussion', Churchill's decision to present politics as a choice between freedom and dictatorship was an iteration of a persistent rhetorical frame, one neither equivalent to, nor directly inspired by, 'neoliberalism'.¹⁵⁹ He and Lloyd knowingly

¹⁵³ 'A Report on the General Election June-July 1945', Mass Observation Archives, File Report 2268.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 85; Zweinger-Barglelowska, *Austerity in Britain*, p. 211.

¹⁵⁵ John Swift's suggestion that more bombastic campaigning would have softened the result is not borne out in Mass Observation evidence: 'Randolph Churchill and the General Election in Preston, 1945: Bucking the Trend', *Northern History*, 48, 1 (2011), 123-144.

¹⁵⁶ 'General Election August Poll' asked of those who had voted in the last election: 'Would you mind telling me your main reason for voting the way you did?', *The Gallup International Public Opinion Polls: Great Britain 1937-1975*, Volume One (New York: Greenwood, 1976), pp. 116-7.

¹⁵⁷ Sarah Churchill to Churchill, 5 June 1945, Churchill Papers, CHAR 1/387, folio 23; Addison omitted the crucial first lines of this letter: *Churchill on the Home Front*, p. 381.

¹⁵⁸ Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/209A, folio 66.

¹⁵⁹ A draft of Churchill's 4 June broadcast originally read: 'I have led you into a doctrinaire discussion between Socialist and individualist theories of life and government'. Notably it was altered to 'I have been forced into...': Churchill Papers, CHAR 9/209B, folio 111.

devised that strategy in response to an idiosyncratic dilemma (how to attack the methods, perhaps even philosophy, that had won the war, whilst defending a limited manifesto and attracting Liberal votes), but the rhetorical act itself and supporting structures would be repeated to advance a fresh ensemble of beliefs and demons under new banners, imperatives and constraints.

IV

Liberty with Order

Whilst 1945 was not a rhetorical beginning, it became one in future Conservatives' simulacra of party history. For them, recovery necessitated 'learn[ing] to express their fears about collectivism in a way which chimed in with the voters' experiences and won their support'.¹⁶⁰ Certainly, historians now recognise that Churchill's opposition used more 'free enterprise, tax-cutting and anti-collectivist rhetoric' than previously acknowledged.¹⁶¹ Far from discarding 'freedom' in defeat, Conservatives narrated their alternative policies through an iteration of the same frame. Harold Macmillan's use of humdrum rhetoric to launch new ideas exemplified this continuity:

The theme of this Conference has been freedom. First, individual freedom. Magna Carta is, I suppose, out of copyright. It is also, alas, out of print! It is certainly not out of date. We need a new Charter of Individual Freedom. Second, industrial and economic freedom. A property-owning democracy, based on security, opportunity, incentive, partnership – that is the Industrial Charter. Thirdly, the great imperial freedom; the right and duty of the British Commonwealth and Empire to strengthen by every possible means its internal economic and strategic unity, and regain its rightful position in the leadership of the world.¹⁶²

Yet, identifying 'the seeds of recovery' in the Gestapo broadcast simplifies subsequent use of freedom.¹⁶³ To nuance that narrative, four conflicting readings of the 1945-51 party's rhetoric need revision. Writing in 1972, Nigel

¹⁶⁰ Willetts, 'The New Conservatism?', p. 171.

¹⁶¹ Francis, "'Set the People Free'?", p. 59.

¹⁶² Harold Macmillan, Conference Speech, 1947, pp. 113-4; Unless otherwise stated, all conference speeches are drawn from the relevant Conservative and Unionist Central Office (hereafter CUCO) *Conference Report*.

¹⁶³ For the first quote: Bale, *The Conservatives Since 1945*, p. 27; Second quote: Willetts, 'The New Conservatism?', p. 171; Francis, "'Set the People Free'?", pp. 61-2; Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, p. 211.

Harris argued that by 1947 public opinion and prosperity had converted the now-dominant 'etatiste' Tory Reformers to 'neoliberalism'.¹⁶⁴ Calls to 'set the people free' supposedly reflected a party 'more diehard' than any since the 1920s.¹⁶⁵ Gamble also found 'Right Progressives' in control after defeat, but instead saw them deploying the 'Middle Way' as a rhetorical response to 'consensus' and lever to 'pin the label of *laissez-faire*' on Whig remnants.¹⁶⁶ Contrived opposition to nationalisation as totalitarian 'mark[ed] out the dividing line... without rejecting those parts of the post-war settlement... endorsed by the New Conservatism', and 'efficiency and profitability' objections were 'overblown' into windy rhetoric, which Conservatives never intended to enact.¹⁶⁷ Although still detecting a gap between rhetoric and policy, historians partly reverted to Harris's position to deny the existence of a 'consensus'. For example, Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska argued that, having forged an anti-socialist coalition, Tories capitalised on a rightward swing, painting controls 'as an erosion of traditional liberties' and blaming bureaucracy for delayed prosperity.¹⁶⁸ Similarly, Harriet Jones found a 'reinvigorated neo-liberal Conservatism' leading the party into 1950-51. Yet, because these beliefs co-existed with electoral pressure to maintain social services, she detected 'contradictions' between emancipatory rhetoric and commitments to the welfare state.¹⁶⁹ All four are reductionist accounts, which clip Conservatives' rhetorical vision and too-quickly conflate 'freedom' with stable 'neoliberal' ideology, ignoring the contexts driving speech-writing. Closer examination of the tropes, commonplaces and imperatives sustaining late-forties rhetoric over the following sections points to a new chronology that emphasises evolution of the rhetoric present in 1945. Its essential features were retained to articulate different beliefs, but other elements became more pronounced in response to specific imperatives, producing not a 'neoliberal' freedom rhetoric, but one more genuine, tentative, and reconcilable with the welfare state and full employment than hitherto allowed. We can begin that series of revisions by showing the

¹⁶⁴ Harris defined 'neoliberalism' as older pluralism combined with less-forgiving attitudes to free-trade, monopolies and restrictive practices): Harris, *Competition and the Corporate Society*, p. 83.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 77-84.

¹⁶⁶ Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, p. 45; also see: Gamble, *Free Economy*, p. 71

¹⁶⁷ Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, pp. 54-7.

¹⁶⁸ Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'Rationing, Austerity', 176, 182-9; On policy/rhetoric gap: Dorey, *British Conservatism*, pp. 84-5, 123.

¹⁶⁹ Harriet Jones, 'The Cold War and the Santa Claus', p. 243.

underlying frame's evolution into a hybrid structure, permitting both dichotomy and continuum, and characterising this development as a shared appropriation rather than a result of shifting factional dominance.

Keen to avoid being tarred *laissez-faire*, Conservatives increasingly connected palettes of balance, freedom and history to colour the mid-twentieth-century political spectrum. 'The problem confronting every age', Eden avowed, 'is how to reconcile freedom with order. "*Laissez-faire*" remembered freedom and denied order. Socialism remembers order and has to deny freedom'.¹⁷⁰ Via such divisions, Tories positioned themselves in a centre-ground that prioritised visceral dualities over policy.¹⁷¹ Politics not only concerned the binary clash of freedom and tyranny, but also the arbitration of goldilocks hues, in which the middle ground represented just the right measure of freedom. Using this model, Research Department (CRD) publications sanitised state intervention as 'order' and marshalled the different streams of party thought together, cautioning that 'because [Conservatism] is a policy of freedom it must not be led astray into the paths of unrestrained individualism', but 'nor, because it is a policy of order, must it be given a colour-wash of Socialism'.¹⁷² Speakers also layered history onto these gradations to rebut the sensitive charge their party had presided over mass-unemployment.¹⁷³ Propaganda insisted that Tories had 'never been the party of *laissez-faire*', and 'steadily throughout the nineteenth century... fought *laissez-faire*'. Conservatism 'recognise[d] the guiding influence which the Government must exert in fostering and balancing the economic life of the country... But it recognise[d], too, that the fundamental control [was] self-control'.¹⁷⁴ Thus, more complex rhetorical models enabled 1945's overwhelmingly-binary frame to parry opponents' attacks and foster a party identity suited to managing its disparate subscribers in defeat.

'Self-control' versus 'guiding influence' was only one permutation of a model also designed to reclaim ownership of 'consensus' and cast opponents as

¹⁷⁰ Anthony Eden, Conference Speech, 1947, pp. 40-3 at p. 43.

¹⁷¹ On Churchill's particular desire to capture to centre: Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, p. 138.

¹⁷² David Clarke, *The Conservative Faith in a Modern Age* (London: CRD, 1947), pp. 27-8.

¹⁷³ On Labour's attacks: 'National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations Yorkshire Area: Report of Group Advisory Conferences', Sep 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/54B, folios 340-3; CUCO, *Notes on Current Politics*, No. 19, 10 Oct 1949, p. 22.

¹⁷⁴ CUCO, *We Fight for the People: The Aims of the Conservative and Unionist Party* (London: CUCO, c. late 1945).

'doctrinaire'.¹⁷⁵ Variants in the *Industrial Charter* ironically incorporated accusations that Attlee's mixed-economy was unworkable: 'We wish to substitute for the present paralysis, in which we are experiencing the worst of all worlds, a system of free enterprise, which is on terms with authority, and which reconciles the need for central direction with the encouragement of individual effort'.¹⁷⁶ Elsewhere, 'reconciliation' remained implicit, with freedom-from-restriction metaphors carrying the model beyond macro-economics. Just as their forefathers 'delivered trade unionism from strangulation at birth seventy years ago at the hands of the over-emphasis on Liberal *laissez-faire*', David Maxwell Fyfe preached, 'today it is the duty of the Conservative Party to deliver trade unionism from the paralysis of Socialist collectivism'.¹⁷⁷ Rhetorical figures encoded this model symbolically. When Raymond Grumbar told conference, 'the Socialists look back to Karl Marx; the Liberals look back to 1906; let us look forward', it was his tripartite structure, historical *synecdoche* (part-for-whole substitutions) and *anaphora* that signposted delegates to a familiar manifesto instead of vague futurism.¹⁷⁸ Indeed, so many speakers deployed three-part structures or switched tenses to aurally transport their audience from history to present to future alternative those articulating the 'Middle Way' – like 1945's anti-controllers – fused meaning with form.

And yet equating this model with the policies connoted by 'Middle Way' is misleading; it represented not so much an invention, as a contested appropriation used by different factions.¹⁷⁹ The parties disputed ownership of dictums like 'liberty with order', which both David Eccles and Herbert Morrison annexed within a fortnight in 1946.¹⁸⁰ Moreover, 'liberty with order' represented not a policy, but the appropriation of a constitutional maxim stretching back to

¹⁷⁵ Anthony Eden, Speech at Preston By-election, London, 28 Jan 1946 reported in 'Tories' Case Against the Government', *The Manchester Guardian*, 29 Jan 1946, p. 6; On consensus as partisan, rhetorical model: Toye, 'From 'Consensus' to 'Common Ground''; Others formulations: 'freedom and justice must be reconciled' in: CUCO, *The Industrial Charter: Popular Edition* (London, CUCO, 1947), p. 2; 'freedom and social justice': David Maxwell-Fyfe, Speech at Stockport, 17 Oct 1947, reported in 'Dollar Saving, Sir David Fyfe on Tory Policy', *The Manchester Guardian*, 18 Oct 1947, p. 6; Between Adam Smith and Marx: Walter Elliot, Broadcast, 20 Dec 1947, reprinted in 'The End of the Year', *The Listener*, 25 Dec 1947, p. 1102.

¹⁷⁶ CUCO, *The Industrial Charter*, p. 3.

¹⁷⁷ David Maxwell-Fyfe, Conference Speech, 1949, pp. 44-5 at p. 44.

¹⁷⁸ Raymond Grumbar, Conference Speech, 1950, pp. 92-3 at p. 93.

¹⁷⁹ Hoffman, *The Conservative Party*, p. 209.

¹⁸⁰ David Eccles, Speech at Howden, 22 Jun 1946 reported in 'An Alternative to Socialism', *The Times*, 24 Jun 1946, p. 2; Herbert Morrison, Broadcast, 30 Jun 1946 reported in 'Combining Order with Liberty', *The Times*, 1 Jul 1946, p. 8.

Burke – an inheritance used to deflect charges of opportunism.¹⁸¹ Such co-option signified a longer-term transition, whereby constitutional formulas began moonlighting as macro-economic guides.¹⁸² Analogies sometimes embodied that transition. Just as ‘freedom of speech can exist only in a society where there is some degree of law and order’, Eden told Preston’s voters, ‘it is necessary to have a degree of order in the economic sphere if full freedom of enterprise and individual initiative is to be achieved’.¹⁸³ Unusually, the analogy led Eden beyond the balanced-principles model towards partial acceptance of his opponents’ views that freedom required intervention: ‘Freedom does not grow on trees. It must be created, and in the complex structure of modern society there is undoubtedly an increasing field for positive state action in economic affairs’.¹⁸⁴ Although uncommon in Tory rhetoric at this stage, reframing state intervention as creating freedom enabled Eden to advocate ‘state enterprise’, but return to the continuum model above to dismiss Labour’s ‘delusion’ that nationalisation was ‘the only form of state action’ as ‘dogma’.¹⁸⁵ Phrases like ‘freedom with order’, therefore, reflected and perpetuated the cross-party tendency to locate relationships between the State and individuals in economic arenas, but also symbolised the retention of older rhetorical maps for traversing politics’ growing domain.

Because of these wider histories, polarity models were not proprietary tools of ‘Right Progressives’ attacking ‘Whigs’, as sometimes argued.¹⁸⁶ Granted, Hinchingsbrooke, Hogg and Eccles’s wartime publications re-read the party’s history against Liberalism, and Butler sought to isolate both ‘State Marxist Socialism’ and Tory supporters of ‘*laissez-faire*’, contrasting each with a

¹⁸¹ ‘Mr. Burke’s Posthumous Works’, *The Times*, 7 Sep 1797, p. 3; Earl of Devon, Speech to Torquay and Newton Abbot Association, 12 Jan 1865 reported in: ‘Conservatism In Devonshire’, *The Times*, 16 Jan 1865, p. 6; David Clarke, *The Conservative Faith in a Modern Age*, p. 32; The duality shaped John Stuart Mill’s philosophy: *On Liberty* (London: Penguin, 2010 [1859]) and dates in general form to Thomas Hobbes in English philosophy: *Leviathan* (London: Fontana, 1962 [1681]), pp. 204-14.

¹⁸² See Chapter one for quantitative evidence. For the wider practice of connecting present to past political dilemmas: Noel Annan, ‘Echoes from a Century Ago’, *The Listener*, 5 Dec 1946, p. 777; ‘Conservatism Today’, *The Times*, 3 Oct 1946, p. 5.

¹⁸³ Anthony Eden, Speech at Preston By-election, London, 28 Jan 1946 reported in ‘Tories’ Case Against the Government’, *The Manchester Guardian*, 29 Jan 1946, p. 6.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ On the strategy of approaching nationalisation as doctrine: Geoffrey Crowther to Churchill, 25 Apr 1946, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/4E, folios 545-6; On Eden’s wish for a policy beyond economic liberalism: Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, p. 141; Harris mistakenly implies Eden rejected intervention: *Competition and the Corporate Society*, p. 83.

¹⁸⁶ Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, pp. 50-2; Peter Dorey, *British Conservatism and Trade Unionism, 1945-1964* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 38-41.

'mounting tide of modern Conservatism' analogous to 'the Counter-Reformation' in its crusade to 'reconcile the need for State action with the restoration of incentive to the individual'.¹⁸⁷ But the *Industrial Charter's* assailants shared this model. Herbert Williams declared:

We Conservatives stand between the totalitarian systems of fascism, communism and socialism - I bracket them on the one hand, and the philosophic anarchy of mid-Victorian liberalism. We are in the middle, which people so often forget. You can sum up Conservative principles in four words: orderly progress and ordered liberty.¹⁸⁸

Even Waldron Smithers, decrying the Charter as 'milk-and-water Socialism', implicitly accepted the cline vision of politics.¹⁸⁹ Moreover, when their views changed, Tory Reformers simply refocused their rhetorical lens: in 1951, Hinchingsbrooke told *The Times* Britain had 'moved across the spectrum from the ultra-violet of *laissez-faire* free trade to the infra-red of absolute protection and control, and nothing [lay] beyond save darkness'. Because 'the Socialists [were] steadily exhausting the capacity of our people for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness... Conservative policy must undergo a philosophic change and begin to entertain the old liberal doctrines...'.¹⁹⁰ Furthermore, eager to characterise New Conservatism as balance, historians have ignored how infrequently Tories treated the spectrum even-handedly, rarely implying equal viscosity along its dimensions.¹⁹¹ So whilst Lieutenant Colonel Edwards reminded the 1947 conference, 'in the long struggle between absolute liberty and ordered government our Party has always been able to reconcile the

¹⁸⁷ Lord Hinchingsbrooke, *Full Speed Ahead. Essays in Tory Reform* (London: Simpkin Marshall, 1944), p. 22; Quintin Hogg, *One Year's Work* (London: Hutchinson, 1944), pp. 80-1; For the 'marriage between liberty and economic planning' see: Eccles, *Your Generation*, pp. 6-9 at p. 9; R.A. Butler, Speech at Saffron Walden, 6 Nov 1947 reported in: *The Times*, 7 Oct 1947, p. 3.

¹⁸⁸ Sir Herbert Williams, Conference Speech, 1947, pp. 35-6 at p. 35; Tactical Committee Minutes, 8 Mar 1949, Bodleian Library, Oxford (hereafter B.L.O), Conservative Central Office, (hereafter CCO), 600/17/11.

¹⁸⁹ Waldron Smithers, Conference Speech, 1947, pp. 49-50; Smithers balanced freedom with Christian duty and divine law: "*Seek Ye First: The Only Solution of the World's Problems* (London: Staples Press, 1948); Smithers published an attack for conference delegates: Waldron Smithers, "*Industrial" or "Magna" Charter: The Conservative Industrial Charter Attacked on Principle* (London, 1947); His attacks were monitored: Tactical Committee Minutes, 29 July 1947, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/9; Tactical Committee Minutes, 17 Jun 1948, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/10.

¹⁹⁰ Lord Hinchingsbrooke, 'A Conservative Policy: The Old Liberal Doctrines', *The Times*, 27 Sep 1951, p. 5; Dorey, *British Conservatism and Trade Unionism*, p. 39; As asserted in: Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, p. 247.

¹⁹¹ This was true of the 'self-control' versus 'guiding influence' dichotomy cited above, which suggested dictatorship followed if the emphasis was not on the former: CUCO, *We Fight for the People*.

freedom of the individual with the needs of the State', the following line revealed his target: 'On the Left there are men who attach no importance to personal freedom, because to them economic security within a rigidly planned economy is the supreme end of politics. I believe that security without liberty is worth nothing'.¹⁹² 'Freedom with order', then, was a shared, appropriated rhetorical model, which helped Conservatives' defend their overarching frame against Labour's charges, but still permitted the emancipatory binaries dominant in 1945.

V

Freedom and Domestic Political Economy

That latter emphasis is best remembered as attacks on controls, housing or nationalisation. As well as recounting how freedom framed these issues, this section argues that the political contexts surrounding them produced or matured permanent features of Conservative rhetoric. Constraints on Tories' ability to oppose austerity spurred both the integration of freedom with related concepts and the development of character tropes to moralise these. Likewise, debates about housing and nationalisation tied freedom to efficiency and condensed economic and political freedom into idioms like 'free enterprise'. Taking controls first, it is well known that Conservatives continued to frame the minutiae of rationing and licencing as curtailing freedom.¹⁹³ Asking the Minister of Food whether the housewife was to have the 'liberty of choosing her own milkman' restored was just one instance of an often-coordinated attack genre.¹⁹⁴ Whilst the Publicity Department pursued reports of petty licencing, CRD sought instances of 'bureaucratic control' from industrialists or New Zealanders'

¹⁹² Lieutenant Colonel Edwards, Conference Speech, 1947, pp. 59-60.

¹⁹³ Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, pp. 214-26; On extra-party groups: Paul Martin, 'Echoes in the Wilderness: British Popular Conservatism, 1945-51' in *Mass Conservatism: The Conservatives and the Public Since the 1880s*, edited by Stuart Ball and Ian Holliday, (London: Frank Cass, 2002), pp. 120-138; This was despite disowning Beaverbrook the 'prince of the anti-controllers': Candidates Conference Report, 5 Oct 1945, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/1A, folios 136-244; Examples of controls as liberty restricting: Patricia Hornsby-Smith, Election Broadcast, 11 Oct 1951, reprinted in 'General Election Broadcasts' *The Listener*, 18 Oct 1951, pp. 647, 650.

¹⁹⁴ Cyril Osbourne, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 5th Series, Vol. 421, 17 April 1946 written answers, col. 450; Other examples: CUCO, *The Industrial Charter*, p. 6; CUCO, *Notes on Current Politics*, No. 14, 15 Jul 1948, pp. 10-12; Coordinated attempts included targeting queues of holiday-makers 'rubbing in the fact that the queues... were due to the Government's muddle and mismanagement': 'Holiday Train Queues: Opportunity for Propaganda', 30 Apr 1947, B.L.O., CCO 600/17/1.

experiencing comparable restrictions.¹⁹⁵ Yet, Zweiniger-Bargielowska's account of anti-austerity rhetoric omits an important caveat: insiders considered it problematic, even dangerous.¹⁹⁶ Party officials could not decide which controls they would remove: 'it is quite impossible', wrote Henry Hopkinson, joint Director of CRD in 1947, '...to produce a list of controls which we would remove apart from the one or two big ones which we have already indicated. The instances quoted are in practically every case not examples of controls but examples of bad administration...'.¹⁹⁷ Insiders were also sceptical about decontrol's electoral value, imagining an audience suspicious that '[we] will take off controls and food will be so expensive they won't be able to buy it' and worrying that those 'who might otherwise vote Conservative feared they might be ejected from their homes'.¹⁹⁸ Even in late 1947, calls to abolish food subsidies and return to price mechanisms were 'doing the Party a great deal of harm', and Hopkinson continued to fret that, if Cripps reduced controls, rising commodity prices would affect the 'rentier class – the vote we want', exposing 'the anti-control party' to 'as much, if not more obloquy as the Government'.¹⁹⁹ Instead, propaganda should 'emphasise the *Industrial Charter* tenet, "we will not remove the control from any necessity of life until we are certain that it is in reach of every family"', and 'desist from the advocating of further control cuts except those of a stupidly bureaucratic nature' – hardly Willetts' 'Hayekian message'.²⁰⁰

By default, opposition centred on mismanagement, 'absurd controls', and translating generalised frustration into recruitment slogans like: 'Tired of being pushed around? Then help to put a stop to it by joining the Conservative and

¹⁹⁵ D.H. Willis to V.R. Birkbeck, 8 Dec 1947, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/2; D.H. Willis to Colonel Thorpe, 20 Aug 1947, CCO 600/17/1; 'An Example of Socialism in New Zealand', B.L.O, CCO 600/17/1; Cohen to Colin Mann, 19 Jun 1947, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/1; Engineering Industries Association to D.H. Willis, 14 Aug 1947, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/2.

¹⁹⁶ Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, pp. 214-26; Also absent from: Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, pp. 169-71.

¹⁹⁷ Henry Hopkinson to E.D. O'Brien, 17 Dec 1947, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/2; Tactical Committee Minutes, 18 Nov 1947, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/9.

¹⁹⁸ John Luant to E.D. O'Brien, 2 Feb 1948, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/2; Tactical Committee Minutes, 29 Nov 1949, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/11.

¹⁹⁹ Tactical Committee Minutes, 23 Dec 1947, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/9; Reginald Maudling, 'Food and Prices Subsidies', 7 Feb 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/16A, folios 238-46 at 220-21.

²⁰⁰ Henry Hopkinson to Chapman-Walker, 27 Oct 1948, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/5; Candidates received the same advice in 1950: R.A Butler, Briefing to Conservative Candidates, 23 Jun 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/94A, folios 241-51 at 243; Willetts, 'The New Conservatism', p. 183; Willetts also misreads Hayek who acknowledged the need for post-war controls: Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, p. 214.

Unionist Party'.²⁰¹ Such limited lines of attack encouraged speakers to frame controls as restrictions on liberty. 'Freedom' enabled principled resistance to controls as a plot to introduce permanent socialism via short-term necessities, but allowed opposition to remain suitably vague, even though this risked confusion.²⁰² Colonel Erroll, for example, told his Altrincham and Sale constituents, 'we should have freedom to make profit but not freedom to profiteer...' before citing the Controls Bill as evidence of 'unnecessary restrictions on our freedom'.²⁰³ Where historians see freedom balanced with 'reassurance', contemporaries saw credibility gaps: 'Set the People Free simply means, to the cynically minded electorate, abolish the subsidies and controls and let prices rise in the interests of the profiteers... The use of these generalities leads to the absurdity that the Conservative propaganda is occupied most of [the] time in explaining away its own slogans. We shall abolish controls, but shall not abolish the important ones... No one believes us'.²⁰⁴ Not until mid-1948 could Reginald Maudling advise Churchill his signature rhetoric was viable; previously he feared 'that the great mass of electors have been more inclined to believe the Socialist story that Conservatives would lift controls too soon'. Only now did Maudling think the public 'may be coming round more to the idea that the Socialists will be too late in lifting them'.²⁰⁵ Far from using 'every opportunity to exploit discontent', then, for much of their time in opposition, Tories felt they were floundering, not 'regain[ing] the initiative'.²⁰⁶

Recognising this tentativeness is not to deny Conservatives framed controls as inhibiting freedom despite their strategists' reservations, and industrialists

²⁰¹ CUCO, *Notes on Current Politics*, No. 15, 26 Jul 1948, pp. 12-4; C.H. Butler to D.H. Willis, 22 Oct 1947, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/2; CRD, *All the Answers* (London: CUCO, 1949), pp. 72-73.

²⁰² Speakers urgently requested advice on specifics: Tactical committee minutes, 18 Nov 1947, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/9.

²⁰³ Quoted in: 'Two MPs on Freedom', *The Manchester Guardian*, 21 Jun 1946, p. 6.

²⁰⁴ On reassurance: Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, p. 229; Douglas Jerrold, 'Conservative and the Electorate', Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/84A, folios 62-74 at 66; For similar views: John Campbell, 'Conservative Policy', *The Times*, 14 Mar 1949, p. 5.

²⁰⁵ Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 22 Jun 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/69B, folio 204.

²⁰⁶ Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'Rationing, Austerity and the Conservative Party', 186; Harris unconvincingly claimed Tories were hardened decontrollers from 1947, but wrongly states controls played 'scarcely any role' in 1951: *Competition and the Corporate Society*, p. 132; For a flavour of continuing pessimism and uncertainty about decontrol: James Stuart to Churchill, 28 Sep 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/8A, folio 171-2; 'Summary of 1922 Committee: Points Found of Importance to Electors', 27 Feb 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/81A, folio 82; Harold Macmillan to Churchill, Oct 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/84B, folios 224-8; Public Opinion Summary, No. 11, Nov 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/17, folios 20-22.

became helpful allies, unhindered by electoral constraints.²⁰⁷ However, Tories also reworked the vocabulary of decontrol to target audiences and emphasise fundamental differences within a limited policy space. This process partly explains the increasing connection between ‘freedom’, ‘choice’, and ‘opportunity’ seen in chapter one. ‘Choice’, for example, transliterated freedom onto consumerism and packaged decontrol with deliverance from less-controversial tyrannies: Tories would ‘give to the consumer freedom of choice, the prospect of a better standard of living, and protection from restrictive practices’.²⁰⁸ In particular, a Monopolies Commission would prevent artificially-short supplies so that ‘...the consumer who has the right to exercise free choice, [was not] steamrolled by those who attempt to corner and abuse economic power’.²⁰⁹ Accordingly, the Tactical Committee seized on signs that Ministers did not ‘believe in freedom of choice’ and co-ordinated amendments to associate the Opposition with anti-monopoly legislation.²¹⁰ Yet, choice also justified freedom’s costs. ‘Are we prepared’, Hinchingsbrooke asked conference, ‘to spend more... on food and other commodities if subsidies are cut; on health and education and other services if Government contributions are cut? My own view is that we are and must be, because at the end we get freedom of choice to spend our money as we wish and not as a doctrinaire government thinks is good for us. Conservatives want quality, variety and difference to come back into our national life’.²¹¹ Beyond price, similar opposition to investment controls more directly reflected Hayekian criticism. Attacking the National Investment Council’s powers, Assheton challenged the Chancellor: ‘Should the Government decide what is good for us? Won’t it leave us some shred of

²⁰⁷ Oliver Stanley, Speech at Manchester, 7 Dec 1949 reported in ‘Symptoms of Next Election’, *The Manchester Guardian*, 8 Dec 1949, p. 8; Walter Elliot, Broadcast, 20 Dec 1947, reprinted in ‘The End of the Year’, *The Listener*, 25 Dec 1947, p. 1102; Robson Brown, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 132-3 at 132; ‘Tory Reply to Challenge on Controls’, *The Manchester Guardian*, 21 Dec 1947; H. Riggall, ‘A Manager Protests’, *The Listener*, 13 Mar 1947, p. 381; Reinhold Niebuhr, ‘Britain’s Great Opportunity’, *The Listener*, 10 Apr 1947, p. 528; S.R. Dennison, ‘Does Bigness Make for Efficiency?’, *The Listener*, 22 Apr 1948, p. 651; On cooperation with industry: Kandiah, ‘Conservative Leaders, Strategy’, p. 66.

²⁰⁸ ‘50 Things the Tories Will Do’, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/4.

²⁰⁹ CUCO, *The Industrial Charter*, p. 11; Similar linkage: CUCO, *This is the Road: The Conservative and Unionist Party’s Policy General Election 1950* (London: CUCO, 1950), pp. 9-11.

²¹⁰ ‘50 Things the Tories Will Do’, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/4; Tactical Committee Minutes, 7 Dec 1949, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/11; Tory statements on monopoly should not be read as ‘neo-liberal’: Butler told candidates ‘The thing to remember is that monopolistic practices are not all quite so bad as the Socialists make out’: R.A Butler, Briefing to Conservative Candidates, 23 Jun 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/94A, folios 241-51 at 242.

²¹¹ Viscount Hinchingsbrooke, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 59-60 at p. 60.

democracy? We on this side of the House still believe in the individual being allowed to choose how he will live his life and how he will spend his money'.²¹² Framed as an act of freedom, then, choice represented two goods: variety and consumer sovereignty.²¹³

Absence of either purportedly spelled moral decline. Listeners heard the sympathetic historian G.M. Young explain that 'belief in variety, as the natural outcome of freedom – variety, individuality and quality' warranted Conservatives' 'instinctive dislike of planning'. Tories feared controls 'gradually cramp us into a dull obedient uniformity, where the only outlet for our old spirit of adventure will be in breaking the law, or indulging in unauthorised strikes...'. Britons would become a 'dishonest but submissive people, always waiting for someone to give orders' because 'the more laws you make, the wider is the field for the lawbreaker. The more restrictions you impose, the narrower is the field for the pioneer'.²¹⁴ Criminalising everyday-life was a theme well-suited to absurdity, and Central Office outfitted speakers with exemplar punishments 'beyond the bounds of reason', such as sentencing house-builders entrapped by officials to 'seven years penal servitude'.²¹⁵ Even without convictions, life's social desires could be inhibited. 'Their Great Handicap', shot by the Conservative Film Unit as a 'corrective to the Socialist film' about inter-class marriage, showed 'that the great handicap to the hopes of young people in such circumstances is not a bigoted parent but the system of frustration and inhibition called "Socialism"'.²¹⁶ The morass of absurd controls was a social menace, not mere inconvenience.²¹⁷

In efforts to remake themselves 'as the party of opportunity' and capture New Liberalism's vocabulary of 'free development of the human personality', Tories

²¹² Quoted in 'The Governments Tools for Economic Planning', *The Manchester Guardian*, 6 Feb 1946, p. 6; Occasionally, on the specific topic of choice, Hayek's arguments were directly cited: Anthony Rogers (Secretary Cambridge University Conservative Association Secretary) letter to *The Times*, 24 Sep 1946, p. 8.

²¹³ For an example linking Marxist materialism, focus on quantity and 'drab, dull monotone': Anthony Eden, Speech at Leamington Spa, 1 Jun 1946 reported in *The Manchester Guardian*, 3 Jun 1946, p. 6.

²¹⁴ G.M Young, 'The Conservative Attitude to the New World', *The Listener*, 20 July 1950, p. 92.

²¹⁵ CRD, *All the Answers*, pp. 69-70.

²¹⁶ 'Programme for 19th Jan 1950', Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/96B, folios 242-3.

²¹⁷ On links between apathy and 'slaves to the queue habit': Joyce Rackham, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 136-7 at 136.

appealed to an alternative *pathos* of adventure.²¹⁸ At Chelmsford, Lord Woolton, Assheton's successor as Chairman, summarised Conservatism as 'a broad based ladder' allowing 'anyone to climb from the factory floor right up to the managing director's office'.²¹⁹ Easily misread as a separate language defending inequality, supporting rhetorical structures identify 'opportunity' as a sub-language within the freedom-versus-unfreedom frame that merged macro-economic liberty into free will to juxtapose socialism with human nature. Conservatives drew heavily on freedom-versus-restriction contrasts to articulate 'opportunity'.²²⁰ Rather than imagining that those who 'fought and worked together in the war' could be 'exhorted, controlled and regimented into producing goods, building houses and rendering services in time of peace', Conservatives would 'give the people, not orders, but opportunity'.²²¹ Furthermore, 'opportunity' adorned the politics-as-continuum model outlined above: Churchill told Scottish Unionists that the *Industrial Charter* balanced 'two main principles of fair play and adequate opportunity'. There was a 'broadening field for state enterprise in modern conditions', but rather than 'repress and constrict individual exertion... the function of government guidance [was] to give the broadest possible chance for everyone to make the best of himself...'.²²² Aside from debunking myths he only hesitantly committed to the Charter at October's conference, Churchill's drafts reveal that 'freedom' and 'opportunity' were rhetorically interchangeable.²²³

²¹⁸ First quote: Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 22 Jun 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/69B, folio 204; CUCO, *This Is The Road*, p. 22; Second quote: Cuthbert Alport, *What Do You Think About Conservative Principles* (London: CUCO, 1946), p. 12; 'Suggestions for Incorporation in the Leader's General Election Message', Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/96A, folio 31.

²¹⁹ Lord Woolton, Speech at Chelmsford, 19 Jun 1948, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/4.

²²⁰ CUCO, *Mr Churchill's Message to You* (London: CUCO, 1950); In 1950, Churchill's handwritten notes include: 'choice vs rules/opportunity vs order' next to other slogans like 'state vs the individual' and 'set the people free': Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/30A, folio 116.

²²¹ CUCO, *The Industrial Charter*, p. 2.

²²² Churchill, Speech to Scottish Unionist Conference, Ayr, 16 May 1947, reprinted as: CUCO, *"Trust the People": A Speech by the Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill MP* (London: CUCO, 1947), p. 15.

²²³ Draft for Scottish Unionist Conference, 16 May 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/12D, folio 589; Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 7 May 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/12E, folios 719-731; John Ramsden mistakenly claims Churchill 'remained silent': *The Making of Conservative Party Policy* (London: Longman, 1980), pp. 112-4; Kandiah, 'Conservative Leaders, Strategy', p. 60; Churchill cut down an extensive section on the Charter written by Maudling for his 16 May speech, but it was his own outline structure that positioned the Charter as a counterpart to 'over-governance'. Nor is Maudling's account of the 1947 conference speech credible, despite its recitation by historians. Before publication, Churchill admitted to having read only half the Charter, but corresponded with Butler about changes and sent him a bottle of wine: R.A. Butler to Churchill, 10 Apr 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/54B, folio 430; R.A. Butler to Churchill, 7 May 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/54B, folio 457; At the 1946 conference Woolton hurriedly

Adventurous, moralised individualism lent ‘opportunity’ Conservative, emancipatory overtones.²²⁴ Notwithstanding pre-war precedents, an important rhetorical response to the enlarged welfare state was the fusing of ‘freedom’ and ‘independence’ into ‘opportunity’, defined against a ‘slave State’ in which ‘everyone depend[ing] on the State for his livelihood, for his job, his food, his clothing’ precipitated ‘the disappearance of liberty’.²²⁵ ‘Development of the individual’ meant ‘self-reliance fostered by adventure and opportunity’,²²⁶ and citizens were ‘manly, not immoral, if they s[ought] to own their own house and to be master in it, instead of being Council tenants all their lives’.²²⁷ This freedom to ‘work out their own lives’ informed distinctions between socialist and Conservative reform: Tories allowed ‘individual initiative and enterprise’ to advance the ‘main army’, who would then ‘bring the rear-guard in’, whereas socialists contemplated ‘bringing the whole army back’.²²⁸ Accordingly, Conservatives would ‘not allow the advance of society and the economic well-being of the nation to be regulated and curtailed by the pace of the weakest... Proper incentives must be offered and full freedom given to the strong to use their strength for the common weal’.²²⁹ So whilst ‘liberty’, ‘choice’, ‘opportunity’ and ‘independence’ were not identical, an important characteristic of Tory rhetorical culture was the fusion of these concepts in an overarching frame.

Normally signifying tax cuts, ‘incentives’ also became enmeshed in the freedom-versus-unfreedom frame, as Churchill’s 16 August 1947 broadcast on the economic crisis demonstrated. Edited by Bracken and Maudling, the speech confronted Attlee’s boast that Britain was ‘moving to a new social and economic

produced a list of points on industrial policy mirroring many of the Charter’s conclusions, all of which Churchill assented to apart from a ‘minimum wage’ proposal: Woolton to Churchill, 4 Oct 1946, misfiled in Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/4D, folios 268-9; A similar ‘Conservative Industrial Code’, written by Oliver Lyttelton was used by Churchill in 1946: ‘Conservative Industrial Code’, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/9B, folio 215.

²²⁴ CUCO, *This is The Road*, p. 9.

²²⁵ Anthony Eden, Speech at Leamington Spa, 1 Jun 1946, reported in *The Manchester Guardian*, 3 Jun 1946, p. 6.

²²⁶ John Campbell, ‘Conservative Policy’, *The Times*, 14 Mar 1949, p. 5.

²²⁷ CUCO, *We Fight for the People*; Similar points were made about ‘ancient virtue’ in: CUCO, *This is The Road*, p. 14.

²²⁸ Dr Charles Hill, Election Broadcast, 16 Oct 1951 reprinted in ‘General Election Broadcasts’ *The Listener*, 25 Oct 1951, p. 689-90 at 90; Churchill, Speech at Blenheim Palace, 4 Aug 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/13B, folios 149-161 at 152-3.

²²⁹ Churchill, Speech at Blenheim Palace, 4 Aug 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/13B, folios 149-161 at 152-3.

system of society in which the incentive of fear [was] being removed'.²³⁰ Utopia this was not; for Churchill, socialism's replacement incentive ('service to the community') really meant 'compulsion'. As Labour discovered, 'direction of labour' had to be introduced because with 'ordinary incentives having been destroyed, wartime compulsion has to be substituted'. Lack of incentive thereby threatened 'the right of free engagement [which was] fundamental in a free society', rendering the 'profit incentive' a bulwark against totalitarianism.²³¹ But moral commentary interspersed Churchill's argument of direction: 'noble, altruistic qualities' had rarely 'been developed in the human race by compulsion'; instead, 'the qualities which dignify and glorify mankind' sprang from 'resistance to tyranny in all its various forms'. These elements coalesced in the nation's choice between 'a system of competitive selection and a system of compulsion'.²³² Albeit an imperfect system, Churchill quoted his younger-self to declare that competition was "all that we have got between us and barbarism", "all that we been able to create... through unnumbered centuries of effort and sacrifice", and, if mitigated, offered 'indefinite capacity for improvement'.²³³ Raised into the overarching frame, 'incentives' absorbed the wider rhetorical culture's models and commonplaces, but also sanctioned freedom as a moral, organic motor of progress.

Toiling on this 'path of freedom' to 'salvation' was typically Churchillian, but connecting incentives to progress via human nature was common and reflected a continued anti-idealist streak running through Tory rhetoric, for which Abraham Lincoln was the default reference point, not Hayek.²³⁴ Major Casswell, whom Central Office tried to parachute into several constituencies, told the Federation of British Industry that 'Government should be based on, not work against Human Nature' and that evolution determined man would 'react to rewards'. 'To ignore the means provided by nature and to rely instead on regimentation [was] the height of folly'.²³⁵ Appeals to *pathos* targeted multiple

²³⁰ Churchill, Broadcast on the Economic Crisis, 16 Aug 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/13E, folios 350-69 at 354.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, folio 354.

²³² *Ibid.*, folio 359.

²³³ *Ibid.*, folio 361.

²³⁴ Waldron Smithers, 'Human Nature and Economics', *The Times*, 11 May 1949, p. 5; On Lincoln: 1950 Election Address Notes, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/29C, folio 321; Lord Woolton, Conference Speech, 1949, pp. 112-5 at p. 114

²³⁵ Eric Casswell, 'An Outline of Our Problem', 9 Jan 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/81A, folio 116-119 at 118-9.

audiences by contrasting freedom and incentives with this unnatural restriction. Whereas socialists would tie down Mary, the middle child of a fictional family, 'with a lot of red tape' to stop her taking exams early, the Conservatives offered 'the encouragement she needs' because 'it's go-ahead people who can help us out of our present troubles: people who'll give more and *get* more as their proper reward...'.²³⁶ Likewise Jim, shown in figure 2.2, should be encouraged to earn extra for his family, not 'restricted' by Union rules against piece-rates.²³⁷ In such attempts to 'humanise' capitalism and 'glamourize social and political inequalities... with an aura of righteousness,' absence of incentive was located in the overarching frame as immoral repression of nature.²³⁸

This framing was tactical. Butler advised candidates in 1950 to stress the 'moral point': 'The whole Socialist philosophy is to down and cramp success wherever it can be found; ours must be the alternative philosophy. I cannot say strongly enough to you how much these moral issues sway the voters...'.²³⁹ But historians also underplay the religious convictions behind this emancipatory rhetoric.²⁴⁰ Pushing for a bolder strategy in 1949, Macmillan argued Conservatives must 'preach Christian democracy' to win 'the battle against Anti-Christ'. 'In all classes', he feared, 'standards of honesty [had] fallen, partly as the result of too much control' and 'all-pervading' bureaucrats which 'destroyed the sense of personal responsibility' and dissipated 'the ethical capital built up by centuries of Christianity'.²⁴¹ Experiencing politics through religion, therefore, was not the preserve of right-wingers like Smithers; it animated responses to controls across the party. But tactical and religious imperatives hide those created by the constraints of forties politics: Conservative oratory integrated 'incentives', 'human nature', 'individualism', 'independence', and 'opportunity' into the freedom-versus-unfreedom frame to counter Labour's moral vision of

²³⁶ CUCO, 'It's a Vital Election For...', Election Leaflet 1951, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/123, folio 10; CUCO, 'What the Conservatives Will Do to Put Things Right', Election Leaflet 1951, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/123, folio 11.

²³⁷ CUCO, *Trade Union Sense or Nonsense?* (London: CUCO, 1951), p. 4.

²³⁸ Robert Eccleshall, 'English Conservatism as Ideology', *Political Studies*, 25, 1 (1977), 62-83 at 62; Jones, 'The Cold War and the Santa Claus Syndrome', p. 245.

²³⁹ R.A Butler, Briefing to Conservative Candidates, 23 Jun 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/94A, folios 241-51 at 242.

²⁴⁰ Normally by omission, but Wade mistakenly claims Conservatives 'have tended to avoid using religious arguments to justify their economic views': *Conservative Economic Policy*, p. 8.

²⁴¹ Harold Macmillan, Proposals for Conservative Policy Programme, 18 Jan 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/84B, folios 188-207 at 190.

fair shares and oppose controls in lieu of policy.²⁴² The result was a richer rhetorical ecosystem than in 1945, but one which still expressed a consistent frame.

Equally long-lasting features of Conservative rhetoric that matured in opposition to controls were the character tropes populating the overarching frame. The most prominent of socialism's victims, the 'small man', was as much a tool for sanitising capitalism as he was an appeal to shopkeepers.²⁴³ 'Sick and tired of regimentation and control', Conservatives claimed the 'individual trader' needed freeing from 'the burdens and expense put upon his business by unwise or unnecessary Government interference and controls'.²⁴⁴ Whilst typical, that refrain was not necessarily supported by its target audience – who were nervous about deregulation – and largely ignored their central request: shelter from multiples (retail chains trading many product lines).²⁴⁵ That demand was misaligned with the party's donors and attempts to drive a wedge between Labour and the Co-operative movement.²⁴⁶ Woolton, himself a department store owner, hardly comforted shopkeepers when defending 'the freedom to combine' as proof Tories 'recognise[d] the rights of Co-operative societies and the advantages of free competition between them and other traders'.²⁴⁷ In fact, perhaps because they were confident of winning his vote, the small trader was not rigidly linked with opposition to subsidised municipal trading or fair licencing; rather, he – and his values – arose from historical narratives about economic success and romanticised diffusions of power that guaranteed freedom.²⁴⁸ For all their public distancing, many Tories idealised the 'release' ethic of yesteryear: mid-twentieth-century Britain required the 'energy, brains and

²⁴² Cockett mistakenly argues the One Nation group foreshadowed the rhetoric of the eighties using this language: *Thinking the Unthinkable*, pp. 162-3.

²⁴³ Gamble recognised the theme of 'independence' attached to this group, and its extension to others, but separates discussion from economic mythology or notions of freedom: *The Conservative Nation*, pp. 57-60.

²⁴⁴ Sir Walter Womersely quoted in 'Traders Tired of Controls: "Little Man" Suffers', *The Manchester Guardian*, 21 May 1946, p. 6; CUCO, *The Industrial Charter*, p. 14.

²⁴⁵ 'A Report on The Industrial Charter', Sep 1947, Mass Observation Archives, File Report 2516, pp. 16, 38; Typical examples: Anthony Nutting, Conference Speech, 1947; Basil Webb, Conference Speech, 1948.

²⁴⁶ The cooperative, it was claimed, risked being 'crushed out' by socialism: Tactical Committee Minutes, 3 May 1949, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/11.

²⁴⁷ 'Tories Will Not Injure Co-ops', *The Manchester Guardian*, 30 Oct 1949, p. 5.

²⁴⁸ Polls pointed to stable loyalty as a class identity: Public Opinion Summary, No. 12, 5 Jan 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/11, folios 34-37 at 37; Public Opinion Summary, No. 16, 22 May 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/99A, folios 18-21 at 18; 'A Report on The Industrial Charter', Sep 1947, Mass Observation Archives, File Report 2516, p. 38; Grass-roots exceptions: Mrs. M. Thornton, Conference Speech, 1949, p. 110.

initiative in the 19th Century' with its 'stimulation of, and opportunity given to, the natural qualities of the British people – craftsmanship, inventiveness, ingenuity and commercial initiative'.²⁴⁹ Quoting Herman Levy, an exiled German professor, T.H. Minshall yearned in *The Times* for the uniquely British, emancipatory 'spirit of capitalism', which "had never been that of men like Stinnes or Carnegie, Krupp or Schwab" but "the capitalist spirit of the small man wishing to extricate himself from the class of dependent wage-earners".²⁵⁰ Like the 'yeoman farmer', the 'independent status and responsibilities' of the 'yeoman manufacturer' or 'yeoman shopkeeper' made him a 'particularly valuable citizen'. According to the *Industrial Charter*, the individual trader was 'a peculiar and valuable asset to a free society' since they liked 'to be their own masters'.²⁵¹ Moreover, because freedom as diffused power bled into consumerist vocabularies, the small trader's import also lay with housewives: where would she be if choice was restricted to 'one or two great combines'?²⁵² Diversified marketplaces, choice, freedom, and power were now symbiotic and coalesced in the small man to safely articulate the virtues of a bygone, moral capitalism.

A popular figure who 69% of the working classes considered worthy of support, the small trader could detoxify the Conservative brand, after leaders had 'allow[ed] it to be thought with their background of Big Business they see the emancipation of the industrial fortunes of his country in terms of the further expansion of Big Business...'.²⁵³ The small trader owed his prominence in late-forties rhetoric, then, to Labour's asking 'freedom for whom?' However, the character was really one instance of an evolving trope: although he started out an independent trader, he became a horticulturalist in the fifties, a 'small saver' in the sixties and a 'small businessman in the seventies'.²⁵⁴ These career

²⁴⁹ Majorie Maxse to Churchill, 14 Aug 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/13E, folios 370-81 at 381; Occasionally praise was public: Lord Brand, 'How Can We Pay Our Way', *The Listener*, 17 Jul 1947, p. 84.

²⁵⁰ T.H. Minshall, 'Conservative Policy' *The Times*, 7 Mar 1949, p. 5.

²⁵¹ For yeomen: Alport, *What Do You Think About Conservative Principles*, p. 15; CUCO, *The Industrial Charter*, p. 13; For similar claims: Anthony Eden, 'The Right Road for Britain' *The Listener*, 28 Jul 1949, p. 150.

²⁵² CUCO, *The Industrial Charter*, p. 14.

²⁵³ 'A Report on The Industrial Charter', Sep 1947, Mass Observation Archives, File Report 2516, p. 15; Lewis May, Speech to Defeated Candidates Conference, 5 Oct 1945, Churchill Papers CHUR 2/1A, folios 238-9 at 238.

²⁵⁴ Brian Harrison, Conference Speech, 1955, p. 84; William Clark, Conference Speech, 1962, pp. 18-9 at p. 19; E. Aston-Jones, Conference Speech, 1970, pp. 74-5.

changes hid a rhetorical continuity: the structures built around a David and Goliath, empathy-seeking metaphor continued to place him ‘in the hands of giants (whether a ‘gigantic co-operative’ or ‘Lord High Lucifer of Technology in London’) about to be let ‘go to the wall’ or at the mercy of restrictions.²⁵⁵ Increasingly losing professional specificity, the ‘small man’ morphed into a vacuous figurine, whose only intrinsic content was a fettered economic freedom-fighter called upon to answer a long-running problem: how to argue for deregulation and capitalism without appearing slavish to amoral corporations.

His nemesis, the Gentleman in Whitehall, was an equally durable stock-character. Although ‘Whitehall’ was an established *synecdoche*, two quotations evolved into out-of-context, often misquoted bywords for over-government: first, a line from Douglas Jay’s *The Socialist Case* (1937) – ‘in the case of nutrition and health, just as in the case of education, the gentleman in Whitehall really does know better what is good for people than the people know themselves’ – and, second, Hartley Shawcross’ Commons quip, ‘we are the masters at the moment’.²⁵⁶ Eventually denoting all manner of intrusions, bureaucrats performed three specific duties in late-forties discourse.²⁵⁷ First, they represented an economic problem. *Notes on Current Politics*, for example, provided statistics about officialdom’s strain on the public purse and manpower, and Churchill decried 650,000 extra officials as an ‘enormous burden... cast upon the productive energies of the country’ partly because his advisors thought the numbers in ‘non-productive employment’ limited output.²⁵⁸ Swollen, clumsy

²⁵⁵Percy Browne, Conference Speech, 1958, pp. 88-9; Paul Bryan, Conference Speech, 1966, pp. 123-5 at p. 125; P. McNamara, Conference Speech, 1969, p. 101.

²⁵⁶Douglas Jay, *The Socialist Case* (London: Faber, 1937), p. 317; Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 5th Series, vol. 421, 2 Apr 1946, cols 1112-1217 at 1213; Ironically, Shawcross was quoting Humpty Dumpty on the slipperiness of words to mock Churchill’s accusation they had no democratic mandate to repeal the 1927 Trades Disputes Act; For Jay’s shifting views, which in 1937 were pro-consumer choice: Richard Toye, ‘The Gentleman in Whitehall Reconsidered: The Evolution of Douglas Jay’s Views on Economic Planning and Consumer Choice, 1937-47’, *Labour History Review*, 67 (2002), 185-202.

²⁵⁷On masters: Howard Johnson, Conference Speech, 1949, pp. 106-7 at p. 106; Churchill, Conference Speech, 1950, pp. 107-13 at p. 109; Anthony Buck, Conference Speech, 1970, pp. 70-1 at p. 70; Joyce Billings, Conference Speech, 1975, pp. 99-100 at p. 99; On Gentleman in Whitehall: Anthony Eden, Conference Speech, 1954, p. 133; John Cheshire, Conference Speech, 1961, 70-1 at p. 70; John Boyd Carpenter, Conference Speech, 1958, pp. 77-9 at p. 78; John Hobson, Conference Speech, 1960, pp. 133-4 at p. 134; Reginald Maudling, Conference Speech, 1967, pp. 33-6 at p. 36.

²⁵⁸CUCO, *Notes on Current Politics*, No. 15, 26 Jul 1948, p. 11; Churchill, Speech to Scottish Unionist Conference, Ayr, 16 May 1947, published as CUCO, *Trust the People*, p. 13; Lord Cherwell to Churchill, 12 Feb 1948, CHUR 5/16B, folios 222-7 at 224; For similar claims: Lord Woolton, General Election Broadcast, 13 Oct 1951, reprinted in ‘General Election Broadcasts’ *The Listener*, 18 Oct 1951, p. 647.

bureaucracies were why controls hindered enterprise: ‘the army of officials [was] so vast... that the senior administrators [could not] keep check of what their battalions of juniors [we]re doing’, causing ‘experienced managers’ to wait on a ‘vital permit’.²⁵⁹ Second, regulations were framed as meddling by non-experts in Whitehall, from which professionals should be freed.²⁶⁰ The cost of health services could be reduced if doctors gave ‘priority of service to the patient as against Whitehall’, businesses should have ‘the maximum freedom to get on with the export trade’ without ‘detailed control from Whitehall’, and, as *Who’s to be the Farmer* put it, ‘you can’t run a farm from a desk in Whitehall’.²⁶¹ Indeed, appeals to *pathos* emphasised the arrogance of government. Ivor Thomas’s attack on Harold Wilson, ‘the bare-footed boy from Whitehall’, for ‘telling his grandmother how to suck three times as many eggs as before’ was typical of the jibes Jay and Shawcross’s words supported.²⁶² Thus, by attacking the administrators of controls, Tories could construct a tyranny to be freed from without specifying the control to be cut.

Third, as Cragoe highlights, Conservatives elided freedom and diffusion of power with anti-Whitehall localism.²⁶³ Butler, for example, told the 1949 conference: “‘The Right Road’ stands not for the concentration of power, which is the negation of freedom, but for the spreading of power right out into the small circles of Local Government voluntary hospitals and elsewhere, which gives us the opportunity of assuring the individual of the freedom he ought to have’.²⁶⁴ In propaganda, this localism was normally expressed as a belief in ‘government as the servant and not as the masters of the people’, and ran alongside promises to partially free Wales and Scotland from the ‘Whitehall

²⁵⁹ CUCO, *Notes on Current Politics*, No. 9, 19 May 1947, p. 11.

²⁶⁰ Reorganisation into health centres was framed ‘doctors as state servants’: Walter Elliot, ‘Centralised Health’, *The Onlooker*, Jul 1946, p. 5.

²⁶¹ Gerald Lovering, Conference Speech, 1949, p. 86; Lord Woolton, Speech in Liverpool, 16 Sep 1947 quoted in: ‘Whitehall Control’, *The Manchester Guardian*, 17 Sep 1947, p. 8; CUCO, *Whose to be the Farmer?* (London: CUCO, 1951), p. 1; Similar logic applied to nationalisation: Richard Bailey, ‘What is Wrong with Nationalisation’, *Tory Challenge*, Sep 1948, p. 9.

²⁶² Wilson’s boots were too-big for him: Ivor Thomas, Conference Speech, 1949, pp. 33-4 at p. 34.

²⁶³ Cragoe, “‘We Like Local Patriotism’”, 965-985.

²⁶⁴ R.A. Butler, Conference Speech, 1949, pp. 95-8 at p. 97; Harris identified ‘decentralisation’ as a sign of ‘neoliberalism’, but did not connect this to ‘freedom’ and the conference motion he cites as evidence was actually interpreted as supporting the Industrial Charter and aroused opposition from the right in case it committed them to only decentralise not denationalise: *Competition and the Corporate Society*, p. 88; Geoffrey Finsburg, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 96-7; Harmar Nicholls, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 98-99.

straightjacket'.²⁶⁵ Such decentralisation could also be integrated into arguments of direction. Woolton told Tory councillors they were 'the watchdogs of freedom' guarding against 'national planners who know so little of human beings that they either think of them as all equal – but of course in a lower plane than the planners – or capable of being regimented into a national plan. That is the way of the totalitarian states: take care that too eager central authorities don't prepare us for that end'.²⁶⁶ Therefore, the giant 'Man from the Ministry' in figure 2.3 represents a more complex critique than a simple metaphor for domination. His size, arrogant blindness, regional-urban setting, and uncompromising movement towards a professional subtly added to a key message: central government trampled citizens or, at least, prevented them getting where they were going. This trope outlasted its late-forties content; but notwithstanding precedents, that period was formative in its rhetorical development, stimulated by Conservatives reluctance to oppose controls directly and the reality that for the first time since 1931 they had to argue against government rather than administer it.

²⁶⁵ 'What the Conservatives Will Do', 1951 Election Leaflet, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/123, folio 4; See also: CUCO, *This Is The Road*, p. 22; David Maxwell-Fyfe, Speech at Bigglesworth, 23 Jul 1949, quoted in 'Mr Eden Attacks Nationalisation', *The Manchester Guardian*, 24 Jul 1949, p. 7.

²⁶⁶ Lord Woolton, Speech to Local Government Conference, 11 Oct 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/27B, folios 287-309 at 301-2.

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Figure 2.2 'The Case of The Good Worker' **Figure 2.3** 'Pinching all the Pavement'²⁶⁷

If the battle against controls was fought through proxies, opposition was more direct on topics where officials had firmer answers or imagined a groundswell of public opinion. Because it 'affect[ed] a fundamental human liberty' criticism of 'labour direction' was strident, with Conservatives claiming it would establish the 'serfdom of the working classes' or 'fasten slavery round the necks of the British people'.²⁶⁸ Indeed, opposition to the Supplies and Services Bill reprised the binary rhetorical models of 1945 to mock Labour's panicked transition from 'Ad-hoc Attlee!' to 'Heil Crippler!'²⁶⁹ Yet, perceived public opinion was the main arbiter of boldness; housing witnessed vociferous rhetoric because Tories considered polling favourable, and their own record sound enough, to make

²⁶⁷ Robert Allan, Election Leaflet, 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/90A, folio 176; CUCO, *Trade Union Sense*, p. 4.

²⁶⁸ CUCO, *Notes on Current Politics*, No. 15, 26 Jul 1948, p. 12; Churchill, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 5th Series, vol. 441, 11 Aug 1947, cols. 1927-2153 at 1968; Quoted in 'Red Flag Torn Up for Red Tape', *The Manchester Guardian*, 1 Mar 1946, p. 8; David Maxwell-Fyfe quoted in *The Times*, 20 Nov 1947, p. 2; Malcolm McCorquodale, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 5th Series, vol. 463, 24 Mar 1949, cols. 568-705 at 685; H.G.E. Vardon, Conference Speech, 1948, p. 135.

²⁶⁹ Anthony Head, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 5th Series, vol. 441, 11 Aug 1947, cols. 1927-2153 at 1976.

unequivocal claims for free enterprise, sometimes forsaking the caveats attached to other controls.²⁷⁰ The case for ‘free[ing] the building industry from its present shackles’ rested on unflattering cost and pre-war output comparisons between Local Authorities and private builders.²⁷¹ But, as well as ‘eliminating... irritating controls’ restricting efficient building, orators deployed the tropes outlined above to define freedom as ‘permitting initiative’ and ending state-purchasing of materials, which had left housing ‘in the hands of the gentlemen with little black hats and little bags’.²⁷² The notion of ‘free choice’ was similarly enlisted to oppose building regulations and target appeals: Irene Dowling had middle-class fears about mixed-income estates in mind when asserting, ‘private enterprise should be free to rehouse those people who are perfectly prepared to rehouse themselves’ instead of competing with ‘poorer families’.²⁷³ ‘Set the builders free’ was more than a poster slogan; it framed a series of sub-debates aiming to associate freedom with efficiency.

Fuller policy statements added important caveats, such as continuing rent controls, and we now know that homogenous rhetoric glossed internal disagreements.²⁷⁴ Furthermore, whilst displaying less hesitancy in public, those defending the 300,000 target’s feasibility privately conceded that, whilst ‘all controls are essentially destructive’, it would be ‘folly to remove controls while shortages exist’ and recommended eliminating the conditions necessitating restriction, rather than controls *per se*.²⁷⁵ Yet, freedom also framed housing debates from angles less-pronounced in Jones’ influential account.²⁷⁶ For

²⁷⁰ Harriet Jones, “‘This is magnificent!’: 300,000 houses a year and the Tory revival after 1945”, *Contemporary British History*, 14, 1 (2000), 99-121; Polling evidence: Public Opinion Summary, No. 12, Dec 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/11, folios 34-7 at 36; The pledge was briefly reconsidered in 1951, but retained under the proviso of rearmament’s priority: Lord Woolton to Churchill, 15 Feb 1951, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/105, folio 27; Churchill to R.A Butler 16 Feb 1951, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/105, folio 25; R.A Butler to Churchill, 23 Feb 1951, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/105, folios 13-15.

²⁷¹ CUCO, *Notes on Current Politics*, No. 19, 10 Oct 1949, pp. 26-8; R.A. Butler, Broadcast, 24 Jun 1950, reprinted as ‘Conservative View of Britain’s Position Today’, *The Listener*, 29 Jun 1950, pp. 1100-1 at 1101; ‘Housing – The Socialist Failure’, c. Mar 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/108, folios 3-6.

²⁷² W.G. Clark, Conference Speech, 1950, p. 58; Irene Dowling, Conference Speech, 1950, pp. 56-7 at 57; A. Becket, Conference Speech, 1949, p. 78.

²⁷³ On freedom to build ‘all sorts of types of sizes the people want’: A. Becket, Conference Speech, 1950, pp. 60-61 at 61; Irene Dowling, Conference Speech, 1950, pp. 56-8 at 57.

²⁷⁴ Jones, “‘This is magnificent!’”, 105-8; For the quote: A. Becket, Conference Speech, 1949, p. 78; Disagreements continued on housing estates: Sir Arnold Gridley to Churchill, 21 June 1951, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/108, folio 85.

²⁷⁵ Ernest Marples to Churchill, 3 Nov 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/108, folios 12-31 at 18; Ramsden’s account misses these points: *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, pp. 172-4.

²⁷⁶ Jones, “‘This is magnificent!’”.

example, builders were not alone in being ‘harried, hampered and bewildered’; Government exercised ‘far too tight control’ over Local Authorities, who needed ‘freedom of action to get on with the job’.²⁷⁷ Similarly, when unpacked, the efficiencies of free enterprise again lay in decentralising initiative, planning, ordering and decision-making.²⁷⁸ With Bevan in charge, there was also room for arguments of direction asserting the trade was handicapped by an ideology, which, if taken to its ‘logical conclusion’ would place ‘all of us in State owned houses’, ‘savour[ing] far too much of Communism’.²⁷⁹ Accordingly, Bevan had ‘liquidated’ the landlords, replacing them with a ‘the single patron, the single master, the all-powerful State with its drab and uniform estates, and its vast army of tenants’, who were vulnerable to abuses of local and central power.²⁸⁰ Tories’ paeans to property-ownership, then, were sung over the background noise of limited power and a slide towards choice-less totalitarianism as well as inefficiency.

Opponents of nationalisation also combined freedom-as-efficiency and threat-to-liberty critiques, using the latter to roll Labour’s proposals into a programme of ‘further and further encroachments by the State on the liberty of the subject’.²⁸¹ Where they considered state ownership popular and irreversible, Tories focussed on specific threats to liberty like John Boyd-Carpenter’s claim that one million people’s political freedom was endangered because legislation to nationalise coal lacked a clause prohibiting the Coal Board from stopping employees standing for election.²⁸² But where they advocated reversal, such as with steel, Tories accused Labour of imprisoning a previously-efficient sector and fought prolonged emancipatory campaign with industry to ‘Set Steel

²⁷⁷ T.D. Galbraith, Conference Speech, 1950, pp. 64-5; Irene Dowling, Conference Speech, 1950, pp. 56-7 at 57; For similar points: Florence Horsbrugh, Election Broadcast, 6 Feb 1950, reprinted in: ‘General Election Broadcasts’ *The Listener*, 16 Feb 1950, pp. 291, 294

²⁷⁸ Ernest Marples to Churchill, 3 Nov 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/108, folios 12-31 at 27.

²⁷⁹ Irene Dowling, Conference Speech, 1950, pp. 56-7 at 57; W.G. Clark, Conference Speech, 1950, p. 58.

²⁸⁰ J. Sayer, Conference Speech, 1949, pp. 76-7 at 76; J.S. Parker, Conference Speech, 1949, pp. 77-8 at 77.

²⁸¹ Oliver Lyttelton, Conference Speech, 1949, pp. 50-2 at p. 51; Ramsden mistakenly removed these attacks from their wider narratives and overemphasised bland efficiency critiques: *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, pp. 186-94.

²⁸² Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 5th Series, vol. 422, 14 May 1946, cols. 1689-837 at 1721

Free'.²⁸³ This combination of abstracted opposition and sniping at legislation's specific implications was designed to avoid internal divisions over specific cases, or to befriend rival industries whilst sidestepping discussion on regulation that could tie their hands in future; once again, 'freedom' afforded ambiguity.²⁸⁴

Yet, framing nationalisation within a discourse of dispersed power also allowed Tories to challenge public ownership's association with democratic control.²⁸⁵ Attacks oscillated between Ministers lacking oversight and exercising dictatorial control. Following the Minister for Transport's refusal to comment on rail fares because 'day-to-day responsibilities' resided with the Transport Commission, party propaganda asked: 'Where is this leading? Are the bureaucracies of the airways, Corporations, Cable and Wireless, the Bank of England, the Transport Commission... to be inviolate, subject to no enquiry by the representatives of the public who pay for them. Hitler had the answer'.²⁸⁶ But on other occasions the State monopolised power via property. Dr Charles Hill pleaded with 1950's electors:

Socialism means the state owns the lot. Oh, we should go there, of course, by sweet and gentle stages, but that's what it means. The state owns the lot, from steel to stockings, from beer to buildings. The state's the employer for us all. It will run all industry through the boards and committees that it appoints... And it leads eventually to the one-party state – a way of describing the totalitarian state.²⁸⁷

Studded with figures of repetition (*tradiuctio* and *alliteration*), Hill's argument of direction represented a rhetorical bridge between the 1945 and 1950 elections, even if the latter normally grounded these in (albeit truncated) appeals to *logos*. For example, one variation on Hill's attack was comparative evaluation between capitalism and socialism's democratic credentials. Under free enterprise, shareholders could remove directors, but members of nationalised industry

²⁸³ 'Nationalisation Makes Prices Soar', Election Leaflet 1951, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/123, folio 5; 'General Election News', Election Leaflet 1951, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/123, folio 18; Anthony Eden, 'The Right Road for Britain' *The Listener*, 28 Jul 1949, p. 150.

²⁸⁴ 'The Nationalisation of Inland Transport', Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/8B, folios 226-7; Some were decidedly more pro-nationalisation than others: David Eccles, 'The Coal Mines Experiment: A Conservative View', *The Times*, 4 Jan 1946, p. 5.

²⁸⁵ CUCO, *This Is The Road*, p. 9.

²⁸⁶ CUCO, 'More Thoughts on Nationalisation', B.L.O, CCO 600/17/1; Similar points made: Robson Brown, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 132-3 at 133.

²⁸⁷ Dr Charles Hill, General Election Broadcast, 14 Feb 1950, reprinted in 'General Election Broadcasts' *The Listener*, 23 Feb 1950, p. 335.

boards were only subject to Ministers – ‘where, then, is the “Economic Democracy”?’’, begged Tory propaganda. ‘Mr Herbert Morrison has got his words mixed up. Knowingly or unknowingly, Socialist Policy is leading to Dictatorship. To preserve and extend real Democracy we must – Unite for Freedom and Recovery’.²⁸⁸

These arguments did not simply fall from ‘ideology’; they countered points expected from Government benches.²⁸⁹ Notes given to MPs opposing the 1948 Steel Bill illuminate this hidden selection process. Circulated on 26 Oct 1948 and later extended, Maudling’s Parliamentary brief predicted that Labour were likely to focus on ‘political’ rather than ‘economic’ arguments.²⁹⁰ Chief amongst these would be ‘the power argument’, which alleged steel magnates could ransom the nation.²⁹¹ In reply, Tory members should invert Labour’s point to show ‘economic power is two-edged’ and applied to both politicians and private individuals:

However true it may have been in the past that individual industrialists or financiers possessed widespread power to influence the lives of many men and women, at the present moment the most alarming feature of this country’s society is the vast and growing power of the Government over every phrase of our economic life. This concentration of power in the hands of the Government is one of the most disturbing recent political developments.²⁹²

The briefing suggested MPs highlight the extent of those Ministerial powers to exploit the Government’s ‘dilemma’, whereby it wanted to publically downplay the extent of change, but risked ‘infuriat[ing] the extreme left’ if this was true.²⁹³ Even when ideological underpinnings were established, attacks expressed as freedom rhetoric should be understood as interactions between traditions of argument and live rhetorical scenarios, in which perceptions of opponents’ weaknesses and likely tactics shaped those summoned to counter. For this

²⁸⁸ CUCO, ‘Have you Noticed’, Leaflet, 1949, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/6.

²⁸⁹ Ramsden wrongly credits the industry’s briefings rather than CRD: *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, p. 192.

²⁹⁰ ‘Preliminary Brief on Steel Nationalisation’, 26 Oct 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/79A, folios 14-23; ‘Brief on the Iron and Steel Bill’, 10 Nov 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/79A, folios 33-71 at 36.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, folio 38.

²⁹² *Ibid.*

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, folio 59.

reason, the experience of opposing a Labour government with a majority altered the body of Tory rhetoric.

'Free enterprise' was emblematic of this process because the phrase developed significantly during these debates as a bulkhead against state ownership and dictatorship. Its use was a product of context: although 'free' never replaced 'private' enterprise, the former began to be preferred by party publications in the late forties because officials worried the latter connoted a 'secrecy and privilege' uncomfortably close to Labour's attacks.²⁹⁴ Moreover, the precondition of 'free enterprise' becoming 'a much larger ideological symbol' was Tory oratory's connection between centralisation, distribution of power, efficiency, incentive, independence and freedom, relationships forged by the rhetorical needs of opposing socialisation in practice.²⁹⁵ Audiences did not have to make those connections themselves. Eden told listeners in October 1950: 'That's what we mean by a property-owning democracy – fair rewards with equal opportunity for all. That's the kind of Britain we want to see, where freedom has a real meaning and the State belongs to the people, not the people to the State'. He then condensed those points into a fundamental choice between 'more and more state control with the centralised authority and the sense of frustration it brings in its train; or a new conception of free enterprise'. 'And after all', he added 'it is free enterprise that is today earning higher exports than we've ever known. But to get this extra effort we must have increasing rewards for those who deliver the goods'.²⁹⁶ This tendency to mix critiques and collapse their meaning into neat phrases used to construct binary choices underlay the phenomena described in chapter one whereby 'freedom' strengthened its connections with more areas of discourse and saw greater use in idioms. Crucially, nationalisation and housing debates provided arenas in which these different aspects of the frame were pulled together, cementing idioms. Context was thus an important catalyst (if not the origin) for the strengthening connection between economic freedom as efficiency and as guarantor of political freedom, although the latter remained the ultimate arbiter. In June, Butler insisted that listeners' two key questions, "Are we going to earn our living?" and "Are we going to

²⁹⁴ D.W. Clarke to Tactical Committee Secretary, 11 Mar 1949, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/6.

²⁹⁵ Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, p. 56.

²⁹⁶ Anthony Eden, Broadcast, 28 Oct 1950, reprinted as 'The Conservative View of Domestic Policy', *The Listener*, 2 Nov 1950, pp. 461-2 at p. 2.

preserve our way of life?”, were ‘linked together’: ‘We certainly shan’t be able to keep our democratic way of life if we don’t succeed in earning our living. But for me, and I think for millions of others too, mere economic survival, or even economic prosperity, wouldn’t be worth having if we were to lose our freedom’.²⁹⁷ These look, of course, very much like the ‘links’ Joseph wanted Conservatives to expound twenty-four years later, but, rather than regarding the rhetorical elision between economic and political freedoms as intrinsic to Tory thought, the evidence suggests it was a product of the paradoxical relationship between frames and context: frames shape our perception of politics, but politics (including rivals’ successes, weaknesses, and expected arguments) promotes or silences elements of the frame.

VI

Contexts, Beliefs, and Speech Writing

Because they neglected the importance of context and consequently misunderstood the economic and political perspectives investing Tory leaders in languages of release, historians misinterpreted emancipatory oratory as skin-deep ‘neoliberalism’ or passively inherited modes of harrying Labour.²⁹⁸ Although Harriet Jones undermined economic ‘consensus’ over twenty years ago, the influence of fiscal and monetary dissent on speech-making has remained unappreciated.²⁹⁹ This section uses speech drafts and memoranda to

²⁹⁷ R.A. Butler, Broadcast, 24 Jun 1950, reprinted as ‘Conservative View of Britain’s Position Today’, *The Listener*, 29 Jun 1950, pp. 1100-1 at p. 1101.

²⁹⁸ On feigned ‘neoliberalism’: Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, p. 45; David Dutton, *British Politics Since 1945: The Rise, Fall and Rebirth of Consensus* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997[1991]), pp. 51-2, 65; Nick Tiratsoo sees ‘set the people free’ as mere rhetoric: Nick Tiratsoo and Jim Tomlinson, *The Conservatives and Industrial Efficiency, 1951-1964: Thirteen Wasted Years?* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 18; Roy Jenkins, ‘Churchill: The Government of 1951-55’ in *Churchill*, edited by Robert Blake and Wm. Roger Louis, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 491-502 at 497; Dorey, *British Conservatism*, pp. 84-5, 123; Kevin Theakston, ‘Winston Churchill, 1945-51’ in *Leaders of the Opposition: From Churchill to Cameron* edited by Timothy Heppell (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 7-19 at p. 10; Stuart Mitchell, *The Brief and Turbulent Life of Modernising Conservatism* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2006), pp. 10-11; On inherited modes: John Ramsden, “‘A Party for Owners or a Party for Earners’ How Far Did the British Conservative Party Really Change after 1945?”, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Fifth Series, 37 (1987), 49-63 at 61; For the argument Tories maintained freedom rhetoric through 1945-51, but placed greater emphasis in reaction to public opinion: Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, pp. 163-8; For a view that Conservatives initially lived up to their rhetoric in office, but with a misplaced focus on decontrol rather than production: Neil Rollings, ‘Poor Mr Butskell: A Short Life, Wrecked by Schizophrenia?’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 5, 2 (1994), 183-205 esp. 197-8.

²⁹⁹ Perhaps this neglect is because Jones drew evidence of mounting support for retrenchment mainly from CRD memoranda and quickly linked this with welfare selectivity: Jones, ‘The Conservative Party and the Welfare State’, pp. 170-83; Often the level of disagreement on welfare and budgeting is omitted altogether: Brian Harrison, ‘The Rise, Fall and Rise of Political

show that freedom rhetoric represented sincere policy intentions, intimately tied to Britain's late-forties trade and production problems, but which cannot be characterised as 'neoliberal' or seen in as tension with the welfare state or full employment. At root, 'set the people free' encoded, in electorally-acceptable euphemism, gloomy economic assumptions, necessitating 'drastic' cuts, sound money and harder work.³⁰⁰ From 1947, interrelated macroeconomic problems shaped Churchill's domestic statements, albeit filtered by his advisors and speechwriter, Reginald Maudling.³⁰¹ In particular, they blamed lacklustre production, haemorrhaging currency reserves, and domestic inflation for Dalton's reliance on further (uncertain) American aid.³⁰² This had several rhetorical implications. First, sheer uncertainty confined speeches to negative attacks, aiming to 'regain moral leadership' by converting economic difficulties into a 'crisis of purpose and effort'.³⁰³ The ideological facets of controls and nationalisation were contrasted with 'freedom' to convict Labour of pursuing un-British, partisan doctrine and class warfare instead of trusting or uniting the people in national crisis.³⁰⁴ Second, the conviction that Britain needed to narrow its trade-imbalance by increasing production through longer hours and lower wages fuelled emancipatory rhetoric: 'set the people free' was primarily a cry for production and therefore emanated from a different rhetorical context than 1945's Gestapo warning or the slogan's later association with the abolition of

Consensus in Britain since 1940', *History*, 84, 274 (1999), 301–24 at 313-4; Kevin Jeffreys, *The Churchill Coalition and Wartime Politics 1940-1945* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995 [1991]), pp. 213-5; Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, pp. 214-26; Harris, *Competition and the Corporate Society*, pp. 70-145; Some still ignore much of this scholarship to imagine the Industrial Charter as a permanent leftwards shift which created a political space on the right: Mark Pitchford, *The Conservative Party and the Extreme Right 1945-75* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), pp. 24, 32.

³⁰⁰ It is necessary to draw a distinction between leadership and membership's rhetoric. The rank-and-file's should be explained as product of the dissemination mechanisms discussed below; Nigel Harris wrongly argued that 'neo-liberalism was sustained by conditions of relative prosperity': *Competition and the Corporate Society*, p. 79.

³⁰¹ Most of Churchill's public statements evolved from Maudling's notes. Other advisors contributing included Lords Woolton and Cherwell, George Christ and Oliver Lyttleton. Post-1945 Beaverbrook and Bracken's role was stylistic, and Geoffrey Lloyd and Ralph Assheton's influence declined, although they remained correspondents. Maudling was 'interpreter' for others too: Ramsden, *The Making of Conservative Party Policy*, p. 121.

³⁰² Geoffrey Crowther to Churchill, c. Mar 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/11C, folios 375-79.

³⁰³ Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 5 Mar 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/11C, folios 356-60.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, folios 356-60; Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 21 Jul 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/13B, folios 143-48; Kandiah recognised the trope of 'doctrinaire' irrationality, but not the economic context: 'Conservative Leaders, Strategy', p. 64; Churchill, Speech at Blenheim Palace, 4 Aug 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/13B, folios 149-161 at 152-3.

rationing.³⁰⁵ Moreover, this diagnosis informed the leadership's pledges to cut oppressive bureaucracy and taxation.³⁰⁶ Lord Woolton advised Churchill on the 'major problem' faced by the country:

Increased production comes as a result of initiative and enterprise from thousands of individuals... With an arrogant and dictatorial spirit a group of inexperienced men are trying to control and regulate and regiment the productive powers of the country. They have harassed and embarrassed industrial enterprise so much that those of this vast community of manufacturers and of traders, who, in the past, have organised the production and the wealth of Britain, now find themselves waiting on the dilatory decisions of innumerable Civil Servants.³⁰⁷

Freedom from bureaucracy was a means of pinning lacklustre production on the Government and a call to return to an allegedly efficient economic model. Extended metaphors of release were the culmination of efforts to translate economic prescriptions from the 'jargon of the times' ('disinflation with less, not more, tax disincentives') into 'homely' terms ('Government must spend less and encourage the tryers to try more') and then into evocative rhetoric ('the life thrust of the British nation, if not impeded, is magnificent').³⁰⁸ Emancipatory slogans were certainly not 'sustained by conditions of relative prosperity', as Harris believed.³⁰⁹ Instead, because they experienced Britain's economic plight through near-rhetorical models of economic efficiency ('greater production must result not from statistical charts but from study of human character'), contemporaries' supposedly 'neoliberal' rhetoric was less an expression of abstract theories of the State or attempt to court public opinion, than a reaction

³⁰⁵ Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 21 Jul 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/13B, folios 143 to 48; Conference delegates also made this link: J.B Godber, Conference Speech, 1950, pp. 45-6 at p. 45; It is often forgotten the 1948 broadcast talk entitled "Set the People Free" primarily concerned nationalisation and production not rationing: Churchill, Broadcast, 14 Feb 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/29B, folios 93-103; Ramsden implies too much continuity between the election and subsequent opposition: *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, p. 164; Jones suggests the calls were an appeal to the middle class: 'Bloodless Counter-Revolution', pp. 11-2.

³⁰⁶ Geoffrey Crowther to Churchill, c. Mar 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/11C, folios 375-79; Butler told candidates to describe tax cuts as restoring 'freedom to spend': R.A Butler, Briefing to Conservative Candidates, 23 Jun 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/94A, folios 241-51 at 241.

³⁰⁷ Lord Woolton to Churchill, 30 Sep 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/14A-F, folios 354-61.

³⁰⁸ Notes for Devaluation Debate, 28 Sep 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/27A, folios 225-27 at 225-6.

³⁰⁹ Harris, *Competition and the Corporate Society*, p. 79.

to Britain's immediate production problems and a need to convert Tory solutions into positive oratory.³¹⁰

However, the cure for productive malaise – incentives – presented risks: 'drastic reduction of Government expenditure' was needed because 'without reduced taxation there [could] be no incentives'.³¹¹ Such cuts could give credence to Labour's charge that Conservatives coveted a return to the thirties, but, because calls for incentives dovetailed with growing opinion that excessive Government spending and over-taxation were inflationary, Tories became more sincerely committed to the retrenchment their rhetoric implied than is normally acknowledged.³¹² In March 1948, for example, figures predominantly on the right of the party agreed that the need for both tax cuts (especially on overtime to incentivise production) and a budget surplus (to dampen inflation) necessitated a big 'reduction in Government expenditure'.³¹³ Yet, an *aide memoire*, written by Churchill prior to the 1947 party conference, reveals this non-consensual outlook held sway at the top, even as the *Industrial Charter* was lauded.³¹⁴ Convinced that the 'British public will eventually vote for Capitalism' because 'Communism is not compatible with freedom' and a 'half-way house won't work', the note listed fourteen 'positive steps to take'. These included large reductions in Government spending and capital expenditure on

³¹⁰ This remained the case after devaluation: CRD, 'Additional Notes for Mr Churchill's Speech', Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/27A, folios 218-20 at 220; Harris ignores immediate motives (or doesn't link them to production) to see 'set the people free' as a radical, ultimately Liberal, cry contrary to the Conservative elision of State and people in the 'nation': *Competition and the Corporate Society*, pp. 130, 142; Others imply contradiction between 'economic growth' and 'setting the people free': Kandiah, 'Conservative Leaders, Strategy', p. 61. Hayek agreed incentives were necessary, but discussed this in terms of necessitating some unemployment not reducing taxation to increase production: *The Road to Serfdom*, p. 130. The end quote is from Macmillan: Harold Macmillan, Proposals for Conservative Policy Programme, 18 Jan 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/84B, folios 188-207 at 198.

³¹¹ Majorie Maxse to Churchill, 14 Aug 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/13E, folios 370-81 at 381; Jones recognised these intentions but did not link this to freedom rhetoric: 'Conservatives and the Welfare State', p. 175.

³¹² On inflation: Geoffrey Crowther to Churchill, c. Mar 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/11C, folios 375-79; Crowther, editor of the *Economist*, (supported by Bracken) was calling for 'deflation and harder times all round': Geoffrey Crowther to Churchill, 27 Oct 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/53, folios 205-7 at 205; Both Harris and Jones simplify the debate about inflation: *Competition and the Corporate Society*, p. 131; The most common argument was that heavy taxation discouraged production and saving, and those who could increased their incomes by selling assets. Senior figures on the right came to doubt this and the party was split over whether to oppose Labour's Income tax rises in 1950: Oliver Lyttelton to Churchill, 23 May 1951, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/51, folio 73-87.

³¹³ Notes of Meeting on Financial and Industrial Policy, 23 Mar 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/51, folio 17; That overtime was targeted for tax reduction shows the sovereignty of production in these decisions as it was otherwise regarded as a discriminatory reduction: Douglas Jerrold, 'Conservative and the Electorate', Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/84A folios 62-74 at 67.

³¹⁴ 'Notes', Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/14A-F, folios 348-50.

houses, schools and railways, elimination of housing and food subsidies, 'longer hours in industry', and postponing raising the school leaving age. Churchill would rely upon incentives (substantially cut income tax) to raise production, restore the price mechanism 'as soon as possible', and gradually abolish controls. Few of these 'steps' made it into his conference address uncamouflaged in the language of 'freedom' and 'opportunity', and, despite openly calling for fiscal restraint, Tories left the extent and location of cuts deliberately vague.³¹⁵ That said, the evidence suggests not only that Churchill continued to think in fairly binary terms about freedom and its role as arbiter of economics, but that he had alternative policies to justify his emancipatory calls; perhaps with good reason, he was unwilling to offer those up for critique, but to characterise him as a 'soaking wet' is misleading.³¹⁶

Macro-economy also lay behind freedom rhetoric's changing emphasis. Whilst treating pressure on Sterling as a risk to production, by January 1948 Maudling believed that 'any political tactics based on the assumption of a financial crash [were] liable to fail' because reserves would likely hold until Marshall Aid arrived.³¹⁷ This forced Conservatives to emphasise the longer-term fallacy of Britain living beyond her export means. Nor was the problem now production output, but selling goods at British prices (worsened by Sterling's high valuation): 'politically, therefore, the problems which are most likely to determine the next Election... [are] how in the long run to reduce costs and prices to the level necessary for competitive efficiency'.³¹⁸ Both changes shaped freedom rhetoric. The benefits of freeing industry gradually transitioned from production to reducing overheads. Furthermore, the need to assimilate an expected period of stability into their narrative encouraged Tories to accuse Labour of relying on free-enterprise America to finance social services (and socialism) in 'artificial Britain'.³¹⁹ Attlee was using welfare and inflated wages 'to obscure the real facts

³¹⁵ Churchill, Conference Speech, 1947, pp. 114-21.

³¹⁶ Addison, *Churchill on the Home Front*, p. 387; Green underestimated the leadership's commitment to what he rather problematically calls a 'liberal market' critique akin to the 1990s: *Ideologies*, pp. 218-20; Wade, *Conservative Economic Policy*, pp. 20, 33-4.

³¹⁷ Reginald Maudling, 'Notes on the Current Political Situation', 17 Jan 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/16A, folios 238-46 at 241.

³¹⁸ *Ibid*; Assheton predicted this: Ralph Assheton to Churchill, 18 Apr 1946, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/4E, folios 493-500 at 496; Similar concerns were again expressed in 1949, as the signs were of entering a 'more competitive phase' in the business cycle: Informational Meeting on the Economic Situation, 1 Apr 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/51, folios 29-31.

³¹⁹ Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 22 Jun 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/69B, folio 203; 'Ideas for Manchester', c. Nov 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/60, folio 89-90 at 89.

of our economic situation and persuade the people all is going well' when Britain's economy was dependent on the charity of a system her Government deplored.³²⁰ Fundamentally, though, Conservatives like Maudling believed 'present policies will never enable us to regain our own feet' or recover the 'national energies and fortunes' needed to 'pay our own way and live our own lives when... American help has been exhausted'. Even if more forward-looking, freedom rhetoric still reflected sincere economic prescriptions related to Britain's independence and merely postponed crisis.³²¹

However, Conservatives' oratory was also consciously adjusted with their opponents' manoeuvrings: Labour's 'don't-rock-the-boat' and moderate-*ethos* strategy branded Tory critiques as partisan sniping during national crises.³²² Having lost the initiative, the Tory counter-offensive substituted pessimism for the line that 'things are going better in this country, not because of the Government but despite the Government' and highlighted the dissonance between Ministers' praise for free-enterprise production and threats to nationalise.³²³ Hence the argument that, if only Britain's traditional qualities 'had been allowed to develop and expand, the material difficulties of the years after the way would soon have been overcome' met a need for patriotic criticism.³²⁴ Freedom helped articulate such attacks: as Bracken told a Surrey meeting, 'British workers had no equal, but their skill was being smothered by the State. Until we got back our freedom to manufacture what we liked, and trade where we liked, we could not hope to regain our trade supremacy'.³²⁵ This narrative, that there was 'nothing wrong with Britain your vote can't fix', lasted into the 1951 election campaign and remained the premise on which freeing the

³²⁰ Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 22 Jun 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/69B, folio 203; For example: Lord Woolton, Speech to Primrose League, London, 30 Apr 1948, reported in 'Controls the Conservatives would Abolish', *The Manchester Guardian*, 1 May 1948, p.6; Speakers had earlier been asked to follow similar lines: Memoranda to Speakers, No. 7, 11 Jul 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/11, folio 28.

³²¹ Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 22 Jun 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/69B, folio 203.

³²² Reginald Maudling, 'Notes on the Current Political Situation', 17 Jan 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/16A, folios 238-46 at 242.

³²³ *Ibid.*, folio 243.

³²⁴ CUCO, *Mr Churchill's Message to You*.

³²⁵ 'Mr Bracken's Reply to Minister', *The Manchester Guardian*, 12 Sep 1949, p. 3; For an example of by-election propaganda on this theme: Churchill to Max Ramsden, 9 Feb 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/90, folio 32.

people's suppressed energy would exorcise trade demons, but it was the answer to a perceived rhetorical problem.³²⁶

Yet, combined with others, the above imperatives formed a rhetorical paradox: outwardly committed to maintaining social security, Conservatives' rhetoric simultaneously implied expenditure cuts to finance incentives. As Maudling admitted, the party 'was not wholly honest... and had refrained from speaking with complete bluntness' to avoid the Socialists 'trap[ping] us into saying that there must be such a reduction in the standard of living'.³²⁷ Whilst 'criticising the excessive rate of government expenditure' generally, it had never been 'led into specific proposals for cutting social services expenditure', and Central Office advised speakers to avoid naming specific cuts.³²⁸ The party took 'the line that government expenditure can be reduced without noticeable discomfort to the recipients of government payments, if only the government conducted their affairs more efficiently'.³²⁹ Thus, as the Tactical Committee recognised, freeing the people disingenuously plugged a budget shortfall, allowing speakers to insist that cutting away the 'swaddling clothes of unnecessary officialdom' would 'give us a chance of reduced taxation and greater incentives' without 'cutting the social services'.³³⁰ Rhetoric chastising the cost of officialdom, therefore, was partly a consequence of needing to argue bureaucratic savings would allow Tories to cut taxes, but not food or welfare.³³¹ Few in the leadership 'honestly believed... the circle could be squared', as Hoffman thought; rather, Tories deployed 'freedom from' to mitigate a rhetorical problem their interpretation of 'freedom to spend' created.³³²

³²⁶ 'There's Nothing Wrong with Britain Your Vote Can't Put Right', Election Leaflet 1951, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/123, folio 23.

³²⁷ Reginald Maudling, 'Notes on the Political Situation' 6 Oct 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/84, folios 78-83 at 77.

³²⁸ Ibid; Memoranda to Speakers, No. 7, 11 Jul 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/11, folio 28.

³²⁹ Reginald Maudling, 'Notes on the Political Situation', 6 Oct 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/84, folios 78-83 at 79.

³³⁰ Tactical Committee Minutes, 26 Jul 1949, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/11; For examples: 'Conservatives will Save on Food Costs', *The Manchester Guardian*, 20 Mar 1949, p. 1; E. Gundry, Conference Speech, 1948, p. 102.

³³¹ Churchill, Speech at Blenheim Palace, 4 Aug 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/13B, folios 149-161 at 156.

³³² Hoffman, *The Conservative Party in Opposition*, p. 194; Ramsden follows him: *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, p. 167; Harris took a similar line: *Competition and the Corporate Society*, pp. 130-1; Jones suggests the need for cuts prompted Tories to look at selective benefits. She overstates development by 1949: 'Conservatives and the Welfare State', pp. 176-81 and 'A Bloodless Counter Revolution', p. 12; *The Right Road for Britain* did not accept Macleod's

Although this façade was largely maintained through to 1951, there were wobbles, which explain the increasing emphasis on freedom in late 1949 and the 1950 manifesto's pledge to cut food subsidies.³³³ By October 1949, Maudling believed that public and party opinion had hardened behind a final resolution to Britain's economic problems following devaluation.³³⁴ Conservative rhetoric could, therefore, afford greater transparency; indeed, not doing so risked speakers being outflanked by Cripps's move towards retrenchment. Maudling now recommended Churchill and Eden announce that alongside reductions in social services, defence cuts and selective benefits, Britons would have to work harder and longer hours with their wages held down, despite devaluation raising prices. Cutting taxes, reversing nationalisation, reducing control over industry, and tackling restrictive labour practices, would then ensure Britain's competitiveness.³³⁵ These proposals were not new; Maudling's point was that devaluation rendered them politically acceptable.³³⁶ Similar thinking was clarifying across the party: Macmillan argued that the need to 'defeat inflation in our economy and consolidate the new rate of the pound' necessitated 'economies of at least twice the order now proposed', and that 'additional cuts over and above those required to hold the financial position [were needed] to allow for incentives to production by tax reduction'.³³⁷ Perhaps the most striking sign of Conservatives' seriousness was CRD's recommendation to 'set the pound free', which Churchill initially supported.³³⁸ Whilst some continued to press for drastic cuts, the risk of corroborating Labour's allegations that they would destroy the welfare state prevented the full extent of these sentiments becoming public.³³⁹ However, despite tactical

advice (which she cites) and originally included an appendix outlining their support of comprehensive services.

³³³ CUCO, *This is the Road*, pp. 6-7.

³³⁴ Conservatives argued that devaluation needed to be made the best of with further tax incentives and expenditure reductions: Conservative Parliamentary Finance Committee Notes on Devaluation, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/91, folios 21-36 at 36.

³³⁵ Reginald Maudling, 'Notes on the Political Situation', 6 Oct 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/84, folios 78-83 at 83.

³³⁶ Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 27 Oct 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/27E, folio 716.

³³⁷ Harold Macmillan to Churchill, 26 Oct 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/84B, folios 249-251 at 249.

³³⁸ 'Notes on Devaluation', 24 Sep 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/91, folios 16-18; Duncan Sandys seems to have persuaded him otherwise: Duncan Sandys to Churchill, 29 Sep 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/91, folios 84-9; This is contrary to: Addison, *Churchill on the Home Front*, p. 397.

³³⁹ Following devaluation Assheton called for 'drastic cut in expenditure (not just administrative waste)', Ralph Assheton to Churchill, 21 Sep 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/19, folios 81-2 at 82; Ralph Assheton to Churchill, 26 Oct 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/80, folios 102-4; Ralph

reservations, the party entered the 1950 election proposing to cut food subsidies to finance incentives and broke from universalism by targeting relief from the expected price rises at those in need.³⁴⁰

Taken together, then, the archival traces of political strategy and speech writing suggest a different picture of Conservative rhetoric. When Gamble wrote ‘the stress on individual freedom and the evils of centralized control and state domination only made sense if the party were preparing to cut back the new state in a drastic manner’, he was mistaken in his conclusion that ‘they had no such plans’.³⁴¹ Rather, the leadership felt it necessary to hide the extent of its planned cuts, in particular those to the social services, behind the reassurance that rolling-back bureaucracy would bring sufficient economies for incentives. Recognising this dishonesty alongside long-held views on retrenchment, incentives and production, allows us to reinterpret the myth of a turn in 1949 towards ‘neoliberalism’ as more akin to the slow reveal of measures necessary for efficient production when economic crisis created favourable rhetorical conditions.

In addition to the caveat of a slow reveal concerned with production, the notion of Churchill’s opposition veering towards ‘neoliberalism’ (as traditionally, but not wholly accurately, understood) can be rejected on two further grounds.³⁴² First, 1949’s *The Right Road for Britain* has been misinterpreted as a rightwards shift in tone, if not policy, whereas the episode is more accurately read as a change in emphasis *post*-authorship to deflect internal criticism of the document as

Assheton to Churchill, 13 Apr 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/94, folio 53; On need to reassure electorate on social services: Mark Chapham-Walker, ‘Socialist Propaganda’, 16 Jan 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/30A, folio 173.

³⁴⁰ CUCO, *This is the Road*, pp. 6-7; R.A Butler, Briefing to Conservative Candidates, 23 Jun 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/94A, folios 241-51 at 242; On caution: Duncan Sandys to Churchill, 17 Jan 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/29B, folios 169-170; Maudling and Alex Spearman had argued on this basis from 1948: Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 7 Feb 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/16B, folios 219-21; Alec Spearman to Churchill, 8 Mar 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/85B, folios 302-3; Churchill removed a line accepting Labour’s ceiling on subsidies during drafting of *The Right Road for Britain*: Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/88; Jones’ work ignores this example of ‘selectivity’.

³⁴¹ Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, p. 57; Ramsden was similarly simplified reality by claiming freedom rhetoric ‘everything to do with presentation... and little to do with the details of prospective action’, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, p. 166; Rollings recognised that ‘this was not simply an issue of emphasis or rhetoric’ but wrongly attributes this rhetoric to the simple desire to decontrol: ‘Poor Mr Butskell’, 198.

³⁴² Bale, *The Conservatives Since 1945*, p. 34; Harris, *Competition and the Corporate Society*, pp. 77, 145.

semi-socialist.³⁴³ Assheton thought there ‘too much adherence to the notion of a planned economy’ and questioned whether it was wise to commit to not cutting social services, suggesting Tories promise ‘more food, less taxation, less restriction rather more definitely’ instead.³⁴⁴ In support, he forwarded Churchill a scathing review by an Oxford economist, Sir Hubert Henderson, who accused the party of ignoring public spending’s inflationary effects when the situation demanded ‘either reduced social service expenditure’ or ‘lower real wages’.³⁴⁵ The leadership privately appreciated Henderson’s point, but his and Assheton’s comments suggest that contemporaries did not think *The Right Road* heralded a new ‘neoliberal’ position. Nor did those criticisms necessarily reflect ‘neoliberalism’ of the New Right ilk: Henderson supported controls and the party’s stance on nationalisation.³⁴⁶ In any case, Butler brushed off their attacks, reassuring Churchill he would ‘see that the meaning of our document is clear at the Press Conference’ and that ‘the tone of the whole suits the hour’.³⁴⁷ As a result, control-cutting and individualism came through strongly in the press coverage and Churchill’s speech at Wolverhampton, where he proclaimed the choice ‘between two ways of life’ using a series of *anaphoric* contrasts ‘between liberty and state domination’.³⁴⁸ Maudling and Clarke drafted the speech, and embellished and reordered *The Right Road’s* material to promote emancipatory rhetoric.³⁴⁹ Instead of heralding a rightwards swing, the 1949 policy statement needs to be set within long-held, cautiously-emerging economic dissent and read with the knowledge that its authors deliberately clothed its launch in

³⁴³ For argument the document’s tone changed to emphasise the ‘language of liberty’ already present: Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, pp. 163-6; Hoffman, *The Conservative Party*, pp. 190-3; Churchill had originally intended to make a policy statement at Glasgow in May, but was persuaded to wait until the policy committees’ work was complete and after the Labour conference. Eden was to broadcast to ensure party unity: Patrick Buchan-Hepburn to Churchill, 6 May 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/80, folio 233; Macmillan persuaded Churchill to write the preface on the basis of re-establishing his reputation for social reform amongst the younger generations: Harold Macmillan to Churchill, 24 Jun 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/88, folios 34-36.

³⁴⁴ Ralph Assheton, ‘Draft Statement of Policy: Comments by RA’, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/88, folio 76-8.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, folio 90.

³⁴⁶ Sir Hubert Henderson to David Clarke, 30 June 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/88, folios 91-3; ‘Controls’, *The Manchester Guardian*, 11 Sep 1948, p. 4.

³⁴⁷ R.A Butler to Churchill, 7 Jul 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 23/88, folios 79-82 at 82.

³⁴⁸ ‘Conservatives’ Policy Statement: Stop to Nationalisation: Reduction of Controls and Taxes’ *The Times*, 23 Jul 1949, p. 4; ‘Conservative Policy: Churchill and “The Right Road”’, *The Times*, 25 Jul 1949, p. 2; despite its launch presentation, contemporaries still did not see it as a ‘neoliberal’ turn: ‘Conservative Policy’, *The Times*, 25 Jul 1945, p. 5.

³⁴⁹ Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 16 Jul 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/26B, folios 173-77.

freedom rhetoric to pacify a minority who considered its commitments to free enterprise and cuts too weak.

But the notes for Churchill's Wolverhampton speech suggest a second reason for resisting simple identity between Conservative rhetoric and 'neoliberalism': they reveal Maudling and Clarke's vision of retrenchment and liberation was in support of social democratic aims. 'A drastic reversal of policy' was needed to protect 'full employment' from the threat of 'economic disaster', and 'breaking away from the Socialist economic policy would ensure that the social services [were] safe-guarded from the decline in the value of money...'.³⁵⁰ Arguing inflation had actually cut the social services was a convenient riposte to Labour's claim the Conservatives would reduce benefits.³⁵¹ However, these counterattacks signify a wider line of argument that harmonised freedom with the welfare state and full employment – a point which qualifies established models of post-war social and economic policy. Jones recognised that Conservatives presented themselves as guardians of sound money to defend the value of social services and rightly connected pressure to cut taxation with CRD's work on selective benefits.³⁵² Yet, her broader interpretation posits an ongoing 'dilemma' within post-war Conservatism between leaders' desires to get elected and keep 'policy along lines compatible with the broad aims of Conservatism', namely free enterprise and incentives. Although these parallel aims caused crises in late 1951 and 1958, Jones argued that favourable economic circumstances permitted Tory governments to win middle-class votes by promising both maintained social services and tax cuts without resolving that tension. Adopted by Cockett, Kandiah and Dorey, the model envisioned a conflict between Tories' 'neoliberalism' and electoral imperatives, in which the latter mitigated the former.³⁵³ The problem is not only that this simplified

³⁵⁰ Ibid., folios 176-7; Reginald Maudling to Churchill, c. Jan 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/30A, folios 168-9.

³⁵¹ 'Black Record: The Sorry Story of Six Years of Socialism', Election Leaflet 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/123, unfoliated; Conference delegates made the point consistently: Geoffrey Finsberg, Conference Speech, 1949, pp. 84-5 at 85; J.B Godber, Conference Speech, 1950, pp. 45-6 at 45.

³⁵² Jones, 'Conservatives and the Welfare State', pp. 176-81.

³⁵³ Cockett, *Thinking the Unthinkable*, p. 159; Kandiah, 'Conservative Leaders, Strategy'; Dorey, *British Conservatism*, pp. 95-7; Kevin Jeffreys, *Retreat from New Jerusalem: British Politics, 1951-64* (Basingtoke: Macmillan, 1997), pp. 9-34; Ramsden also implies this ('the pledge to maintain the Keynesian and Beveridge Attleean settlement... did sit uneasily alongside the Conservative pledge to cut taxes'): *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, p. 167; John Turner, '1951-64' in *How Tory Governments Fall: The Tory Party in Power Since 1783* edited by Anthony Seldon (London: Fontana, 1996), pp. 317-52 at 321.

neoliberal theorists' positions, but that when faced with unfavourable economic circumstances in 1949-51, Conservatives privately and publically denied any such dichotomy existed.³⁵⁴

Because their rhetoric expressed solutions to lax production, not 'neoliberalism' as habitually understood, senior Conservatives did not regard economic liberation, full employment or the welfare state as competing objectives. Granted, the dangers of public opinion and Labour's attacks made Tories question whether it was wise to articulate the cuts and decontrol necessary to liberate British production. But this did not mean Conservatives saw economic freedom in contradiction with their stated aims in welfare or employment policy in the long-run. Convinced that social services relied upon temporary American aid and that further Sterling crises and unemployment were imminent, Conservatives argued that industrial liberation was necessary to achieve social ends. Those working on the *Industrial Charter* refused to separate these policy strands: 'without a great and immediate improvement in productivity, all other plans for full employment, social security and a better general standard of living in this country are largely meaningless. And in this problem of productivity, the question of incentives plays a major part'.³⁵⁵ Two years later, Macmillan argued the party 'must give an absolute pledge that we will not allow the unemployment, or at least the mass unemployment, the low living standards; the poverty and the hardships which are associated with that Victorian conception of "*laissez-faire*" – or what Socialists call "the jungle economy"'. 'But', he added, 'we can only make this pledge effective if we can at the same time revive individual incentive and ambition, so as to create wealth out of which high standards can be maintained. Thus and only thus can real justice prevail'.³⁵⁶ Indeed, that Macmillan – for some a 'neoliberal' by 1947, for others the archetypal 'paternalist' – could call for freedom, incentives and 'reduction of Government expenditure' alongside an Industrial Parliament and protectionism belies the assumption that freedom rhetoric stemmed from 'neoliberal'

³⁵⁴ Many neoliberals like Popper supported some forms of social insurance schemes and even tolerated Keynesian intervention to alleviate unemployment. However, Hayek objected to 'full employment' on the grounds it became the sole aim of a society and considered too higher figure futile: Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, pp. 124-6, 212; Jackson, 'At the Origins of Neoliberalism', 145-8.

³⁵⁵ James Stuart to R.G Casey, c. Feb 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/53, folios 66-9 at 69.

³⁵⁶ Harold Macmillan, Proposals for Conservative Policy Programme, 18 Jan 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/84B, folios 188-207 at 207.

conversion rather than immediate concerns about production.³⁵⁷ Likewise, a 'statement of general principles' circulated at Churchill's request in 1950 accepted the gradation between *laissez-faire* and collectivism – at a time when Harris claimed Tories thought a 'synthesis or middle way was impossible' – and declared full employment a duty of government, but argued it depended 'in the long run, not on restrictions, but on abundance, and abundance comes from enterprise and is fed by freedom'.³⁵⁸ Although some social services would see short-term reductions to finance the increased production necessary for their survival, Tory leaders' had different priorities (production for social services) to Smithers or Law, who thought the welfare state fundamentally incompatible with capitalism because it over-burdened production.³⁵⁹ The inconvenient truth undermining attempts to identify 'liberal' and 'paternalist' factions or Jones' model of a clash between electoral imperatives and economic beliefs is that forties Conservatism did not position social services and greater economic freedom as inherently conflicting objectives.³⁶⁰

Consequently, rather than awkward contradiction, Conservatives presented commitments to social services, full employment and calls to 'set the people free' as complementary. Tories certainly critiqued excessive dependency on the State and occasionally attacked welfare's redistributive ethos (it was actually common to stress the population-wide financial burden), but the primary aim of their oratory was to persuade the electorate that economic freedom was necessary to meet the welfare bill and maintain full employment.³⁶¹ During the 1950 election, Maudling urged Churchill to tell 'any voter who wishes to avoid the return of mass unemployment [they] should vote for the Party whose policy

³⁵⁷ On Macmillan as a 'neoliberal' convert: Harris, *Competition and the Corporate Society*, p. 83; Wade, *Conservative Economic Policy*, pp. 14-5.

³⁵⁸ 'Principles', 24 Jul 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/105, folios 3-9 at 6; This was the 'overlap prospectus' Butler showed to Violet Bonham Carter, but which was put on ice due to the Korean war: Anthony Howard, *RAB: The Life of R.A. Butler*, Kindle Edition (London: Bloomsbury, 2013[1987]), loc. 3083; Harris, *Competition and the Corporate Society*, p. 140; Hayek also denounced a 'middle way': *Road to Serfdom*, p. 43; It is worth nothing that in Nov 1949, members of the Shadow Cabinet forced Woolton to recall advertisements that promised to 'prevent mass unemployment'. The words were to be substituted with a pledge to: 'lower costs, for high costs lead to mass unemployment': Patrick Buchanan-Hepburn to Churchill, 23 Nov 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/17, folios 16-7.

³⁵⁹ Waldron Smithers, "*Industrial*" or "*Magna*" Charter, p. 13; Law, *Return from Utopia*, pp. 114-5.

³⁶⁰ For a revival of Greenleaf's terminology: Wade, *Conservative Economic Policy*, pp. 14-5; Green interpreted forties freedom rhetoric as 'libertarian opposition' and one half of the 'two souls' living within Conservatism: 'The Conservative Party', p. 181.

³⁶¹ George Christ, 'Who Pays the Bill?', *Yorkshire Post*, 15 Feb 1950, cutting in: Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/29B, folio 108.

is more likely to bring down production costs... The only possible alternative is our Conservative policy of stopping nationalisation, scrapping bulk-buying, reducing controls over industry, encouraging competition, and reducing Government expenditure and taxation'.³⁶² Similarly, Duncan Sandys told those gathered at Streatham Baths Hall that nationalising further industries would leave Labour unable to pay for social services, whereas 'reviving the nation's economic strength under free enterprise' would extend them.³⁶³ The twin thrusts of Tory rhetoric, therefore, worked in relative harmony. Indeed, Amery suggested this synthesis could helpfully 'sum up our detailed policies under one or two general ideas'. Speakers should 'stress the fact that it is only the surplus resulting from the unimpeded activities of the mass of our people that can provide the basic standard. The more these activities are held back by the clammy clutch of bureaucratic monopoly... the less there will be to maintain the basic standard...'.³⁶⁴ But Churchill was already on-message: the 'suggested main theme' for his platform speeches would be 'the choice between two ways of life and the need for liberating individual energies' with the aim of 'illustrat[ing] first on the economic plane, the Socialist way having led to a high cost of living, and in the future threatening our employment and social services'.³⁶⁵ At least in 1950-1, then, Tory rhetoric was not riven with contradiction; its theme was that maintaining the "Attleean settlement" depended on freedom.³⁶⁶

Jones's model also downplays the conscious attempt to unite liberty and security that characterised Conservative rhetorical strategy. Circulated in April 1949, Douglas Jerrold's memorandum, 'Conservatives and the Electorate', indicates that Tories rejected any default juxtaposition of freedom and the

³⁶² Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 19 Feb 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/32C, folios 713-4; He made this argument from 1948 as an explicit response to Labour's attacks: Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 13 Dec 1948, folios 5-9 at 9; Because Rollings did not recognise the interrelatedness of these objectives he wrongly sees expenditure cuts as a competing objective with full employment: 'Poor Mr Butskell', 196.

³⁶³ Duncan Sandys, Speech to Streatham Baths Hall, 11 Jan 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/29B, folios 131-6 at 136.

³⁶⁴ Leo Amery to Churchill, 2 Feb 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/94, folios 18-19.

³⁶⁵ 'Notes for Speeches at Leeds, Cardiff, Edinburgh, and Manchester', Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/29B, folios 91-2 at 91; George Christ's drafts for Churchill particularly emphasised these points: 'Social Services and Unemployment', Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/29B, folios 191-49.

³⁶⁶ Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, p. 167; This point also undermines Ramsden's overall interpretation of freedom rhetoric being the 'libertarian' part of two discrete rhetorical packages: p. 166; The same strategy held in 1951: George Christ, 'General Election Campaign 1951: Co-ordination of Party Political Broadcasts', 30 Sep 1951, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/43A, folios 45-7 at 45.

welfare state.³⁶⁷ The editor of the *New English Review* argued that his party lacked support because it failed ‘to allow for the change in mentality of the electorate’ resulting from ‘the vast extension of the social services’.³⁶⁸ Tory complicity in making the voter ‘dependent, whether he likes it or not, on the State for the whole of his domestic economy’, meant that welfare policy now decided elections.³⁶⁹ However, the dilemma facing Tories was *not* how to begrudgingly bribe the electorate with benefits whilst retaining sound finance. Rather ‘the basic trouble with Conservative thinking on social policy [was] that it [was] asking the wrong questions’.³⁷⁰ Instead of outbidding Labour or stressing the necessity of ‘economy in administration’, Conservatives needed to bifurcate the advantages of the welfare state from the negative effects of socialism on liberty: ‘The problem, for instance, with national health is not how to provide the best doctoring... but how to provide a free national health service which at the same time preserves that the doctor is the servant of the patient and not the State’.³⁷¹ Similarly, the issue with benefits was not their affordability, but how ‘to reconcile social security with the retention of the necessary incentives and the provision of differential rewards for differentiated services’.³⁷² These quandaries called for reconciliation between individual freedom and the State’s ability to provide services: ‘How are we to give the taxpayer’s money to the doctors if, in the last resort, we do not control them?’³⁷³ Whereas socialism was founded on the belief there were no valid answers, Conservatism’s survival depended on its insistence there were and on finding ‘other means for organising and developing the social services... which would leave the essential liberties intact while providing security’.³⁷⁴ Crucially, the party’s *Raison d’être* was resolution, not rejection or begrudging tolerance.³⁷⁵

Although Jerrold provided few answers, his conviction that Conservatism must reconcile freedom with security exposes a subtle weakness in Jones’s

³⁶⁷ Douglas Jerrold, ‘Conservative and the Electorate’, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/84A, folios 62-74.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 62.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 69.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 69-70.

³⁷² *Ibid.*, 70.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, 71.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁵ Arguably, the idea of the ‘Opportunity State’ Conservatism associated with the One Nation group took up this mantle, but accounts do not relate it to these broader rhetorical origins: Hoffmann, *The Conservative Party*, pp. 210-4.

argument, which assumes Tories rejected the welfare state's principles in favour of 'neoliberalism', but that economic booms enabled it to avoid the electoral consequences of enacting that rejection. Jones finds her evidence in an erroneous reading of the similarities between Quintin Hogg and Law, whose works supposedly show a cross-party rejection of the welfare state's philosophy on the grounds of inequality and incentives.³⁷⁶ True, both maintained that some inequality was a prerequisite of freedom and that excessive taxation sapped the incentives for growth.³⁷⁷ But Jones mistakenly implies that these points of agreement represented similar approaches to the welfare state that can be tied to moves away from universalism. Law specifically argued that the social services 'were a brake upon production', not only because of their tax burden, but because they left man 'under no compulsion to strive for those things, like security for his old age or education for his children...'.³⁷⁸ To him, the free economy and the welfare state were irreconcilable.³⁷⁹ Far from concurring, Hogg condemned Law's ally, Alec Spearman, for proposing cuts in social services to lower business costs.³⁸⁰ In fact, he insisted that the services should never be subject to the whims of economic management, arguing they actually aided business by keeping wage demands down: 'a man who has to pay his own doctor's bills may possibly demand higher wages than one who does not'.³⁸¹ Hogg was 'committed to a great experiment – the creation and maintenance of a Social Democratic State', and, like Jerrold, he saw the 'opportunity for Conservatives' not in rejecting it, but in remedying its 'defects and... manifest dangers'.³⁸² In this view, those who argued liberty and security were irreconcilable had more in common with socialists than Conservatives. Moreover, whilst selectivity was a nascent feature of late-forties thought, Jones overstates its hold on Conservatives. Certainly Hogg thought there 'a strong case for overhauling [social services] efficiency, but none for reducing their scale, range, or comprehensiveness'.³⁸³ In fact, Macmillan was proposing the

³⁷⁶ Jones, 'A Bloodless Counter-Revolution', pp. 7-11.

³⁷⁷ Law, *Return from Utopia*, pp. 114-5; A point made generally in: Hickson, 'Inequality', p. 185.

³⁷⁸ Law, *Return from Utopia*, pp. 114.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

³⁸⁰ Quintin Hogg, 'High Price of Exports: Social Services and Food Subsidies', *The Times*, 26 Jul 1949, p. 5.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*; Quintin Hogg, 'Social Service Costs', *The Times*, 2 Aug 1949, p. 5.

³⁸² Quintin Hogg, 'Conservative Policy: The Opportunity of Today', *The Times*, 16 Mar 1949, p. 5.

³⁸³ Quintin Hogg, 'High Price of Exports: Social Services and Food Subsidies', *The Times*, 26 Jul 1949, p. 5.

opposite: a weekly state minimum paid to all as ‘a universal right’ and financed by an incentivising flat tax-rate should replace benefits and PAYE taxation.³⁸⁴ Therefore, Jones’s model problematically supposes Conservatives really held Law’s position, but made electoral concessions. However, whilst we have seen the Tory leadership was more willing than Hogg to consider cuts, unlike Law they aimed not to dismantle the welfare state, but to resolve the tensions between liberty and security.

Furthermore, Jerrold’s pursuit of harmony responded to a more complex perception of the electorate’s demands than Jones’ model imagines: reconciliation was the rhetorical opportunity, not mere tactical assurances that Tories would better administer the socialists’ model. Conservatives ‘ought to be exploiting, viz. that people do not like nationalisation *per se*, that they fear regimentation, and that they are profoundly uneasy as to the use which the State is making of the vast powers which it necessarily possesses in order to discharge its responsibilities’.³⁸⁵ Voters were waiting for Tories to show ‘the dilemma provided by the Socialists, that working people must choose between freedom plus unemployment on the one hand, or bureaucratic socialism, as the price of security, on the other hand, is a false dilemma’.³⁸⁶ Jerrold identified groups likely to be most receptive to this message: a ‘hard-core of the electorate’ may be ‘indifferent to anything but security’, but this was ‘emphatically untrue of the black coated worker and or very many, and particularly of the older, Trade Unionists. It is, in fact, probably untrue of the whole floating vote’.³⁸⁷

Those were precisely the voters Maudling and Churchill were eager to attract, and their reactions suggest not only assent, but that Jerrold’s thesis encapsulated existing strategy. Maudling summarised the ‘extremely shrewd remarks’, requested that Butler and Woolton be sent copies, and asked Jerrold to contact CRD. But he also assured Churchill the *Right Road for Britain* already encompassed the salient points:

³⁸⁴ Harold Macmillan, ‘The New Deal for the Home’, c. Nov 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/70B, folios 307-8.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 64.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 74; Woolton had accused Labour of offering a similar false choice: Lord Woolton, Speech to Local Government Conference, 11 Oct 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/27B, folios 287-309 at 292.

³⁸⁷ Douglas Jerrold, ‘Conservative and the Electorate’, 65.

Instead of allowing ourselves to appear as grudging supporters of the new social services, we should declare ourselves firm supporters and further explain to the electorate not only how they can be provided as at less expense to the taxpayer, but also that we intend to see how they can be provided without the threat to individual freedom and responsibility contained in many of the features introduced by the Socialists.³⁸⁸

Indeed, although is no direct relation, it is possible read Churchill's conception of welfare as a minimum above which all should be free to rise, not as a concession or simple commitment to inequality, but an attempt to rhetorically reconcile security with liberty.³⁸⁹ On three fronts, then, the evidence suggests that Jones' model risks ignoring contemporaries' claims that freedom was, in principle, compatible with extensive social services or full employment. First, Tories could contemplate welfare economies in support of increased production, and yet sincerely argue such action was necessary for the continuance of those services and full employment. Second, the imperative driving Conservative rhetoric was not compromise from a 'neoliberal' position which rejected the welfare state; Tories saw their mission as resolution not rejection. Third, the party's rhetorical strategy was more complex; instead of merely attempting to render 'neoliberal' economics electable, Conservatives targeted voters demanding security *with* liberty.

VII

Civil Liberties and Liberal votes

This rhetorical strategy required Conservatives to show that Labour's vision of security endangered freedom. Consequently, the Government's alleged threat to civil liberties and steps away from constitutionalism were prime targets for Conservative oratory and underpinned rhetoric on economic and social policy.³⁹⁰ This section shows how Conservatives framed Labour's actions as

³⁸⁸ Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 11 Apr 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/84A, folios 56-7.

³⁸⁹ For example: Churchill, Party Political Broadcast, Jan 1950, reprinted in: 'The Conservative Point of View', *The Listener*, 26 Jan 1950, p. 156.

³⁹⁰ Ignoring this connection is a weakness of: Gamble, *Conservative Nation*, pp. 54-7; Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*; Ramsden does include civil liberties but only briefly in the abstract: *Age of Churchill and Eden*, p. 164; Francis lists merely lists the issues discussed below as evidence of a libertarian bent to Tory rhetoric but without analysis: "Set the People Free?", pp. 63-4.

threats to civil liberties to construct appeals to a national *pathos* and target Liberal votes. The Tactical Committee's inaugural meeting tasked Henry Strauss with cataloguing 'loss of liberty', and, because they pooled issues, civil liberties motions guaranteed a crescendo of conference condemnation.³⁹¹ Tories normally cited three infringements: First, newsprint shortages and Labour's Royal Commission investigating press ownership were framed as attempts to 'muzzle the Press'.³⁹² Inspired by Gulliver's Travels, cartoons showed ministers pinning down the Press, and delegates looked to recent history for sinister omens: 'the first victims of the Nazi Dictator were the Free Press; the first victims of Mussolini were the Free Press; so long as we have a Free Press in this country our liberties are safe'.³⁹³ Bury's delegate walked conference through those analogies' implied logic using *anadiplosis*: 'That we must have a Free Press; that from a free Press follows a free Parliament, and from a free Parliament follows a free people'.³⁹⁴

According to Conservatives, though, gerrymandering, curtailed private members' time, use of the guillotine to pass bills rendered Parliament a diminished guardian.³⁹⁵ Reducing the Lords' delaying powers epitomised this second assault on liberty.³⁹⁶ Framed as a dangerous enhancement of executive power,³⁹⁷ Labour was allegedly resorting to constitutional vandalism to nationalise steel,³⁹⁸ and opening the door to 'evil forces which desire to upset free institutions'.³⁹⁹ The Bill, Lord Salisbury's rejecting amendment explained, 'would go far towards establishing Single Chamber government and thereby deprive the country of a vital constitutional safeguard of its liberties'.⁴⁰⁰

³⁹¹ Tactical Committee Minutes, 1 Apr 1947, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/9.

³⁹² Robson Brown., Conference Speech, 1948; Walter Fletcher, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 92-3; Douglas Graham, Conference Speech, 1948, p. 94; Mr. F.P. Bishop MP, Conference Speech 1950; For the quote: Beverly Baxter MP quoted in 'Mr Morrison on Royal Commission on the Press', *The Manchester Guardian*, 29 Jul 1949, p. 8.

³⁹³ Billy Rayne and Selected Artists, *How Not to Be a Socialist* (London: Findon Press, c. 1950); Bernard Braine, Conference Speech, 1947, pp. 58-9 at 59.

³⁹⁴ W.E. Rothwell, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 93-4 at 94.

³⁹⁵ A point made at length by Iain Macleod to Young Conservatives: 'Constitutional Changes' in *Young Conservatives Holiday Week and Conference*, (London: CUCO, 1949), pp. 50-3.

³⁹⁶ CUCO, *Notes on Current Politics*, No. 15, Jul 1948, p. 34; Bernard Braine, Conference Speech, 1947, pp. 58-9.

³⁹⁷ Anthony Barber, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 53-4; J.L. Windle, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 54-5.

³⁹⁸ CUCO, *Notes on Current Politics*, No. 15, Jul 1948, p. 34.

³⁹⁹ Lord Salisbury, Parliamentary Debates, House of Lords, 8 Jun 1948, 5th Series, vol. 156, cols. 443-523 at 463.

⁴⁰⁰ Parliamentary Debates, House of Lords, 8 Jun 1948, 5th Series, vol. 156, cols. 443-523 at 463.

Democracy was ‘merely a catch-phrase’ to Labour’s ‘single-chamber men’, who elided the will of the people with ‘rule of a particular political clique’ and desired ‘no check on their autocratic power’.⁴⁰¹ Without the Lords’ delay, Tories warned Habeas Corpus, trial by jury, or other ‘fundamental freedoms’ could be abolished as had ‘been done by pseudo-constitutional means in Czechoslovakia’.⁴⁰²

Conservatives adopted this frame in response to Labour’s perceived strategy. The Government presented the Bill as remedying legislative inefficiency, refusing to raise reform, partly because Attlee favoured speedy passage, but also to avoid strengthening an anachronistic Lords, whose temporary survival restrained Labour’s left-wing.⁴⁰³ In response, Tory strategy aimed to show Labour wanted ‘single chamber government’, forcing it ‘into the open as the opponents of reform’ by issuing pre-emptive calls for ‘drastic revision of [Lords] membership’, but rejecting the Bill as menacing liberty.⁴⁰⁴ Although Salisbury wanted reform and feared unicameral government, he and others saw an opportunity to win middle class and Liberal support as defenders of bicameralism and dodge a ‘Peers v. People’ election trap.⁴⁰⁵ As with economics, then, constitutional liberties rhetoric entwined agents’ beliefs with tactical manoeuvres.

Conservatives found a third threat to liberty in delegated legislation and Ministerial power. Every three hours, CRD claimed, another restriction swelled the miasma of 25,000 Statutory Rule and Orders administered by 10,916 officials under the authority of nineteen Government departments.⁴⁰⁶ Because most stemmed from powers delegated to ministers, they were supposedly

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., col. 459.

⁴⁰² Balfour of Burleigh, 8 Aug 1948, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/5.

⁴⁰³ Kevin Manton, ‘Labour and the 1949 Parliament Act’, *Contemporary British History*, 26, 2 (2012), 149-172 esp. 160-4; Hoffmann does not cover this aspect of the Lords debate: *The Conservative Party*, p. 246.

⁴⁰⁴ Lord Woolton to Churchill, 28 Oct 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/66, folio 5.

⁴⁰⁵ Lord Salisbury to Churchill, 26 Oct 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/66, folio 6-9; Lord Salisbury to Churchill, 2 Nov 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/66, folio 29; The Tory Lords extracted a commitment to reform from the party, as a condition of refusing Labour’s compromise during negotiations: Lord Salisbury to Churchill, 22 Mar 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/66, folios 46-7; Lord Astor to Churchill, 25 Oct 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/66, folios 30-1 at 30; Labour’s stifling free speech and Parliamentary debate were also presumed to appeal to Liberals: Ralph Assheton to Churchill, 18 Apr 1946, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/4E, folios 493-4.

⁴⁰⁶ CUCO, *All the Answers*, p. 69; CUCO, *Notes on Current Politics*, No. 15, Jul 1948, p. 15

beyond ‘Parliamentary sanction’ and unchallengeable in court.⁴⁰⁷ Controls also signalled that the Executive had ‘placed itself above the law’ and the legal system (‘one of the last and greatest bastions of liberty’) in ‘jeopardy’.⁴⁰⁸ Suitably illustrated by officials entering private houses without warrants,⁴⁰⁹ opening mail, or scanning it using X-rays,⁴¹⁰ delegated power was a site for distinguishing Tory *ethos*: the self-appointed watchdog on this legislation (the Active Back Benchers Group) explained that ‘in practice a handful of Conservatives hold the bridge...’ because ‘Socialists are naturally more anxious to issue order than to protect others against them’.⁴¹¹ So, despite hazier commitments to social liberties like gambling, Tories keenly framed Labour’s attitude to the Press, treatment of Parliament, and delegated legislation as transgressing constitutional norms.

Together, these accusations enabled speakers to evidence arguments of direction. For journalist Norman Robson, the Parliament Bill was one chapter in a ‘long miserable story, the story of the Socialist attempt to stifle, to distort, to cripple the liberties of the British people’, which ‘began when unnecessary controls were obtained... continued with the crippling of the Press through deliberate starvation of paper... followed on by the arraignment of many journalists before Commissions as though before a Star Chamber, [and] reached almost its climax in the manipulation of Parliamentary seats’.⁴¹² Tragedian Britain, led astray into the techniques of her past or emerging foes, was this script’s staple character.⁴¹³ Instilling direction and contrast through *sympolce*, Bernard Braine warned: ‘Today it is an official coming in to search your larder; tomorrow it may well be an official coming in to inspect your books and private papers. Today it is direction of labour; tomorrow it may well be a Fascist State in which no man can call his soul his own’.⁴¹⁴ Rewarded with applause, Braine positioned restrictions on civil liberties as further stages towards dictatorship, attempting to tarnish controls by association. Central Office encouraged these claims that Britain was heading ‘towards complete

⁴⁰⁷ Basil Webb, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 133-4 at 134.

⁴⁰⁸ C. Edwards, Conference Speech, 1947, pp. 59-60 at 60; Similar points: Robson Brown, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 132-3 at 132.

⁴⁰⁹ Bernard Braine, Conference Speech, 1947, pp. 58-9 at 59.

⁴¹⁰ C. Edwards, Conference Speech, 1947, pp. 59-60 at 60.

⁴¹¹ CUCO, *The Onlooker*, Jul 1946, p. 7.

⁴¹² Norman Robson, Conference Speech, 1948, p. 54.

⁴¹³ F.S. Hazard, Conference Speech, 1947, p. 40.

⁴¹⁴ Bernard Braine, Conference Speech, 1947, pp. 58-9 at 59.

enslavement', producing accounts of 'the drift towards a one Party state', and, set within this frame, banal issues revealed menacing intentions, readying the 'instrument of tyranny and oppression' for 'wicked men to seize'.⁴¹⁵ Churchill's warnings in 1945 were prophetic: 'Why did Mr Churchill say that Socialism must lead to totalitarianism?', *All the Answers* asked: because delegated powers and the Parliament Act proved 'the socialists have laid the legislative foundations for dictatorship'.⁴¹⁶ The assertion that from a high-point in 1945 'the tone of Conservative anti-socialism became less alarmist' is, therefore, wide of the mark – the twilight of freedom continued to frame Tory rhetoric.⁴¹⁷

Electoral maths encouraged Conservatives to translate this threat into a shared political heritage to target Liberals, who were urged to 'unite for freedom' by voting Tory.⁴¹⁸ Central Office recognised that 1945 had become 'a verdict against the Conservative party', and calls for an anti-socialist front attempted to ensure the reverse would be true in 1950-1.⁴¹⁹ Officials believed Liberal intervention split the anti-Conservative vote where Tories performed worst, but hindered them where the swing against Churchill's Government was weaker.⁴²⁰ Accordingly, negotiations began with Clement Davies' Liberals and the National Liberals, but, when talks to reunite Liberalism collapsed, Woolton forced the issue of Nationals' relations with Conservative constituency associations. Patchily implemented, the 1947 Woolton-Teviot agreement recommended joint-candidatures and amalgamated constituency organisations.⁴²¹ Despite attempts to cleave the 'right-wing and more moderate Liberal support' from the Independent Liberals, Labour's slim majority after 1950 left Tories' predicament

⁴¹⁵ Frank Hawes, Conference Speech, 1948, p. 133; Tactical Committee Minutes, 10 Jan 1950 B.L.O, CCO 600/17/12; Reductions in local government powers: Geoffrey Hutchinson, Conference Speech, 1949, p. 100.

⁴¹⁷ Nick Lee, 'Creating A "Property-Owning Democracy": The Conservative Party and Popular Capitalism, 1918-1951', Unpublished MA Thesis (Durham University, 2007), p. 29.

⁴¹⁸ Conservative Party Posters; Available via:

<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/cpa/collections/posters-collection>. [Last Accessed: Nov 2013]; The appeal could be reversed to encourage Tory support for Liberal proposals: 'Big Stick; Little Man', *Daily Mail*, 3 Jun 1950, p. 1.

⁴¹⁹ 'General Election 1945', 7 Aug 1945, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/1B, folios 356-63 at 360; Kandiah, 'Conservative Leaders, Strategy', p. 63.

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

⁴²¹ For an account of the Conservatives' negotiations with both Clement Davies Liberals and National Liberals, and the failed reunion between the latter two: David Dutton, *Liberals in Schism: The History of the National Liberal Party* (London: I.B Tauris, 2008), esp. pp. 150-73; For mixed results of Woolton-Teviot agreement: 'National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations Yorkshire Provincial Area: Report on a Series of Group Advisory Conferences held during September 1947', Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/54B, folios 340-3.

unresolved, and ‘an anti-socialist front with the Liberals’ became Churchill’s ‘overall strategic objective’.⁴²² Whilst Davies’s party’s subsequent collapse benefited them, post-election research suggested ‘Tories st[ood] little chance of a working majority’ without Liberal votes or electoral arrangements in the ‘vital 60 seats’.⁴²³ Conservatives, therefore, required both appeals to Liberals and a narrative to justify co-operation.

Historians have recognised these imperatives, but the anatomy of Conservative appeals is generally ill-appreciated, despite speakers’ attention to Liberal audiences.⁴²⁴ Most advanced an inheritance thesis that narrowed Liberalism to liberty. Yet, the association of Liberalism with liberty was a perception rather than reality since research suggested Liberalism lacked ‘a special reputation in respect of its freedom-loving and democratic principles’.⁴²⁵ Despite this, ‘freedom’ became the frame for unity partly because it could divide the political spectrum and press the urgency of unity, and partly because Liberals positioned themselves ‘as the only champion[s] of freedom’.⁴²⁶ However, the framing also reacted to independent Liberal propaganda that attempted ‘to link Conservatives with Fascism’ and polling which suggested Liberal and doubtful voters distrusted ‘how far [the party] stands wholeheartedly for the freedom of the individual’.⁴²⁷ If the party persuaded ex-liberals and socialists it stood ‘for the right of the individual against the state, then it [was] probable that many of them would find it possible to transfer their allegiance’, officials concluded.⁴²⁸ That advice bolstered the instructions given to speakers when asked to step up attacks on Independent Liberals, recommending they stress that ‘true Liberalism’ and Conservatism were divided ‘only when they look back. Now

⁴²² For first quote: Lord Woolton to Churchill, 7 Aug 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/64, folio 21-22 at 21; For second quote: ‘A Note on the Political Position’, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/33A folios 151-3 at 152; Lady Rhys Williams kept Churchill informed on Liberal politics and was involved in several ‘coup’ and unity attempts. See correspondence in: Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/64.

⁴²³ ‘Tackling the Liberal Vote in the Next Election’, Report by Graham Cranch of Mather and Crowther Advertising, 2 Mar 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/99A, folios 198-205 at 205.

⁴²⁴ Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, pp. 199-205; Zweiniger-Bargielowska, ‘Rationing, Austerity and the Conservative Party’, 191-2; An exception regarding Churchill: Richard Toye, ‘I am a Liberal as much as a Tory’, 38-45; Nigel Davies to Churchill, 14 Feb 1950, Churchill Papers, 5/32B, folios 411-3 at 412; Duncan Sandys to Churchill, Feb 1950, Churchill Papers, 5/32B, folios 507-10 at 507.

⁴²⁵ ‘Report on the Liberal Party’ Mass Observation Archive, File Report 1128, p. 22.

⁴²⁶ Public Opinion Summary, No. 12, Dec 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/11, folios 34-7 at 34; Public Opinion Summary, No. 11, Nov 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/17, folios 20-4 at 20.

⁴²⁷ Public Opinion Summary, No. 11, Nov 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/17, folios 20-4 at 20.

⁴²⁸ Public Opinion Summary, No. 12, Dec 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/11, folios 34-7 at 34.

they must look forward and unite for freedom and recovery'.⁴²⁹ Thus, although pursuing Liberal votes preceded and outlasted Churchill's leadership, appeals to (ex)Liberals using 'liberty' were the product of context-specific rhetorical imperatives.

The resulting appeals took three forms. First, by framing politics as a binary choice between socialism and liberty, Conservatives extolled their inheritance of Liberalism's 'spirit' and pressed Liberals to vote accordingly. Progressive Conservatives and Liberals lacked 'fundamental difference' when compared to 'bureaucratic and at times totalitarian' socialism, against which, as in figure 2.4, Liberals' ancestors had warned. With freedom at stake, partisan concern with independence was a futile betrayal of Liberals' forbears. A second trope, conversion narratives, put this case more gently.⁴³⁰ Dr Charles Hill, standing as a Conservative and Liberal National, explained that 'for years I regarded myself as a Liberal' because he liked 'their insistence on the freedom of the individual' and had considered standing as a Liberal in 1945. However, Hill 'could find little real difference between the Liberal, not socialistically inclined – and there are some who are – and the progressive Conservative' and 'came to the conclusion that the real issue was between socialism and freedom; that liberal ideas were more important than party labels'.⁴³¹ Played to his *ethos* strengths, the popular wartime radio-doctor encouraged wavering voters to adopt a narrowed frame of politics, reject partisanship, and fear the Left's hold on the Liberal party.

However, historians often ignore a third category of appeal aiming to convince fellow Tories that co-operation with old enemies was necessary.⁴³² Such rhetoric was particularly important in attempts to facilitate Liberal-Tory mergers by changing the party's name.⁴³³ Monmouth Conservatives supported such

⁴²⁹ CUCO, Weekend Talking Point, No. 112, 12 Nov 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/17, folio 15; Butler also considered civil liberties issues a key site of agreement: 'Aspects of Policy to Which Reconsideration Might be Given on the Following Lines in the Light of the Need to Attract the Liberal Vote', 12 Apr 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/96A, folios 48-5.

⁴³⁰ CUCO, *All the Answers*, p. 94; Harold Macmillan, Speech at Hatfield Park, 31 Aug 1946, reported in: 'New Democratic Party. Mr Macmillan on a High Task: Unity against Socialism', *The Times*, 2 Sep 1946, p. 2.

⁴³¹ He had stood unsuccessfully as an independent in 1945 for a university seat: Dr Charles Hill, General Election Broadcast, 14 Feb 1950, reprinted in 'General Election Broadcasts' *The Listener*, 23 Feb 1950, p. 335.

⁴³² For example: Major G.M Longden, Speech to Defeated Candidates Conference, 5 Oct 1945, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/1A, folio 161-2.

⁴³³ 'Change of Party Name: Report of a Discussion by the Executive Committee of the National Union', 30 Jul 1946, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/8B, folios 342-4; Churchill was supportive:

proposals because ‘on the bridge of Unionism the conflicting armies of Liberty may join forces’ to save a nation ‘drifting into servitude’.⁴³⁴ Similar narratives justified amalgamation with National Liberals. Since her adoption at Cannock, Mrs Hickling had been involved in ‘forg[ing] a new political pattern... based upon the fundamental principle of liberty so dear to Conservatives and Liberals alike’. Sacrifices were worthwhile ‘to ensure... defeat of Socialism’.⁴³⁵ Ex-Liberals also manipulated this frame to assure Conservatives of their conversion. A ‘repentant sinner’, Wellingborough’s J. Sayer called for unity after a tetchy conference debate, warning: ‘If we do not pull together in this liberty-loving boat our children and our grandchildren will one day turn back and say, and say quite rightly: “What fools, what utter fools our predecessors were”’.⁴³⁶ Therefore, narrowing politics to one fundamental division, a quintessentially rhetorical act, was more than an outward-looking appeal; it helped Conservatives construct an audience ripe for conversion, but also rationalised the potentially divisive ‘necessity of establishing anti-socialist forces on the broadest possible basis’.⁴³⁷

Churchill to Woolton, 3 Aug 1946, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/8B, folios 345-6; Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, pp. 197-9.

⁴³⁴ Area Council of the Young Conservatives Organisation of South Wales and Monmouthshire Resolution, 27 Jul 1946, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/8B, folio 350.

⁴³⁵ Mrs Hickling, Conference Speech, 1949, p. 91.

⁴³⁶ J. Sayer, Conference Speech, 1949, pp. 76-7 at p. 77.

⁴³⁷ ‘Change of Party Name: Report of a Discussion by the Executive Committee of the National Union’, 30 Jul 1946, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/8B, folios 342-4.

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Figure 2.4 ‘Lloyd George’s Prophecy’, Election Poster (1951)⁴³⁸

VIII

Trade Unions and Imperial Preference

Hitherto freedom rhetoric has been distilled from ‘neoliberalism’ by emphasising the influence of immediate rhetorical, political and economic contexts and the more complex strategies these produced. Showing how Conservatives used freedom rhetoric to further two causes incompatible with ‘neoliberalism’ in both its forties and New Right manifestations can strengthen that disassociation. First, Tories attempted to drive a wedge between Attlee’s Government and Trade Unionists, ostensibly defending workers’ rights and, more surprisingly, Unions’ role in society.⁴³⁹ The latter jarred with early and later neoliberals’ views of Unions as monopoly power in need of dispersion, and historians have omitted important subtleties and underemphasised how far Conservatives embedded these appeals within their overarching frame.⁴⁴⁰ Repeal of the 1927 Trades Dispute Act focussed attention on the closed-shop and reversion to

⁴³⁸ ‘Lloyd George’s Prophecy’, 1951 Election Poster, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/123, folio 35.

⁴³⁹ Dorey, *British Conservatism and Trade Unionism*.

⁴⁴⁰ On early neoliberals and Unions: Jackson, ‘At the Origins of Neoliberalism’, 144-5; Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, pp. 204-6.

contracting-out of the political levy, although other repercussions, such as the legality of picketing homes and general strikes, attracted attention during Commons debates.⁴⁴¹ All had long been framed as infringements on individuals' liberties, but labelling opposition 'ritualistic' forgets that Tories were challenging Ministers' claims that repeal restored freedoms and ignores the contribution that denying members' rights to choose a 'political party of their own free will' made to general assessments of Labour's attitude to civil liberties.⁴⁴² Repeal demonstrated that Labour 'counted the liberty of the individual as nothing' compared its finances, Butler argued, and, when combined with suppression of parliamentary debate and newspapers, the closed-shop, political levy, and contracting-out represented 'elements of the Labour Front in Germany, and... all the elements of a totalitarian state' for Brigadier Prior-Palmer.⁴⁴³ Therefore, these critiques sat within a wider narrative, exemplifying Labour's supposedly lax commitment to liberty.

More novel were charges that nationalisation put Unions under the Socialist State's heel.⁴⁴⁴ Churchill's letter of support to Abertillery's by-election candidate in November 1950 proclaimed that workers throughout publically-owned industries were 'becoming aware of the threat to the freedom and even the existence of our great Trade Unions, which is the inevitable consequence of the State combining the roles of employers and arbitrator'. The Unions, he

⁴⁴¹ Peter Dorey, 'Individual Liberty versus Industrial Order', 223; Captain S. Prescott, Speech to North West England and North Wales Conservative Clubs, Manchester, 13 Oct 1945 reported in: 'Trades Disputes Act: Tory MP's Criticism of Repeal Proposal', *The Manchester Guardian*, 15 Oct 1945, p. 3; R.A Butler, Press Conference, London, 1 Feb 1946 quoted in 'Conservative Plan to Oppose Repeal', *The Times*, 2 Feb 1946, p. 2; Sir Walter Bromley, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 5th Series, vol. 419, 12 Feb 1946, cols. 192-307 at 280; Selwyn Lloyd, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 5th Series, vol. 419, 12 Feb 1946, cols. 192-307 at 273.

⁴⁴² Peter Dorey, 'Individual Liberty versus Industrial Order', 223; CUCO, *The Industrial Charter*, p. 13; Similar commitments against the closed shop: CUCO, *The Right Road for Britain*, p. 3, but omitted from *This is the Road*.

⁴⁴³ R.A. Butler, Speech at Bradford, 4 Feb 1946, reported in 'Mr. Butler on Trades Disputes Act', *The Times*, 5 Feb 1946, p. 2; Brig. O.L. Prior-Palmer MP, Conference Speech, 1947, pp. 60-1 at p. 60.

⁴⁴⁴ Neither Dorey or Harris unpack the consequences cited by speakers or immersion in broader tropes: Dorey, *British Conservatism and Trade Unionism 1945-64*, p. 56; Harris, *Competition and the Corporate Society*, pp. 113-4. The latter wrongly characterised this attack as theoretical 'neoliberalism' keen to remove the State from labour negotiations. But even the evidence he cites countenances other State intervention and Tory rhetoric on Unions remained committed to partnership and rejected the 'conflicting sides of industry' model: Fitzroy Maclean, 'Unofficial Strikes', *The Times*, 3 Nov 1945, p. 5; David Maxwell Fyfe, 'Why Organised Labour Should Vote Tory', *The English Review*, Feb 1950, proofs in: Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/96B, folios 322-3; Dorey points out that those advocating 'neoliberal' economic policy wanted intervention on Unions: Peter Dorey, *The Conservative Party and the Trade Unions* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 46.

prophesized, had promoted 'policies which spell[ed] their own enslavement'.⁴⁴⁵ Without competition, state employers could obstruct negotiations and justify suppressing industrial action, since strikers (reclassified 'enemies of the people') threatened to deprive the community of vital goods, not proprietors' profits.⁴⁴⁶ As omens, Tories cited Attlee's use of conscripts to break strikes, drew Russian parallels, or mischievously quoted Cripps's caveat that strikes were legitimate 'so long as capitalism and private enterprise persist'.⁴⁴⁷

Tropes of centralised bureaucracy and archetypally-progressive businessmen conveyed the effects of Unions' diminished freedoms.⁴⁴⁸ Nationalisation impaired relations between Unions and their members because, instead of 'negotiat[ing] on equal terms' with private employers, representatives faced 'all-powerful and remote officials in Whitehall'.⁴⁴⁹ Subtitled 'the case of frustration', *Trade Union Sense or Nonsense* depicted an employer telling his inflation-afflicted workforce: whereas 'before nationalisation we would have settled this round a table within a week', now '...your case has gone up to the Ministry through the usual channels and heaven knows when you'll get satisfaction'.⁴⁵⁰ Political collusion also stymied negotiations: 'the case of the political lever' showed benevolent managers lamenting the 'demands our chaps are making' going unheeded because 'the T.U.C and Government are so closely allied'.⁴⁵¹ Combined with over-centralisation (ensuring decisions were taken without regard to local conditions), this dysfunctional representation prompted unofficial strikes, lowering productivity.⁴⁵²

⁴⁴⁵ Churchill to Frank Body, 27 Nov 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/90A, folios 16-9; Similar claims were made in the Bristol S.E. by-election: Churchill to Lindsay, 25 Nov 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/90A, folios 111-3 and in Churchill's 1947 conference speech: Churchill, Conference Speech, 1947, pp. 114-21.

⁴⁴⁶ David Clarke, *What Do You Think? About Trade Unions* (London: CPC, 1947), p. 24; Fitzroy Maclean, 'Unofficial Strikes', *The Times*, 3 Nov 1945, p. 5.

⁴⁴⁷ David Maxwell Fyfe, 'Why Organised Labour Should Vote Tory'.

⁴⁴⁸ The over-centralisation argument could be reversed within the same speech to see the Unions as holding government to ransom, but this was rarer in this period: G.B Sankey, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 97-8.

⁴⁴⁹ CUCO, *The Manifesto of the Conservative and Unionist Party General Election 1951* (London: CUCO, 1951), p. 2; For similar claims: 'Socialism is Running the Railways on the Wrong Lines', Election Leaflet, 1951, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/123, folio 12; Fitzroy Maclean, 'Unofficial Strikes', *The Times*, 25 Oct 1945, p. 5.

⁴⁵⁰ CUCO, *Trade Union Sense or Nonsense*, p. 5.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁴⁵² Anthony Barber, Conference Speech, 1949, pp. 39-40; Geoffrey Finsburg, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 84-5.

These newer attacks on Unions' freedoms intersected with traditional grievances. Maxwell Fyfe predicted that nationalised industries operating a closed-shop would make men 'industrial outlaw[s]' unable to work if they displeased Union officials, warning his Oxford audience: 'Freedom of association has become a shadow and we are well on the way to the German Labour Front...'.⁴⁵³ Yet, appeals targeting the 'skilled worker' demographic drew on freedom rhetoric's other sub-genres to argue that decentralisation humanised industry.⁴⁵⁴ Unlike *The Industrial Charter's* proposals, Eccles claimed that nationalisation was discredited amongst workmen, who 'wanted opportunity as well as security, and a chance to count for something in an organisation not too big to blot out their individuality – these are things that go to make a good citizen...'.⁴⁵⁵ Hence, in the context of a 'strait-jacket economy', pledges to 'free Trade Unions' combined tropes of totalitarianism, frustration and Whitehall bureaucracy to create a new threat to workers' liberty, opportunity and workplaces' efficiency, which could be juxtaposed with idealised citizenship and production models.⁴⁵⁶

Simultaneously, Conservatives rehabilitated their *ethos*, assuring voters that they believed 'free and independent Trade Unions are an essential part of industry' and Tory Ministers would seek 'full discussion' on labour problems.⁴⁵⁷ Such reassurances were expressed as liberation narratives, alluding to a selective history in which Tories ('who first legalised trade unions') would 'restore... their liberty and their rightful place in the community'.⁴⁵⁸ Even the 1927 Trade Disputes Act could be read as 'safeguard[ing] the rights and liberties of individual Trade Unionists'.⁴⁵⁹ Indeed, CPC publications attempted to re-educate the party's membership, by framing Trade Union history as legal struggle for freedom, which had only recently ended in a temporary alliance with

⁴⁵³ David Maxwell Fyfe, Speech to Oxford University Conservative Association, Oxford, 25 Oct 1946, reported in: 'Closed Shop under Nationalisation', *The Times*, 26 Oct 1946, p. 2.

⁴⁵⁴ Maxwell Fyfe, 'Why Organised Labour Should Vote Tory'.

⁴⁵⁵ David Eccles, 'The Faith of a Tory', *The Listener*, 25 Mar 1948, p. 494.

⁴⁵⁶ David Maxwell Fyfe, 'Why Organised Labour Should Vote Tory'; Robert Allan, Election Leaflet, 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/90A, folio 175.

⁴⁵⁷ 'What the Conservatives Will Do to Help the Workers', Election Leaflet 1951, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/123, folio 28; Dorey recognises this rehabilitation and revisionist history, but omits the importance of freedom narratives: *British Conservatism and Trade Unionism 1945-64*, p. 41.

⁴⁵⁸ L.D Gammans MP, Conference Speech, 1949, pp. 42-3 at p. 43.

⁴⁵⁹ CUCO, *How the Conservatives Have Helped the British People* (London: CUCO, 1948), p. 15.

the Socialists.⁴⁶⁰ Speakers often tried to break Labour's hold by highlighting the plight of Conservative workers, who needed 'protection of their right to freedom... denied to them by the Trade Unions'.⁴⁶¹ There were, Eccles claimed '2,000,000... fighting for freedom and Tory principles inside the factories'.⁴⁶² As implied, they adopted an *ethos* of liberating troops: 'The Conservative trade unionists are on the march', Lord Woolton hailed in 1947, 'determined to free themselves from the shackles of the Socialist Party... determined to regain for themselves and for their Unions freedom from the domination of any Party bosses... They are planning to fulfil their proper industrial function'.⁴⁶³ Depoliticisation, then, was framed as an act of manumission, looking backwards to a lost history of independent Unions.

Doubtless, the shift towards voluntarism that Dorey identified facilitated these appeals, but he too quickly links them with the party's 'progressives' and simplifies the influence of rhetorical pressures.⁴⁶⁴ Because senior Tories used the freedom-versus-unfreedom frame to interpret politics, figures across the party quickly spotted an opportunity. As early as 1946, Assheton urged Churchill to exploit the opening rhetorical space, since there was now 'nothing between us' and the Unions' desire to see 'freedom of the individual', 'freedom for collective bargaining' and freedom to 'take a job or leave one job and go to another', whereas 'a great gulf [was] appearing between the aims of the Trade Unions and the aims of the doctrinaire Socialists' to make the State 'sole employer'.⁴⁶⁵ Four years later, the party's Labour Committee saw the same opportunity in workers' experiences of nationalisation, recommending no major speech go without reference to 'respect for... the rights of Trade Unionism and the danger of nationalisation to the Trade Unions'.⁴⁶⁶ Central Office similarly

⁴⁶⁰ David Clarke, *What Do You Think? About Trade Unions*, esp. pp. 16-8.

⁴⁶¹ Mr. W.A. Colgeate, Speech to Defeated Candidates Conference, 5 Oct 1945, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/1A, folio 161.

⁴⁶² David Eccles, 'The Faith of a Tory', *The Listener*, 25 Mar 1948, p. 494.

⁴⁶³ Lord Woolton, Conference Speech, 1949, pp. 112-5 at p. 113.

⁴⁶⁴ Dorey wrongly implies such arguments were the domain of Progressives: *British Conservatism and Trade Unionism 1945-64*, p. 41; Harris, *Competition and the Corporate Society*, pp. 110-12; For evidence of direct consideration of this audience during speech-writing: Eric Adamson to Churchill, 4 Oct 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/27D, folio 621.

⁴⁶⁵ Ralph Assheton to Churchill, 18 Apr 1946, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/4E, folios 493-500 at 497-8; Others on the right made this argument: Oliver Lyttelton to Churchill, 7 Mar 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/51, folios 24-7 at 25-6.

⁴⁶⁶ Report of Parliamentary Labour Committee sub-committee, Jul 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/96B, folio 326-9 at 327. Churchill made special efforts to read this report; The strategy

stage-managed Tories' rejuvenated *ethos*, advising MPs not to attack Trade Unions and to use strikes to 'support the rights of the workmen concerned' and demonstrate they 'represented no one section of the community but stood for the freedom of the individual and are prepared to deplore employer or Union when they conspire willingly or not against that freedom'.⁴⁶⁷ The artificiality was striking: whilst publicising the existence of Conservative Trade Unionists,⁴⁶⁸ officials' headcounts were extrapolated from newspaper polls and downplayed the organised movement to give the impression of spontaneity and outwardly maintain their Unions-above-politics stance.⁴⁶⁹ However, the desire to attract working-man, by concatenating partnership with productivity and framing 'the merits of free competitive enterprise from the point of view that it serves best the interests of master and man', rebounded onto Tories' freedom rhetoric.⁴⁷⁰ Maxwell Fyfe's Labour Committee stressed the need to clarify what 'free enterprise' meant because 'there is undoubtedly a suspicion in the minds to which we wish to appeal that we mean by this phrase freedom to build up monopolies and cartels'.⁴⁷¹

Conservatives were similarly cognisant of helpful rhetorical models, particularly the value of linking Trade Unions to the 'free state of society' in the 'presentation of our point of view'.⁴⁷² Indeed, the above examples show an emerging model, which constructed a dependency between an idealised 'free society', select liberties or institutions, and 'proper function'. First, representing a supposedly ideal of civil organisation, 'a free society' made certain freedoms, which included Union members', unimpeachable. Second, Unions themselves relied upon this free society for their legal existence and operation. Third, transgression of that society's rules by Unions' or Governments spawned

was acknowledged prior to the report: Oliver Lyttelton to Churchill, 7 Mar 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/51, folios 24-7 at 25-6.

⁴⁶⁷ Tactical Committee Minutes, 16 Mar 1948, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/9; 'The Rover Strike', 18 Sep 1950, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/7; For worries about Churchill's reputation on strikes: Eric. S. Adamson to Churchill, 12 Oct 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/27D, folio 625-9 at 628.

⁴⁶⁸ Tactical Committee Minutes, 23 Feb 1949, CPA, CCO/17/11/146.

⁴⁶⁹ Trade Union Advisory Committee Minutes, 10 July 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/10, folio 21.

⁴⁷⁰ Report of Parliamentary labour Committee sub-committee, Jul 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/96B, folio 326-9 at 327.

⁴⁷¹ David Maxwell Fyfe to Churchill, 24 Jul 1950, CHUR 2/96B, folios 325-329; Though see above for similar rationale regarding 'free' over 'private' enterprise.

⁴⁷² Donald McCullough, Speech to Defeated Candidates Conference, 5 Oct 1945, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/1A, folio 178-9; the notion of a free society was gaining adherents: Edward Shils, 'Human Nature in Industrial Society', *The Listener*, 26 Jun 1946, p. 1005.

improperly functioning units – Unions ceased to perform their role if Government usurped the place of employers and Unions became partisan. By inserting Trade Unionism into the freedom-versus-unfreedom frame, Conservatives appealed to workers through language which allowed them to champion ‘free combination’, but dismiss certain practices as transgressions of an ideal society. Thus, Tories used freedom rhetoric to articulate a more positive vision of Unions’ role in society than ‘neoliberalism’ allowed and defended Unions from the power of state monopolies rather than decry their control of the labour market.

Likewise, historians often neglect liberty’s ironic recruitment to another cause less in-tune with ‘neoliberalism’: imperial preference.⁴⁷³ ‘Imperial freedom’ was an important feature of late-forties debate, not least because American attempts to eliminate preferential tariffs split Conservatives, lining up Imperialists Beaverbrook, Boothby and Amery against Atlanticists Lyttleton, Eden, and Law.⁴⁷⁴ Unlike Labour’s commitment to multilateralism, which wavered given Britain’s trade deficit and America’s reluctance to lower her barriers sufficiently, Conservative policy upheld preference throughout opposition, normally justified as necessary protection, which fostered ‘imperial unity’ and development.⁴⁷⁵ However, Imperialists gradually reframed protection into a test of national sovereignty, since the American Loan extracted commitments to negotiate the contraction of preferential tariffs.⁴⁷⁶ Even before the loan was debated, Amery, who had been Secretary of State for India, began subverting the traditional language of free trade to recast ‘discrimination’ as freedom to make reciprocal treaties.⁴⁷⁷ Alongside established protectionist attacks on free traders’ ‘promiscuity’, he derided Most Favoured Nation clauses, which rendered tariffs

⁴⁷³ Major accounts only cover the issues very tangentially: Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, pp. 34-5, 194-5; Bale, *The Conservatives Since 1945*, p. 70; Hoffman, *The Conservative Party*, pp. 181-3; The best discussion is: Scott Kelly, *The Myth of Mr Butskell: The Politics of British Economic Policy 1950-55*, Second edition, Kindle edition (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), loc. 3499.

⁴⁷⁴ Richard Toye, ‘Churchill and Britain’s ‘Financial Dunkirk’’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 15, 4 (2004) 329-360 at 332. In some cases disagreement was over whether the sacrifice was necessary for aid (Anderson), others opposed preference outright (Law).

⁴⁷⁵ CUCO, *We Fight for the People*; CUCO, *The Industrial Charter*, p. 10; CUCO, *The Right Road for Britain*, p. 5; CUCO, *This is the Road* p. 19; CUCO, *Britain Strong and Free: A Statement of Conservative and Unionist Policy* (London: CUCO, 1951); CUCO, *The Manifesto of the Conservative*, p. 4.

⁴⁷⁶ Richard Toye, ‘The Attlee Government, the Imperial Preference and the Creation of the GATT’, *English Historical Review*, 478, (2003), 912-939 at 919.

⁴⁷⁷ Leo Amery, Speech to Institute of Export, London, 2 Oct 1945, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/1A, folios 22-5 at 23.

non-discriminatory, as a 'stranglehold' imposed by US Cobdenites on Britain's 'freedom to develop mutual trade within the Empire'.⁴⁷⁸ Yet, although Boothby ignored the Whips and savaged the loan as a return to 'knockabout individualism', no other Tory in the Commons developed his fear that Britain was about to 'hand over absolute economic power to the great creditor nations'.⁴⁷⁹ The merits of a commercial loan over spending the 'rest of our lives economic thralldom in the loss of our fiscal liberty in dealing with the sister countries of the British Empire' were left to Lord Croft, who sensed a 'Boston-tea-party in reverse' and 'interference with the freedom of our country to manage its own affairs... unparalleled in the history of the world'.⁴⁸⁰

However, a no-new-preference rule conceded in the 1947 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) gave these arguments renewed salience.⁴⁸¹ Declaring tariffs 'a question of freedom' to that autumn's conference, Amery lashed preference onto the Opposition's growing *ethos*:

Yesterday this Conference showed in no unmistakable terms the importance it attached to our freedom as individuals within this country. It is no less vital that the nations of the Empire should be free, free to deal with each other in their own way, free to develop the complementary resources by which they grow to greatness. It is that freedom which the draft Geneva Charter and which so many declarations of the Government are imperilling today.⁴⁸²

Every conference during 1947-50 saw Amery's frame reprised, with speakers condemning Labour's 'surrender of our economic freedom', dependence on American aid, and Breton Woods and GATT as 'positively hampering' Britain's

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, folio 24.

⁴⁷⁹ Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 5th Series, vol. 417, 12 Dec 1945, cols 455-69 at 464, 466, 468. Sir John Anderson focussed criticism elsewhere: Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 5th Series, vol. 417, 12 Dec 1945, cols 444-55; Churchill accepted Cripps' position that all that had been agreed was that preference would be negotiated as part of a movement to wider multilateral tariff lowering: Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 5th Series, vol. 417, 13 Dec 1945, cols 713-725; Churchill had to subsequently be persuaded not to minimise the impact of the loan on Imperial Preference: Anthony Eden to Churchill, 24 Apr 1946, Churchill Papers, 5/4E, folios 372-4 at 373.

⁴⁸⁰ Parliamentary Debates, House of Lords, 17 Dec 1945, 5th Series, vol. 138, cols. 750-56 esp. 755, Lords Woolton, Hailsham and Beaverbrook: Parliamentary Debates, House of Lords, 18 Dec 1945, 5th Series, vol. 138, cols. 777-897.

⁴⁸¹ For an account of the negotiations in which Labour did well to thwart efforts to dismantle the existing system: Toye, 'The Attlee Government, the Imperial Preference'.

⁴⁸² Leo Amery, Conference Speech, 1947, p. 64.

‘freedom of movement’.⁴⁸³ John Campbell’s 1948 speech was typical in arguing Britain must resist ‘paper constitutions [that] deprive us of our free will and our independence’.⁴⁸⁴ Detecting the leadership’s tentativeness, successive years’ resolutions ratcheted up commitments, before insisting in 1949 on ‘full freedom to exercise’ Britain’s right to make tariff arrangements.⁴⁸⁵ Responding to demands that Britain should repudiate any agreements ‘which deprive us of one atom of our economic freedom’, all Oliver Stanley, the ex-secretary of state for the colonies, could do was blur ‘certain fiscal advantages’ with a wider system of development as ‘imperial priorities’.⁴⁸⁶

This strange brew of defending the Empire’s freedom to develop through free-traders’ vocabularies was necessary because divisions lay dormant within the party, sheltered by the Opposition’s right to indecision. But in 1949 *The Times*’ letter columns aired these differences, exposing Imperialists’ manipulation of the ‘freedom with order’ frame. Calling out Minshall’s recommendation to re-found the Conservative appeal on ‘Every man a Capitalist’ as ‘yet another return to the laissez-faire economy of the nineteenth century’, Boothby contended that the electorate had resisted conversion because they feared a return to unemployment associated with the Gold Standard and too little protectionism.⁴⁸⁷ Tories’ late opposition to multilateralism gave credence to suspicions they ‘hanker[ed] after the dead golden world of nineteenth-century enterprise and free trade’. Conservatism must, he urged, resist another ‘infiltration of Whigs’, accept Amery’s view that a “stable social system” necessitated “a planned and controlled trade and industrial policy”, and convince themselves ‘the defeat of Hitler will no more restore *laissez-faire* capitalism to Europe than the defeat of Napoleon restored feudalism’. Richard Law confronted Boothby head-on: ‘it really cannot be sensible to argue that every idea which was valid in the nineteenth century must be invalid today’, he replied. Britain’s livelihood

⁴⁸³ Aubrey Jones, Conference Speech, 1947, pp. 62-3; Lord Fairfax, Conference Speech, 1947, p. 65; quote from: Bernard Braine, Conference Speech, 1948, p. 66-5; Oliver Stanley, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 69-71; quote from: Maurice Petherwick, Conference Speech, 1949, p. 52; Lord Swinton, Conference Speech, 1950, pp. 37-8; Bernard Braine, Conference Speech, 1950, p. 35.

⁴⁸⁴ John Campbell, Conference Speech, 1948, p. 65; America accounted for 80% of tobacco imports. Hence, during the loan debate, Boothby had thrown a packet of cigarettes onto the Common’s floor.

⁴⁸⁵ Maurice Petherwick, Conference Speech, 1949, pp. 52-3.

⁴⁸⁶ Sir Herbert Williams, Conference Speech, 1949, p. 58.

⁴⁸⁷ Robert Boothby, ‘Conservative Policy’, *The Times*, 9 Mar 1949, p. 5.

depended on free international trade. But Law also showed the slipperiness of a shared rhetorical model counterposing extremes of freedom and order:

...does [Boothby] really believe that an economic system in which every nation-State was governed in its trading relationships by well-established and generally recognised laws was less orderly and more anarchic than one in which each State imposes such restrictions upon international trade as it thinks fit? Would he not admit that the solar system is an expression of order? Or would he think it more orderly if the planets roamed about the universe at their own sweet will, with all the attendant chances of collision?⁴⁸⁸

Alec Spearman reinforced Law, bifurcating multilateralism and bilateralism not as planning versus *laissez-faire* but 'different types of planning': 'Creating conditions and establishing recognised laws under which nations can trade in an orderly manner' was 'in keeping with Conservative principles', but bilateral trading, which involved 'the perpetuation of detailed control of private enterprise', was 'quite incompatible with Conservative principles'.⁴⁸⁹ This embarrassing 'academic squabble' demonstrated frames could connect narrow issues like tariffs to wider philosophical tensions. But, stepping back, we can also see dissimilar participants manipulating both elements of 'balance': supporters of preference were defenders of liberty, but resisters of anarchy; Law was wedded to liberty, but redefined order as natural laws emerging from freedom. In that sense, freedom was able to mediate intra-party conflict.

The Imperial Policy launched two months later sided with Amery, partly because Churchill and Butler courted Beaverbrook, who was making his 'aid' conditional on candidates supporting preference.⁴⁹⁰ Indeed, far from the 'neoliberal' case 'reigning supreme' from 1947, influential figures in the party proposed protectionist blocs (whether Imperial or European) as solutions to Britain's

⁴⁸⁸ Richard Law, 'Conservative Policy', *The Times*, 10 Mar 1949, p. 5.

⁴⁸⁹ Alec Spearman, 'Conservatives and World Trade', *The Times*, 11 Mar 1949, p. 5.

⁴⁹⁰ Beaverbrook to Churchill, 22 Jan 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/80, folio 145; Churchill to Beaverbrook, 23 June 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/80, folio 148; He and Butler actively courted Beaverbrook and Churchill, who had overseen the statement at Beaverbrook's request, forwarded him an advance copy hoping he would find it 'not out of harmony with the mission of the Conservative party': R.A. Butler to Churchill, 9 Jun 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/80, folio 253; On the policy: Hoffman, *The Conservative Party in Opposition*, pp. 181-3.

economic problems.⁴⁹¹ Yet, the precise (and misrepresented) manifesto commitment, ‘maintain imperial preference’, had less to do with Liberal votes and more with a growing leadership consensus that Britain had no choice but to remain in GATT.⁴⁹² But when electoral publicity or higher-profile statements raised the issue,⁴⁹³ framing preference as freedom was a reaction to the perception that ‘public opinion in this country is becoming sensitive to any suggestion of American interference with our economy’, and that reliance on their Atlantic cousins ‘carries with it implications that are disquieting to any proud and free people’.⁴⁹⁴ At root, then, ‘freedom to discriminate’ was a rhetorical response to uncomfortable American hegemony, which demonstrated that freedom rhetoric was not tied to ‘neoliberal’ economics.⁴⁹⁵

IX

A Rhetorical Culture

As well as arguing that ‘neoliberal’ is a problematic description of mid-to-late-forties freedom rhetoric, the above discussions identified the materials of a rhetorical culture in the tropes, commonplaces, and models used to frame politics as a choice between freedom and unfreedom. Without proclaiming the forties an ‘origin’, the case has also been made for political and economic contexts shaping this frame via imperatives and constraints. But language is only one element of a rhetorical culture. This section supplements the form and semantic layers of that concept with Conservatives’ deeper assumptions about effective argument and party-management imperatives that predisposed them towards freedom rhetoric. It then shows how the frame was actively disseminated amongst, and reproduced, by the party membership, who

⁴⁹¹ Harris seems unaware of the above debate and its use of freedom: *Competition and the Corporate Society*, p. 130; Harold Macmillan to Churchill, 26 Oct 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/84B, folios 249-51; Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 17 Jan 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/16B, folios 238-46 at 245.

⁴⁹² Kelly mistakenly quotes from *Britain Strong and Free* as the manifesto. Even this is not strong enough to claim Conservatives were committed to repealing the no-new-preference rule: *The Myth of Mr Butskell*, loc. 3690; Officials believed Liberals may accept preference, or were prepared to arrive at a ‘satisfactory formula’ to fudge the disagreement: ‘Aspects of Policy to Which Reconsideration Might be Given on the Following Lines in the Light of the Need to Attract the Liberal Vote’, 12 Apr 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/96A, folios 48-51 at 51; Tactical Committee Minutes, 13 Sep 1948, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/10; Tactical Committee Minutes, 30 Sep 1948, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/9. Willetts simplifies the issue in believing this was one boon of a movement back to free trade: ‘The New Conservatism’, p. 183.

⁴⁹³ Robert Allan, Election Leaflet, 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/90A, folio 175.

⁴⁹⁴ Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 22 Jun 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/69B, folios 196-8, 203.

⁴⁹⁵ For Hayek’s opposition to protectionism: *The Road to Serfdom*, p. 49.

demanded similar rhetoric from their leaders.⁴⁹⁶ Recognising Central Office's conscious management of this rhetoric is important, not least because recent work has mistakenly imagined spontaneous defences of liberty by those who felt betrayed by Butler's New Conservatism.⁴⁹⁷

Freedom's ubiquity across Conservative argumentation was partly a product of how contemporaries constructed their rhetorical needs, which arose from assumptions about the electorate and effective argumentation. Whilst it could express complex ideas, simplification was an important motive for framing politics as a battle between freedom and restriction. Butler's preference for 'freedom [as] a simpler word than anti-centralisation' suggests mundane reasons why arguments about concentrated power and devolved initiative were condensed.⁴⁹⁸ Rather than bemoaning the public's competence, Conservatives saw 'complete ignorance' about macro-economics and other subjects as giving 'political propaganda... a clear field'. Because electors 'often turn with eagerness towards any source which purports to explain [it] in the simplest terms', 'no opportunity can be lost of presenting the existing economic situation in its true light – and in simple, telling terms'.⁴⁹⁹ Such simplification was especially important to establish in a period when few voters could distinguish between the parties' programmes.⁵⁰⁰ In this context, that the only value associated with Conservatives in 1947 was their standing for freedom is significant, especially since they had trailed Labour in this regard.⁵⁰¹ In some respects, then, partisan simplification was justly conceived as the means of persuasion.⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁶ In another context, Louis Althusser described this layer as the means of 'reproduction of the conditions of production': 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)' *La Pense*, 151 (1970), 67-152 translated and republished in: *On Ideology* (London: Verso, 2008 [1971]), pp. 1-60 quote at 1. He, of course, was referring to 'production' of goods not rhetoric.

⁴⁹⁷ Pitchford, *The Conservative Party and the Extreme Right*, p. 17. Although Pitchford further distinguishes those supporting extreme right groups from those simply resisting Attlee's government and the Industrial Charter, he consistently portrays the leadership as having moved leftwards.

⁴⁹⁸ R.A. Butler to Churchill, 21 Sep 1951, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/113B, folios 190-2 at 1.

⁴⁹⁹ Public Opinion Summary, No. 16, 22 May 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/99A, folios 18-21 at 20.

⁵⁰⁰ Except as representing different classes: *The Gallup International Public Opinion Polls: Great Britain 1937-1975*, Vol. 1, (New York, 1976), p. 129.

⁵⁰¹ 'A Report on The Industrial Charter', Sep 1947, Mass Observation Archive, File Report 2516, p. 10; 'A Report on the Liberal Party', Mass Observation Archive, File Report 1128, p. 22.

⁵⁰² Constituencies also pressured for 'a bold, clear and simple programme': Eton and Slough Conservative Association Resolution, 11 Apr 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/10, folio 33.

Such reductionism was integral to finding the ‘inspiring theme’ that Conservatives thought a precondition of retaking the initiative and turning policies into a programme.⁵⁰³ Quoted at the head of this chapter, Law’s agreement with Churchill that Conservatives must offer the electorate ‘freedom’ as ‘quite a different theme’ was a reaction to Butler’s draft of the 1950 manifesto, which Law considered flawed ‘because it d[id] not make sufficiently clear the nature of the choice which the elector w[ould] be asked to make’. Without offering an alternative, Conservative policy would ‘strike the elector as only variations, less carefully thought out and expressed with less skill, of the socialist theme...’.⁵⁰⁴ Notwithstanding his ideological predispositions, Law envisaged ‘freedom’ doing rhetorical work: it created difference, packaged policies into a platform, and linked this to dire warnings about the alternative; it fulfilled a need for holistic storytelling.⁵⁰⁵

Law’s theme saved others from internal clashes or having to articulate policy.⁵⁰⁶ Because senior Tories were unwilling to announce policy, opposing without a detailed alternative became a serious challenge for those marshalling day-to-day battles, and by 1949 the Tactical Committee unanimously recorded ‘they were finding increasing difficulty in their tactical work by reason of the lack of any sufficiently defined Conservative Party policy’.⁵⁰⁷ Many operating beneath the Shadow Cabinet defaulted to ‘freedom from’ opposition because they were starved of information. That said, blaming a policy vacuum on Churchill’s reluctance is simplistic: whilst some lobbied for detail, others urged focus on thematic philosophy. For example, the principles Churchill announced in April 1946, judged by Ramsden ‘so bland as to be almost useless’, were constructed around the Chief Whip’s advice that ‘education... regarding the fundamental

⁵⁰³ Reginald Maudling, ‘Memorandum on Current Political Situation’, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/16B, folio 244.

⁵⁰⁴ Admittedly, Law developed a record for critiquing Butler’s efforts and became a significant opponent of ‘the middle way’ in his *Return from Utopia*.

⁵⁰⁵ On the importance of political storytelling: Drew Western, *The Political Brain: The Role of Emotion in Deciding the Fate of the Nation* (New York: Public Affairs, 2007).

⁵⁰⁶ Ambiguity was helpful in what Butler described as the need for practising ‘the art of diffused authorship’: R.A. Butler to Churchill, 18 Sep 1951, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/113B, folios 187-8 at 8.

⁵⁰⁷ Tactical Committee Minutes, 16 Nov 1948, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/10; Tactical Committee Minutes, 4 Jan 1949, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/11; Tactical Committee Minutes, 10 Dec 1947, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/9; On the general pressure for policy in 1946 and 1949: Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, pp. 139-40, 159-60.

principles of the political parties' was needed, not policy.⁵⁰⁸ A number of pressures, then, meant thematic rhetoric was attractive or necessary.

Tactical assumptions about how best to fight Labour shaped the form of freedom rhetoric. For example, attacks on Bevan as dictator-in-waiting partly emanated from convictions that personal attacks enhanced Labour's 'threat to the middle classes'.⁵⁰⁹ Similarly, advice that speakers should assume 'Socialism had failed, and [go] on to point out a few of the reasons for this' encouraged restriction and frustration themes.⁵¹⁰ Conservatives' views about 'inspirational' oratory were particularly important. Both Macmillan and the Tactical Committee favoured 'a dramatic programme calculated to stir the imagination' in order to 'seize the political initiative' and overturn the 'progressive' connotations of voting Left.⁵¹¹ Identifying Labour's 'moderate', 'socialist Baldwinism' tactics, Macmillan urged: 'Our slogans must be dramatic, vigorous and filled with foreboding as well as with inspiration'.⁵¹² Suitable 'cries' would be a 'New Crusade', pitting 'militant Christianity' against 'Marxist atheism', 'free will against logical determinism' and 'free democracy against socialism'.⁵¹³ One reason 'freedom' survived, then, was its fit with contemporary perceptions of campaigning, especially the ease with which it allowed oratory to glide between dramatic attacks and religiously-inflected inspiration. These tactical assumptions represented the underlying view of effective argumentation that predisposed Conservatives to frame debates using freedom.

But leaders' oratory also needed to maintain their membership's unity or fervour, and freedom rhetoric responded to these party-management imperatives. Facing reports of defeatism throughout 1949-50 and rumours that industrialists felt they would benefit from a small Labour majority, the Tactical

⁵⁰⁸ Ramsden misdates and misreads the speech as primarily about foreign policy: *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, p. 140; James Stuart to Churchill, 8 Apr 1946, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/4E, folios 503-5 at 504; Admittedly he was made aware of demands for policy and included a section on housing at Assheton's request: Ralph Assheton to Churchill, 18 Apr 1946, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/4E, folios 193-4.

⁵⁰⁹ Tactical Committee Minutes, 25 May 1949, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/11; Tactical Committee Minutes, 1 Nov 1949, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/11; For an example of Bevan as the 'Tito of Tonyandy' see: Dr Charles Hill, Election Broadcast, 16 Oct 1951, reported in: 'Labour's Two Voices', *The Times*, 17 Oct 1951, p. 3.

⁵¹⁰ Tactical Committee Minutes, 16 Nov 1948, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/10.

⁵¹¹ Tactical Committee Minutes, 31 Mar 1948, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/10; Harold Macmillan to Churchill, 26 Oct 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/84B, folios 249-51.

⁵¹² Harold Macmillan, 'Proposals for Conservative Policy Programme', 18 Jan 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/84B, folios 188-207 at 188-90.

⁵¹³ *Ibid.*

Committee requested that prominent figures emphasise ‘the vital necessity of winning’.⁵¹⁴ Churchill obliged in May 1949, confronting ‘pusillanimous defeatism’ attributed to a misguided desire that Cripps reap the consequences of mismanagement and to ‘weaker brethren’ believing scaremongering that a Tory Government would prompt industrial strife.⁵¹⁵ His response used ‘freedom’ to heighten the consequences of defeat (would Britons ‘continue to be hobbled, hampered and half strangled’ or ‘free themselves at a stroke from the bonds by which they are now cramped and restricted’), but also derided defeatism as surrender to forces subverting democracy.⁵¹⁶ Morrison’s ‘class war tactics’ were ‘attempts to sabotage the free workings of constitutional government’, which threatened to replace ‘liberties of the British people’ with ‘the one-Party system...’.⁵¹⁷ With the stakes suitably raised, defeatists were ‘soldier[s] committing suicide before the battle for fear [they] may be killed in it’.⁵¹⁸

Such warnings relied upon and perpetuated group identities nurtured through freedom rhetoric. ‘What we can do is no less than to save England’, Woolton told the 1948 conference. Conservatives’ task was ‘to restore her economy and to give her back her liberty and her sense of feeling free’.⁵¹⁹ Once established, Woolton could leverage this identify for fundraising, telling those gathered in Brighton, ‘we cannot regain our liberty without money. I want money... for the great fight for liberty which is ahead – the next General election’.⁵²⁰ Especially at conference, encouraging persecuted missionaries became a quasi-religious ritual emancipation: Mr Fullstone commanded Conservative Trade Unionists ‘go out’ with Conservatism’s ‘gospel to liberate man from the mean and petty existence of today’, leading ‘men and women to this liberating truth, to a realization that naught lies between them and their rich inheritance, that “Britons never shall be slaves”’.⁵²¹ Likewise, the ‘shock troops of the party’ (North-West Area’s Young Conservatives) would ‘spearhead [the] attack in a fight for the

⁵¹⁴ ‘Defeatism’, 17 Apr 1950, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/7; Tactical Committee Minutes, 10 May 1949, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/11; Tactical Committee Minutes, 23 Feb 1949, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/11.

⁵¹⁵ Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 26 May 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/25E, folios 599-603.

⁵¹⁶ Churchill, Speech at Chigwell, Essex, 28 May 1949 quoted in: ‘Be Ready for an Autumn Election’, *The Manchester Guardian*, 29 May 1949, p. 1.

⁵¹⁷ Churchill, Speech at Chigwell, Essex, 28 May 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/25E, folio 582.

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*, folio 584.

⁵¹⁹ Lord Woolton, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 144-5 at 145.

⁵²⁰ Lord Woolton, Conference Speech, 1947, pp. 76-8 at 77.

⁵²¹ E.E. Fullstone, Conference Speech, 1948, p. 136.

survival of British freedom'.⁵²² Yet, historians often neglect these unity and recruitment functions in their assessments of speeches. For instance, Churchill's 1946 conference address, often cited as evidence of a policy vacuum, was composed to Woolton's plea that he rally the party around saving Britain 'from Socialist misrule' and reassure members they represented a 'party based on the principles of freedom and respect for the individual'.⁵²³ Similarly, Churchill's odes to freedom in a widely-publicised speech at Luton Hoo played into a recruitment drive.⁵²⁴ Party management also structured speeches: the closing juxtaposition between Shawcross's words 'we are the masters now' and Tories' counter-*ethos* 'we are your servants' in Churchill's 1949 conference message was designed to 'send delegates away with their tails up'.⁵²⁵ Freedom rhetoric, then, was as much about managing a party through inward-facing identities as outwards projection.

Party audiences experienced these speeches through a political culture built to disseminate identities and arguments. Central Office manufactured an *ethos* of resistance in Liberty's name. The Tactical Committee organised heckling at Socialist meetings (distributing suggestions on plain paper) and decided to teach 'the techniques of protest... since the Government ha[d] taken so much responsibility for the ordering of their day to day lives, and should therefore be made to account closely for their actions'.⁵²⁶ Moreover, the committee controlled a 'panel' of letter writers that could be trusted to condemn abuses of power, and Woolton secretly used employers to establish 'free enterprise' 'cells' within the Trade Unions to turn others against nationalisation.⁵²⁷ There was also a

⁵²² 'Youth Turning to the Tories', *The Manchester Guardian*, 25 Apr 1949, p. 8.

⁵²³ Bale, *The Conservatives Since 1945*, pp. 29-30; The 'platitudes' Bale highlights from Churchill's speech were partly Woolton's suggestions: Lord Woolton to Churchill, 24 Sep 1946, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/9B, folio 205.

⁵²⁴ This was factored into the drafting: Reginald Maudling to Churchill, 22 Jun 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/69B, folios 196-209 at 199; Churchill, Speech to Conservative Eastern Area Fete, Luton Hoo, 26 Jun 1948, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/19C, folios 637-51; Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, p. 185.

⁵²⁵ 'Notes for Mr Churchill's Speech', Oct 1949, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/27D, folios 617-8 at 618.

⁵²⁶ Letter to Constituency Agents, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/1; Tactical Committee Minutes, 6 May 1948, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/10; Tactical Committee Minutes, 23 Nov 1949, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/11.

⁵²⁷ Tactical Committee Minutes, 1 Jul 1948, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/10; Lord Woolton to Churchill, 10 May 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/95A, folio 29.

physical culture, not only of posters, but platform banners, bingo cards, bumper stickers and pin badges embossed with 'Set the People Free'.⁵²⁸

Alongside these organisational expressions of a liberators' *ethos*, 1945-51 witnessed sustained efforts to educate members and 'prime' both Parliamentarians and the rank-and-file with messages for the electorate.⁵²⁹ The apparatus disseminating the rhetoric described above went beyond the *Talking Points*, *Speakers Memoranda* and CPC publications cited throughout. Central Office briefings for the 1946 National Recruiting campaign advised doorstep canvassers to give 'freedom of the individual' as their top answer when asked 'what do you stand for?' They should then elaborate: 'Knowing that Britain's whole future depends on the character, industry, thrift, skill, and enterprise of individuals, our policy is to encourage those qualities, not to reduce our people to cogs in a vast State machine'.⁵³⁰ Party periodicals distilled academic work and provided factual ammunition: reviewing Dr K.C. Allen's book on delegated legislation, July 1946's *Onlooker* insisted it 'should be on the bookshelf of everyone concerned to defend the liberties of the individual against State domination'.⁵³¹ Moreover, widely-circulated public opinion research attempted to shape oratory directly. Along with opinion trends and target audience assessments, 'reaction reports' surveyed audiences' impressions of speakers to recommend points 'that stung' and those to avoid. Such assurances that attacking the 'Gents from Whitehall', inefficiency and reliance on American aid were popular contributed to the relative homogeneity of Tory appeals.⁵³² Other mediums carrying this rhetorical culture may appear marginal (book advertisements, Swinton College's courses on freedom, and a Conservative Book Bus touring Sussex and Kent seaside resorts),⁵³³ but, taken with reading group instructions and party conferences, late-forties Conservatism ensured

⁵²⁸ Tactical Committee Minutes, 5 Nov 1947, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/9.

⁵²⁹ Originally 'priming' was a consequence of 'agenda setting' whereby audiences evaluation of a politicians performance was based on the issues successfully positioned by the media or others as the most salient: Shanto Iyengar, Mark Peters and Donald Kinder, 'Experimental Demonstrations of the "Not-So-Minimal" Consequences of Television News Programs', *The American Political Science Review*, 76, 4 (1982), 848-858 at 849.

⁵³⁰ CUCO, *National Recruiting Campaign: Workers Guide* (London: CUCO, 1946).

⁵³¹ Alan Lennox-Boyd, 'Unholy Orders', *The Onlooker*, July 1946, p. 7; Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/7A, folio 114.

⁵³² Public Reaction Report Nos. 1-2, Jan 1950, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/99A, folios 170-1.

⁵³³ 'Our Bookshelf', *The Onlooker*, July 1946, p. 8; Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/7A, folio 114; CUCO, *Tory Challenge*, Sep 1948, pp. 1,7.

that members did not have to generate the frame for politics discussed above themselves.⁵³⁴

However, party supporters did not consume this rhetorical culture passively; they contributed to it, rendering distinctions between top-down and bottom-up propaganda unhelpful. Resolutions passed by regional associations were just as steeped in freedom rhetoric as central statements, and the leadership used lists of these during drafting to gauge what messages would rally supporters.⁵³⁵ Equally, members' suggestions for propaganda reveal how deeply this framing organised their political consciousness. 'Ardent anti-Socialists' sent CRD detailed plans for operation "Overthrow", which would capture Guy Fawkes night 1948 as a symbol of resistance,⁵³⁶ along with collections of 'jingles', which expressed the leadership's narratives more creatively:

Three Heroes

Attila and 'itler and Attlee

all stand for "Direction" of men.

Attila and 'itler and Attlee:

the last of 'em's at it agen.

Attila, e' jiggered 'alf Europe,

And 'itler just jiggered the 'uns;

And Attlee, e'll jigger Old England

if England don't stick to 'er guns.

For England 'as treasured 'er freedom

till "Freedom" and "England" are one,

And 'e who take freedom from England

takes the light and the 'eat from the sun.⁵³⁷

D.M Young's lines are significant because they represented a re-consumption of rhetoric, in which leaders' policy frames, narratives and tropes were recycled into member-led contributions to a rhetorical culture.

⁵³⁴ Alport, *What Do You Think? About Conservative Principles*.

⁵³⁵ Eastern Area Conference Resolution, 'Regimentation', Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/10, folio 36; It is notable how many resolutions survive in drafting files: Notes for Address to Scottish Unionist Conference, 29 Apr 1946, Churchill Papers, CHUR 5/4E, folio 371.

⁵³⁶ P.K. Edwardes-Ker to Winston Churchill, 27 May 1948, B.L.O, CCO 600/17/4.

⁵³⁷ D.M. Young quoted in: H.A. Gwynne to Churchill, 7 Mar 1947, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/54B, folio 345.

Although neither Young's poetry nor 'Operation Overthrow' was adopted, an indirect feedback loop was emerging between members and leaders, who were pressured to conform to these rhetorical models. It is normally difficult to detect this grass-roots pressure during stage-managed party conferences, but the closed meeting of defeated candidates in October 1945 reveals frank rhetorical prescriptions. One candidate argued Conservatives had 'failed to make clear... what we meant when we said they would lose their freedom under Socialism'. Churchill's broadcast was 'understandable to those of us who had read past history, but it was unfortunately not so clear to the ordinary voter'. Accordingly, propaganda should emphasise how socialist measures 'will affect the people in their daily lives'.⁵³⁸ Captain Watkin Grubb saw the task as primarily linguistic: 'Conservatives must 'ensure the self-reliance of each man in this country and the dignity of the family and all we stand for in encouraging resource and freedom from State control is put in modern language which working men will appreciate'.⁵³⁹ Indeed, the Publicity Department was subject to similar criticism throughout 1945-51, best expressed by Robson Brown, who roused the 1948 conference by saying: 'We must say simply and plainly how we would set the people free (Applause)'.⁵⁴⁰ The justification for labelling 'set the people free' a rhetorical *culture* is, therefore, not limited to the shared patterns of argument that contributed to a common framing of politics; rather, it is warranted because these were perpetuated by assumptions about effective argumentation, group identities and mechanisms of dissemination, which ultimately produced an endogenous pressure on leaders to continue speaking (and thinking) within a frame assumed to motivate their followers.

X

Conclusion

This chapter proposed two responses to the parallel frequently drawn between Conservatives' rhetoric under Churchill and Thatcher, which has shaped the party's historiography and assessments of freedom rhetoric. One strand of

⁵³⁸ R. Fort, Speech to Defeated Candidates Conference, 5 Oct 1945, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/1A, folios 190-1.

⁵³⁹ Captain Watkin Grubb, Speech to Defeated Candidates Conference, 5 Oct 1945, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/1A, folios 233-4.

⁵⁴⁰ Robson Brown, Conference Speech, 1948, pp. 132-4 at 132; Also see the wider debate on party propaganda: CUCO, *Conference Report*, (London: CUCO, 1948), pp. 123-6.

analysis sought to weaken the analogy by recovering the historical specificity of Tory oratory and propaganda between 1945 and 1951. Freedom rhetoric did not indicate neoliberal political economy in either its mid-forties form or its substantially-evolved New Right incarnation. The 1945 campaign's rhetorical ingredients were in place before Hayek published the book that supposedly motivated Churchill's Gestapo broadcast, and Conservatives expressed similar fears about Labour's threat to liberty without subscribing to neoliberal economics. Moreover, the attacks deployed in 1945 were different from neoliberals': Churchill and others primarily attacked *ethos*, supported by older traditions of anti-idealism, and expressed little of the logic behind neoliberalism's assertion that democracy and planning were incompatible. Likewise, although Hayek's work influenced a minority of figures, the 1945-51 Opposition's oratory did not reflect a neoliberal party: 'freedom' was used to articulate balanced models of politics, defend imperial preference, and champion the role of Trade Unions in society, all of which jarred with neoliberalism. Unlike the New Right, Conservatives could vigorously call for emancipation and sincerely advocate the expenditure cuts and tax incentives this implied, but remain committed to the welfare state and full employment. Even if neoliberals did not automatically reject either in the forties, historians have followed the minority of Conservatives who juxtaposed 'neoliberal' economics with commitments to those aims. Identified by Jackson, that false-image of neoliberalism exacerbated a wider false-linkage between Hayekian economics and freedom rhetoric underlying rival interpretations of 1945-51 and beyond.⁵⁴¹ The latter has led to equally-mistaken claims that freedom rhetoric was feigned to create differences where few existed or that throughout the late forties and fifties Conservatives were content to live with a tension between neoliberal ideas and electoral compromises, so long as economically possible.

The underlying reason why neither of these accounts, nor those of 1945 as neoliberal or Thatcherite harbinger, can be sustained is that rhetorical opportunities and constraints arising from political and economic contexts governed freedom rhetoric, not pre-systematised ideological positions. Just as the 1945 campaign was produced by the particular rhetorical problems faced by Conservative leaders and their perceptions of the electorate, the emancipatory

⁵⁴¹ Jackson, 'At the Origins of Neo-Liberalism'.

rhetoric of opposition was a very specific call for increased production in response to Britain's trade and monetary difficulties. For much of their time in opposition, political context forced Tories to blur the expenditure cuts they planned to finance the incentives that 'freedom' represented, invoking a further layer of anti-Whitehall rhetoric to cover a budget shortfall. Yet, because 'set the people free' was a call for production, not a forbear of the New Right or cry for Law's 'neoliberal' conception of the State, Conservatives refused to see their commitments to the 'Attlee settlement' and economic freedom as *inherently* contradictory. Indeed, rather than begrudgingly compromise out of electoral necessity, they exploited a rhetorical and philosophical opportunity in *reconciling* liberty with security so as to expose the 'false choice' Labour offered between economic and civil liberties or social security with full employment. Similarly, instead of ideological reflexes, the cases of steel nationalisation, the Parliament Act and appeals to Liberals suggest that freedom rhetoric was often a reaction to opponents' expected arguments and target audiences. Conversely, imagined audiences disciplined attacks on controls to an extent hitherto underemphasised. None of this is to argue that freedom rhetoric had no basis in policy or philosophy. However, the archival evidence of Tories' speech drafting and strategizing suggests that immediate political and economic contexts were the sovereign arbiters of rhetoric, calling some beliefs to the fore, repressing others, and applying each to policy debates in a reactive manner with assumptions about audience, opponents, and effective argumentation in mind. Thus, historians' mislabelling of forties freedom rhetoric as 'neoliberal' stems from their erroneous model of rhetoric as reflector (or mask) for *a priori* ideological positions, when in fact more complex policy and rhetoric emanated from the imperatives and constraints generated by agents' perceptions of their contexts.

Yet, rather than entirely dismiss the affinity that historians detected between Tory rhetoric in 1945-51 and 1975, a second strand of analysis constructed a model that can explain perceived continuities, whilst retaining the historical specificity described above. It has been grounded in five premises: First, instead of ideology or policy (as traditionally conceived), the continuity in

Conservative freedom rhetoric lies in form and function.⁵⁴² Second, the apparent similarity between late-forties and seventies oratory is not due to any direct connection, but rather the later period's inheritance of rhetorical practices that persisted over the intervening years.⁵⁴³ Third, this continuity in form and function is best conceived as a rhetorical culture, the materials of which were persistent (but evolving) commonplaces, models, figures and tropes that contributed to a defining rhetorical act: framing politics as a choice between freedom and unfreedom. Fourth, Conservatives could manipulate the shared tools of that culture to articulate disparate policies or conceptions of freedom and adjust the frame to their context. Fifth, this 'culture' should incorporate the wider assumptions and needs predisposing orators to using its collective resources as well as the mechanisms for its dissemination.

In exploring the 1945-51 iteration of that rhetorical culture, this chapter has established a starting point from which chapters three and four will show its continued evolution up to 1970. However, we can already draw some preliminary conclusions and relate these to framing scholarship. The widespread, cross-faction use of rhetorical models (binary or balance), commonplaces (arguments of direction), and tropes (the small man) suggests that Tories expressed disparate policy debates through a shared, holistic frame. This frame and the rhetorical resources rendering it persuasive were sustained, constrained, and altered by context. Late-forties politics encouraged the development of rhetorical models and tropes designed to deflect attacks on Tories' pre-war records and drew languages of 'choice', 'opportunity' and 'incentive' further into the frame's orbit, partly in response to Conservatives' hesitancy to attack controls directly. Nor can the mergers of efficiency and freedom in phrases like 'free enterprise' be set apart from the debates that cemented those elisions in Tory rhetoric. Frames were, therefore, often conscious but collective acts of construction, sensitive to contexts; in that sense, politicians' rhetoric was co-authored by their opponents and events. Yet, underlying this contingency, the ubiquity of freedom rhetoric also resulted from

⁵⁴² We should be open to less-permeable boundaries between ideology-policy and rhetorical form/function.

⁵⁴³ For this reason, side-by-side comparisons between freedom rhetoric in 1945-51 and 1975 have been avoided because they suppose a direct connection, when this chapter and the next two argue for a connection *through* the intervening years (and all the evolutionary adjustments they brought).

its fit with perceptions of effective argumentation and party management imperatives. This culture of argument was actively disseminated and in some senses stretched beyond language into organisational expressions of a liberator's *ethos*. Like all cultures, it was experienced differently: leaders and their advisors had different motivations than their rank-and-file, but the latter actively contributed to, and demanded, this rhetorical vision, rather than just consume it.

When Conservatives appealed to 'liberty' they were not merely expressing beliefs; they were doing so through a shared set of resources that framed politics advantageously to attack opponents, restructure audience perceptions, or manipulate group identity. From that perspective, this chapter has taken another step towards answering this thesis's wider questions: why did 'freedom' survive in British politics and what is the relationship between ideology and rhetoric? Like chapter one, it has better defined the object of study: 'freedom' survived as a set of rhetorical practices within a culture of argument, sustained by its *usefulness* in particular contexts, rather than as a stable political philosophy. Moreover, the closeness with which some rhetorical figures mirror the essence of arguments they animated bolsters chapter one's assault on a dichotomy between form and meaning. Indeed, if this rhetorical culture can be shown to extrapolate over post-war Conservatism, we may begin to suspect the raw contents of 'ideology' ought to include rhetorical acts, perceptions, and materials as well as, or instead of, atomistic ideas. Perhaps the most significant message, though, is that, despite very different methods, chapters one and two find twentieth-century rhetoric operating through the same dynamic: idiosyncratic expression within more homogenous, normative patterns of argument.

CHAPTER THREE

The Evolution of Conservative Freedom Rhetoric Part I, 1951-64

On a Saturday afternoon in February 1970, Dorking Conservatives congregated in the town's Grand Hall to hear the contentious blend of incendiary rhetoric and cold treatise that typified a speech from their party's most notorious dissident: Enoch Powell.¹ 'It is twenty years since a Conservative Opposition last prepared to eject an entrenched Socialist Government', recalled Wolverhampton's MP, before lamenting: 'The battle-cry of that time, to "set the people free", is borne to us faintly across the intervening years. It was brave; it was simple; and the generation which had fought the war responded to it with an ardour that the Conservative Party has hardly experienced since'.² Once again, though, Britain's voters had grown disenchanted with over-taxation and socialist drift and were now 'more impatient to see the back of Harold Wilson than they ever were to see that of Clement Attlee'. 'All this we know', Powell ruminated, leading his audience towards an *aporic* precipice: 'What we do not know is whether this is still a people that wishes to be set free'.³ Ostensibly a launch-pad for routine assaults on socialist planning, Powell used such parallels to position his views within the Tory canon and attack those Conservatives whom allegedly deviated from the 1945-51 Opposition's ideals. Chapter two showed that similar analogies between forties and seventies rhetoric have led historians to underplay the earlier period's specificity and wrongly identify Churchill's oratory with 'neoliberalism'. This chapter and the next demonstrate that the accompanying narrative of an interregnum, in which freedom rhetoric drifted into abeyance or mere recital and was only kept alive between 1951 and 1970 by a dissenting few, is equally unsustainable. In fact, there were strong elements of continuity and significant developments in Conservative freedom rhetoric during the years separating Churchill and Thatcher's leaderships, and the apparent affinity between Tories' rhetoric in 1945 and 1975 can only be explained as two distinctive expressions of a common rhetorical culture, which the latter inherited through fifties and sixties Conservatism, not in spite of it.

¹ Enoch Powell, Speech to Dorking Conservative Association, Dorking, 21 Feb 1970, PPB 61/1, 30, folios 129-132.

² Powell conveniently forgets that the 1950 election was lost and that subsequent campaigns increased the party's majority. For other examples of decline from a 'golden age': Phillip Vander Elt, 'Radical Toryism – The Libertarian Alternative', *Political Quarterly*, 44, 1 (1973), 65-72 at 66-7; Ronald Butt, 'Shortage of Big Issues', *The Times*, 17 Jul 1969, p. 10.

³ *Aporia* is the deliberate creation of doubt.

Such revision is crucial because key interpretations of 1951-70 (which for the purposes of historiographical critique will be treated here in entirety) have assumed freedom rhetoric's absence or greatly reduced significance and simplistically associated it with a vocal liberal-market minority. From those assumptions, and in the context of debating the existence of a post-war consensus, historians generally downplay the importance of freedom rhetoric to Eden, Macmillan, Home and Heath.⁴ For Gamble and Harris, the mainstream party's use of 'liberty' was ritualistic and lacking in substance. Conservatives might occasionally 'talk the language of neoliberalism', but 'liberal tendencies remained largely in the realm of aspiration rather than practice'.⁵ To others, freedom rhetoric indicated an undercurrent of grass-roots dissent from consensus, fuelled by middle class dissatisfaction with inflation, Trade Union law, taxation, and the over-generous welfare state.⁶ In these accounts, the leadership either shared or had to gesture to such 'libertarian' inclinations, but was unwilling or unable to translate these into policy alternatives due to electoral constraints.⁷ Another layer of interpretation has Powell and the One

⁴ D.R. Thorpe, *Eden: The Life and Times of Anthony Eden First Earl of Avon, 1897-1977*, Kindle Edition (London: Pimlico, 2006 [2003]); Dilwyn Porter, 'Downhill All the Way: Thirteen Tory Years 1951-64' in *The Wilson Governments 1964-70*, edited by Richard Coopey, Steven Fielding and Nicholas Tiratsoo (London: Pinter, 1993), pp. 10-28; D.R. Thorpe, *Supermac: The Life of Harold Macmillan*, Kindle Edition (London: Chatto & Windus, 2010); David Dutton, *Douglas-Home* (London: Haus, 2006), esp. pp. 69-70; D.R. Thorpe, *Alec Douglas-Home* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1996); Interpretation of Heath is more complex: John Campbell, *Edward Heath* (London: Pimlico, 1993), esp. pp. 189-286; Peter Hennessy, *The Prime Minister: The Office and its Holders Since 1945* (London: Penguin, 2000), pp. 333-5.

⁵ Andrew Gamble, *The Conservative Nation* (London: Routledge, 1974), p. 63; Nigel Harris, *Competition and the Corporate Society: British Conservatives, The State and Industry, 1945-1964* (Oxon: Routledge, 2006[1972]), pp. 149-50; Ken Phillips and Mike Wilson, 'The Conservative Party: From Macmillan to Thatcher' in *The British Right* edited by Neill Nugent and Roger King (Farnborough: Saxon House, 1977), pp. 29-63 at 50; On 'schizophrenia between Conservative rhetoric about "setting the people free" and the corporatism of the 1950s': John Charmley, *A History of Conservative Politics 1900-1996* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998 [1996]) pp. 144-7, 182, 186.

⁶ E.H.H. Green, 'The Conservative Party, the State and the Electorate, 1945-64' in *Party, State, and Society: Electoral Behaviour in Britain since 1820*, edited by Jon Lawrence and Miles Taylor (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1997), pp. 176-200; E.H.H. Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism: Conservative Political Ideas in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 214-39. Unfortunately, Green imagines a very static 'libertarian' rhetoric and neglects the leadership's rhetorical response (beyond recognising Macmillan's 'opportunity state').

⁷ On the interplay between neoliberal beliefs, electoral constraints and the economy: Harriet Jones, 'The Cold War and the Santa Claus Syndrome' in *The Conservatives and British Society, 1880-1990*, edited by Martin Francis and Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996), pp. 240-254; Richard Cockett, *Thinking the Unthinkable: Think Tanks and the Economic Counter-Revolution* (London: Fontana, 1995), p. 159; John Turner, '1951-64' in *How Tory Governments Fall: The Tory Party in Power Since 1783* edited by Anthony Seldon (London: Fontana, 1996), pp. 317-52 esp. 321; For explanations that perceived need to appeal to both middle and working classes prevented concession to 'libertarian' demands: Green, 'The Conservative Party'. On stalled development of policy alternative:

Nation group articulating the intellectual basis for discontent and anticipating Thatcherism, if not in policy then in ‘rhetorical style’.⁸ Whilst encompassing a degree of variation, all these readings draw upon the weak interpretive paradigm identified in chapter two, which attaches significance to rhetoric only so as far as it indicates currents in ideology or policy, particularly clashing ‘libertarian’ and ‘paternalist’ philosophies or omens of Thatcherism. The result is a history written in negatives: freedom rhetoric was either missing entirely, adrift from policy, a minority (albeit portentous) expression of dissent, or a sign of constrained beliefs.

The lack of a positive history recovering how the freedom rhetoric of 1945-51 continued to be used and adapted by the leadership and a majority of Tories to articulate the non-neoliberal policies they *did* implement distorts assessments of post-war Conservatism’s transition from austerity to prosperity and fails to contextualise individuals’ oratory. For example, a focus on issues, rather than the form in which these were articulated, has led historians to posit an unwarranted disjuncture: for Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, ‘the post-war period came to an end in the mid-1950s and 1955 was the last election dominated by policies and rhetoric which originated during and immediately after the Second World War’.⁹ Admittedly, the politics of rationing gave way to ‘affluence’ and ‘modernisation’, but older rhetorical models were retained, especially at constituency level, to facilitate a starker ideological clash than normally acknowledged. Moreover, in their keenness to identify newer appeals to ‘affluence’, ‘opportunity’, and ‘efficiency’, historians have ignored how far older frames of debate absorbed and organised these languages or were themselves repurposed to articulate prosperity. In consequence, fifties and sixties oratory has wrongly been reduced to the ‘rhetoric of growth’ or ‘modernisation’,

Rodney Lowe, ‘Modernizing Britain’s Welfare State: The Influence of Affluence, 1957-1964’ in *An Affluent Society?: Britain’s Post-War “Golden Age” Revisited*, edited by Lawrence Black and Hugh Pemberton (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 35-51; Kevin Jefferys, *Retreat from New Jerusalem: British Politics, 1951-64* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), pp. 131-53.

⁸ Gamble, *Conservative Nation*, pp. 217-8; Cockett, *Thinking the Unthinkable*, pp. 162-9; Charmley, *A History of Conservative Politics*, p. 149; For the view that Powellism played a ‘preparatory role’ for Thatcherism: Douglas Schoen, *Enoch Powell and the Powellites* (London: Macmillan, 1977), p. 240. On differences between Powell and Thatcherism: Camila Schofield, “A Nation or no Nation?” Enoch Powell and Thatcherism’ in *Making Thatcher’s Britain* edited by Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 95-110 quote at 95.

⁹ Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain: Rationing, Controls and Consumption 1939-55* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 242, 254-5.

connoting a materialist, pragmatic politics wary of ideology.¹⁰ Coupled with the mistaken equation of late-forties freedom rhetoric with ‘neoliberalism’, this imagined disconnection between the rhetoric of austerity and prosperity has contributed to the sense that the liberal-market Right ‘owned’ freedom rhetoric. Thus, Green quickly detected a ‘ready-made... audience’ for Thatcherism in middle-class supporters’ ‘libertarian’ dissent from consensus, but ignored the leadership’s use of similar rhetoric to defend its policies, including planning.¹¹ Indeed, hindsight has encouraged historians to read freedom rhetoric as a story of the survival of liberal-market ideas, rather than tell the important history of its adaptation to articulate Macmillan’s economics, its continued influence on policy-making, or its relationship to alternative approaches to liberty. As a result, individuals’ rhetoric has been misinterpreted. Heath, for example, is portrayed as weak, having been led into liberal-market rhetoric that he either never believed or later reneged on, whilst others like Powell are presented as rhetorically novel ‘anti-socialist prophet[s]’ who ‘provid[ed] Thatcherism with much of its language’.¹²

If we utilise a broader range of archival material and accept that similar rhetoric could advance disparate positions, the history of fifties and sixties Conservatism can be read rather differently and without privileging ‘neoliberalism’ as a condition of sincerity. There was greater continuity in Conservative oratory between 1951 and 1970 than normally acknowledged, but this should be characterised as successive iterations of the rhetorical culture described in chapter two. To facilitate detailed assessment, discussion of this period is split in two, with chapter four taking over analysis following Douglas-Home’s succession to the leadership. In turn, each chapter further subdivides

¹⁰ Jim Tomlinson, ‘Conservative Modernisation, 1960-64: Too little, Too Late?’, *Contemporary British History*, 11, 3 (1997), 18-38 at 18-9; Gamble, *The Conservative Party*, pp. 62-7; This is a central theme of Jefferys, *Retreat from New Jerusalem*.

¹¹ Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism*, p. 236

¹² Campbell, *Edward Heath*, pp. 189-286; Hennessy, *The Prime Minister*, pp. 333-5; Mark Garnett, ‘Planning for Power: 1964-1970’, in *Recovering Power: The Conservatives in Opposition Since 1867*, edited by Stuart Ball and Anthony Seldon (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 192-218; For view Heath pragmatically adjusted: Robert Blake, *The Conservative Party from Peel to Thatcher* (London: Fontana, 1985), pp. 300-1; John Ramsden, *The Winds of Change: Macmillan to Heath 1957-1975* (Harlow: Longman, 1996), pp. 300-2 quote on Powell at 278; For view Heath betrayed: Dennis Macshane, *Heath* (London: Haus Publishing, 2006), p. 68; For Powell: Richard Vinen, *Thatcher’s Britain: The Politics and Social Upheaval of the Thatcher Era*, Kindle Edition (London: Simon & Schuster, 2009), for second quote: loc. 749; For a more nuanced interpretation whereby Thatcher attached different meanings to Powell’s rhetoric: Camila Schofield, “A Nation or no Nation?”, p. 101.

discussion into two parts, so as to show the evolution of 1945-51's rhetorical models, tropes, and figures in response to the needs of new contexts that permitted Tories holding a range of disparate views to continue framing politics in similar terms. First, in this chapter, the reconfiguration of freedom rhetoric to meet the new imperatives of government is examined through the prism of the 1955 election. In what is traditionally regarded as an uneventful campaign, analysis detects a significant development of the framing identified in chapter two, reoriented to the defence of an economic record, but also extended to articulate a politicised vision of affluence, which linked freedom with 'progress' and allowed Conservatives to retain their anti-statist *ethos* in government. Second, freedom rhetoric more than survived the alleged 'nadir of neoliberalism' under Macmillan, it was an important tool for articulating the interventionist policies with which it is normally juxtaposed.¹³ As Macmillan's policy stances changed, he adjusted a stable set of rhetorical tools, and the 1959 election witnessed a traditional ideological battle beneath the supposedly materialistic national campaign. Nor was this a benign inheritance: greater focus on 'opportunity' allowed Tories to construct new tyrannies appropriate for affluence, personalised to the individual and targeted at youth, but expressed through the established frame. Moreover, the 'free society' distinguished and defended Conservatives' visions of planning. Nor was this was a cynical mask for *dirigisme*: ministers' public rhetoric reflected private debates, and a number of complex approaches to liberty hint that the rhetorical models used by Macmillan's party had alternative philosophical roots in contemporary Conservatism than proto-Thatcherism.

Chapter four then takes over discussion to reveal how historians wrongly dismiss rhetorical change under Alec Douglas-Home as 'irrelevant'. In fact, his short leadership witnessed a crucial shift towards the rhetoric associated with Heath.¹⁴ In particular, the 1964 election represented a transitional phase in which Macmillan's defences of planning co-existed with prescriptions of liberation favoured under Heath. In this context, a final stage of analysis re-reads the 1965-70 Opposition's oratory and propaganda to argue that interpretations hinging on the sincerity of Heath's supposedly 'neoliberal' rhetoric misconstrue the chronology of rhetorical change and falsely accuse him

¹³ Ramsden, *The Winds of Change*, pp. 143-71, 'nadir' phrase at 158.

¹⁴ Dutton, *Douglas-Home*, pp. 88-90.

of making concessions to his Right wing or betraying such rhetoric in government. Instead, all wings of late-sixties Conservatism manipulated a shared set of rhetorical tools. For Heath's allies, freedom rhetoric was never synonymous with liberal-market capitalism; they and their mentors had consistently used liberty to articulate a mix of free-market and interventionist economics. Indeed, the relationship between Heath's policy and rhetoric becomes more comprehensible once we recognise that the latter evolved out of Macmillan and Home's oratory, not neoliberal theory or 'Powellism'. Likewise, Powell and Joseph articulated their views through the same rhetorical culture as those they disagreed with. In this sense, the liberal-market Right manipulated (and arguably later annexed) rhetorical resources that no faction owned in 1970. Thus, in place of reading mid-twentieth-century Conservatism as harbouring a 'neoliberal' critique, dismissed by Macmillan, cynically adopted and/or betrayed by Heath, but finally expressed by Powell and Thatcher, a more interesting story can be told about the inheritance of rhetorical tools, which evolved to meet contemporaries' immediate needs and allowed them to express disparate policy positions through more homogenous rhetoric devoted to the consistent act of framing politics as freedom versus unfreedom. As chapter two explored the overarching historiography and scholarship on framing, and because the discrete debates cited above are best discussed in context, attention can immediately turn to the mix of rhetorical change and continuity following Churchill's victory in 1951.

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Churchill and Eden: 'Conservative Freedom Works'

The rhetorical culture described in chapter two was tailored to the needs of opposition. On taking office in 1951, Conservatives had to repurpose freedom rhetoric into an effective means of retaining power. In doing so, they faced two challenges: First, rather than convincing the public that they, the public, must be set free, speakers now needed to persuade audiences both that they had been liberated to beneficial effect and that further emancipation was desirable. Meanwhile, the leadership had to deflect unfavourable comparisons between its actions and words, and assuage those wanting to pursue manumission further or in different directions. This section assesses how successfully Conservatives reconfigured the rhetorical resources described in chapter two to meet those

demands of government. Recovering this process of change and continuity is important because our knowledge of Tory rhetoric between 1951 and 1955 is both threadbare and distorted: historians have concentrated on policy implementation or the perceived gap between substance and rhetoric, often submerging their accounts in wider debates about consensus, affluence, ‘thirteen lost years’, or a leadership at odds with its grass-roots.¹⁵ With Mr Butskell demythologised, Seldon and Gamble’s narrative of a continuing consensus has been superseded by that of Jones and others who found ‘neoliberal’ intentions curtailed by electoral necessity.¹⁶ Yet, other elements of Gamble’s thesis remain influential, particularly his argument that ‘affluence’ allowed capitalism to be ‘justified on pragmatic grounds – Conservative Freedom Works – rather than on moral grounds...’, which still informs characterisations of fifties politics as dominated by the ‘rhetoric of economic growth’ and competent administration.¹⁷ Indeed, whilst ‘the political meaning of affluence’ has been explored through organisational histories, the scholarship suffers from the all-too-simplistic division of rhetoric into materialist versus idealist categories, reflecting an incomplete understanding of how politicians

¹⁵ Standard accounts of implementation: Anthony Seldon, *Churchill’s Indian Summer: The Conservative Government, 1951-55* (London: Hodder and Stroughton, 1981) economic policy: pp. 169-77; consensus in social policy: pp. 245-7; Gaps between rhetoric and policy: Charmley, *A History of Conservative Politics*, pp. 144-7; Cockett, *Thinking the Unthinkable*, p. 159; Martin Francis, “‘Set the People Free’? Conservatives and the State, 1920-1960” in *The Conservatives and British Society, 1880-1990*, edited by Martin Francis and Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996), pp. 58-77. For views that the Government lived up to ‘freedom’: John Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden* (Harlow: Longman, 1995), pp. 247-55; Nicholas Rollings, ‘Poor Mr Butskell: A Short Life, Wrecked by Schizophrenia?’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 5, 2 (1994), 183-205 esp. 197-8; On swapping of policy between ‘liberty’ and ‘order’ principles: Jim Tomlinson, “‘Liberty with Order’: Conservative Economic Policy, 1951-1964’ in *Conservatives and British Society, 1880-1990*, edited by Martin Francis and Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996), pp. 274-288; On middle class pressures: Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism*, pp. 223-4; On thirteen lost years Michael Pinto-Duschinsky, ‘Bread and Circuses? The Conservatives in Office 1951-1964’ in *The Age of Affluence 1951-64*, edited by Vernon Bogdaner and Robert Skidelsky (London: Macmillan, 1970), pp. 55-77; For summary of Labour’s charges and Tory responses: John Barnes and Anthony Seldon, ‘1951-1964: Thirteen Waster Years? Part 1: The Argument’, *Contemporary Record*, 1, 2 (1987) 19-21.

¹⁶ Jones, ‘The Cold War’; Tim Bale, *The Conservatives Since 1945: The Drivers of Party Change* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 50-1; Michael Kandiah, ‘Conservative Leaders, Strategy – and “Consensus”? 1945-1965’ in *The Myth of Consensus: New Views on British History, 1945-64*, edited by Harriet Jones and Michael Kandiah (Palgrave: Basingstoke, 1996), pp. 58-78; On restraints of small majority: Jefferys, *Retreat from New Jerusalem*, pp. 9-15, 32.

¹⁷ Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, p. 62; This view of a consensus politics was intrinsic to his interpretation of Thatcherism: Andrew Gamble, *The Free Economy and the Strong State: The Politics of Thatcherism* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994 [1988]), pp. 72-3; Tomlinson, ‘Conservative Modernisation’, 18-9; Jefferys, *Retreat from New Jerusalem*, pp. 36-40.

interpreted prosperity through established languages.¹⁸ Furthermore, for Gamble, the Tories' focus on growth was symptomatic of ideology's waning importance as parties became converted to 'rational', polling-led campaigns for the centre-ground, which encouraged them to 'appear less ideological' and retain only those distinctions necessary to keep supporters loyal.¹⁹ Although they make the case differently, Jon Lawrence and Lawrence Black similarly detect a 'dulling down' of electioneering, with the former arguing that debate became rational and less 'heroic' in response to suspicions of demagogic oratory.²⁰ This recent work highlights that the shifting mediums of debate were reflections of, and spurs to, changing relations between politicians and 'the people', but it also writes the messages transmitted out of its story.

Whilst not wholly incompatible with these interpretations, closer analysis of Tory rhetoric during the 1955 election and the debates feeding into the campaign provides an important counterweight to the notion of a less-ideological politics of growth and bolsters efforts to revise earlier readings of the campaign distorted by the narratives above. Historians generally stress the May election's uneventfulness and lack of ideological clash, minimising the significance of Tory rhetoric.²¹ Whilst admitting the 'parties still did their best to underline the differences between their policies', David Butler's classic review of manifestos, addresses and broadcasts passed over the arguments Conservatives made to differentiate themselves.²² Such neglect stems from his conviction that 1951-55 was a period of consensus and that if 'traditional battle-cries and images retain[ed] an electoral appeal, and a place in the election address, [they did so]

¹⁸ For quote and some very brief examples of the possibilities: Lawrence Black, 'The Impression of Affluence: Political Culture in the 1950s and 1960s' in *An Affluent Society?: Britain's Post-War "Golden Age" Revisited*, edited by Lawrence Black and Hugh Pemberton (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 85-106 at 91, 94; Zweiniger-Bargielwska's brief account of 1951-55 tackles a narrow selection of the issues but not rhetoric: *Austerity in Britain*, pp. 234-42.

¹⁹ Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, pp. 65-7.

²⁰ Jon Lawrence, *Electing Our Masters: The Hustings in British Politics from Hogarth to Blair* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 137, 142-3, 146-7; Lawrence Black, *Redefining British Politics: Culture, Consumerism and Participation, 1954-70* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 172-205.

²¹ David Butler, *The British General Election of 1955* (London: Macmillan, 1955), p. 1; Jefferys, *Retreat from New Jerusalem* pp. 36-40; Blake, *The Conservative Party*, pp. 273-4; Lawrence, *Electing Our Masters*, p. 150.

²² Butler merely acknowledges 26% of candidates mentioned freedom in their addresses and that 'Conservatives boasted most of their liberation of the housewife from the tyranny of the ration-book after fourteen long years': Butler, *The British General Election of 1955*, pp. 47-64, 9, 33.

out of all proportion to the real differences of policy they represent[ed]'.²³ Certainly, the threat to Britain's free economy had to share more space in propaganda with foreign affairs than normal in post-war elections, but Butler underplayed the partisan debate over affluence. Although Zweiniger-Bargielwska recognised this inadequacy, a focus on rationing and reliance on central publications prevented her from connecting the housewife's liberation to the broader frame Conservatives projected onto politics.²⁴ Moreover, like Butler, she neglects the rhetorical construction of candidates' appeals and thereby wrongly positions 1955 as an end point in Tory oratory. In fact, scrutinising the arguments made on air and in print suggests that 1955 represented a significant development in Tories' freedom rhetoric, which would outlast the politics of austerity and bridge Churchill and Macmillan's oratory. In reworking their rhetoric to defend a record, Conservatives retained the tools used to attack economic failure in the forties, but adjusted these to the new task of defending a record built on employment and welfare as much as terminating rationing, whilst developing a highly-ideological vision of 'affluence' and progress, not easily reduced to materialism.

Attributing economic prosperity, not to a worldwide upturn, but to their policy of freedom was central to most candidates' appeals in 1955. Attempts to explain how 'Conservative Freedom' had produced growth were necessarily fairly curt in propaganda, and most efforts sat somewhere between assertion, correlation, and the truncated versions of theory fed to candidates via *The Campaign Guide*, Central Office memoranda, and *Daily Notes*. Fully stated, 'Conservative Freedom Works', the slogan of the garish pre-election poster campaign reproduced in figure 3.1, signified three layers of economic policy: First, the new Chancellor, R.A Butler, claimed that a 'flexible monetary and credit policy', which varied the bank-rate and hire-purchase terms, was a more effective means of managing inflation than controls or taxing for a budget surplus. This permitted a second strand of policy that attempted to create the climate for expansion by freeing industry from controls, the housewife from rationing, and workers from incentive-sapping taxation, and cutting government expenditure on bureaucracy. Finally, a third, and more controversial, element claimed to have negotiated freer world trade for Britain's exports, removed import

²³ Butler, *The British General Election of 1955*, p. 35.

²⁴ Zweiniger-Bargielwska, *Austerity in Britain*, pp. 234-42 esp. 239-42.

restrictions, and returned most state trading to private enterprise.²⁵ In retrospect, these measures took on a cohesion which allowed Tories to claim that 'Conservative Freedom Works' applied to much more than derationing: 'greater freedom and flexibility', it was argued, allowed industry to 'adapt itself more rapidly to fluctuations in the world trade', monetary policy meant bureaucratic restriction could be avoided, and tax reductions incentivised greater production.²⁶ As a result, freedom could be held responsible for full employment, housing, and rising production.

In truth, Conservative sloganeering lent artificial coherency to measures that emerged haphazardly. Indeed, the theme of liberation itself only gradually became dominant, not least because Butler's first budget as Chancellor imposed rather than lifted controls.²⁷ When he announced his 1952 measures, the only hint that Butler had been elected to 'set the people free' was the portrayal of tax cuts and the removal of some commodities from controls as tentative moves to a freer economy and removing the 'crushing burden of income tax'.²⁸ Indeed, many speakers at the party's 1952 conference emphasised restraint, not freedom, and when the latter was mentioned it was only in the context of reducing public expenditure to save the country from crippling taxation.²⁹ Richard Law argued that 'a free society cannot operate with taxation at these levels, because a free economy cannot operate with taxation at these levels'. Without controlling inflation via spending cuts, he claimed controls could not be abolished nor incentives given.³⁰ Here Law was using the arguments developed in opposition to encourage his own government to take further action. But by the following year's budget, Butler's emancipatory tone was becoming stronger and he commended the package to the House as 'a new direction... step[ping] out from the confines of restriction to the almost forgotten but beckoning prospects of freer endeavour and greater reward for effort', even if privately he regarded the inability to show a real plan for cutting

²⁵ Conservative and Unionist Central Office (hereafter CUCO), *The Campaign Guide 1955* (London: CUCO, 1955), p. 3.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²⁷ Ramsden, *The Age of Churchill and Eden*, pp. 247-8.

²⁸ R.A. Butler, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 497, 11 Mar 1952, cols. 1269-1322; CUCO, *We Shall Win Through* (London: CUCO, 1952).

²⁹ Unless otherwise stated, all conference speeches are drawn from the relevant CUCO *Conference Report*. Graham Rowlandson, Conference Speech, 1955, pp. 42-3; John Arbuthnot, Conference Speech, 1955, pp. 44-5 at 44.

³⁰ Richard Law, Conference Speech, 1952, pp. 46-7 at 46.

expenditure a weakness of the speech.³¹ At the 1953 conference Butler also placed more emphasis on freedom in an effort to cajole supporters of imperial preference or agricultural subsidies into sticking to the policy of 'freeing the economy': 'if there are interests, vested or otherwise, which enjoyed the softer days of control and allocation, they have got to realise that we Conservatives have come to Margate this time not to plaster over disunity by a compromise programme, but to achieve unity which we already have by a policy which we intend to follow through'.³² Throughout 1954 it is clear that Butler felt pressured by the party to reduce expenditure and taxation further, but privately recognised this would not be possible in 1955-6.³³ Yet, rather than abandon his freedom rhetoric, his focus simply shifted to the broader 'march to freedom' represented by the abolition of rationing, bureaucrats and wartime regulations, and using the 'free economy' as a defence of why he could not control the cost of living directly: 'I would rather have freedom, success and choice than control, restriction and want'.³⁴ Thus, it is important to position the 1955 campaign as the culmination of Conservatives' growing confidence in their use of emancipation, a theme whose focus had shifted according to immediate needs.

During the 1955 campaign itself the link between freedom and success normally relied on blunt assertion that 'Britain's recovery and rising living standards have not been achieved by accident' but by the 'Conservative policy of freeing enterprise from restriction, and encouraging effort by incentives'.³⁵ Having posed the triumphalist question, 'Why have we done so well?', Ronald Watson, standing at Newark, simply answered 'because we have had a Conservative Government which had freed the Nation from Socialist controls, restored free competition and managed our finances wisely'.³⁶ In this way a succession of issues could be marshalled under a single, simple theme. Central Office propaganda claimed 'Cheaper Tea – Another Victory for "Freedom of Choice"', 'Tea prices are coming down. What is the lesson to be learnt? It is that

³¹ R.A. Butler, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 514, 14 Apr 1953, cols. 33-62 at 62; Cabinet Notebook, 16 Apr 1953, Public Records Office (hereafter P.R.O.) CAB 195/11/35.

³² R.A. Butler, Conference Speech, 1953, pp. 47-9 at 47.

³³ 'Report of the Committee on Civil Expenditure: Memorandum by the Chancellor of the Exchequer', P.R.O. CAB 129/70/2.

³⁴ R.A. Butler, Speech at Gloucester, 1954 quoted in: *The Campaign Guide*, p. 68.

³⁵ CUCO, *The Weekly News Letter*, Vol. 11. No. 20, 14 May 1955, p. 1.

³⁶ Ronald Watson, Election Address, Newark, 1955, British Library of Political and Economic Science (hereafter B.L.P.E.S.), COLL MISC 0321/1/387.

Conservative freedom for the housewife works and controls do not'.³⁷ Similarly, Fred Hardman claimed that 'a million more people [were] in new homes' because 'Conservative Freedom let the builders build'.³⁸ The party's pre-election propaganda campaign, shown in figure 3.1, perfectly embodied this imposed cohesion across the policy field by uniting disparate achievements, such as 'it's the housewives choice', 'more food from our farms', 'recovery – now prosperity', 'it's full employment', with the explanatory tagline: 'Conservative Freedom Works'.³⁹ There were more complex explanations, some of which dared to incorporate claims to be taking the lead on a freer system of world trade,⁴⁰ but as in 1951 the headline rhetorical function of freedom in 1955 was distilling a range of policies into a single theme. Unlike 1951, however, the purpose of doing so was to attribute success to government policy, not a favourable turn in the balance of trade.

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Figure 3.1 *Conservative Party Posters 1954*

Conservatives also adapted narratives about Britain's past, present, and future for the governing party's need to describe change, defend its actions, and appeal for continuity. Many candidates attempted to prompt memories of Attlee's premiership as a time of restriction and control. Under the heading 'Our Liberty', for example, John Jackson asked electors: 'Do you remember ration cards, identity cards, power cuts, food snoopers, and all the other irritations and restrictions? Are they there now?'⁴¹ Descriptions of the past often attacked Labour's slow removal of wartime regulations. 'Some six years after the war we

³⁷ CUCO, 'Cheaper Tea', Election Leaflet 1955, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/135A, folio 77.

³⁸ Fred Hardman, Election Address, Wolverhampton North East, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/173.

³⁹ Conservative Party Archive Posters: CPA Poster archive available via:

<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/cpa/collections/posters-collection> [Accessed: Jan 2013].

⁴⁰ Fergus Graham, Election Address, Darlington, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/97.

⁴¹ John Jackson, Election Address, South-East Derbyshire, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/186.

were still rationed; controls hampered industrial expansion and individual freedom', Peter Kirk reminded voters who would help him unseat Richard Acland at Gravesend.⁴² Indeed, the Research Department (CRD) encouraged candidates to use the past to mock Labour's idea of liberty:

If socialist "freedom" doesn't mean restrictions and controls, why did this country have to wait for a Conservative Government in order to rid itself of the thick network of controls by which it was stifled for over six years? Does it mean "helping men and women into occupations" by using direction of labour, as it did last time? Does it mean freedom to have a financial crisis every second year, constant inflation, penal taxation, short rations and the discouragement of thrift, as well as maintaining a stranglehold on enterprise?⁴³

Thus, the attacks of 1945-51 became icons in a highly partisan history.

Establishing such associations was a necessary prelude to the liberation narratives used to favourably recount their own period in office. Conservatives rhetorically bludgeoned audiences into accepting this version of events with reassurances they were now free, and asking voters to remember and be grateful for emancipation (see figure 3.3). Naturally, the abolition of rationing was the go-to example of liberation, and Eden's triumphal odes to the improved condition of a people 'free to choose what they wanted in the shops' were typical.⁴⁴ Others like Farey-Jones declared 'We are Free – Free to buy what we like within our means – Free to go where we like to get it'.⁴⁵ 'From Controls to FREEDOM',⁴⁶ was certainly a compelling narrative, facilitating a wealth of imagery as 'the shackles of the socialist planners [were] broken', but it also incorporated a range of topics beyond rationing that escape Zweiniger-Bargielowska's analysis.⁴⁷ Fighting Newark, Ronald Watson argued the Government had 'press[ed] forward with its policy for restoring freedom in industry and the individual. Instead of controls and restrictions, the Country was given opportunity and incentive'. As a result, industry was 'booming' with full

⁴² Peter Kirk, Election Address, Gravesend, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/185.

⁴³ CRD, *Daily Notes*, No. 10, 17 May 1955, p. 6.

⁴⁴ Anthony Eden, Speech at Leeds, 9 May 1955 reported in *The Times*, 10 May 1955, p. 14.

⁴⁵ F.W. Farey-Jones, Election Address, Watford, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/108.

⁴⁶ Howard Johnson, Election Address, Brighton Kemptown, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/194.

⁴⁷ A.A. Jones, Election Address, Wellingborough, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/198.

employment.⁴⁸ Similarly, Butler's budgets were presented as having 'freed' half a million from income tax, and the 'air of frustration... ha[d] changed to one of opportunity and hope for the future'.⁴⁹ Moreover, Butler himself inserted recent events into a longer history using the balance model popular in the late-forties:

When we saw a selfish individualist creed run riot in the last century we intervened by State legislation to care for the condition of children and workers in mine and factory. When we saw State control go mad, as it had by 1951 when we came into office we turned our economy over to freedom and restored personal initiative and opportunity. You may be sure that over the next few years we will keep the balance true. We do not intend to tolerate monopolies or unfair price rigging. At the same time we shall not hesitate to reward success and cut loose cramping restrictions on human endeavour.⁵⁰

Thus, freedom from rationing was not a liberation narrative that merely supplemented a bigger story about affluence; prosperity itself was framed as the boon of emancipation.

The epilogue to this history was an affluent future, but one conditional upon continued freedom and neatly summarised in the slogan: 'Conservative Freedom Works – Give it the Chance to Go On Working'.⁵¹ Standing at Sunderland, Auberon Herbert, for example, predicted that 'a greater future, with happiness and prosperity for all' lay before the 'thriving and vigorous town of Sunderland' but only 'if our people are allowed to follow their natural genius in trade and industry unhampered by artificial controls'.⁵² For candidates like Robert Grimston at Westbury, promises to 'build a greater prosperity for all' were inseparable from the assertion this 'must be based on the idea that people are individuals who should be encouraged, who should be trusted. Led, yes, but not dragooned'.⁵³ Indeed, just as important as portraying bright prospects under

⁴⁸ Ronald Watson, Election Address, Newark, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/387.

⁴⁹ Harold Gurden, Election Address, Selly Oak, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/149; *The Campaign Guide*, p. 1.

⁵⁰ R.A. Butler, Election Broadcast, 21 May 1955, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/135, folios 131-3 at 132.

⁵¹ Douglas Glover, Election Address, Ormskirk, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/107; Henry Hopkinson, Election Address, Taunton, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/177.

⁵² Auberon Herbert, Election Address, Sunderland, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/160.

⁵³ Robert Grimston, Election Address, Westbury, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/146; Peter Walker, Election Address, Dartford, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/403.

Tory rule was painting the risks of a socialist future. Labour's plan was no different, candidates alleged, to the restrictive policies of 1945-51, which included the reinstatement of 'snoopers' as figure 3.2 points out using the iconography of totalitarianism.⁵⁴ Now, though, candidates articulated the choice between potential futures by combining the imagery common in 1951 with the notion of gambling. The party's future leader, Edward Heath, implored his constituents not to 'run the risk' of losing freedom of choice, and next to an image of dice the electors of Erith and Crayford were warned:⁵⁵

Danger Socialists At Work. Danger. Have you read the Socialist manifesto? You ought to. It tells you what could happen. It promises you a return to nationalisation, to price controls "where necessary". If you give the Socialists another chance to disrupt our economy, watch out for disaster. Look out for inflation, for restrictions, queues and rationing. The Conservatives promise you freedom from all these miseries.⁵⁶

Sometimes unemployment and financial crisis were listed as the consequences of departing from freedom, but others captioned gambling imagery with blunter messages like: 'Freedom – it's good – don't let them take it away – vote Conservative-Liberal'.⁵⁷ Yet, the prosperity being gambled was not simply materialism. Central office publications claimed that '...if the Socialists came back freedom would go out. As Mr. Herbert Morrison has said, Labour "doesn't believe" freedom works'.⁵⁸ This appeal often built on *pathos*: 'Control this, regulate that; have a Ministry for his, a Board for that. There is your Socialist policy. It's always "the Gentleman in Whitehall who knows best", as a member of the Socialist Government said a few years ago. Is that what you think? Don't you think that you know best what to buy, and how and where to buy it? You won't enjoy that kind of freedom under another Socialist Government. It will be back to controls, especially if the extremists in the Socialist Party got control, as they most likely would'.⁵⁹ Narratives about Britain's past, present and future

⁵⁴ Geoffrey Jennings, Election Address, Ogmere, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/202.

⁵⁵ Edward Heath, Election Address, Bexley, 1955. B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/135.

⁵⁶ Edward Gardner, Election Address, Erith and Crayford, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/132.

⁵⁷ Harold Watkinson, Election Address, Woking, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/411;

E.W. Flynn, Election Address, Sheffield Brightside, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/95.

⁵⁸ 'Conservative Freedom of Choice has Meant', Election Leaflet 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1.

⁵⁹ Harold Gurden, Election Address, Selly Oak, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/149.

were not simply banal commentaries on improved administration, greater prosperity, or choice; each of these elements was inserted into a story of national liberation that repurposed the tropes, models and figures of opposition.

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Figure 3.2 *Conservative Party Leaflet, 1955*⁶⁰

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Figure 3.3 *The Beacon, 1955*⁶¹

This implicit elision of progress with freedom was frequently expressed through journey metaphors, which contrasted Conservatives' forward momentum with Labour's regressive plans and brought together several attacks and rhetorical devices. 'To put it in a nutshell', one candidate declared, 'either we can continue with the system of personal freedom, free enterprise and genuine security which

⁶⁰ Peter Kenyon, Election Address, West Wiseldon, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/195.

⁶¹ *The Beacon*, Jan 1955, p. 4 in Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/121B, folio 499.

has done good to everyone and harm to no-one, *or* we can take a step backwards and submit ourselves to the wisecracks who maintained rationing in accordance with their socialist theories far longer than was necessary...'.⁶² Here, a linear road to progress acted as a container for appeals to *pathos* and tropes of a doctrinaire, incompetent bureaucracy, but elsewhere the same metaphor provided a scaffold upon which the disparate elements of Tory critiques could form neat *parallelisms* that asked constituents to choose between travelling 'forwards with the Conservatives, united, to Freedom–Prosperity–Lower Taxes or backwards with the disunited Socialists to Controls–More Nationalisation–Restrictions–Higher Taxes'.⁶³ Like other techniques for creating contrast, these lines primed voters to make decisions based on favourably-narrow comparisons, but the metaphor overlaid these with the party's key message: their programme was progressive, whilst Labour's was outdated. Moreover, just as emancipation metaphors were variously configured in 1951, these host structures could be tailored to translate the freedom-versus-unfreedom frame into subtly different choices. Hence, rather than a direction of travel on the linear paths above, 'freedom' could also be a signpost at the 'crossroads' Britain had reached on her road to recovery,⁶⁴ or an ultimate destination in arguments that voters should keep going on 'the road to freedom', so as to reap the rewards of their efforts thus far.⁶⁵ On a practical level, then, journey metaphors allowed strands of critique and rhetorical devices to cohere around a broader framework, but they also translated the basic frame into an emotive choice with favourable connotations.

It is a mistake to derogate such metaphors as clichés; their triteness reflects a process of authoring frames and political rhetoric that is characterised, not by invention, but layering in three related senses. First, political meaning tends to be layered onto existing resources. Both POLITICS AS JOURNEY and ELECTION AS CROSSROADS draw on a wider cultural heritage, which Lakoff and Johnson claim is rooted in the base metaphors TIME PASSES and ARGUMENT AS PATH. Tory candidates manipulated that heritage to personalise responsibility for Britain's

⁶² Auberon Herbert, Election Address, Sunderland, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/160; This was common message even in victory speeches: Wille Whitelaw, Victory Speech, 26 May 1955, filmed in: BBC 1955 Election Coverage, available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jvVLblcjkM> [Accessed: Feb 2014].

⁶³ Charles Williams, Election Leaflet, Torquay, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/412.

⁶⁴ Eveline Hill, Election Address, Wythenshawe, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/172.

⁶⁵ Ian Macleod, Election Address, Enfield West, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/298.

future and stress the urgency of decision through politicised versions of imagery audiences already associated with decision making.⁶⁶ Second, the layering of metaphors amplifies this effect by colouring opponents' proposals with culturally-negative associations. For example, journey metaphors were regularly partnered with derivations of LIGHT AS LIFE - DARKNESS AS DEATH pairs to claim 'the Conservative Torch of Freedom [could] light the way to a golden future for you and your children, if wisdom [was] your guide on May 26th'.⁶⁷ When combined graphically, as in figure 3.4, the elector was confronted with a powerful, culturally-loaded binary, which also worked in an argument of direction as a path sliding leftwards downhill into darkness and made an analogy between economic and biological growth. Thirdly, both metaphors could very subtly layer more abstract meaning onto apparently materialistic messages, informing the layout of election ephemera portraying scarcity and abundance. Figure 3.5 shows the contrast between brighter, plentiful and larger freedom under the Conservatives, and darker, narrower queues under Labour. There is even a graphical element of direction, with 'freedom of choice' printed over the head of an arrow and 'rationing under Labour' the tail. Thus, Conservatives politicised affluence not only by making it conditional upon freedom, but by layering a series of wider cultural metaphors over this contention.

A particular target for these appeals was the housewife, who had allegedly been 'liberated' from the ration book and now faced the 'housewives choice' between 'controls under Labour or freedom under Conservatives'.⁶⁸ Central propaganda, which was keen to warn that Labour planned to 'trick her with a "plan" to control prices', tailored the past-present narratives above accordingly: 'Are you a Housewife?', *Fancy Calling Socialism Freedom* asked. 'Remember the fish queue, the meat queue, and every other blessed queue? They've all gone. You're FREE NOW to take your choice'.⁶⁹ Similarly, messages from candidate's wives highlighted their unwillingness 'to return to the bad old days of socialist restrictions' when they could 'enjoy the freedom and prosperity that only a

⁶⁶ George Lakoff and Mark Johnstone, *Metaphors We Live By*, Kindle Edition (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2003 [1980]), loc 1653.

⁶⁷ Dennis Walls, Election Address, Manchester, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/410.

⁶⁸ Michael Keegan, South Nottingham, Election Address, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/203.

⁶⁹ 'Fancy Calling Socialism Freedom', Election Leaflet, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1.

Conservative government can give'.⁷⁰ On one level, material goods were central to such appeals: freedom was 'to shop where [you] like, when [you] like' and imagery of plentiful food and white goods supported claims that 'freedom of choice has meant... more clothes, more food, less drudgery'.⁷¹ But not every appeal to 'better conditions' or 'freedom from rationing and queues' can be equated with materialism.⁷² Sometimes the message was as much about effective consumerism and bureaucrats usurping housewives' assigned roles, as it was about the sheer availability of goods. Broadcasting for the party on 13 May, Edith Pitt argued:

...because of the freedom we enjoy, we women can now get the full value out of the money we spend on food. We don't think the gentleman in Whitehall knows best, as the Socialists said, we know this is the job where women have a natural gift. Do you really want some official to tell you how to do your shopping? I like shopping and I'm sure most women do, but it is only lately it's become a real pleasure again, something that gives us a change and an interest, and it is a joy many of the younger housewives are discovering for the first time.⁷³

This link between freedom and housewives' supposed roles had been used to defend price rises as goods came off the ration book prior to its abolition in 1954, but it gradually became an argument about consumer protection. On 10 March 1955, for example, Patricia Hornsby Smith maintained that 'the British housewife is perfectly capable of choosing good or bad quality for herself without having a body of bureaucrats, which is what the Labour Party advocate in their new set up of standards and commissioners and standardisation'.⁷⁴ Ultimately, beliefs about the association between capitalism and quality underlay this point. As *The Campaign Guide* explained: 'Conservatives do not believe that the freedom of the housewife to shop where she pleases and to buy

⁷⁰ Michael Keegan, Election Address, South Nottingham, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/203.

⁷¹ 'Conservative Freedom of Choice has Meant...', Election Leaflet, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1.

⁷² Kenneth Knee, Election Address, East Flintshire, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/183; William Jameson, Election Address, Dulwich, 1955, COLL MISC 0321/1/187.

⁷³ Edith Pitt, Election Broadcast, 13 May 1955, Churchill Papers, CHUR 2/135A, folios 39-41; Candidates were supplied with an accurate quotation of Jay's words under the heading 'Skeletons from the Socialist's Cupboard': CRD, *Daily Notes*, No. 6, 12 May 1955, p. 12.

⁷⁴ Patricia Hornsby Smith, Party Political Broadcast, 6 May 1953, reprinted in: 'The Government and the Nation's Housekeeping', *The Listener*, 14 May 1953, p. 802; Patricia Hornsby Smith, Party Political Broadcast, 10 Mar 1955 reprinted in: CUCO, *The Campaign Guide*, p. 66.

what she wants should in any way be restricted, or that she needs a horde of civil servants to make up her mind for her. No amount of Government regulations can be anything like as swift and effective in protecting the consumer as free competition and abundance'.⁷⁵ Narrowly constructed as the housewife, then, appeals to women show how Tories targeted and repurposed appeals, narratives, and tropes from their established rhetorical culture, but also reveal a finer distinction between the prosperity freedom brought and the freedom required by consumers to carry out their proper function.

As the antipathy towards bureaucrats in those appeals indicates, anti-statism represented a significant continuity within Conservative rhetoric. Contrary to David Butler's impression, critiques of over-government and the restoration of civil liberties were prominent themes in the constituencies. Alongside reinstating 'freedom of choice in what we buy and where we buy it', Conservatives boasted that 'the identity card' had gone and that 'right of entry to your home has been taken from hundreds of officials'.⁷⁶ But, even if many of the socialist infringements that previously animated party conferences had vanished, many candidates argued there was still work to be done in the light of Crichel Down.⁷⁷ 'Although recognising the valuable role that the State plays in modern society', Coventry East's candidate remained 'anxious to preserve the independence and rights of the private citizen which seem to me to be threatened more and more severely'.⁷⁸ Various solutions were offered: Sir Ian Fraser explained that Conservatives would deal with the remaining wartime regulations, simplify government, and preserve individuals' rights by 'limiting official interference', 'modifying compulsory purchase' and extending legal aid.⁷⁹ Yet, perhaps the most significant aspect of these appeals was that, despite the Government being their own, Tories' retained their *ethos* as defenders of liberty.⁸⁰ Having declared 'the freedom which we enjoy today is not complete' and condemned

⁷⁵ CUCO, *The Campaign Guide*, p. 66.

⁷⁶ Greville Howard, Election Address, St Ives Cornwall, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/147.

⁷⁷ On the complexities of this incident concerning previous owners preferential rights on compulsory land purchases: John Delafons, 'Crichel Down Revisited', *Public Administration*, 65, 3 (1987), 339-47.

⁷⁸ Michael A. Hooker, Election Address, Coventry East, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/157; CRD, *Daily Notes*, No. 12, 19 May 1955, pp. 11-12.

⁷⁹ Sir Ian Fraser, Election Address, Morecambe and Lonsdale, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/110.

⁸⁰ Farey-Jones, Election Address, Watford, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/108; Richard Wood, Election Address, Bridlington, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC, 0321/1/396.

Town and Country Planners' 'interference with ordinary people', Auberon Herbert assured electors they would have 'a member who will fight for the rights of the private citizen'.⁸¹ Similarly, Greville Howard promised that he would continue to do his best to 'help constituents, irrespective of Party... to see that the individual is not made to suffer injustice at the hands of large bodies and authorities'.⁸² CRD advised candidates to refute Attlee's claims he wanted to create a 'freer life for the majority' exactly on this ground: 'Mr Attlee's idea of a free people is a society in which nobody can build a house or open a shop or do anything without the permission of a bureaucrat – a society in which the gentleman in Whitehall ("big brother") knows what is good for people better than they do themselves'.⁸³ Concern with the power of the State was not a peculiarly Liberal obsession; indeed, it represented an element of stability within the broader shift between the rhetoric of opposition and government.

Likewise, the looming danger of a Socialist State remained important, particularly for attacks defining liberty as dispersion of power. Under the heading 'Freedom for the Individual', Henry Hopkinson's address informed Taunton electors that 'Socialism means that property and power become more and more concentrated in the hands of the State', whereas Conservatives' property-owning democracy would ensure 'they are ever more widely spread among the people'.⁸⁴ Jeffery's view that 'the rhetoric of "freedom" vied for attention with Eden's "property owning democracy" and Churchill's "ladder up which all can climb..." misunderstands the interconnectedness of Tory critiques'.⁸⁵ Even when Eden's famous concept was not framed as an antidote to the concentrated power threatening freedom, it was normally juxtaposed with restriction to define the electorate's choice.⁸⁶ The Prime Minister told a London crowd: 'A return to Socialism with all that this means, more nationalisation, more controls, more interference with the life of our people. Or alternatively, we can build on the work that has already been so well done... and create a truly

⁸¹ Auberon Herbert, Election Address, Sunderland, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/160.

⁸² Greville Howard, Election Address, St Ives Cornwall, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/147.

⁸³ CRD, *Daily Notes*, No. 8, 14 May 1955, p. 6.

⁸⁴ Henry Hopkinson, Election Address, Taunton, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/177; Further examples include: Richard Wood, Election Address, Bridlington, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC, 0321/1/396; Ian Fraser, Election Address, Morecambe and Lonsdale, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/110.

⁸⁵ Jefferys, *Retreat from New Jerusalem*, p. 34.

⁸⁶ CUCO, *United for Peace and Progress: The Conservative and Unionist Party's Policy* (London: CUCO, 1955), p. 5.

property-owning democracy. Can we carry that work a stage further so that our people, all of them, can have more power, more property, and more opportunity than they have ever known before?’⁸⁷ Similarly, the old scares that Labour’s moderate programme was a pretence hiding the influence of its left-wing took on a new currency given Labour’s divisions; George Christ’s warning that ‘Forward with Labour’ really meant ‘Forward to a Socialist State’ was a weak version of claims that socialism would lead to ‘Communism and dictatorship’ and threatened the freedoms Britain fought for.⁸⁸ Such attacks sometimes rivalled the hyperbole of opposition, with claims that socialism demanded ‘the complete subjugation of everything and everybody to the state’, was ‘based on dictatorial rule’, ‘immune against representative associations, societies and unions’, feared individual freedom, and allowed ‘nothing to stand in the way of its dogged career towards complete domination’. Previously Labour had ‘played dangerously’ with its theories, and one section of the party would ‘go very far along the road of no return and the people who would push it there will find that it is too late to repent when their expectations are proved false’.⁸⁹ However, it is important not to equate these attacks with ‘neoliberal’ economics. Dennis Walls, for example, believed that ‘the threatening shadow of socialism’ and its programme of alleged soviet-style nationalisation and collective farming would endanger the ‘free society’, but ‘planning’ still adorned the rightwards-pointing signpost in his crossroads metaphor.⁹⁰ As in 1950 and 1951, these appeals were in part targeting Liberals, most notably by pointing out the disparity between Megan Lloyd George’s actions (she had recently joined Labour) and her father’s prophetic warnings about the socialist threat to liberty.⁹¹

Importantly, these strands of rhetoric rarely stood alone. Candidates closed their election addresses by interweaving them to frame the choice facing the electorate in a dramatic series of contrasts that linked property ownership, individual liberties, shopping, and the number of civil servants.⁹² Continuing his

⁸⁷ Anthony Eden, Speech at London, 21 Apr 1955 reprinted in: CRD, *Daily Notes*, No. 2, 7 May 1955, p. 1.

⁸⁸ CUCO, *The Weekly News Letter*, Vol. 11. No. 20, 14 May 1955, p. 1; Edwin Hodson, Election Address, Ashton-under-Lyne, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/152.

⁸⁹ David Hopkins, Election Address, Brigg, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/167.

⁹⁰ Dennis Walls, Election Address, Manchester, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/410.

⁹¹ Lord Salter quoted in: CRD, *Daily Notes*, No. 14, 21 May 1955, p. 5; CRD, *Daily Notes*, No. 4, 10 May 1955, pp. 4-5.

⁹² Michael Hughes Young, Election Address, Wandsworth Central, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/142.

attempt to unseat Labour's Lance Mallalieu, for example, David Hopkins rewrote Central Office material to confront Brigg constituents with a stark series of contrasts:

You have two alternatives, mine and my opponent's; he clings to the broken reed of nationalisation, I believe in a property-owning democracy; he relies on officialdom, I rely on enterprise; his policy is to multiply restraints, mine is to multiply opportunities; his party is divided to divide the nation, mine is united to unite the nation; over his head looms up the ugly leer of socialism, over mine the bright prospect of progress and opportunity.⁹³

But perhaps the best instance of these elements coming together to frame voters' choice was one of the party's earliest television broadcasts.⁹⁴ The narrator claimed that on election night in 1951 'the whole history of this country was on the point of change'. He went on to remind voters 'of what has happened since that fateful October' with striking visual imagery:

The Socialists are for controls and austerity. [Shot of withered plant] But the Conservative policy is incentive and expansion. [Plant revives after watering]

The socialist prescription is to cut down and restrict. [Illustration of tree being chopped and grass being cut] The Conservatives work for freedom and plenty. [Light and open farming vista] Britain Strong and free was our election cry in 1951. [Focus on 1951 manifesto title] Strength has come to us over the last four years because of our recovery.

And freedom has come in many ways. Into the waste paper basket went identity cards, building licences, repairs licences, development charges, most wartime controls, the act to nationalise steel, dozens of forms farmers had to fill out and the ration book. [Shots of wastepaper basket filling up]

⁹³ David Hopkins, Election Address, Brigg, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/167.

⁹⁴ 1951 had already seen Eden in discussion with Leslie Mitchel, but the number of television sets was relatively low. Party Election Broadcast, 10 May 1955, Available at: <http://pebs.group.shef.ac.uk/harold-macmillan> [Accessed: Jul 2013].

After listing the party's derationing he continued:

Here is the story of progress in a nutshell. Registered customers only. [Shot of shop signs changing] Then.. Anyone served. That was the breath of freedom. Now no space is taken to tell you the shop will serve you, you take your choice.⁹⁵

That short film summed up the Tories' campaign. It was premised on a narrative of the years 1951-55 as witnessing fundamental change, expressed in terms of a simple binary that could be elaborated to incorporate a number of issues. Triumphant in tone, the strategy was to draw consistent contrasts associated with freedom, helpfully illustrated through established metaphors of natural growth either inhibited or unbound. But rather than an end point, 1955 represented the successful reorientation of freedom rhetoric into a cry for continuity that remained central to the leadership of the man whose face filled the television screen at the end of the broadcast above: Harold Macmillan.

⁹⁵ Party Election Broadcast, 10 May 1955 available at: <http://pebs.group.shef.ac.uk/> [last accessed: Jun 2012]

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Figure 3.4 *Conservative Leaflet 1955*⁹⁶

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Figure 3.5 *'Under Labour, Rationing, Under the Conservatives Freedom of Choice', 1955*⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Charles Lawson, Election Address, Eccles, 1955, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1/260

⁹⁷ CUCO, *Under Labour, Rationing, Under the Conservatives Freedom of Choice*, 1955 Election Leaflet, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0321/1.

II

Macmillan: Neoliberal Nadir, Party Management or Middle Way Liberty?

Over no other period have the twin influences of 'neoliberalism' and 'consensus' exerted such a powerful hold on the interpretation of freedom rhetoric as that between Harold Macmillan's accession to the Premiership and his resignation during the 1963 party conference.⁹⁸ For Gamble, Harris and others, 1957-63 represented the zenith of a post-war consensus, the 'nadir of neoliberalism', and the point at which the 'schizophrenia between Conservative rhetoric about "setting the people free" and the corporatism of the fifties' reached its peak.⁹⁹ The narrative underlying these accounts alleged that, under the banner of a 'consensus, one-nation party', Macmillan defeated Thorneycroft's attempts to control inflation through spending cuts, extended the welfare state, and pushed an expansionist policy designed to prevent unemployment onto successive chancellors, whose complicity varied.¹⁰⁰ Against the backdrop of introspection about Britain's comparatively lacklustre growth and the failures of a stop-go economy, Macmillan became increasingly interventionist. For these historians, Selwyn Lloyd's 1961 pay-pause and formation of the National Economic Development Council (NEDC or 'Neddy') augured a headlong rush into state planning in the name of 'modernisation', symbolised by 1962's 'New Approach' and National Incomes Commission (NIC or 'Nikky').¹⁰¹ All this, critics claimed, 'was a long way from the Conservatism of ten years earlier'.¹⁰² From the late-nineties, this story was subjected to piecemeal revision. For example, whilst they dispute monetarism's role in Thorneycroft's resignation, historians agree

⁹⁸ For a useful account of Macmillan during this period, but one which omits reference to his rhetoric see: Thorpe, *Supermac*.

⁹⁹ Gamble, *Conservative Nation*, pp. 61-80; *The Free Economy*, pp. 72-6; Harris, *Competition and the Corporate Society*, pp. 149-246, esp. 149-54; Charmley, *A History of Conservative Politics*, quote at p. 182; Blake, *The Conservative Party*, pp. 284-93; For more nuanced accounts, but which ultimately retain much of this narrative: Ramsden, *The Winds of Change*, pp. 143-71, 'nadir' phrase at 158; Cockett, *Thinking the Unthinkable*, p. 159; John Turner, '1951-64', pp. 328-42; For more balanced assessments of the 'gap' between words and action: Tomlinson, "Liberty with Order"; Martin Francis, "Set the People Free".

¹⁰⁰ For some this was a politicised narrative: David Willets, *Modern Conservatism* (London: Penguin Books, 1992) pp. 41-2; Classic statements of the economic consensus case: David Dutton, *British Politics Since 1945: The Rise, Fall and Rebirth of Consensus*, Second Edition (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997); Keith Middlemas, *Power, Competition and the State*, Volume Two (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), esp. 23-93; Kenneth Morgan, *The People's Peace: British History 1945-1989* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 175 for quote.

¹⁰¹ Middlemas, *Power, Competition and the State*, Volume Two, pp. 23-92; Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, pp. 75-8; Harris, *Competition and the Corporate Society*, pp. 236-42; Phillips and Wilson, 'The Conservative Party', esp. pp. 50-1.

¹⁰² David Willets, *Modern Conservatism*, p. 42.

that Macmillan and his cabinet were much nearer the Chancellor's views in 1958 than had been assumed and that the Government remained committed to both the end and means of controlling inflation.¹⁰³ Likewise, Alan Booth stressed the continuities between mid-fifties and early-sixties economic policy and showed that growth was pursued less single-mindedly than once imagined.¹⁰⁴ Recently released cabinet notebooks show Macmillan positioning growth as the sweetener for accepting a tougher incomes policy and reveal a significant deflationary faction, only warded off by fear of electoral suicide.¹⁰⁵ Indeed, contrary to his self-portrayal as an unequivocal expansionist trying to avoid unemployment at any cost, Macmillan sometimes supported deflationary measures (when the electoral cycle allowed) and was neither an unqualified Keynesian nor quasi-socialist *dirigiste*.¹⁰⁶ This revised understanding of economic policy sits alongside more nuanced assessments of a party experiencing protracted disagreements, attempting to break from universalism and other tenets of the social policy 'consensus', but ultimately bound to the post-war settlement by competing electoral considerations.¹⁰⁷

But whilst historians have complicated the second half of Phillips and Wilson's claim that 'despite the need to voice liberal slogans, the Conservative government... maintained the social democratic consensus', they are yet to attack the first and liberate Macmillan's rhetoric from the narratives imposed by Gamble and Harris.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, the revisionist literature also contains

¹⁰³ On this and the scepticism of Ministers and officials about general reflation: Neil Rollings, 'Butskellism, the Postwar Consensus and the Managed Economy' in *The Myth of Consensus* edited by Harriet Jones and Michael Kandiah (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1996), pp. 97-119 at 102-9; Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism*, pp. 192-213; Chris Cooper, 'Little Local Difficulties Revisited: Peter Thorneycroft, the 1958 Treasury Resignations and the Origins of Thatcherism', *Contemporary British History*, 25, 2 (2011), 227-50; For an early recognition of shared aims regarding Sterling: Scott Newton and Dilwyn Porter, *Modernization Frustrated: The Politics of Industrial Decline in Britain Since 1900* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), p. 132.

¹⁰⁴ Alan Booth, 'Inflation, Expectations and the Political Economy of Conservative Britain 1951-64', *Historical Journal*, 43, 3 (2000), 827-47 at 843-5.

¹⁰⁵ Harold Macmillan, 'Incomes Policy', 19 Jun 1962, P.R.O., CAB 129/109/49; 'Incomes Policy', 9 Jul 1962, P.R.O., CAB 129/110/1; Cabinet Notebook, 12 Jul 1962, P.R.O., CAB 195/21/11.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 841-2, 846; Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism*, 157-91 esp. 186.

¹⁰⁷ For party disagreement: Bale, *The Conservative Party Since 1945*, pp. 71-2, 85; On developing thinking in social policy: Rodney Lowe, 'The Replanning of the Welfare State, 1957-1964' in *The Conservatives and British society, 1880-1980* edited by Martin Francis and Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996), pp. 255-73; Jefferys, *Retreat from New Jerusalem*, 131-53; For the thesis that electoral pressure accounted for appearance of consensus: Jones, 'The Cold War'; Green, 'The Conservative Party'; Gamble had always acknowledged the clashing 'electoral perspective' of the Progressive Right leadership and the 'ideology of support' of its membership, but wrongly assumed the former was unsympathetic to the latter's aims: *The Conservative Nation*, pp. 70-81.

¹⁰⁸ Phillips and Wilson, 'The Conservative Party', p. 50.

problematic readings of Tory oratory, not least the simplification of Macmillan's appeal to 'material rewards', a strategy supposedly epitomised by the 1959 campaign.¹⁰⁹ Historians artificially separate post-1955 oratory from its 1945-55 roots, and attempts to identify a 'ready audience' for Thatcherism in late-fifties 'middle-class revolts' have predisposed historians to find suppressed 'libertarian themes' in Tory rhetoric instead of the alternative visions of freedom developed to present 'Conservative planning'.¹¹⁰ In extending the reappraisal of Macmillan's leadership beyond policy, this section demonstrates that the supposed 'nadir of neoliberalism' was not a nadir for freedom rhetoric. Instead of unchanging, ritualistic, hollow 'liberal slogans' at odds with the Government's policy, freedom rhetoric helped the 1957-63 party define its identity just as much as under Churchill or Thatcher, with speakers reworking inherited forms and extending the notions of the 'free society' and opportunity. Nor was liberation of secondary importance to 'materialistic' appeals, a sign of suppressed 'neoliberalism', or merely an insincere tool of party management. Instead, a picture of this chapter's overarching claim emerges in miniature: those defending or attacking Macmillan's policies articulated their positions through a shared, inherited but evolving language, which expressed an underlying continuity in how Conservatives framed politics. Before examining the more complex approaches to liberty which made 1957-63 more than a homage to 1951, this section highlights the mix of continuity and change in Macmillan and his supporters' freedom rhetoric, positions the 'Opportunity State' within the overarching frame, re-reads the 1959 election as more than a materialistic auction, and shows that liberty was essential for Tory advocacy of limited planning.

¹⁰⁹ Jefferys, *Retreat from New Jerusalem*, pp. 78-84; Kandiah, 'Conservative Leaders, Strategy', p. 65; Ramsden, *The Winds of Change*, p. 143.

¹¹⁰ Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, pp. 242, 254-5; Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism*, p. 236; 'The Conservative Party', p. 189; On planning, the initiatives have been well studied, but not the rhetoric used to present them: Tomlinson, 'Conservative Modernisation'; For a detailed discussion which emphasises the political and electoral barriers to modernisation: Stuart Mitchell, *The Brief and Turbulent Life of Modernising Conservatism* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2006); Glen O'Hara, "Intractable, Obscure and Baffling": The Incomes Policy of the Conservative Government, 1957-64', *Contemporary British History*, 18, 1 (2004), 25-53; For an emphasis on the disparate visions of 'growth' contributing to the NEDC: Astrid Ringe and Neil Rollings, 'Responding to Relative Decline: The Creation of the National Economic Development Council', *Economic History Review*, 53, 2 (2000), 331-53; Stewart Wood, 'Why "Indicative Planning" Failed: British Industry and the Formation of the National Economic Development Council 1960-64', *Twentieth Century British History*, 11, 4 (2000), 431-459.

By the late fifties, the frame described above was well-worn, and Labour derided the consequences of 'Tory Freedom' on subjects from education and rents to monopolies and potato prices.¹¹¹ Undeterred, Macmillan continued to frame politics in familiar terms. His inaugural conference speech as leader reaffirmed:

It will be true next time, as it was last time and the time before that – to borrow a phrase from our old friend Anthony Eden – that the broad divide in our political life is between Socialism and freedom, between those who accept the doctrine that the State should dominate the life of the individual and those who believe in the highest degree of individual freedom compatible with an ordered community and the common good.¹¹²

Attentive listeners might have suspected that Macmillan was Eden's rhetorical successor, not Churchill's; both ex-foreign secretaries tended to balance freedom with another value, Eden being one of the few to do so in June 1945. As chapter two discussed, this politics-as-balance model became widespread in late-forties Tory oratory, but in some respects Macmillan had always been its advocate general: he was, as he reminded audiences, the author of *The Middle Way*.¹¹³ Yet, Macmillan's use of 'balance' was neither static nor incompatible with brasher, Churchillian liberation; both were resources deployed and amended to the demands of the moment. Seeking unity at the beginning of his Premiership, Macmillan tilted the politics-as-balance model towards individualism and Tories' standard theory of economic growth.¹¹⁴ 'Our Party stands', he told delegates, 'for the combination of two principles: the rights of

¹¹¹ Douglas Jay, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 562, 20 Dec 1956, cols. 1521-95 at 1541; Arthur Champion, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 608, 29 Jun 1959, cols. 175-95 at 178; James Callaghan, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 653, 14 Feb 1962, cols. 1323-452 at col. 1431.

¹¹² Harold Macmillan, Conference Speech, 1957, pp. 119-26 at 124; For similar: Harold Macmillan, Speech to Bromley Conservatives, Kent, 12 Sep 1958 reported in 'Prime Minister Rejects Idea of Snap Election', *The Times*, 13 Sep 1958, p. 4.

¹¹³ Harold Macmillan, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 648, 31 Oct 1961, cols. 4-144 at 41.

¹¹⁴ His speech on formal election as leader deliberately tried to confront accusations of left-right factionalism using this model: Harold Macmillan, Speech on Election as Leader, 22 Jan 1957 reported in: 'Mr. Macmillan States Party Philosophy', *The Times*, 23 Jan 1957, p. 5; David Hennessy (a Tory candidate) recognised this party unity function regarding Lord Hailsham: 'The Communication of Conservative Policy 1957-59', *The Political Quarterly*, 32, 3 (1961), 238-56.

the individual – freedom, let us call it – and his duties’.¹¹⁵ The dilemma running through ‘human society’ was how to combine individuals’ freedom to ‘make or... to mar their own fortunes, [with] the duty that they have to others...’. The accent, however, was anti-statist: ‘Every man comes into this world alone. He goes out of it alone. Although the life of man on earth is spent in a community, to which each man owes obligations, fundamentally he is a single, individual soul, alone before his Maker’. Collectivist societies, which disregarded this, ‘would not produce a high standard of material conditions for a people who have no raw materials save coal and a little iron... who can only live by their intelligence, their brains and by the constant development of new methods – which spring after all in the long run from individual human brains’. Not for the last time, Macmillan had partnered a theory of growth – for now, a party-wide mythology of releasing the innate genius which powered the industrial revolution – with a duality model to find the road to prosperity in a harmony of principles only progressive Toryism could achieve.

Accordingly, Macmillan’s ‘Opportunity State’ was grounded in emancipation. ‘The whole fabric of our social services’ was, he claimed, ‘sustained by the success of individual enterprise and effort’. If enterprise was encouraged, services would expand, ‘but damp it down, penalise it, and inevitably the social services will wilt and wither’.¹¹⁶ Articulating this theme earlier in 1957, Macmillan believed ‘that unless we give opportunity to the strong and able we shall never have the means to provide real protection for the weak and old’.¹¹⁷ Although unpopular decisions would be taken in ‘clear[ing] out of the way many obstacles and vested interests’, liberating enterprise was the only sound basis for welfare. As originally conceived, then, the Opportunity State was an extension of the arguments made in the late-forties by Churchill (and indeed Macmillan) that dissolved any juxtaposition between economic release and welfare.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ Harold Macmillan, Conference Speech, 1957, pp. 119-26 at 126.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Harold Macmillan, Speech at Leicester, 18 Mar 1957 reported in: ‘Government Determination to Achieve Opportunity State’, *The Times*, 19 Mar 1957, p. 4.

¹¹⁸ The links between Macmillan’s definition of the Opportunity State, release and moral welfare go unrecognised: Green, ‘The Conservative Party’, p. 189; or wrongly seen from the outset as concerning selectivity and individual responsibility: Jefferys, *Retreat From New Jerusalem*, p.p. 131-53; Hoffmann, *The Conservative Party*, pp. 210-4.

Continued use of liberation narratives also signalled that Macmillan's pre-1960 rhetoric built on established themes. The parable of food supplies still illustrated political divisions. Macmillan told a Leicester crowd that 'no one should forget the lesson' of Britain's escape from socialist 'queuetopia' thanks to the free market: Labour's prophesies about the 'price of freedom' were always unfounded. Accordingly, he urged 'we were not afraid of freedom then; we must not be afraid of freedom now', although 'freedom' in 1957 referred to the less-populist cause of rent control abolition.¹¹⁹ Indeed, Macmillan habitually recounted his predecessors' emancipatory achievements as a prelude to his politics-as-balance model. After a difficult political year, he reminded those gathered in Blackpool in September 1958 that on taking office in 1951 the Government had begun removing the 'paraphernalia of burdensome and complex controls' off the backs of farmers, businessmen and citizens, whilst 'cut[ting] back State trading', reopening commodity markets, abolishing rationing, identity cards, the development charge 'and many other irritating controls over personal liberty and freedom'.¹²⁰ Only after reciting this list did Macmillan remind his audience: 'of course, we in the Conservative and Unionist party, do not want to return to the *laissez-faire* doctrinaire Liberalism. Too often that meant the defence not of freedom but privilege'.¹²¹ In part, this was party and press management, an effort to write the history of a period considered by some as less-than-wholehearted emancipation. But mythologizing 1951-55 was also the latest instalment of a party chronicle mapped onto Macmillan's pet rhetorical model: '...providing the balance between the State and the individual is... the historic role of the Tory Party. Once it was necessary to proclaim the rights of the State against those of powerful individuals or associations. It may become necessary to do so again. But now the need is rather to proclaim the right of the individual against the State and other large-scale concentrations of power'.¹²² Although chapter two showed that these were party-wide devices under Churchill, Macmillan updated the narrative with recent events and increasingly used the balance model to elide his policy programme with an 'authentic' Toryism derived from his version of history. Contrary to Zweiniger-Bargielowska's claims, then, the immediate post-war period's politics and

¹¹⁹ Harold Macmillan, Speech at Leicester, 18 Mar 1957.

¹²⁰ Harold Macmillan, Conference Speech, 1958, pp. 161-8 at 164.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 165.

oratory survived the end of austerity, both as rhetorical forms and as part of a historical narrative informing contemporary politics.¹²³

Of course, some pre-1955 issues were still live, and Macmillan's focus on Liberty's side of the philosophical scales sometimes constituted a tacit admission that more could be done to reform the bureaucratic machinery that irked supporters. Indeed, the Government framed its legislation to reflect an anti-statist *ethos*. For Macmillan, one sentence in the 1958 Queen's speech described his programme: 'we will continue our efforts to secure a just balance between the expanding demands of the modern State and the freedom and status of the individual'. In a narrow context this meant the abolition of 'emergency powers and controls' and putting those still necessary on a proper statutory basis. But in a 'wider sweep' the principle justified legislation strengthening the Factories Acts, the Catering Wages Act, but 'more notably... the Bill to provide a fairer basis for compensation where land is compulsorily acquired'.¹²⁴ Such moves against the bureaucratic machine were not the only rank-and-file policy penchants deftly articulated using 'balance'. Macmillan argued that in times of full employment and greater bargaining power labour must take more responsibility: 'we believe in freedom, and we have done a great deal to restore it, but freedom does not mean licence, and rights involve responsibilities'.¹²⁵ Surprisingly, given the leadership-membership dynamic subsequently pinned on Macmillan, the early rhetorical model implicit in the Middle Way facilitated oratory calibrated to the grass-roots' expectations.¹²⁶

However, amongst cautions against diminished or excessive freedom lay partial attempts to more precisely define 'real' freedom. This subtle departure from most late-forties formulations suggested that Middle Way freedom might involve issues of authenticity as well as balance and excess. Indeed, alterations to the politics-as-balance model are a reliable barometer of changing policy stances. Like his pre-1959 speeches, Macmillan's 1960 conference address dwelt on 'balance'.¹²⁷ The individual's 'supreme value' and his 'right to develop his

¹²³ Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, pp. 242, 254-5.

¹²⁴ Harold Macmillan, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 594, 28 Oct 1958, Cols. 8-142 at 26.

¹²⁵ Harold Macmillan, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 574, 25 Jul 1957, cols. 621-784 at 725.

¹²⁶ Gamble detects a clash of 'electoral perspectives': *The Conservative Nation*, pp. 70-4.

¹²⁷ Harold Macmillan, Conference Speech, 1960, pp. 146-52 at 149.

personality in freedom' remained 'limit[s] to political action', but the State's duty to maintain 'the framework of an ordered society' now received greater attention. Macmillan once again read party history through his preferred oratorical model, but now applied this to the character of institutions through which 'our forefathers have endeavoured over the ages to work out a balance between order and freedom...'. Drawing upon a classic Conservative ideal of political development, Macmillan asserted that 'the right balance between order and freedom' had been arrived at via 'a good deal of history (and some of it pretty rough history)' and needed 'constant vigilance'. On the latter point, he again recalled how Tories had countered Liberalism's excesses and corrected 'the balance [which in 1945] had been upset in the other direction', and, related these principles to policy:

One thing they mean is surely this: moderation should be the keynote of policy. Extremes always threaten the family or the individual in one way or another. Too much State control endangers freedom and initiative; but a free-for-all exalts rights over duties and means that the weak go to the wall. Extremes undermine the national unity which it is our Conservative tradition to foster. We want the maximum of consent to acts of government and the minimum of coercion. Our aim is to harmonise different and conflicting interests, not to set them against each other with the strident accents of the class war. We aim to balance them so that all can contribute as one nation to the common good.

In retrospect, this was a comprehensive statement of Macmillan's domestic politics: his concepts of society, balance and voluntarism came together in an exemplar manipulation of the language of consensus to capture the political centre ground and paint opponents as doctrinaire.¹²⁸ However, in the context of Macmillan's earlier use of balance and party history, we can also detect an enhanced claim on the needs of society and a further stage in the leader's rhetorical quest to relate moderation, via freedom, to One Nation Toryism.¹²⁹

¹²⁸ On the model of consensus: Richard Toye, 'From "Consensus" to "Common Ground": The Rhetoric of the Postwar Settlement and its Collapse', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 48, 1 (2013), 3-23.

¹²⁹ Macmillan was not alone in this endeavour: A Young Conservative, 'Keep To Right For Realism', *The Times*, 11 Oct 1960, p. 13.

More radical alterations were to come and in 1961 modernisation and planning were worked into the organising frame. Macmillan told 4,000 delegates in Brighton that ‘economic policy must be dynamic not static’ and ‘change with changing conditions’.¹³⁰ The obligatory tale of breaking Attlee’s ‘siege economy’ followed, but whilst the plot was familiar the ending was not. First, Macmillan gave the truism ‘freedom must not be made the excuse for licence’ a novel twist, explaining: ‘It must not mean waste, inefficiency or unwillingness to develop any of our resources to the maximum in an orderly and constructive way’. More traditional forms and new conclusions followed as Conservative planning was added to Macmillan’s metaphorical scales. Whilst it had ‘always been opposed to State domination’, he argued, ‘the Tory party ha[d] never stood for the sacrifice of human values to the doctrines of a completely free economy. Between Socialism and the old *laissez-faire* Liberalism there is indeed a Middle Way. That is our way. It is in this spirit that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has formulated his proposals for planning in a free society, purposeful but free’.¹³¹ Undoubtedly, this was a very different speech to 1957’s. Ironically, Macmillan’s presentation of political equilibrium had itself tilted towards collective units and away from individual liberties to reflect new rhetorical imperatives.¹³² Yet, beneath the differences lay a continuity of equal significance: Macmillan retained a stable rhetorical model and accompanying historical narratives, which grounded his oratory in the pre-1957 rhetorical culture discussed above. Despite apparent policy shifts, Macmillan used a persistent toolkit to perform the same speech-act of framing politics as a choice between freedom and unfreedom. Was this continuity a symptom of creative malaise? Perhaps, but the considerable effort involved in fitting new policy messages into old rhetorical bottles suggests not. Rather, Macmillan continued to talk through freedom rhetoric because he found it useful in eliding his aims with party ‘history’.

Admittedly, many Conservatives continued to frame politics as a simpler choice between remaining ‘free men under the law or [becoming] creatures of the

¹³⁰ Harold Macmillan, Conference Speech, 1961, pp. 145-9 at 147.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

¹³² Macmillan never abandoned this use of the model entirely, telling Marcus Lipton, who was calling for stricter controls on Tabaco advertising on television, that ‘the hon. Gentleman, in his passion for order, must have regard to the importance of freedom’: Harold Macmillan, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 662, 3 Jul 1962, cols. 271-2 at 272.

State?¹³³ Party chairman Lord Hailsham did little to discourage this fervour, accusing Dingle Foot of 'betray[ing] the cause of freedom' in defecting from the Liberals to Labour and charging local Conservatives with collaboration if they failed to vote in Ipswich's subsequent by-election.¹³⁴ Hailsham had already described irresponsible wage demands as a conspiracy designed to worsen inflation, allowing the Opposition to claim 'Conservative freedom doesn't work, and you must submit to Socialist tyranny and control'.¹³⁵ Continuity was also the keynote in presenting party policy prior to 1960. Wider property ownership was still framed as giving 'freedom of choice and the chance to break away from the regimentation of council houses', and a host of fleeting issues (such as the Icelandic expansion of fishing territories) joined education, local government, and nationalisation as staple battlegrounds where Liberty needed reinforcements.¹³⁶ Notwithstanding the changed perspective noted in part one, the underlying narration of the Government and its opponent's actions had changed little since 1951.

Yet, historians rightly highlight that supporters increasingly used freedom rhetoric to pressurise their leadership, particularly over inflation and Trades Unions. For Green, the rhetoric of the 'middle class revolt' was significant because it was supposedly 'informed by the imperatives of libertarianism' and evidenced a 'ready-made... audience' for Thatcherism.¹³⁷ Regardless of their links to organisations like The People's League in Defence of Freedom, many certainly condemned Unions as 'a state within a state' 'infring[ing] upon the liberty of the subject', and the relegation of a civil liberties motion to the Saturday morning at the 1956 conference fractured delegates' usual compliancy.¹³⁸ Accusations that the Rent Acts were no conception of freedom became an annual affair and the rank-and-file pushed for a return to the

¹³³ Ernest Partridge, Conference Speech, 1957, p. 84; For an extreme example: J.E.

Macdonald, Conference Speech, 1958, pp. 134-5 at 134.

¹³⁴ 'Lord Hailsham Fights in the Front Line', *The Guardian*, 22 Oct 1957, p. 2.

¹³⁵ 'Lord Hailsham will "Name No Names"', *The Guardian*, 12 Oct 1957 1957, p. 2.

¹³⁶ W.E Simpson, Conference Speech, 1958, pp. 33-4; J.R.T. Holt, Conference Speech, 1958, pp. 36-7; C.A. Buckmaster, Conference Speech, 1956, pp. 99-100; W.R Rees-Davies, Conference Speech, 1956, pp. 56-7; Harry Golding, Conference Speech, 1958, p. 83; John Biggs-Davison, Conference Speech, 1956, p. 78; Patrick Wall MP, Conference Speech, 1958, pp. 90-2.

¹³⁷ Green, 'The Conservative Party', pp. 181-2 quote at 182; *Ideologies of Conservatism*, p. 236; Gamble made similar points about the 'disaffection of the middle class': *The Conservative Nation*, pp. 78-80.

¹³⁸ W.W. Harris, Conference Speech, 1957, p. 53.

hyperbolic rhetoric of 1945-51.¹³⁹ Mrs Brookes of West Willesden, for example, insisted leaders 'offer not only a record, but a way of life. Freedom and, all that goes with it does not mean very much unless it can be shown to be in danger'. The 'other side of the picture' needed painting more starkly.¹⁴⁰

However, Green's account requires nuancing. First, because speakers were drawing upon a long-standing rhetorical culture, freedom rhetoric by no means reflected 'libertarian' beliefs: cries for liberty often sat alongside no-less-vigorous calls to protect local industries.¹⁴¹ Second, at late-fifties conferences, the platform defended the Government's record by manipulating similar rhetoric.¹⁴² Replying to a motion pressing action on civil liberties, Jocelyn Simon, Joint Undersecretary of State at the Home Office, anointed the party the heir of Disraeli and the Chamberlains, not Shaftesbury, and reminded delegates it was Conservatives who 'called into being the school inspector, the customs official, the public health officer, the factory inspector and so on'. 'What we must ensure', he said, 'is that we can live with them in freedom: that they, too, do not become over mighty subjects and a menace to our liberties'.¹⁴³ The political division lay on this latter question: between those whose theories had already damaged the rights of the individual, and which 'in their complete development would prove fatal to personal liberty, as they have proved themselves in totalitarian countries abroad', and 'those who have beaten back bureaucratic tyranny that threatened to engulf us'. The latter group assigned the State a legitimate, but restricted, function and the duty of protecting the 'liberties of the private citizen', enlarging the 'area within which he can make those decisions which affect his life'.¹⁴⁴ The following year, Simon similarly defused another middle class crusade, lower taxation, by reminding conference it had passed resolutions requiring expenditure, but also claiming that a high rate 'restrict[ed]... personal freedom' by withdrawing the means of making

¹³⁹ Ralph Flemming, Conference Speech, 1956, pp. 52-5.

¹⁴⁰ P. Brookes, Conference Speech, 1958, pp. 133-4 at 134.

¹⁴¹ See for example the 1958 debate on Trade and Industry: Samuel McMahon, Conference Speech, 1958, pp. 59-60; S. Rodgers, Conference Speech, 1958, p. 60; John Crabtree, Conference Speech, 1958, pp. 61-1.

¹⁴² On nationalisation: Lord Mills, Conference Speech, 1958, pp. 83-4 at 84; On liberating the builder as a response to schedule A abolition cries: Henry Brooke, Conference Speech, 1958, pp 37-8 at 38.

¹⁴³ Jocelyn Simon, Conference Speech, 1957, pp. 85-7 at 87.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

choices.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, John Boyd-Carpenter's condemnation of the 'gentleman in Whitehall' usurping the individual's choice in pension provision was just as vigorous as the speech of any other delegate.¹⁴⁶ A case can be made that the Government's words were hollow, and in this regard Green correctly identifies frustrated dissent from 'consensus'. However, to cast their *language* as 'libertarian' or indicative of nascent Thatcherism is to remove speakers from group languages not yet annexed by any policy perspective. Indeed, as we saw above, the group identity of Liberty's guardians was an equally 'ready-made' audience for manipulation by Macmillan as it would be for Thatcher.

Notwithstanding wider continuity, Tory rhetorical culture did not stand entirely still; the 'free society' and 'opportunity' became particularly important expressions of the underlying frame. Appendix B shows selected concordance data for the 'free society' in conference speeches 1947-75. It is evident that its capacity to function as an arbiter of proposals facilitated Conservatives' application of the 'free society' to disparate subjects. Some actions became inadmissible due to their association with, or potential to lead towards, an inverted 'slave state'. Conversely, as shown above, some rights, institutions, and relations between civic society's parts were justified with reference to this ideal state. Using the methods described in chapter one, figure 3.6 shows that the phrase became increasingly prominent during the post-war era. Of course, the transliteration of free person versus slave dichotomies onto larger units owes its inspiration to the classical distinction between free and slave states, bolstered in later philosophy by the metaphor of the State as corporal entity.¹⁴⁷ From this perspective, the free society was a fashionable expression of a tradition of defining political systems through the 'other'. However, the data reveals some evidence of a linguistic shift: 'free society' has an inverse trajectory to 'free state' or 'free country' and experienced significant growth in Commons speech during Macmillan's time in office.¹⁴⁸ In part, this relates to the Government's defence of limited planning (discussed below), but this was only one waypoint on the free-versus-slave model's transition from a test of formal

¹⁴⁵ Jocelyn Simon, Conference Speech, 1958, pp. 43-5 at p. 43

¹⁴⁶ John Boyd-Carpenter, Conference Speech, 1958, pp. 77-9 at 78-9.

¹⁴⁷ For a demonstration of the argument's roots in Roman philosophy and its use via Machiavelli by Milton and others: Quentin Skinner, *Liberty Before Liberalism*, Kindle Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012 [1998]), loc. 388-566.

¹⁴⁸ The same is true for plurals and the broad trends apply to 'free state'.

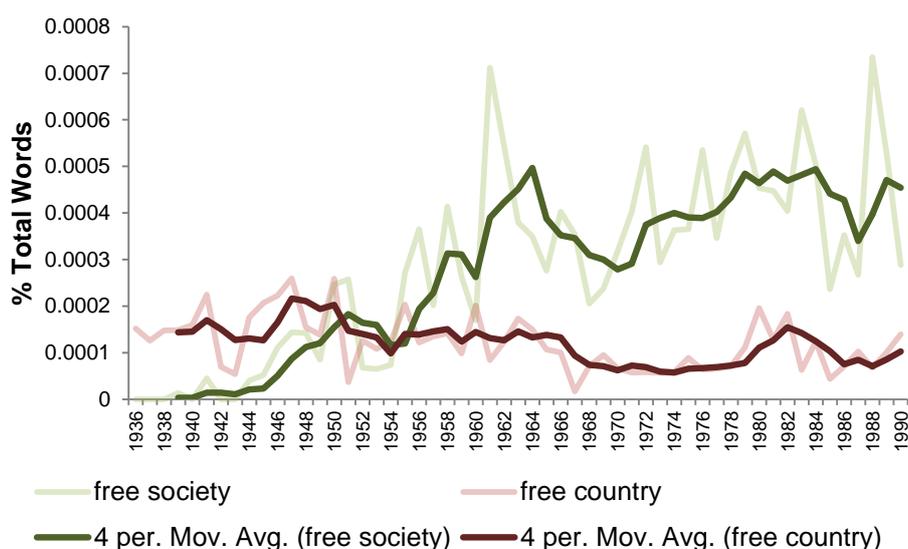
political machinery to one applying to many internal facets of the nation, such as its economy, labour, or other social structures, whilst international politics became subject to a more monolithic description: the 'free world'.

In practice, the 'free society' facilitated comparisons with communist states, as Cold War tropes gradually replaced the anti-Germanism identified in chapter two. Such comparisons were not politically neutral; they were designed to place Labour in bad company and naturalise the Tory conception of economic freedom by eliding it with civil liberties languages. Dr Staveley, for example, declared that 'there are two economic systems as we all know. One is democracy, with freedom - freedom to invest, freedom for private capital and freedom of action. On the other side, we have the rigid totalitarian controls' – a decidedly Tory diagnosis of Russia's shortcomings.¹⁴⁹ Opposition to nationalisation could become quite complex via these analogies. Allan Plane argued that nationalisation contravened the 'free society', citing the example of the Russians, who had realised that when the 'motive for efficiency' was removed, it had to be supplanted... with force and with terror'. Thus, the coal industry would never be efficient 'unless you abuse the principles of freedom in this country'.¹⁵⁰ Versions of this argument were also used to oppose moves towards interventionist policies. Cyril Osbourne asked fellow delegates to reject an economic resolution because in asking government to control prices and wages it 'ask[ed] the Government to do two impossibilities at least in a free society, and [he] would rather live in a poorer, freer England than in a richer controlled England'. 'They tried to freeze wages in Poland and in Germany; you had Poznan and East Berlin'.¹⁵¹ The 'free society,' then, was an important argument used by speakers to demarcate the limits of acceptable politics with reference to other societies and layer morality over economics. But as we shall see, after 1961 this rhetorical model was no longer an exclusive tool of those rejecting intervention entirely.

¹⁴⁹ D.C.S Staveley, Conference Speech, 1958, p. 121.

¹⁵⁰ Allan Plane, Conference Speech, 1958, pp. 81-2 at 82.

¹⁵¹ Cyril Osbourne, Conference Speech, 1956, pp. 61-2 at 62.

Figure 3.6 Frequency of 'free society' and 'free country' in Hansard 1936-90

Meanwhile, opportunity continued to develop as an alternative vocabulary for expressing the overarching frame. Macmillan deployed freedom and opportunity in very similar rhetorical structures, and some candidates simply swapped the words in their updated propaganda.¹⁵² Likewise, although outsourcing of advertisements to agencies coincided with an increased prominence of 'opportunity', these efforts still relied upon the tools of the broader rhetorical culture. For example, in late June 1957 Sunday papers carried a picture of a young girl reaching through the bars of a country gate. Entitled 'Will she be fenced in when she grows up?', the advert outlined the socialist threat. 'We all like to think our children will grow up to enjoy a freer and happier world', the caption read. 'A world unfettered by petty restrictions, niggling controls and a mass of regulations. A world of opportunity'.¹⁵³ These adverts by Colman, Prentis & Varley attempted to articulate a different message to 'Conservative Freedom Works', but their narratives and imagery quickly identified them as products of the same frame; opportunity was inserted into the same argument of direction used to discuss the threat to liberties, captured in the advert's paragraph sub-headings: 'going, going, gone'. Moreover, the negation of opportunity still referenced metaphorical imprisonment, and restriction of choice

¹⁵² Harold Macmillan, Conference Speech, 1958, pp. 161-8 at 164.

¹⁵³ 'Will She be Fenced in When She Grows Up', Conservative Party Advert, 1957. The fullest copy of the series is available in CPA Poster archive available via: <http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/cpa/collections/posters-collection>. [Last Accessed: Nov 2013]. For account of this public relations blitz: Ramsden, *The Winds of Change*, pp. 55-6; Hennessy, 'The Communication', 250-1.

was conceptualised as a denial of freedom.¹⁵⁴ This was not coincidence; the dominant frame of British politics shaped the evolution of newer concepts, and the advert reflected the growing number of Conservatives who linked freedom with youth and personal development in 1959.

The 1959 election is often painted as a ‘bonanza’, dominated by the rhetoric of growth and ‘overwhelmingly pragmatic’ appeals.¹⁵⁵ For some historians, Macmillan made a tactical error in ‘shifting the basis of politics so strongly towards material rewards’ that eventually rebounded, whilst others detect the symptoms of an ideology-less battle over the floating voter.¹⁵⁶ Chronologically, Zweiniger-Bargielowska groups 1959 with the contests of the next decade.¹⁵⁷ These potentially misleading impressions derive from the national campaign, in which freedom certainly played a lesser role. The manifesto devoted little space to liberty, although it perfectly encapsulated the mix of established slogans and newer marketing in the line: ‘we have shown that Conservative freedom works. Life *is* better with the Conservatives’.¹⁵⁸ Initially, leaders looked like re-running previous contests. But between the Chancellor offering Cornish electors ‘a choice between freedom and opportunity for the individual and the all-pervading power of a bureaucratic Socialist State’¹⁵⁹ and Macmillan’s 6 October claim that prosperity had been achieved ‘not by nationalisation, not by controls, not certainly by extravagance, but by letting people *free* under the general guidance of the government’, few ministerial speeches used the rhetoric that had been semi-mandatory in previous campaigns.¹⁶⁰ Moreover, Central Office distanced itself from claims that nationalisation necessitated a Police State.¹⁶¹ Look beneath the press reports, though, and a more impassioned fight emerges, in which the narratives of prosperity and opportunity developed in 1955 were

¹⁵⁴ Chapter one explored how freedom became associated with choice in the mid-twentieth century.

¹⁵⁵ Tomlinson, ‘Conservative Modernisation’, 18; Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, p. 66.

¹⁵⁶ Jefferys, *Retreat from New Jerusalem*, pp. 78-84 quote at 84; Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, pp. 64-70; Ramsden offers a more nuanced version of this thesis: *The Winds of Change*, pp. 55-67.

¹⁵⁷ Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, p. 242.

¹⁵⁸ CUCO, *The Next Five Years* (CUCO: London, 1959) available at:

<http://www.politicsresources.net/area/uk/man/con64.htm> [Accessed: Jan 2014].

¹⁵⁹ *The Times*, 10 Sep 1959, p. 9.

¹⁶⁰ Harold Macmillan, Election Broadcast, 9 Oct 1959 available at: <http://pebs.group.shef.ac.uk/> [Accessed: Jan 2014].

¹⁶¹ *The Times*, 3 Oct 1959, p. 10; Although the fact Central Office had originally released his remarks suggests the party was reacting to perceived public opinion rather than its own judgement: David Butler and Richard Rose, *The General Election of 1959* (London: Macmillan, 1960), p. 57.

extended within the freedom-versus-unfreedom frame alongside stalwart tropes. Indeed, candidates' addresses – ill-served by Butler's study, which merely recorded the topics mentioned – reveal a mix of continuity and evolution that qualifies the interpretations above.¹⁶²

First, like Macmillan, candidates continued to frame politics using the narratives developed under Churchill and Eden. 1951 was still 'a turning point in British history' away from 'straight jacket control' and onto 'the Broad Highway leading to prosperity and opportunity for all'.¹⁶³ The people had responded to the 'restoration of freedom',¹⁶⁴ and 'step by step' Britain was 'moving forward into an era of greater freedom, abundance and opportunity', with more consumption, variety, and less taxation as a result.¹⁶⁵ Moreover, as in conference speeches, this liberation story existed alongside calls for state intervention to prevent unemployment or develop the regions.¹⁶⁶ Again, propaganda projected "setting the people free" into the future, claiming 'our policy in the next five years is to keep the people free, and to use the fruits of freedom for a great constructive programme which will raise still further our own standards of life and leisure...'.¹⁶⁷ Familiar logic linking prosperity and freedom also underlay this narrative: 'free enterprise' made Britain 'strong and prosperous' (provided the 'necessary checks and balances' kept it so) and combined with 'freedom to trade' to fuel exports and the social services, all of which would thus be threatened by a Labour victory.¹⁶⁸ Because prosperity resulted from releasing 'the real dynamic genius of our people', the State should 'stimulate not stifle', but also 'create conditions under which we can expand and prosper'.¹⁶⁹ Yet, freedom was not just the driver of affluence, it was also the result: prosperity resulted in 'stable prices, lower taxation, rising employment, flexible industrial

¹⁶² Bulter and Rose, *The General Election of 1959*, pp. 131-3; Of course the same caveats about reading the source apply as discussed regarding 1955.

¹⁶³ H.L. Lambert, Election Leaflet, Attercliffe, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/25/6606.

¹⁶⁴ Colin Thornton-Kemsley, Election Leaflet, North Angus and Mearns, 1959, , B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/31/6760.

¹⁶⁵ Ray Mawby, Election Leaflet, Newton Abbot, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/26/6651.

¹⁶⁶ Eric Johnson, Election Leaflet, Blackley, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/25/6590.

¹⁶⁷ Harold Macmillan letter to candidate quoted in Norman Hulbert, Election Leaflet, Stockport North, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/24/6580.

¹⁶⁸ R. Winston Jones, Election Leaflet, Bradford South, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/25/6595; Donald Kadberry, Election Leaflet, North West Leeds, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/25/6596; Harold Macmillan letter to candidate quoted in Norman Hulbert, Election Leaflet, Stockport North, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/24/6580; John K. Vaughan-Morgan, Election Leaflet, Reigate, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/31/6672.

¹⁶⁹ Maude Heath, Election Leaflet, East Hull, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/24/6551.

policy, more houses, more schools, expanding and well-run social services, care for the sick in mind and body, for the unfortunate, for the old', but according to Martin Redmayne (Chief Whip 1959-64) these in turn brought 'moral prosperity, which is true freedom'.¹⁷⁰ To dismiss these narratives as 'tired' not only underestimates their prominence in candidates literature (and the significant variation of expression), but also ignores the rhetorical connection between 1959 and previous elections.

Second, the *ethos* constructed during 1945-55 carried over into 1959, often as a distinction between the parties' approaches to governance: 'We Conservatives lead but we do not order about. We guide but not *direct*', Gerald Wills informed Bridgewater constituents.¹⁷¹ Like 1955, much self-definition was anti-statist: Tories were those who believed 'you and I shall be free to live the lives we choose without the Ministries or the County Council or the Borough Council everlastingly trying to run them for us', Hugh Linstead wrote, promising his Putney constituents he had helped 'individuals to battle against these big authorities whenever necessary' and would continue the struggle 'on behalf of you and your children'.¹⁷² Others added a non-doctrinaire *ethos*. Although he 'rarely abuse[d] the other political parties', Petersfield's candidate was 'a determined opponent of Socialism' because he 'dislike[d] rigid theories and extreme views... [and had] learned that if one believes in freedom one must practice tolerance...'.¹⁷³ Pragmatism fed into another recurring *ethos*, best articulated by John Jennings, who described his 'political faith' as 'liberalised, modern, progressive Conservatism', which balanced 'government guidance, but not bureaucratic control' with the free enterprise and protection of the small man vital for a 'free society'.¹⁷⁴ 'Liberalised' signified another continuity as candidates highlighted their Liberal credentials. Whether 'a Conservative, brought up in the liberal principles of individual liberty, free enterprise, social reform, economy',¹⁷⁵ or one inheriting Liberal activism from grandparents, many candidates tried to

¹⁷⁰ Martin Redmayne, Election Leaflet, Rushcliffe, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/29/6709.

¹⁷¹ Gerald Wills, Election Leaflet, Bridgewater, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/32/6792.

¹⁷² Hugh Linstead, Election Leaflet, Putney, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/25/6619; Others cast themselves as protectors of liberty: Julian Ridsdale, Election Leaflet, Harwich, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/29/6714; For an interesting example of framing advocacy of mental health reform as civil liberties: Donald Mcl. Johnson, Election Leaflet, Carlisle, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/25/6590.

¹⁷³ Peter Leigh, Election Leaflet, Petersfield, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/25/6612.

¹⁷⁴ John Jennings, Election Leaflet, Burton, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/25/6588.

¹⁷⁵ Sam Storey, Election Leaflet, Stretford, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/30/6747.

argue that they had been converted to Toryism upon realising that ‘if freedom was to be maintained against the attacks of Socialism it was necessary for all those people with “Liberal” ideals to join together under the Conservative banner’.¹⁷⁶

Continuity was similarly apparent in appeals to a national *pathos*, particularly calls to preserve the British ‘way of life’, for which ‘people ha[d] shed their life’s blood’ to ensure ‘we are still human beings, wanting to remain free, and not slaves to a man-made machine...’.¹⁷⁷ Through this concept candidates sought to step beyond materialism. ‘The policy I support is more than a successful story of good Government’, Donald Kadberry told Leeds voters, ‘it is a way of life’ standing for ‘integrity as well as for efficiency, for moral values as well as for material advancement, for service and not merely self-seeking’. These values, of course, were ‘dignity and liberty of the individual’.¹⁷⁸ Labour threatened this society in much the same way as in 1945 because its policies followed ‘the same pattern as Dictator States, where there lies a lust for power and personal aggrandisement. No holds are barred’.¹⁷⁹ For a young Michael Heseltine, Labour was ‘the enemy of the individual and his freedom’ because the ‘ultimate consequence of nationalisation and socialism’ was a State that decides ‘what education you have, picks a job for you, rents you a home, decides what clothes you shall wear and what holidays you shall take, is the only employer of Labour and therefore decides what money you shall earn’. This was ‘a journey’s end and it is along a road down one year of which I shall not willingly move’.¹⁸⁰ Yet, such arguments of direction should not be equated with ‘neoliberalism’.¹⁸¹ Patrick Maitland, who argued that nationalisation ended with a ‘political police replac[ing] the Bobbies’, supported imperial preference and regional development.¹⁸² Similarly, Evelyn King justified defecting from Labour on the grounds that nationalisation was pursued ‘at the expense alike of living standards and liberty’ and ‘at the end of that road looms the spectre of one

¹⁷⁶ Donald Moore, Election Leaflet, Gorton, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/27/6660; Graham Stewart, Election Leaflet, Leith, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/30/6744.

¹⁷⁷ Douglas Marhsall, Election Leaflet, Bodmin, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/26/6646.

¹⁷⁸ Donald Kadberry, Election Leaflet, North West Leeds, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/25/6596.

¹⁷⁹ Henry Kerby, Election Leaflet, Arundel and Shoreham, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/25/6597.

¹⁸⁰ Michael Heseltine, Election Leaflet, Gower, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/24/6554.

¹⁸¹ Marcus Worsley, Election Leaflet, Keighley, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/32/6799;

Geoffrey Waite, Election Leaflet, Loughborough, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/32/6773.

¹⁸² Patrick Maitland, Election Leaflet, Lanark, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/26/6642.

employer – the State, and one Landlord – the State’ and ‘an atmosphere, [in which] men could not freely breathe’.¹⁸³

But within the wider continuity there were subtle signs of change. Opportunities, as well as civil liberties, were the kinds of freedom under threat. For Howe, ‘the multiplication of individual opportunity’ achieved happiness, not a single State-directed plan’ that could become a ‘unjustifiable restriction of private liberty’.¹⁸⁴ For Guildford’s candidate, the election came down to ‘the kind of Government that suits us best’, one which gave ‘maximum freedom for us, as individuals, to live our lives... the essence of [which lay] in the words “Freedom and Opportunity”’.¹⁸⁵ Compared to 1955, candidates extended the links between opportunity, youth and the future.¹⁸⁶ According to Anthony Marlowe, young people’s ‘natural urge’ was to be ‘progressive’, but ‘progress in human affairs, like progress in science, must be based on reason and experience’. Here the post-war years taught a lesson: ‘Life really is better under the Conservatives because they believe in individual freedom. Given that, the gates of opportunity are open to you all’.¹⁸⁷ This appeal targeted parents. The wife of the Wrekin’s candidate wanted ‘your children and ours to grow up in a happy and prosperous Britain, free to choose their own jobs and free to use their own initiative and enterprise, and free to take full advantage of this great new scientific era. What wonderful times we live in! Let’s keep it that way – without restrictions, without controls, and without the form-filling ways of Socialism’.¹⁸⁸ Such claims are easily read as materialistic, but in fact they were often defined against ‘a godless materialism of communism’, positioned as an idealist meritocracy against ‘levelling-down’ and worked into the broader release narrative that the nation’s future lay in ‘setting free the urges and efforts of every member of our society so that he may earn and enjoy the results of his own efforts and so add to the advantage of all’.¹⁸⁹ Modernity also began to enter Tory addresses through this merger of opportunity and growth as candidates posed the

¹⁸³ Evelyn. M. King, Election Leaflet, Southampton (Itchen), B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/25/6602.

¹⁸⁴ Geoffrey Howe, Election Newspaper, Aberavon, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/24/6577.

¹⁸⁵ Dick Nugent, Election Leaflet, Guildford, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/28/6678.

¹⁸⁶ Michael Roberts, Election Leaflet, Cardiff South East, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/29/6718.

¹⁸⁷ Anthony Marlowe, Election Leaflet, Hove, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/26/6644.

¹⁸⁸ William Yates, Election Leaflet, The Wrekin, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/32/6803.

¹⁸⁹ Ken Thompson, Election Leaflet, Liverpool Walton, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/31/6759.

question: 'Which philosophy when translated into Governmental action can best cope with [the Age of automation] as far as Britain is concerned?' Restrictive socialism was the 'wrong vehicle to convey us into the future', whereas lower taxation, free enterprise and 'freedom from class hatred', and 'opportunities to all irrespective of rank or fortune' were what future generations needed to meet modernity's challenges.¹⁹⁰ Opportunity was not, as Jefferys suggests, a purely material appeal – it was incorporated into abstract conceptions of British governance, images of youth and models of emancipatory growth.¹⁹¹ Nor, was the election characterised by non-ideological appeals; as in 1955 prosperity was inserted into deeply politicised narratives extending from 1945-51 to become a highly ideologically charged concept that co-existed with, and raised another aspect of, Labour's threat to freedom.

Traditional accounts set Macmillan's second government on a downwards economic road to defeat.¹⁹² With his Chancellors unable to manage demand effectively, the Prime Minister supposedly reached for interventionist measures to combat wage-push inflation, imposing a pay-pause on public sector workers in 1961 and naïvely imploring businesses and Unions to follow. Against the backdrop of difficult by-elections and a hostile, introspective zeitgeist that blamed Britain's comparatively lacklustre growth on outmoded industrial practices presided over by a nepotistic establishment, Macmillan increasingly looked to rejuvenate his Government with the theme of modernisation.¹⁹³ Together with Selwyn Lloyd's 'guiding light' and capital investment, the creation of the NEDC and NIC heralded the Government's apparent 'conversion' to indicative planning.¹⁹⁴ The telling of this story has gradually improved as subject specialists explored the precedents, influences and origins of 'Conservative planning'.¹⁹⁵ Nevertheless, the tendency to juxtapose freedom rhetoric with

¹⁹⁰ Godfrey Nicholson, Election Leaflet, Farnham, 1959, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/28/6676.

¹⁹¹ Evelyn. M. King, Election Leaflet, Southampton (Itchen), B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0370/1/25/6602.

¹⁹² Blake, *The Conservative Party*, pp. 286-90; Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, p. 70.

¹⁹³ Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, pp. 76-7, 130-1; Jefferys, *Retreat from New Jerusalem*, pp. 110-30; On growth: Michael Shanks, *The Stagnant Society: A Warning* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961); On failings of governing elite: Arthur Koestler, *Suicide of a nation?: An Enquiry into the State of Britain Today* (New York: Macmillan, 1964), pp. 56-9.

¹⁹⁴ Mitchell argues only the act of bringing initiatives together was new: *The Brief and Turbulent Life*, pp. 53-4.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid; Tomlinson, 'Conservative Modernisation'; O'Hara, "Intractable, Obscure and Baffling"; Ringe and Rollings, 'Responding to Relative Decline'; Wood, 'Why "Indicative Planning" Failed'.

planning has remained and the latter's presentation remains unconsidered.¹⁹⁶ In fact, freedom rhetoric was integral both to how Conservatives articulated their version of planning publically and how ministers debated policies privately. Indeed, because they internalised many of the freedom-versus-unfreedom frame's assumptions and narratives the line between presentation and policy-making became blurred.

Although the policies and rhetorical framework that became 'Conservative planning' had precursors in post-war Conservatism, economic crisis in 1961 forced their development.¹⁹⁷ Wage inflation, thought banished after the defeat of London's Bus drivers in 1958, returned throughout the spring and combined with a domestic boom and pressure on Sterling to create a summer crisis.¹⁹⁸ Ministers considered the pay pause a temporary necessity to avoid a more extreme deflationary package, not a step towards a permanent incomes policy.¹⁹⁹ But once Lloyd's 'July measures' were announced on 24 July and the immediate crisis began to pass, Conservatives were confronted with a rhetorical problem: the pause could be critiqued as ineffective and unjust because it only directly applied to the public sector, whose example many Unions and employers proved unwilling to follow. An early indication of freedom rhetoric's role in justifying the voluntary nature of Tory planning came three days after Lloyd's announcement when Macmillan defended these criticisms in the Commons:

We have a special responsibility to give a lead in restraint in our capacity as an employer, and we intend to discharge that duty. In industry as a whole we can but set an example. In a free society the Government cannot compel but only persuade, but if we do our part I am confident

¹⁹⁶ Notably, Lloyd's first question to colleagues was 'how do we present this crisis?': Cabinet Notebook, 20 July 1961, P.R.O. CAB 195/19/124977.

¹⁹⁷ Macmillan wryly told the 1922 Committee his new slogan was 'Conservative Planning Works': 'Tory Planning Works: New Slogan', *The Guardian*, 2 Feb 1962, p. 20.

¹⁹⁸ O'Hara, "Intractable, Obscure and Baffling", 29; The Cabinet initially treated the problem as a need to cut foreign spending. Butler supported import restrictions, and others like Maudling and David Eccles wanted to free Sterling and reduce domestic demand 'savagely': Cabinet Notebook, 30 Jun 1961, P.R.O. CAB 195/19/68706.

¹⁹⁹ Cabinet Notebook, 20 Jul 1961, P.R.O. CAB 195/19/124977; Cabinet Notebook, 24 Jul 1961, P.R.O. CAB 195/19/40035

that the people of the country will not be backward in doing theirs. (Hon. Members: "Resign").²⁰⁰

Throughout the autumn, the Government became dependent on this 'free society' defence as the Opposition seized on settlements contravening the pause, especially those involving nationalised industries. Having to condemn electricity workers' wage rises whilst defending the policy against Wilson's mockery, Macmillan inserted the pay-pause into a typical argument of direction. 'It might be urged', he replied, 'that we should take powers over the nationalised industries, but should we then take powers over private industry and local authorities? In that case we are moving a long way from a free society, which it is our purpose to preserve'.²⁰¹ The Government must trust, influence and suggest 'but in a free society [it could not] do this by taking full authority over the wage structure of the country'. When the Liberal leader, Jo Grimond, joined Labour's assault by asking what steps would be taken to prevent 'this gross injustice between one group of workers and another?' Macmillan could only repeat his defence and accuse Grimond of totalitarian intentions:

No policy can operate successfully in a free society except by general acceptance and working together. The right hon. Gentleman... seems to be suggesting that we should move towards a kind of Fascist society, where we would impose our will. That is not my view...

Macmillan rehearsed this argument throughout November, which was now being deployed by John Hare to thwart Tory supporters' calls for legislation to stop Unions' inflationary claims.²⁰² Far from being out of step with the Government's actions, then, the leadership reached for freedom rhetoric to defend limited intervention.

Come December, the pause was collapsing and the Cabinet looked to manage its demise or transition to permanent arrangements. Significantly, the rhetorical frame deployed publically structured private debate. Treasury memoranda

²⁰⁰ Harold Macmillan, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 654, 27 Jul 1961, cols. 673-744 at 726.

²⁰¹ Harold Macmillan, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 649, 21 Nov 1961, cols. 1145-52 at 1147.

²⁰² Harold Macmillan, Speech to Sheffield Conservative and Liberal Federation, Sheffield, 27 Nov 1961 reported in 'Prime Minister Calls on Nation to Work Harder', *The Times*, 28 Nov 1961, p. 5; John Hare, Conference Speech, 1961, pp. 116-8 at 118.

encapsulated the dilemma, confessing that it was ‘far from easy to set out something which will be politically viable in a free society, will stand some chance of acceptance by both sides of industry, and yet will go beyond being just another piece of exhortation about the virtues of restraint’. Although mandarins offered a range of sanctions (from industry-wide levies to a Wages Court with imprisonment powers) they considered all unworkable without the Government taking ‘complete control of the economy’.²⁰³ Some ministers, such as Ernst Marples, pushed for deflation on these grounds since ‘control by the State – with effective sanctions’ was impossible in a ‘free society’.²⁰⁴ Others, like the Chancellor, quoted Macmillan’s statements in the Commons to argue that wider wage control was incompatible with freedom and maintained that attempts to back up ‘guiding light’ with sanctions ‘lead towards a fully controlled economy’.²⁰⁵ But Lloyd, like Macmillan, also rejected any a return to completely free bargaining because the level of unemployment and taxation required to control inflation would be ‘politically unacceptable’. Instead, with the cabinet divided at the close of 1961, the Prime Minister stressed the need to turn public opinion against high awards as had been done in Sweden.²⁰⁶ Thus, a policy often cited as evidence for *dirigiste* consensus actually resulted from a compromise between the need for action and two parameters ministers placed on debate: the electoral ramifications of deflation and the notion of a free society (which remained undefined). Far from a mismatch between policy and rhetoric, their perception of pay restraint through the freedom-versus-unfreedom frame led Ministers to a policy most predicted would fail.

As the pause morphed into a ‘guiding light’, the free society became a standard component of ministerial exhortations for restraint.²⁰⁷ Indeed, with by-election defeats mounting, the concept became the only drag on Conservatives’ determination to stamp out inflation. Iain Macleod, party chairman, reassured those on fixed incomes, whom he believed had recently deserted the party at the Orpington by-election, that ‘within the limits of a free society and a free

²⁰³ Norman Brook, ‘Incomes Policy’, 4 Dec 1961, P.R.O. CAB 129/107/55.

²⁰⁴ Ernst Marples, ‘The Pay Pause’, 5 Dec 1961, P.R.O. CAB 129/107/57.

²⁰⁵ Selwyn Lloyd, ‘Incomes Policy’, 5 Dec 1961, P.R.O., CAB 129/107/52.

²⁰⁶ Cabinet Minute Book, 7 Dec 1961, P.R.O. CAB 195/20/43709. At this stage, Macmillan was even content to let the pause fade, and ruled no further mention should be made of a ‘guiding light’.

²⁰⁷ Charles Hill, Speech to Glasgow Conservative Association, Glasgow, 23 Feb 1962 reported in: ‘Dr Hill on Aim of Incomes Policy’, 24 Feb 1962, p. 6.

economy we... will do everything we can to see that the rewards of victory are justly shared'.²⁰⁸ Speakers also tried to bring public opinion onside by casting those making excessive claims as selfishly sabotaging the free society. Henry Brooke, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, insisted that inflation was just as big a curse as unemployment and could only be stopped 'in a free society' if 'everyone saw that what was going on was fair'.²⁰⁹ Attempting to rally support, Macmillan again raised voluntarism into the traditional binary division between parties over freedom:

We shall not try to turn our free society into a kind of fascist or communist state. We shall not ask for powers to fix all wages and salaries throughout the land. We shall not try to control all prices... If people want this sort of socialism they had much better vote for it straight, and I can assure you even then they will not get it.

Whilst his government would slowly correct unfairness resulting from the pause, it would hold fast and 'promote [the policy] in the only legitimate way which a free and democratic system admits: by trying to persuade people that it is right and that it is in their own interests'.²¹⁰

But voluntarism also became a test of whether an efficient economy was possible in a free society. Broadcasting in January, Macmillan explained the test of whether the British could make a 'free society work in a modern economy' was if people could forgo dividing up the cake to let it expand.²¹¹ On this point, Macmillan found an unexpected ally in Enoch Powell, who told South Gloucestershire Tories that whereas between the wars 'the great question-mark... was whether deflation and unemployment could be prevented in a free society', now the same question posed itself but in reverse: 'can inflation with all its social and economic evils be prevented in a free society?'.²¹² At this stage,

²⁰⁸ Iain Macleod, Speech to Home Counties North Area Council, 5 Apr 1962 reported in: 'New Vision is Needed, says Mr. Macleod', *The Times*, 6 Apr 1962, p. 8.

²⁰⁹ Henry Brooke, Speech to Conservative Rally, Llandrindod Wells, 26 May 1962 reported in: 'Mr Brooke Calls for a New Attitude', *The Times*, 28 May 1962, p. 8; Iain Macleod, Speech at Thornaby, 25 May 1962 reported in: 'Incomes Policy "A Success"', *The Times*, 26 May 1962, p. 5.

²¹⁰ Harold Macmillan, Speech to Conservative Women's Conference, London, 23 May 1962 reported in: 'Britain Nailing Colours to Mast of Expansion', *The Times*, 24 May 1962, p. 9.

²¹¹ Harold Macmillan, Party Political Broadcast, 24 Jan 1962 reported in: 'Call for "A Little Extra Effort"', *The Times*, 25 Jan 1962, p. 6.

²¹² Enoch Powell, Speech to South Gloucestershire Conservative Association, Chipping Sodbury, 18 May 1962, Powell Papers, POLL 4/1/1, folios 103-4 at 103.

Powell believed the Government's approach was correct, and that in a 'free society and economy' the Government and 'other responsible elements in the economy' needed to work to the same ends via the NEDC.²¹³ In general terms, Maudling had prefigured this framing of pay restraint as a test of freedom a week before Lloyd announced the pause in 1961.²¹⁴ The President of the Board of Trade described the immediate economic difficulties as a symptom of the 'fundamental problem of how a free society can work effectively in conditions of full employment'. Britain had escaped the 'old, harsh and wrong disciplines of unemployment', but now needed to find an alternative discipline. 'Higher wages and higher profits', Maudling argued, 'should come from greater output and greater efficiency and service to the community, not from the exploitation of monopoly or semi-monopoly positions'. To achieve this voluntarism was needed:

It would be a tragedy if we abandoned the degree of social and economic freedom which we have achieved. Once we started back on that road, Government controls would become inevitable and all-pervasive and the progress that we have made would be lost. We can maintain our freedom and full employment only within a responsible society which recognises, accepts and acts on the need for restraint and self-discipline.

Ironically, a measure which has been seen as infringing the free economy was presented by Tories as necessary for its survival.

Such rhetoric was not brinkmanship; the economic viability of a free society dominated the Cabinet's attempts to escape the guiding light's political liabilities. Concerned that the policy was not politically sustainable because the wages directly controlled were those of the middle classes, most ministers wanted to 'put teeth' into the policy and impose restraint on private sector.²¹⁵ Macmillan's reaction was telling: 'Are we saying it's impossible to run a free society under democracy?' Having ruminated for a fortnight, the Premier returned with his New Approach (an Incomes Commission and a host of

²¹³ Enoch Powell, Speech to Annual Luncheon of the Midland Branch, Birmingham, 23 Mar 1962, Powell Papers, POLL 4/1/1, folios 120-9 at 127; Cabinet Notebook, 24 Jul 1962, P.R.O. CAB 195/21/14.

²¹⁴ Reginald Maudling, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 644, 18 Jul 1961, cols. 1068-199 at 1069.

²¹⁵ Cabinet Notebook, 15 May 1962, P.R.O. CAB 195/21/1.

sweeteners to improve workers condition and cut prices) framed as an answer to whether it was possible to meet their economic objectives ‘in a free society’.²¹⁶ Indeed, the most discussed question was the balance between compulsion and voluntarism, and the issue of balancing freedom with economic necessity was at the heart of Macmillan’s proposals, which aimed at an incomes policy ‘freely accepted as fair’ to avoid the ‘impression that the Government are in some sense “against” the rest of the population’ that would result from imposition. The package of measures to ‘improve conditions at work’ and the ‘square deal for the consumer’ were designed to persuade the ‘employer or worker to accept some limitation on his personal freedom of action in light of the national interest as a whole’.²¹⁷ Remarkably, at no point did ministers question the juxtaposition of statutory wage restraint and a ‘free society’, even though others were doing so.²¹⁸ Critiquing Macmillan’s speeches, *The Times* was adamant that ‘persuading people that something is right and in their own interests is not, in fact, the farthest a government may legitimately go in a free and democratic system’. Taxes, it pointed out, were not collected by persuasion. The Government’s position mistakenly assumed that ‘freedom of persons individual or in combination to negotiate the amount they shall pay or receive in wages is so important a freedom that its abridgement by the Government would threaten the basis of a free society...’²¹⁹ Like many, *The Times* suspected that faulty rhetoric was covering for hesitancy or disarray; in fact, it reflected Ministers’ application of the stable frame of their rhetorical culture both privately and publically.

As the Government positioned wage restraint within a package of planning initiatives, the rhetorical models used to defend the pause became generalised to articulate a distinctive vision of Tory planning. As we have seen, the free society model had long been a means of limiting state interference; the difference was that it now sanctioned a Tory vision of intervention it previously ruled out. For example, in 1956 Macmillan had told conference ‘the great question’ was ‘how to combine progress and stability in a free society: that is, how to have at the same time full employment, expanding production, steady

²¹⁶ Cabinet Notebook, 28 May 1962, P.R.O. CAB 195/21/1.

²¹⁷ Harold Macmillan, ‘Incomes Policy’, 19 Jun 1962, P.R.O. CAB 129/109/49.

²¹⁸ This is not to say that all were unwilling to countenance stepping beyond the free society.

²¹⁹ ‘Freedom’, *The Times*, 4 Jun 1962, p. 11.

prices. I say a free society, because that is important, and it is not always remembered by those who talk about controls and planning'.²²⁰ Six years later, Macmillan claimed he had always been a planner and that 'the real difficulty' was 'not the concept but the execution': 'In a totalitarian State planning is simple but not necessarily effective. In a free democracy it certainly can only be effective if it is backed by the general assent of the people'.²²¹ As with balance, Macmillan judged planning using a consistent rhetorical model, but arrived at different conclusions.²²² To do so, Tories made the compatibility of planning with a free society a matter of distinguishing between compulsory planning and guidance. 'The real argument', Maudling argued, 'is not for or against planning. All human activity involves planning. The question is: how is the planning to be done? Is it to be done by partnership or by imposition?'²²³ The free society also imposed limitations on what could be planned. Maudling reassured conference that, unlike his opponents who said "you just plan more and plan better", Conservatives recognised 'definite limits':

People can plan what they are going to produce, but no Government can plan what industry is going to sell because you cannot plan what the consumer is going to buy, you cannot plan what people are going to spend their money on, how much they are going to save, how much they are going to spend at any given time. You cannot, above all, plan what the foreign customer is going to buy and when. So, while clearly, there is great room for better forecasting and more coordination, we must recognise so long as our society remains free, there will always be fluctuations one way or the other.²²⁴

Thus, Tory planners could advance a quasi-Hayekian critique, but only so far as to distinguish acceptable planning from that threatening freedom.²²⁵

²²⁰ Harold Macmillan, Conference Speech, 1956, pp. 73-6 at 74.

²²¹ Harold Macmillan, Conference Speech, 1962, pp. 146-50 at 149.

²²² For another example: Harold Macmillan, Speech to Institute of Directors, London, 8 Nov 1961 reported in: 'A Duty for Industry: Planning Plea by Premier', *The Guardian*, 9 Nov 1961, p. 3.

²²³ Reginald Maudling, Conference Speech, 1963, pp. 99-101 at 100; for the same argument in 1961: Reginald Maudling, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 664, 18 Jul 1961 cols. 1068-109 at 1093; This was itself an adaptation of late-forties defences that all governments plan.

²²⁴ Reginald Maudling, Conference Speech, 1962, pp. 22-5 at 22.

²²⁵ Hayek, of course, rejected 'middle way' planning: *The Road to Serfdom* (London: Routledge, 2001 [1944]), p. 43.

Crucially this was not a rhetorical veil placed over the Chancellor's interventionist inclinations. Maudling deployed the same arguments to oppose Macmillan and Lloyd's initial proposals for the NEDC. Privately, he argued there were 'fundamental differences between the type of planning that can be successful in a socialist State, and what can be done in a free market economy'.²²⁶ Distinctions must be drawn between planning demand and influencing or predicting it, and Maudling insisted that a 'central body' usurping Government's responsibility or 'attempt[ing] to dictate the distribution of investment between different industries [was]... entirely contrary to the system of free enterprise that has always been our policy'. 'In a free-enterprise system', he concluded, 'there [wa]s no real room for central planning in the proper sense of the word. Responsibility for planning and performance must rest with managements, labour and the government'. However, given that the Government was 'expected to take an initiative in the field of "planning"... [which] must not seem to be too much of a damp squib', a consultative body to facilitate sharing of information between enterprises could be countenanced. These concerns were serious enough for Macmillan to adjust his initial plans and reassure the Cabinet the NEDC would not 'dictate or enforce measures of economic planning' but simply influence 'independent decisions of employers and Unions'.²²⁷ Once again, then, Tory rhetoric reflected arguments made privately, which ensured the supposed high-water mark of consensus *dirigisme* was a product of the restraints freedom placed on public clamour for planning.

Defined in this way, strong criticism of bureaucratic socialism could co-exist with enthusiasm for planning. For example, Mr Dodsworth of the Hartlepoons rejected Labour's 'restrictions, regulations, control and direction' but argued that unemployment in the North required directed investment.²²⁸ Likewise, whilst praising the Government's incomes policy and the NEDC's growth targets, Macleod contrasted Tory policy with Labour's plans to create more departments: 'The Socialists believe that the purpose of power is to govern and to direct. Freedom would not be an immediate casualty under the Socialists, but her death by a thousand cuts would, in the end, be certain'.²²⁹ Given this

²²⁶ Reginald Maudling, 'Economic Planning', 20 Sep 1961, P.R.O. CAB 129/106/38.

²²⁷ Cabinet Conclusions, 19 Sep 1961, P.R.O. CAB 128/35/50; Cabinet Conclusions, 21 Sep 1961, P.R.O. CAB 128/35/51.

²²⁸ G. Dodsworth, Conference Speech, 1963, pp. 97-8.

²²⁹ Iain Macleod, Conference Speech, 1963, pp. 46-8 at 46, 48.

context, we should be sceptical about attempts to read back individuals' later commitments to 'economic liberalism'. David Howell, identified by Cockett as developing a brand of 'economic liberalism' in the late sixties, is a good example.²³⁰ By 1970 Howell had authored the influential *A New Style of Government*, which raged against over-government and bureaucracy, but in 1963 he was using anti-statist rhetoric whilst arguing that 'the relevant debate is no longer about freedom and individualism versus planning, but about how to ensure freedom and opportunity *within* a planning framework'.²³¹ Indeed, he urged Tories to champion the NEDC's successes because the economy was no longer 'a myriad of small decisions', rather it required 'huge decisions by Government, well involved in the economy...'.²³² From this perspective we can see that the coexistence of interventionist policies and supposedly 'neoliberal' rhetoric under Heath was nothing new.

Doubtless many Tories used freedom rhetoric to condemn their Government's vision of planning, especially if we momentarily extend analysis slightly beyond Macmillan's leadership. Writing pseudonymously in *The Times*, Powell now attacked the party's compromise: 'Once admit that "the gentleman in Whitehall" knows *when* to interfere ie., *when* he knows best, and you have admitted "the gentleman in Whitehall knows best" *tout court* – which is the essence of socialism, whereas the essence of the Conservative case is that the gentleman in Whitehall does *not* know best'.²³³ Reactions were mixed, but significantly some Tories countered Powell through the same frame. Monday Club Conservatives, for example, refuted the binary opposition of planning and freedom: whilst a Labour Government 'would seek to control and direct the individuals in society... [t]he Conservatives would hope to administer them. Surely the latter is the more attractive alternative so long as the rulers of the State realize that they are also its servants'.²³⁴ Fuller proof that those supporting Powell's position did not own freedom rhetoric regards planning came from Hogg, who told a crowd in Faversham, that 'the right kind of freedom' and 'the

²³⁰ Cockett, *Thinking the Unthinkable*, pp. 200-1.

²³¹ David Howell, *A New Style of Government* (London: CPC, 1970); Quoted in: 'Planning Needed by Tories', *The Guardian*, 8 Jul 1963.

²³² David Howell, Conference Speech, 1963, pp. 96-7 at 96.

²³³ A Conservative, 'The Field Where the Biggest Failures Lie', *The Times*, 3 Apr 1964, p. 13; Simon Heffer, *Like the Roman: The Life of Enoch Powell* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1998), p. 350.

²³⁴ Paul Bristol et al, 'A Party in Search of a Pattern', *The Times*, 8 Apr 1964, p. 15.

right kind of planning' were compatible. The former meant not a 'free-for-all' but 'freedom under law', conceived as 'responsible freedom'. The latter was more specific:

Our planning has been planning by investment. It is planning by consultation. It is planning by a forecast of people's requirements. All these forms of planning are perfectly compatible with freedom under the law. What is not compatible with freedom or efficiency is the wrong kind of planning, the use of physical controls to override supply and demand...²³⁵

Some of Hogg's thought was always idiosyncratic ('under law' meant moral law), but his speech demonstrated the broader truth that freedom rhetoric was a language of debate through which planning was both attacked and defended.

Having recovered a shared language of debate and undermined the supposed gap between policy making and presentation, we can see that Macmillan's party manipulated and developed the tools of a persistent rhetorical culture for its own ends. Even from this perspective, though, it is possible to read the rhetoric above as merely proof that a 'neoliberalism' remained dormant in the minds of leaders, caged by electoral realities, or that liberty restrained *estatiste* desires, not least because of rank-and-file pressure.²³⁶ Neither reading is satisfactory because both fail to countenance distinct philosophies underlying freedom rhetoric between 1957 and 1963. The case above, of course, has been that politicians drew upon shared resources, which were not tied to any single policy position. Tories inherited an argumentative language, not a coherent philosophy, and for that reason I have avoided extracting 'ideology' as traditionally conceived. Yet, in order to show that two periods' similar rhetoric need not reflect equivalent ideas, we must briefly demonstrate the alternative *possibilities* of thought about freedom co-existing with this rhetoric.²³⁷ Exploring

²³⁵ Quentin Hogg, Speech at Sheerness, 30 May 1964 reported in: 'In praise of Tory planning: Mr Hogg's Faversham Message', *The Guardian*, 1 Jun 1964, p. 3.

²³⁶ Jones, 'The Cold War'; Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, pp. 61-86; Green, 'The Conservative Party'; Some observers considered Macmillan held back by his party on these grounds: Francis Boyd, 'All Planners Now', *The Guardian*, 17 Oct 1961, p. 20; The assumption that the conference reacted well to 'liberation' rhetoric was common amongst contemporaries: T.E. Utley, 'Answering Utopia', *The Spectator*, 10 Oct 1963, p. 8.

²³⁷ 'Possibilities' because it is not my contention that these necessarily informed politicians use (indeed the above discussion suggests not!). I merely claim that there were alternative approaches to freedom beyond Hayekian economics or 'libertarianism'.

what was meant by the 'free society' is a good starting point because it evokes assumptions integral to the Middle Way. Whilst Richard Law had elided the free society with the natural order of a 'free economy', other Tories aligned the term with Macmillan's politics.²³⁸ The most revealing discussion comes in a lecture by Tory journalist, T.E. Utley, which CPC published in 1957.²³⁹ Utley defined the free society via an anti-idealist critique of equality, arguing that efforts to enthrone 'a single, sovereign, universal principle of selection' underwrote 'progressive' definitions from the moment they conceded 'flat' equality's impracticability.²⁴⁰ Instead, Tories believed 'no society which tries to build itself on one single principle of selection [could] prosper...' because of humanity's complex nature.²⁴¹ Economic systems were irrelevant compared to this philosophical schism: capitalism could produce substantial equality and socialism inequality of wealth and power.²⁴² Rather, the problem of equality was 'whether you have one means of choosing your elite... or a world in which there [are] a variety of different means of getting to the top'.²⁴³ Because the former approach necessitated 'one sovereign power [the bureaucracy] apply that principle' with extensive powers over the community, Conservative equality rested on the latter.²⁴⁴

This prelude showed the links between anti-idealism and heterogeneity and a willingness to distinguish Conservatism from capitalism that characterised Utley's definition of liberty, which avoided metaphysics by instead asking: 'What are the characteristics of a free society?'²⁴⁵ Predictably, it was 'not a society based on upon uniformity imposed from above', but Utley's positive definition is altogether more interesting. 'One of the perennial characteristics of a free society', he declared, 'is that there are tensions within that society. If you are constantly feeling that you want to live in the kind of world where there are no

²³⁸ Richard Law, *Return from Utopia* (London: Faber, 1950), pp. 98-101.

²³⁹ It was delivered to the 1956 CPC summer school: T.E. Utley, 'Equality or Liberty' in *Liberty in the Modern State* (London: CPC, 1957), pp. 77-84; Reliance on Utley's *Spectator* articles led Gamble into a misleading analysis of his views: *The Conservative Nation*, p. 72-3; Relying on Gamble, Mitchell also badly misrepresents Utley's critique: *The Brief and Turbulent Life*, p. 84. T.E. Utley, 'Eleven Years of Tory Rule', *The Spectator*, 10 May 1963, pp. 9-11; 'Answering Utopia', *The Spectator*, 10 Oct 1963, p. 8.

²⁴⁰ Utley, 'Equality or Liberty', p. 77.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

²⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 78.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

²⁴⁵ On this point, Utley's ideas had a good deal in common with Michael Oakeshott's.

disputes or none which cannot easily be settled by a straightforward administrative organ, then you will not want to live in a free society'.²⁴⁶ To live in a free society meant 'reconcil[ing] yourself to an apparently never-ending series of perpetual tensions', which it was government's duty to see were 'properly and peacefully managed'.²⁴⁷ The art of politics in a free society was acceptance that 'people want incompatible policies simultaneously'.²⁴⁸ Utley applied this maxim to the key tension in fifties Britain: how to 'reconcile the aims of the Welfare State, which implies and demands full employment, with an efficient economy, including the absence of inflation (without which, in the last resort, the Welfare State cannot be sustained)'.²⁴⁹ Utley's summary of the intellectual battle taking place over this conundrum chastised both socialism and the 'neoliberalism' he was later sometimes associated with.²⁵⁰ According to Utley, some would resolve the tension above by relegating full employment and reasserting *laissez-faire*, thinking they 'know the things to which man responds, profit and loss' with their 'abstract view of the nature of man'.²⁵¹ Meanwhile, the far Left prescribed an 'all-powerful State directing the economy'.²⁵² Both groups were 'committing the ultimate offence against the free society' by forgetting it consisted of 'contending groups and, in its nature, [wa]s an attempt to strike a balance between incompatibilities'. In attempting to 'impose order, simplicity, and in a naïve sense, rationality on affairs', both committed 'first sin against politics',²⁵³ whereas the Tory party had refuted each using 'the right mixture of fiscal controls and voluntary restraint' to ensure 'the choice between an economic free-for-all and a bureaucratic tyranny will not have to be made'. Indeed, he warned liberals, failure to 'find the middle way' would not yield 'unfettered free enterprise' but the 'opposite solution'. Utley's lecture is significant, not because of its direct influence, but because it demonstrates 'liberty' was not a concept owned by the free marketers and loaned out as one half of the Middle Way. In the guise of the 'free society', liberty could become a state of perpetual

²⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 80-1.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 81.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 81.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 81.

²⁵⁰ Cockett, *Thinking the Unthinkable*, p. 165.

²⁵¹ Utley, 'Equality or Liberty', p. 82.

²⁵² Ibid., p. 82.

²⁵³ Ibid., p. 82.

reconciliation, making Macmillan's approach, not Law's, the politics of freedom.²⁵⁴

This principle was not limited to Utley. Russell Lewis, an ex-Bow Group chairman, offered a similar definition of liberty rooted in anti-idealism, but focussed on interests.²⁵⁵ Government's task was 'maintain[ing] the social balance of power, for this is how liberty is persevered'.²⁵⁶ *Laissez-faire* had tipped the balance too far in favour of the employer, but since 1945 power had 'tilted the other way' because in conditions of full employment Unions became 'the over-mighty subjects of the age, able and willing to exploit the rest of the community'.²⁵⁷ However, like Utley, Lewis maintained that balancing 'power groupings' to create liberty was a matter for pragmatic politics, not on a priori principal, no matter how attractive. Many Tories were, he believed, wrong to assert 'liberty will be achieved... by a wide spread of property ownership', conceived as 'popular capitalism' or a 'property owning democracy'.²⁵⁸ Indeed, Lewis looked to French political instability and cited opposition to Resale Price Maintenance (RPM) and Schedule A tax as evidence of the illogical policies resulting from the political pressure diffused ownership produced. He even argued that 'the small property owner may be a threat to the rest of the community's freedom of political or economic choice' and that 'freedom's best defenders' were often 'large property-owners'. In the 'history of our constitutional liberties it is Hampden rather than the village Hampden who figures', he observed, adding there was 'much to be said for a society in which the units of power are economically large but electorally small'.²⁵⁹ To be clear, Lewis also attacked monopoly. Like Utley, he simply insisted that liberty was dependent upon the Governments' perpetual rebalancing of interests and avoiding the fallacy of an organising ideal. Although neither stated it, Lewis and Utley's positions implied that the State *created* liberty, which arose from its

²⁵⁴ The press pointed out the similarity of Utley's lecture to Macmillan's views: 'Tory Freedom', *The Manchester Guardian*, 4 Feb 1957, p. 6.

²⁵⁵ Russell Lewis, 'Continuing Conservatism' in *Principles in Practice: A Series of Bow Group Essays for the 1960s* edited by David Howell and Timothy Raison et al (London: CPC, 1961), pp. 125-39 at 134-5; Cockett glossed over the complexities of Lewis' views: *Thinking the Unthinkable*, p. 163.

²⁵⁶ Lewis, 'Continuing Conservatism', p. 134.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 135; Lewis also argued that Unions, in their eagerness to destroy the employer, had created a rival power in bureaucracy.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 134-5.

pragmatic management of the clash of interests or policies, not a natural state on one side of balanced dualities.

If Utley and Lewis articulated a philosophy supporting politics-as-balance, others like Tim Raison, editor of *Crossbow*, were more concerned with defining 'what the limits of freedom and the market economy ought to be'.²⁶⁰ Raison approached freedom as a limitation on action rather than a policy *per se*.²⁶¹ Politics was dominated by the choice 'between freedom or liberty for the individual' and 'paternalism by a government which claims that it knows best or feels that the rights of the individual can only be secured by... interven[ing] extensively'.²⁶² Unlike the Left, the Tory view was complex, acknowledging that 'the State must prevent one man harming another', but setting this against belief in its fallibility and that those individuals needed 'freedom and responsibility':

Freedom means strength, freedom leads to achievement, freedom allows men to leap over the class barriers, freedom is the greatest antidote to the mediocrity that is endemic in the socialist concept of welfare, and the ineffectiveness that is inevitable in the State controlled bureaucracies.

This 'belief that liberty will make for economic strength' was the philosophy that positioned release as a creative force in the rhetoric above. And yet, despite this, Raison insisted that 'liberty can be no more than limited, a yardstick rather than a rule of thumb. It can make us ask basic questions when we tackle a problem – why there should be *any* restriction on betting, for example, or whether the mere existence of licensing laws does not inevitably cause the troublesome drinking clubs that are a source of concern. But it cannot tell us the answers'.²⁶³ In Raison's approach liberty is a consideration *applied* to a proposal, not a proposal itself. He made this clearer regarding the parallel belief that 'freedom will make for moral strength'. To talk of 'progress or better education unless they are expressed through self-control' was ridiculous: 'The virtues which Puritanism instilled in Britain may be valuable, but they only defeat their own ends if they have to be applied by law'. Yet, this did not mean all

²⁶⁰ Timothy Raison, 'The New Toryism', *The Observer*, 1 Nov 1959, p. 16.

²⁶¹ Timothy Raison, 'Principles in Practice' in *Principles in Practice: A Series of Bow Group Essays for the 1960s* edited by David Howell and Timothy Raison et al (London: CPC, 1961), pp. 9-17 at 13.

²⁶² *Ibid.*

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

moral laws were wrong. 'Here too', Raison argued, 'we should use liberty as a yardstick, or a means of restricting restriction, rather than as a justification of licence.'²⁶⁴ That phrase, 'restricting restriction', sums up the philosophical approach to freedom that facilitated the party's rhetorical model making; indeed, it suggests we should be cautious of assuming freedom's use as a limitation on policies was a compromise with 'neoliberal' positions rather than deeper approach to the concept.

Others in the Bow Group argued that Raison's 'yardstick' should vary according to context. As poverty diminished, greater ability to choose in health and education and greater selectivity in social services would drive freedom in a new direction.²⁶⁵ David Howell, for example, argued that prosperity meant state involvement could shrink. As the population became better off and sought 'an improved *quality* of life, better education, better facilities, a happier old age' then 'they, and not the government, should be allowed to pay, in growing part, for what they want in the way they want?'²⁶⁶ The emphasis here was firmly on 'allowed'; for Howell this was question of whether 'the challenge of prosperity be met without sacrificing the traditional liberties of the individual?' Whereas the One Nation group had focussed on welfare selectivity to target resources and avoid egalitarian redistribution, the Bow Group's emphasis was shifting onto prosperity as a means to independence from the State; in short, having brought freedom from want, the welfare system should now be reformed to facilitate freedom from dependence. Although only gradually gaining momentum under Home before blossoming under Heath, this was an early sign of an elision between the negative liberty (freedom from government) that enabled positive liberty to develop personality.

Yet, prosperity led others to develop liberty rather differently. Maudling, for example, advocated positive liberty in a much-publicised newsletter to his constituents.²⁶⁷ Like Macmillan, Maudling painted a quasi-Hegelian view of recent history, in which the electorate in 1945 'chose between Freedom and

²⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 14-5; Raison was placing a caveat on Law's position at his most 'libertarian' (in the philosophical not New Right sense): Law, *Return from Utopia*, pp. 189-92.

²⁶⁵ Dennis Lees quoted in 'Plan for New Tory Democracy' *The Guardian*, 8 Apr 1963, p. 11.

²⁶⁶ David Howell, 'Expanding Prosperity' in *Principles in Practice: A Series of Bow Group Essays for the 1960s* edited by David Howell and Timothy Raison et al (London: CPC, 1961), pp. 18-29 at 18-9.

²⁶⁷ Reprinted in: 'New Policies Needed for Problems of 1960s', *The Times*, 20 Jun 1962, p. 5.

Order and chose Order'. 'History [was] unlikely to say that they were wrong', but the 'reaction from Order to Freedom' had returned the Tories in 1951.²⁶⁸ However, the sixties posed new problems, which demanded a new concept of freedom. 'A new national mood' was developing, which realised that 'liberty in a purely negative sense is not enough. Man's basic instinct for freedom is not satisfied by merely being free "from"; he needs also to be free "for"'. This recognition was compounded by the sense that 'material affluence is not enough' and 'must be a means... but it cannot be an end in itself'. In both cases, Maudling concluded, Britain lacked 'a sense of purpose', which was a symptom of a more serious absence of responsibility. At this point in his analysis, Maudling integrated the calls for self-discipline in a free society discussed above relating to wage inflation. However, by June 1962 he had altered his position slightly: whilst the Government should explain 'the rights and the duties of a free individual in a free economy', it should also take 'determined action' to enforce that responsibility 'if powerful groups or organisations attempt to override them...'. Doing so 'may be inconsistent with classical laissez-faire Liberal doctrine', but it was 'essential for true freedom and a sound economy in the 1960s'. Given his private views on planning, it seems unlikely these were the words of a *dirigiste* minister; rather Maudling was expressing the perceived need adjust liberty to context in order to make 'real' freedom work: the country was no longer 'haunted by Jarrow and the Rhonda' nor in need of breaking from the 'meshes of Socialism'. Instead, freedom had to take on a more purposive sense, which may need to be secured by intervention.

Neither Utley, Lewis, Raison, Howell, nor even Maudling's conception of freedom should be imagined as directly informing the freedom rhetoric described above; when Macmillan used the 'free society' he was speaking with a vague, but no-less-powerful, symbol, rather than Utley's detailed definition. Rather, what each described was an *approach* to freedom as a concept (for Utley and Lewis this was balance, for Raison 'restricting restriction', for Howell and Maudling a 'freedom for'). It should be no surprise these approaches are encapsulated in the Middle Way, free society, and opportunity models discussed above. The connection between them is not one of direct inspiration; rather, the approaches to freedom outlined at length in writing derived from the

²⁶⁸ Lewis Baston has pointed out the influence of Hegel on Maudling: *Reggie: The Life of Reginald Maudling* (Stroud: Sutton, 2004), pp. 20-1.

same milieu that condensed these approaches into rhetorical models using the cultural tools available. In unpacking the writings above it becomes clear that historians' claims that freedom rhetoric under Macmillan was either a relic, devoid of meaningful content or sign of latent 'neoliberalism' underestimate its importance for very different Conservative philosophies.

III

Conclusions, 1951-64

Only at the close of chapter four will it possible to bring together all these elements to characterise the dynamics of an evolving rhetorical culture and refute the existing historiography. At this mid-way point, though, we can usefully summarise the revisions offered thus far. Between 1951 and 1955, Conservatives reconfigured the rhetorical model and tropes of opposition into a highly partisan explanation of growth, bringing a dubious coherence to a range of economic policies distilled into three words: Conservative Freedom Works. This framing was supported by adding an emancipatory chapter to the narrative constructed about the Attlee government in opposition and by eliding future progress with freedom. To present this case for continuity, Conservatives layered their traditional partisan rhetoric over deep-rooted metaphors for decision making and targeted their rhetoric at specific audiences. Electors, therefore, were not being asked to simply vote on prosperity, but on a version of prosperity grounded in more abstract values and integrated into the same frame presented between 1945 and 1951. Attempts to portray such rhetoric as non-ideological or materialistic risk losing the context in which most candidates presented prosperity, and although we can share Zweiniger-Bargielwska's opposition to Butler's vision of a dull election dominated by consensus, the case can now be made on broader grounds, acknowledging the continued importance of traditional anti-socialist attacks, but also recognising the adjustment of a rhetorical culture to the needs of arguing for continuity rather than change. None of this is to directly challenge Lawrence's recent picture of an apathetic electorate. That said, it suggests that we should treat claims that rhetoric became concurrently more 'rational' and deliberative cautiously. Indeed, the real significance of 1951-55 is that freedom rhetoric survived its advocates' moves into government to form a set of rhetorical defences and attacks that, whilst continually modified, would last throughout Macmillan's premiership.

Taken with these points, the research above suggests three reasons why that Premiership cannot be considered the 'nadir' of freedom rhetoric as sometimes imagined. First, Macmillan and his party made considerably more use of the rhetorical resources they inherited from Churchill and Eden than normally acknowledged, and this is especially true of Macmillan's own rhetoric and the 1959 election at a constituency level. Second, familiar rhetorical resources were put to new uses: whether using the 'free society' to advocate planning, 'opportunity' to add a more positive concept of liberty, or shifting the balance model's focus according to policy changes, a stable set of rhetorical tools helped Tories meet rhetorical imperatives. Third, this rhetoric was *not* insincere or out of step with policy; to posit 'schizophrenia' between rhetoric and policy or suppressed 'neoliberalism', not only raises the latter to an unwarranted standard against which other uses of 'freedom' are to be judged, it also ignores the shaping influence liberty had on policy and the alternative philosophical positions developed. Thus, on three counts – usage, development, and meaning – Macmillan's successor inherited freedom rhetoric that amounted to more than 'liberal slogans'.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Evolution of Conservative Freedom Rhetoric Part II, 1964-70

Given that chapter three positioned this chapter's analysis within an overall critique of the historiography covering the period 1951-70, this introduction can turn immediately to the explanations that historians offer for the rightwards shift in Conservatives' rhetoric and policy they detect between the party's fall from power in 1964 and poll-defying return six years later.¹ The extent and significance of that change is hotly debated, not least because rival assessments of the 1970-4 Government (especially its apparent U-turns) hinge upon differing judgements of Heath's sincerity in opposition: some insist the Tory leader took office committed to a 'libertarian' programme, whilst others argue he arrived in Downing Street having 'allow[ed] himself to be pushed into a more doctrinaire right-wing rhetoric than truly reflected his views'.² Yet, despite becoming central to the debate, neither side has grounded its case in an extensive study of freedom rhetoric between 1965 and 1970, an omission which this chapter will remedy shortly.

Some of the confusion can be dispelled in advance, though, by setting Heath's rhetoric in the context of that deployed under Alec Douglas-Home. Doing so exposes the problematic assumptions reducing debate to a judgement about authenticity, namely that a rhetorical shift occurred *after* Heath's election as leader and that – whether feigned or not – freedom rhetoric signified Powellism or neoliberalism.³ Already, the discussion in chapter three places indirect limitations on either premise: the continuing development of freedom rhetoric during Conservatism's 'corporatist' phase reminds us that Heath, Maudling and Macleod made their careers in a party happy to talk about emancipation without subscribing to the New Right's ideals and suggests that cries for liberation in 1966 and 1970 had a more complicated lineage than simply returns to 1951 or expressions of long-suppressed neoliberalism. Against this backdrop, Tory

¹ Pollsters predicted a victory for Wilson despite his Government's difficulties; For a comparison of the 1964 and 1970 manifestos to this effect: Tim Bale, *The Conservatives Since 1945: The Drivers of Party Change* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 214-9.

² Compare: Martin Holmes, *The Failure of the Heath Government*, Second Edition (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997) with John Campbell, *Edward Heath* (London: Pimlico, 1993), p. 223.

³ On Heath changing both policy and tone: Bale, *The Conservatives Since 1945*. p. 134; On equation with neoliberal or Thatcherite rhetoric: Holmes, *The Failure of the Heath*, p. xi; Campbell, *Edward Heath*, p. 267.

oratory and propaganda under Home reveals a smoother transition between the early sixties and 1970 than normally assumed.⁴ Characterised by the fuller integration of declinist, modernisation and efficiency narratives into harder binary models suited to opposition, the 1965-70 iteration of the freedom versus unfreedom frame grew out of changes already visible before and during the 1964 campaign, and hastened in the immediate aftermath of defeat.⁵ Rather than a 'plunge into the politics of youth and modernisation in July 1965', a conversion to neoliberalism, or a concession from a weak leadership to its proto-Thatcherite Right, freedom rhetoric under Heath represented the later stages of an ongoing evolution that predated his leadership.⁶ The crucial mediation between the early-sixties and seventies configurations of an overarching rhetorical culture took place whilst Alec Douglas-Home was at the helm, a significance which biographers deny to his leadership and historians generally assign to Selsdon Man or Heath's 'quiet revolution'.⁷

This chapter first characterises the nature and causes of that transition before observing its course over Home's pre-election speeches, the 1964 campaign, and Conservatives' reactions to defeat in the months before Heath won the leadership. It then moves to attack existing interpretations of Heath's opposition more fully, exposing their reliance on a false-image of his rhetoric as 'technocratic' and failure to recognise that his supposedly 'libertarian' rhetoric was an extension of that under Home and Macmillan. Having considered the further reorientation of freedom rhetoric back into a call for change in 1966, reappraisals of Heath's strategy and the use of freedom by disparate factions in

⁴ For example of a discussion which omits references to precedents: Mark Garnett, 'Planning for Power: 1964-1970', in *Recovering Power: The Conservatives in Opposition Since 1867*, edited by Stuart Ball and Anthony Seldon (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 192-218 at 200-5; Tim Sansom, 'Marketing the Tories in Opposition: A Difficult Tale', *Conservative History Journal*, 7 (2008) 29-30.

⁵ For an archetypal deployment of the 1965-70 frame: Edward Heath, Conference Speech, 1968, pp. 124-9; These are the features Andrew Gamble identifies with Heath's rhetoric as developed under pressure from the Right or failure of the Wilson government: *The Conservative Nation*, (London: Routledge, 1974), pp. 92-102; *The Free Economy and the Strong State: The Politics of Thatcherism* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994 [1988]), p. 77; Bale see identifies the importance of 'state of the nation' literature, but sees this influence exclusively in terms of a change Heath instigated: *The Conservatives Since 1945*, p. 134.

⁶ John Ramsden, *The Winds of Change: Macmillan to Heath 1957-1975* (Harlow: Longman, 1996), p. 173.

⁷ David Dutton, *Alec Douglas-Home* (London: Haus, 2006); Thorpe, D.R., *Alec Douglas-Home* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1996); Harshan Kumarasingham, "Home Sweet Home": The Problematic Leadership of Sir Alec Douglas-Home', *Conservative History Journal*, 5 (2005), 13-15; Holmes, *The Failure of the Heath*, p. 10.

the late-sixties party allow us to relocate the rhetorical roots of Selston Man and the 1970 election campaign, not in proto-Thatcherism, but in neo-Macmillanism. An extended conclusion then draws out the implications of this and the previous chapter's findings for how historians think about post-war Conservatism and its relationship with Thatcherism, before describing the forces promoting change and continuity in Tory rhetoric.

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Douglas-Home: A Lost Connection

Between late 1963 and July 1965 Tory rhetoric underwent an evolutionary change, in which some elements were strengthened and others weakened. Neither the 1964 campaign nor Sir Alec's succession could generate such a reconfiguration independently; instead, both intensified a movement already underway, in which Tories increasingly used freedom rhetoric to *simultaneously* defend their brand of planning, attack dictatorial socialism, and argue that competition was the engine of growth.⁸ To some extent, these genres of freedom rhetoric had quietly co-existed since 1960 because the former never completely eclipsed earlier versions of the latter: although more open to attack than in 1955, 'Conservative Freedom Works' remained an important narrative for explaining prosperity, and Tory planning relied upon its liberty-crushing, socialist counterpart for definition. Yet, by late 1963 Tory rhetoric had entered a transitional phase, whereby use of freedom to articulate Macmillan's vision of modernisation (Conservative planning) gradually gave way to a refreshed account of the link between freedom and growth, which claimed that economic freedom (especially competition) was the means of improving Britain's efficiency and reversing relative decline. Subsequently associated with Heath, this line of argument removed 'freedom' from its mid-to-late fifties duties as a justification for continuity and repositioned it as a call for change. 1964 represented a point of temporary equilibrium between these different uses of the same rhetorical resources to articulate two routes to modernisation. However, the impending election meant binary oppositions between liberty and socialism were thrown

⁸ Speeches at the 1963 conference began to display the beginnings of this greater balance between planning and freedom as efficiency: Reginald Maudling, Conference Speech, 1963, pp. 99-101; R.A. Butler, Conference Speech, 1963, pp. 142-7; Iain Macleod, Conference Speech, 1963, pp. 46-8.

into this oratorical mix, which now included all the ingredients for Tory freedom rhetoric in 1960-3 and 1965-70, but in more equal proportions than before or after.⁹ The pace of evolution quickened in the months following defeat, as speakers developed the themes of efficiency in freedom and liberty as antithetical to socialism, whilst allowing earlier defences of planning to atrophy, leaving only traces in their rhetoric. By the time Tories elected Heath in July 1965, then, many of the rhetorical changes historians have associated with his leadership had already taken place.

This period of rhetorical flux was occasioned by a second-wave policy reaction to anxiety about Britain's relative growth.¹⁰ Competition was never the centrepiece of Macmillan's modernisation programme, although the acceptance of Beeching's recommendations to close loss-making railway lines indicated a desire to subject nationalised infrastructure to an operating environment more akin to private enterprise, and efforts to take Britain into the European Community were sometimes framed as exposing British industry to a 'bracing shower' of competition in the name of efficiency.¹¹ However, when de Gaulle scuppered those plans, Heath and others turned their rhetoric and legislative attention to domestic competition as a means of prompting modernisation.¹² Revived interest in monopolies regulation and the abolition of RPM, which Heath steered through Tory opposition after Macmillan's departure, were justified as increasing the 'consumer's freedom of choice' and allowing 'freedom [to] produce a better distributive system'.¹³ Although these proposals did not

⁹ Part of the pressure was to differentiate the party from Labour: John Ramsden, *The Making of Conservative Party Policy* (London: Longman, 1980), p. 229.

¹⁰ For a summary: Jefferys, *Retreat from New Jerusalem: British Politics, 1951-64* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), pp. 110-30; Tomlinson, 'Conservative Modernisation'; The competition and planning elements had never been entirely separate but in Macmillan's hands measures on the former like RPM were primarily means to assuage the latter like pay control: Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism*, p. 185.

¹¹ On origins of these positions: Keith Middlemas, *Power, Competition and the State*, Volume Three (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1991), pp. 30-4; Jim Tomlinson, 'Conservative Modernisation, 1960-64: Too little, Too Late?', *Contemporary British History*, 11, 3 (1997), 18-38 at 29; D.R. Thorpe, *Supermac: The Life of Harold Macmillan, Kindle Edition* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2010), loc. 12499; Harold Macmillan, Conference Speech, 1961, pp. 145-9 at 147.

¹² Campbell, *Edward Heath*, pp. 134-5; Ramsden, *The Winds of Change*, p. 177; There is some evidence Macmillan also turned attention back to domestic stimuli for modernisation in December 1962, but with focus on the NEDC/NIC: E.H.H. Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism: Conservative Political Ideas in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 190.

¹³ Jefferys, *Retreat from New Jerusalem*, p. 186; Ramsden, *The Winds of Change*, p. 220; Edward Heath, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 687, 15 Jan 1964, cols. 224-30; Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 691, 10 Mar 1964, cols. 257-63, 272-3.

represent a 'neoliberal' programme (Heath simultaneously advocated extensive regional planning), they at least signalled that market liberalisation had joined planning as a Tory cure for decline.¹⁴ Thus, whilst policy and rhetoric were not synchronous, the fortunes of the two different modes of freedom rhetoric above were partly related to the prominence of the different policy prescriptions living, in Powell's words, under 'the comprehensive umbrella' of the 'philosophical rubric of "modernisation"'.¹⁵

Because he became leader in the midst of these changes, Home's Premiership both reflected and contributed to this transitional state. In policy terms, he retained Macmillan's planning apparatus and accepted a high level of spending.¹⁶ That said, Heath could not have abolished RPM without Home's support and contemporaries detected a shift.¹⁷ Sir Alec's biographers, however, have dismissed Iain Macleod's claim that 'for the first time since Bonar Law [the party was] being led from the right of centre', insisting that Home did 'nothing to change' 'policies in the early 1960s [that were] more interventionist, corporatist indeed, than ever before or since'.¹⁸ Admittedly, policy change was limited; but the new Prime Minister's speeches reflected the rhetorical evolution described above rather more definitely. Unfortunately, focus on the new leader's image problem, weak television performances, and inability to deal with hecklers has

¹⁴ Richard Cockett argues an IEA pamphlet encouraged Heath to pursue RPM abolition: *Thinking the Unthinkable: Think Tanks and the Economic Counter-Revolution* (London: Fontana, 1995), pp. 145-6; 'Mr. Heath Planning Social Strategic Controls', *The Times*, 4 Nov 1963, p. 7; For the history of the measure, its genesis under Macmillan, and the nuanced case it made defeat likely: Richard Findley, 'The Conservative Party and Defeat: The Significance of Resale Price Maintenance for the General Election of 1964', *Twentieth Century British History*, 12, 3 (2001), 327-53; For longer history and limitations on RPM as an explanation of defeat: Stuart Mitchell, *The Brief and Turbulent Life of Modernising Conservatism* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2006), pp. 23-32, 172-3.

¹⁵ 'A Conservative', 'From the Years of Protest to the Year of Disasters', *The Times*, 1 Apr 1964, p. 11.

¹⁶ Ramsden, *The Winds of Change*, p. 217.

¹⁷ 'Sir Alec's 7-Point Plan for Britain', *The Observer*, 28 Oct 1963, p. 2; 'Sir Alec on that Little Extra', *The Guardian*, 21 Nov 1963, p. 1; Without discussion, Robert Blake agreed with MacLeod that Doulgas-Home led from the right: *The Conservative Party from Peel to Thatcher* (London: Fontana, 1985), p. 299; On Home and RPM: Thorpe, *Alec Douglas-Home*, pp. 355-8; Macmillan felt Hogg a safer 'Middle Way' candidate than Home: Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism*, p. 191.

¹⁸ Thorpe, *Alec Douglas-Home*, p. 325; Dutton, *Douglas-Home*, pp. 69-70; John Charmley, *A History of Conservative Politics 1900-1996* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998 [1996]), p. 177; Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, p. 89; That Home inherited a generalised counter-attack is acknowledged: Ramsden, *The Making of Conservative*, p. 226; Macleod's article was in the *Spectator* 17 Jan 1964, reprinted in: George Hutchinson, *The Last Edwardian at No. 10: An Impression of Harold Macmillan* (Quartet: London, 1980), pp. 123-41.

prevented historians identifying this change.¹⁹ Whilst enforcing policy continuity, the impending election encouraged Home to give heated anti-socialist freedom rhetoric, particularly attacks on Labour's *ethos*, a higher billing. In a major speech at Swansea, he claimed that Wilson's vision of Britain would be 'more like 1984' and that socialists were people whom enjoyed 'pulling strings to watch people dance'.²⁰ Elsewhere, Labour's support consisted of the 'natural busy-body who tells everybody how to manage other people's affairs', traits which ran against 'the individual character of the British people'.²¹ These jibes were part of Home's attempt to reemphasise the Tories' anti-centralisation credentials. Whereas 'for the socialists... power belongs to the centre' and 'Mr. Wilson emphasize[d] the concentration of power in fewer and fewer hands' in all his speeches, Sir Alec assured a London rally that: 'if anyone wants our nation to be subjected to nationalization, to direction and to controls then he can go for them to the shop across the road, because he won't get it from me'.²² Chapter three showed these elements had never disappeared from Tory rhetoric after 1951, but Home made them central to his rhetoric in a way which Eden and Macmillan had not.

Meanwhile, Home rebalanced defences of limited planning with greater stress on free competition as the means to efficiency. He was less wary of Labour's *laissez-faire* accusations than his predecessors, telling the Commons: 'if it is a choice between a free-for-all and controls for all, [he] would choose the first'.²³ But whilst he warned his future constituents that the Left offered a 'state-dominated society where Whitehall imposed a pattern of production that industry must follow willy-nilly', like Macmillan, he did not rule out some forms of planning.²⁴ 'In an increasingly complex society, government, industry and the unions must freely combine to modernize Britain', he said at Kinross. However, this commitment to Conservative planning co-existed with a rhetoric of freedom

¹⁹ Dutton, *Douglas-Home*, p. 70; Thorpe, *Alec Douglas-Home*, pp. 367-8.

²⁰ Alec Douglas-Home, Speech to Wales and Monmouthshire Area Conservative Rally, Swansea, 20 Jan 1964, reported in: 'Socialist Utopia would be like "1984"', *The Guardian*, 21 Jan 1964, p. 2.

²¹ Alec Douglas-Home, Speech at Huddersfield, 20 Jun 1964, reported in: 'Prime Minister Debasing Political Currency', *The Times*, 22 Jun 1964, p. 6.

²² Alec Douglas-Home, Speech to Greater London Area Conservatives Rally, 5 Mar 1964 reported in: 'Sir A. Home's Assurance on Rate Changes', *The Times*, 6 Mar 1964, p. 6.

²³ Alec Douglas-Home, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 690, 3 Mar 1964, cols. 1124-5, 1125.

²⁴ Alec Douglas-Home, Speech at Kinross and West Perthshire By-election, 1 Nov 1963, Reported in: 'Sir A. Home Denies Rumours', *The Times*, 2 Nov 1963, p. 6.

for competition: 'Instead of interfering with the normal workings of the economy, it [was] one of the chief tasks of NEDDY to see that the economy is genuinely free and competitive, not distorted by restrictive practices'.²⁵ Indeed, the concomitant of helping industry make itself efficient without the socialists' 'prohibitions and directives' was that management would be responsible for success or failure.²⁶ For Home the path to efficiency represented a fundamental divide between the parties: defending the abolition of RPM, he argued that socialists 'insist that we cannot be an efficient nation unless we are put under nationalization and controls and orders from Whitehall... We think we can be an efficient nation while leaving every man essentially the master in his own home'.²⁷ The rhetorical strategy was similar to Macmillan and Maudling's approach to planning (offer the benefits of modernisation without the restriction on liberty socialism entailed), but Home's speeches implied freer competition would be just as important in achieving efficiency.²⁸

Sir Alec's rhetoric was more distinctive when using the stalwart tools of Tory rhetoric to reveal the incompatibility of socialism with modernisation or affluence. On the one hand, Labour's bureaucratic philosophy inhibited science: 'If Watt had had to get a Whitehall permit before he could develop the steam engine he probably would have been watching the kettle boil until the day he died'.²⁹ On the other hand, because socialists were 'so fascinated with the machine that they often forget about the individual', Home warned that 'the combination of socialism and automation could open the door to the destruction of personal freedom'.³⁰ To survive the age of technology, he argued, liberty required a party committed to individuality; only the diffusion of property and education could 'safeguard against the great concentrations of power' or the 'relentless pressure of mass-production and mass-market and mass-ideas

²⁵ Alec Douglas-Home, Speech at Kinross and West Perthshire By-election, 1 Nov, 1963, Reported in: 'What Sir Alec has said – for the Record', *The Guardian*, 6 Nov 1963, p. 5.

²⁶ Alec Douglas-Home, Speech at Kinross and West Perthshire By-election, 1 Nov, 1963, Reported in: 'Sir A. Home Denies Rumours', *The Times*, 2 Nov 1963, p. 6; He also ruled out wage freezes: 'Mr. Wilson on Kinross Clash of "Self and Service"', *The Times*, 5 Nov 1963, p. 6.

²⁷ Alec Douglas-Home, Speech to Cities of London and Westminster Conservatives, 12 Mar 1964, reported in: 'Prime Minister Depends Bill on Prices', *The Times*, 13 Mar 1964, p. 6.

²⁸ For a non-Douglas-Home example: Ernst Marples, quoted in: 'Transport Users Should be Free to Choose', *The Guardian*, 2 Dec 1963, p. 5.

²⁹ Alec Douglas-Home, Speech at Kinross and West Perthshire By-election, 1 Nov, 1963, Reported in: 'Sir A. Home Denies Rumours', *The Times*, 2 Nov 1963, p. 6.

³⁰ Alec Douglas Home, Speech at Kinross and West Perthshire By-election, reported in: 'What Sir Alec has said – for the Record', *The Guardian*, 6 Nov 1963, p. 5.

forcing us to conform'.³¹ Clearly Sir Alec's personal scruples about modernity informed this rhetoric; but his reapplication of established components of Tory rhetoric like individual freedom and concentrated power to modernity presaged moves to relate old values to modernity's shortcomings under Heath. 'Opportunity' was another watch-word handed a refreshed role, now paired with an equally-steadfast trope, the patronising socialist, to defend affluence. The socialists were 'professional killjoys', Home argued, whereas Conservatives trusted the people to use their opportunities because morally there was 'no cause for the British people in 1963 to live colourless, drab, and uniform lives'.³² In fact, Home's only pre-election catchphrase attempted to distil the political divide in these terms: Government should 'help each individual make the most of his talents, of his personality, and of his character. And so what I am offering you is not direction of control at all. Quite the opposite. It is partnership between all of you and the Government. And it is *not orders but opportunity*'.³³ In an otherwise dull broadcast, the phrase's significance was not its originality: opportunity was linked with prosperity throughout the fifties and its juxtaposition with restriction had been intrinsic to its definition since 1945-51; indeed, the phrase came from the *Industrial Charter*.³⁴ Instead, Home's use represents an important example of how Tory rhetoric in the late-sixties and seventies was connected to the forties through the rhetorical culture of the intervening period, not in spite of it.

So when Sir Alec called an election for 15 October 1964, he had already helped reorient Tory rhetoric towards efficiency via free competition and framed the coming battle as a choice between socialism and freedom in starker terms than had been usual for a Conservative leader outside of conference since Churchill. However, historians' attachment to the consensus thesis and tendency to dismiss such attacks as routine and unchanging precluded them from identifying this important transition either before or during the campaign.³⁵ Once again, Butler and King's classic study paid little attention to how candidates

³¹ Alec Douglas-Home, Speech to National Liberal Organisation, 20 Apr 1964, reported in: 'Sir A. Home's Plea for Individuals', *The Times*, 21 Apr 1964, p. 6.

³² Alec Douglas-Home, Speech at Blair Drummond, 6 Nov 1963, reported in: 'No Cause for Drab, Uniform Lives: Sir Alec Defends Affluence', *The Guardian*, 7 Nov 1963, p. 5.

³³ Alec Douglas-Home, Party Political Broadcast, 20 Nov 1963, reported in: 'Sir Alec on that Little Extra', *The Guardian*, 21 Nov 1963, p. 1.

³⁴ CUCO, *The Industrial Charter: Popular Edition* (London: CUCO, 1947), p. 2.

³⁵ Gamble, *The Free Economy*, p. 76.

presented issues and devoted no space to freedom rhetoric.³⁶ Indeed, if relying solely on their tabulation of the topics covered in election address, readers could be misled into thinking that materialism dominated. Accordingly, historians' accounts that relied on Butler's work have ignored the precedents for the freedom rhetoric attracting considerable attention in 1970.³⁷ In truth, 1964 was just as ideologically charged as 1970, and, far from seeing no change, the campaign bridged the freedom rhetoric of Macmillan and Heath. Unlike Hexham's candidate who audaciously reprinted his 1951 address, most election leaflets and broadcasts in 1964 exhibited significant rhetorical change as candidates repurposed the stable elements of their rhetoric culture to the specific tasks at hand.³⁸ Two changes in particular reveal the transitional status of freedom rhetoric compared to 1959 or 1966. First, like Home's pre-election speeches, candidates' addresses strengthened links between freedom, efficiency and the modernisation necessary to forestall decline. Freedom was the handmaiden of modernity primarily because 'improved efficiency and modernisation demand[ed] competition' and absence of 'nationalisation or centralised controls'.³⁹ This relationship between economic freedom and efficiency was expressed with varying precision. Often the logic behind assertions that 'the disciplines and incentives of free enterprise are the mainspring of this progress' or that 'the system of free competitive enterprise is not only very efficient, but also permits more personal freedom' remained mysterious.⁴⁰ However, some candidates offered fuller explanations. Having stated that 'industry thrives on freedom and competition', Bill Yates, who would retain his Wrekin seat, implied a connection between delegated responsibility and efficiency by asking his readers to 'imagine the service we should get in the Market Place if it was all planned in Whitehall. Conservatives say "trust the man

³⁶ David Butler and Anthony King, *The British General Election of 1964* (London: Macmillan, 1965), pp. 109-55.

³⁷ Blake, *The Conservative Party*, pp. 296-7; Charmley, *A History of Conservative Politics*, pp. 177-8; Thorpe, *Alec Douglas-Home*, pp. 362-77; Jefferys, *Retreat from New Jerusalem*, pp. 189-93; Although it neglects to consider how 'freedom' was used to articulate different forms of modernisation by far the best account comes from Mitchell, *The Brief and Turbulent*, pp. 158-76.

³⁸ For 1951 reprint: Rupert Spier, Election Address, Hexham, 1964, British Library of Political and Economic Science (hereafter B.L.P.E.S.), COLL MISC 0401/1/18Q.

³⁹ James Allason, Election Address, Hemel Hempstead 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/1G.

⁴⁰ Greame Finlay, Election Address, Epping, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/6E; Oliver Wright, Election Address, Swansea, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/21J.

on the spot and let him get on with the job”^{.41} Similarly, Norman Glen attempted to explain the efficiency boost offered by economic freedom through a very similar appeal to that concerning the ‘small trader’ in the late-forties. His election address carried an endorsement from Woodside shopkeeper, Mr E. Taylor, who supported the Conservatives because he wanted ‘a Government which believe in competition and free enterprise’. Labour did not ‘care a button about the small business’, even though ‘we are the people who give the customer freedom of choice. I welcome competition – it keeps me on my toes’.⁴²

However, metaphor often informed claims that socialism ‘would retard the rapid progress now being made in modernisation’ compared to the ‘free environment’.⁴³ Growth simply resulted from the absence of restraint. Whereas ‘in its six years in office’, West Gloucestershire voters were reminded, ‘the Socialist Party shackled industry, smothered initiative, and squandered our resources’, ‘in thirteen years of Conservative freedom industry ha[d] flourished’. By clinging to the doctrines of Marx, now even abandoned in Soviet Russia, Labour was ‘sneezing the dust of the last century’.⁴⁴ Indeed, candidates extended both FREEDOM AS AIR and ECONOMIC RESTRICTION AS BODILY CONFINEMENT metaphors: ‘We Can Breathe’, declared Lord Baniel triumphantly, ‘Let’s remember this better life is only possible because we believe in freedom, enterprise and competition. We can breathe in this atmosphere. It brings prosperity. We suffocate with nationalisation, “planning by compulsion” central direction and control. “It gives us cramp!”⁴⁵ Although this message was similar to those in 1955 and 1959, a key difference was that calls for release once again spoke to Britain’s perceived economic weakness rather than strength. For example, the party’s manifesto framed its warning that ‘a centralised system of direction cramps the style of the British people’ within the context of warnings that its proposals did not represent ‘easy, sheltered life’ and that ‘prosperity has to be worked for’.⁴⁶ Of course, corporeal metaphors of restriction were by no means a new feature of Tory rhetoric, but they were well-suited to this declinist

⁴¹ Bill Yates, Election Address, The Wrekin, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/22.

⁴² Norman Glen, Election Address, Glasgow, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/71.

⁴³ Leslie Thomas, Election Address, Canterbury, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/19M.

⁴⁴ D. St. P. Barnard, Election Address, West Gloucestershire, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/2N.

⁴⁵ Lord Robin Baniel, Election Address, Hertford, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/20O.

⁴⁶ CUCO, *Prosperity with a Purpose* (London: CUCO, 1964) available at:

<http://www.politicsresources.net/area/uk/man/con64.htm> [Accessed: Jan 2014].

narrative; they implied a comforting analogy between biological and economic growth, which could be achieved if only natural function was not inhibited. As we shall see, this layering of politics over a wider cultural metaphor of restriction and release continued to rise in prominence under Heath, particularly as a justification of the free market as in harmony with human nature. In 1964, however, its popularity amongst candidates probably owed something to its vagueness; an ethereal vision of modernisation was helpful to those needing to advocate change without offending local interests involved in specific proposals.⁴⁷

However, because the 1964 election was a point of transition many more candidates than in 1959 or 1966 used freedom to support a limited form of planning, following Selwyn Lloyd's distinction: 'We believe in planning by consent, as with NEDDY, not by compulsion'.⁴⁸ The thrust of these arguments was that liberty could be retained whilst delivering growth. 'The Conservative Policy of partnership between Government and People, i.e. a Free Society has proved successful', Douglas Glover declared whilst promising a 4% annual growth rate.⁴⁹ Some candidates were more precise as to the difference between their planning by 'partnership' or 'consent' and Labour's socialism. The candidate for Ruislip North proudly stated: 'We Conservatives have shown the British people in the most decisive fashion... that planning is compatible with a free society when it is carried out by public investment, consultation and incentive and not by centrally imposed controls and nationalisation'.⁵⁰ But for most of those championing their party's 'immense programme of development which is an integral part of the modernisation of Britain', the 'essence of Conservative planning – unlike what the Socialists offer – [was] not the direction of individuals and to industry but rather the creation of conditions in which individuals, through private enterprise and initiative, [could] achieve success'.⁵¹ Of course, with these loaded definitions in place, candidates could engage in

⁴⁷ Mitchell, *The Brief and Turbulent Life*, p. 166.

⁴⁸ Selwyn Lloyd, Election Broadcast, 28 Sep 1964 available at: <http://pebs.group.shef.ac.uk/> [Accessed: Jan 2014]; Mark Woodnutt, Election Address, Isle of Wight, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/21H.

⁴⁹ Douglas Glover, Election Address, Ormskirk, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/7; For an example championing the results of planning by consent: Griffith Pierce, Election Address, Wrexham, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/16J.

⁵⁰ Petre Crowder, Election Address, Ruislip Northwood, 1964. B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/3D.

⁵¹ Charles Doughty, Election Address, East Surrey, 1964. B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/4C.

anti-statist, socialist menace rhetoric, and, in this sense, defence of State intervention was not antithetical to the rhetoric subsequently associated with 'Powellism'.

But the conception of freedom as efficiency was even beginning to structure definitions of limited planning. 'To impose plans on people is neither efficient nor democratic', Wallsall North's candidate wrote, adding: 'we have to reconcile individual freedom and enterprise with planning techniques and we can only do it with popular consent and co-operation...'.⁵² Keith Joseph's literature neatly expressed the free society's efficiency as a limiting factor on planning. Whilst 'there was much that the Government must and d[id] plan', George Brown's plans for 'over-ambitious planning – with the "teeth" of which Socialists boast – would be fatal to us in a highly competitive world'. 'Trying to plan – as the Socialists would plan – the trading of a free society in a competitive world, with increasing bureaucracy and controls, would have the same result as last time – distortions, delays, rising taxation and soaring cost of living'.⁵³ Likewise, for Home it was now the efficiency of a free society that placed limitations on planning, not solely the liberty of its members. Reviewing Labour's programme he said: 'we have the State monopoly, we have planning by compulsion and when the socialist leaders say that their first task will be to plan every aspect of our lives, they mean it'. 'It means more officialdom and more red tape for that is what Socialism is. Now surely the last thing we want when our major competitors still rely on the individual enterprise system is to turn over from one which suits us so well to a Socialist system which must inevitably cramp our style?'.⁵⁴ Although similar to arguments made under Churchill, this rhetoric reflected present concerns about which political philosophy reflected the imperatives of sixties Britain: 'modernisation', Spencer Summers argued, 'inevitably means change. The Socialists believe in imposing a pattern of change drawn up by the State. Conservative policy is based on a working partnership between the State, the employers and the employees'.⁵⁵ Two factors, therefore, now limited Conservative planning: first, the extent to which it

⁵² John Barnes, Election Address, Walsall North, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/2GG.

⁵³ Keith Joseph, Election Address, Leeds North East, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/10B.

⁵⁴ Alec Douglas-Home, Election Broadcast, 13 Oct 1964 available at: <http://pebs.group.shef.ac.uk/> [Accessed: Jan 2014]; 'Douglas-Home Replies', *The Guardian*, 21 Sep 1964, p. 8.

⁵⁵ Spencer Summers, Election Address, Aylesbury, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/18C.

negated a free society, and, second, the degree to which it reduced efficiency by restricting freedom. In sum, the basic act of framing Tory planning as a matter of balancing freedom with State action persisted, but that model drew upon slightly different rhetorical resources to reflect a different model of growth.

The vision of society offered by the Conservatives experienced a similar transition, in which the stable rhetorical resources were reworked into contextually-specific forms. Whereas in 1959 opportunity was vaguely defined as freedom for self-development, by 1964 its meaning had become entwined with the notion of free choice, increasingly a monetary choice linked to the moral purpose of prosperity.⁵⁶ Targeting the ever-elusive 'youth vote', Bill Yates's bullet-point election address made this revised conception of opportunity clear:

Good to be young. Given freedom and opportunity. Opportunity to choose a career. Opportunity to make a living and enjoy the rewards. Opportunity to spend your money how and where you like. Opportunity to save as you wish. Opportunity to choose where to live; how to travel; where to shop. Opportunity to succeed and help others. The Conservative party gives you opportunities – The Socialist party does not.⁵⁷

But whilst his focus on choice was fairly representative, the implicit link between opportunity and leisurely consumption was now less universal.⁵⁸ Unlike 1955 or 1959, the 'opportunity state' frequently meant one 'in which everyone has the freedom to get on with their job'.⁵⁹ If that greater focus on work was one reaction to Labour's critique of affluence, another was to integrate opportunity with tropes concerning independence from the State, again defined in economic terms. 'If you want the Government to run your life & spend your money – Vote Labour', Bill Yates appended to his bullets above.⁶⁰ Peter Horden extended his leader's defence of prosperity the previous November, juxtaposing Tory freedom to choose with Labour's arrogantly-paternalistic attitude:

⁵⁶ Joan Hall, Barnsley, Election Address, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/8X.

⁵⁷ Bill Yates, Election Address, The Wrekin, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/22.

⁵⁸ On alleged materialism of those elections: Jefferys, *Retreat from New Jerusalem*, p. 79.

⁵⁹ Harrison Harwood, Election Address, Eye, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/8G; These arguments explain why Butler and Boyle saw no contradiction between prosperity and traditional Tory values like work and duty: Jefferys, *Retreat from New Jerusalem*, p. 198.

⁶⁰ Bill Yates, Election Leaflet, The Wrekin, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/22.

“Trust the People – Trust Yourself” – Surely the choice is whether you and I want a government whose aim is to increase the freedom of the individual in the belief that by releasing his energies for his own fulfilment the interests of the nation will best be served – OR whether you want a government which thinks it knows best how you should run your life, by running it for you. It seems quite remarkable that in what is, in my opinion, the most civilized country on earth, the Socialists should deliberately seek to restrict the degree of individual choice and initiative by exercising an increasing measure of central control and direction’.⁶¹

Crucially, exercising independence from the State through opportunity was the moral purpose of prosperity. According to Hamilton Kerr, Tories believed in ‘helping people to help themselves rather than looking to an impersonal and all-powerful State for their benefits’, by helping people to learn, to earn and to own’. The purpose of prosperity was for people to achieve this freedom from dependence: ‘Henry Ford, the great American Industrialist, once said some wise words’, Kerr continued. “Power and money, machinery and goods are only useful in that they set us free to live”.⁶² A virtuous circle was emerging: if individuals were free to take up their own opportunities, they would in turn become freer still by virtue of their monetary independence from Government. Thus, Morgan Giles explicitly merged the Tory watchwords of opportunity, freedom and responsibility to extract ‘idealism’ out of materialism. ‘Material prosperity is not everything’, he claimed. ‘We need prosperity with a purpose... Conservative policy has created the “Opportunity State” – the conditions for any enterprising man or woman to live a fuller, more interesting and more responsible life for the country’s benefit as well as their own’. Continuing the sixties trend to look across the Atlantic, this ‘responsibility’ was defined using Abraham Lincoln’s conception of self-help: “It is not possible to help anyone permanently by doing for him what he could do for himself”. Only by trusting the individual with freedom and responsibility shall we maintain the vitality to keep this country great’.⁶³ Opportunity had become not only something to be created by Government and prosperity, but a philosophy of the small State allowing individuals to exercise those opportunities to generate prosperity, the purpose

⁶¹ Peter Horden, Election Address, Horsham, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/8W.

⁶² Hamilton Kerr, Election Address, Cambridge, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/11

⁶³ Morgan Giles, Election Address, Winchester, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/7Q.

of which was a moral emancipation from reliance on Government. Whilst this was one route to moralising prosperity via individual sovereignty, the altruistic motivations of affluence continued to play a minor role since opportunity was a means of benefitting the community as a whole.⁶⁴ Economic release was mutually beneficial: 'Englishmen's energies should be free to do their best for themselves, their families, their businesses and their country'.⁶⁵ Although both Lowe and Jefferys recognised developments in welfare policy along these lines stretching back to the One Nation group's advocacy of selectivity, their accounts omit the complex rhetorical reconfiguration which supported this critique of independence as an attempt to repel Labour's critique of affluence. Placing the languages of opportunity in perspective, then, we can see an evolutionary development.⁶⁶ During the forties, opportunity had been defined against State restriction, but, once Conservatives were themselves in power, the negative definition shifted towards an abstract restriction on personal development. By the early sixties, however, the two strands had merged – freedom to develop oneself through exercising economic choice would promote independence from the State and share this ever-more widely.

Articulating the socialist threat to this society also saw familiar rhetorical resources either transposed into or adjusted to the context and rhetorical needs of the early sixties. Parts one and two of chapter three have shown that framing the 'central issue in this election [as] whether Britain is to be transformed into a Socialist State under Mr. Wilson or is to go forward as a free society under the Conservative leadership of Sir Alec Douglas-Home', expressed a perennial formulae of grass-roots Tory rhetoric; but one of the reasons why Heath's use of freedom rhetoric has been misunderstood as symptomatic of a policy shift is that historians underestimate how mainstream hyperbolic rhetoric had again become by 1964.⁶⁷ In some respects, tropes were carried over in near entirety from 1951 to 1964. 'Do you want this country and its industry to be stifled and regimented by incompetent bureaucrats?', John Gorst asked the electors of

⁶⁴ Lord Dalkeith, Election Address, Edinburgh North, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/4DB.

⁶⁵ Reginald Bennett, Election Address, Gosport and Fareham, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/2A; Lord Dalkeith, Election Address, Edinburgh North, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/4DB.

⁶⁶ Lowe, 'Modernizing Britain's Welfare State'; Jefferys, *The New Jerusalem*, pp. 131-153.

⁶⁷ Quote from: John Litchfield, Election Address, Chelsea, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/12F.

Chester-le-Street. Indeed, only the technological menace of ‘inquisitive civil servants anxious to compute and tabulate you’ placed his catalogue of bureaucratic threats in a sixties context.⁶⁸ Similarly, Home revived arguments of direction to near-Churchillian heights:

The Labour Party really does believe in socialism, which must mean subjecting the individual to the State. Inside the party there may be differences as to the speed at which they can move towards it – and all sorts of questions of political expediency enter into it – but the Socialist State has always been, and still remains, their goal.

Indeed, having declared his party ‘fundamentally opposed’ to that conception of society, his caveat was significantly weaker than Macmillan or even Churchill’s: ‘We are not a *laissez-faire* party, but while we recognise the role of the State in modern society we are determined to reserve the fullest freedom for the individual’.⁶⁹ Although the tools had remained in use throughout the fifties and sixties, the hard fought election of 1964 presaged a return to prominence of this more hyperbolic frame.

Yet, this was not carbon-copy oratory; speakers used the established tools of their rhetorical culture to accomplish context-specific tasks. For example, having emblazoned her literature with the banner, ‘The Battle for Freedom’, Patricia Hornsby-Smith applied the familiar logic of opposing nationalisation to Wilson’s proposals:

Logically and ruthlessly the Socialists reckon that if they control steel they can control the whole economic life of the nation and through it can gradually produce a Socialist State though the nationalisation of all the means of production, distribution and exchange. This is no battle for one industry; it is a battle for free enterprise, as a whole, a battle for democratic freedom and the way of life of the whole nation’⁷⁰

Similarly, candidates such as Lionel Heald, a self-proclaimed ‘modern middle-of-the-road Conservative’, produced very contemporary versions of well-worn dictator tropes. Seizing Wilson’s intention to initiate a hundred days of

⁶⁸ John Gorst, Election Address, Chester-le-Street, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/7R.

⁶⁹ ‘Douglas-Home Replies’, *The Guardian*, 21 Sep 1964, p. 8.

⁷⁰ Patricia Hornsby-Smith, Election Address, Chislehurst and Sidcup, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/8S.

legislation, he declared: 'Mr Wilson has also chosen an unfortunate analogy: the historic "Hundred Days" was the period just before Waterloo in 1815, when Napoleon sought unsuccessfully to establish himself as a European dictator'.⁷¹ Others set the traditional accusation of Labour as dictators-in-waiting within the early-sixties foreign affairs climate, telling voters that 'although the risk of catastrophe ha[d] temporarily receded, the conflict of thought between Left and Right in world politics [wa]s likely to prevail for a long time' and that it was important to remember 'this very same conflict between Left and Right... dominates our domestic politics, albeit on a smaller and less obvious scale'.⁷² Finally, the heightened rhetoric of socialist threat was serving a specific purpose in 1964: countering the perceived desire for change. 'Some will say "time for a change" particularly those who have never experienced Socialist controls', Hornsby-Smith sympathised. 'But if the change is from a free society to a Socialist State, that change is too dearly bought'.⁷³ In short, the context of 1964 had produced the rhetoric of Tory opposition before the party had lost power. Yet, a more aggressive portrayal of the socialist threat was only one rhetorical step towards Heath: whether measured by increasing use of efficiency, evolving defences of limited planning, or vision of opportunity, the election was characterised by transition, not the stagnancy normally invoked to justify neglecting candidates' oratory.

Undoubtedly, the pace of change quickened in the months following defeat, during which the balance tipped firmly away from Conservative's vision of planning towards freedom as choice or the route to efficiency and even stronger oppositions between socialism and liberty.⁷⁴ Predictably, prominent figures announced a return to anti-statist principles on losing power. Henry Brooke told Newcastle students at the end of a difficult year:

Conservatives believe profoundly in freedom and free choice and free enterprise and personal responsibility. To keep laws designed to safeguard liberty is one thing. To let personal freedom be cocooned in

⁷¹ Lionel Heald, Election Address, Surrey, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/84.

⁷² Lord Dalkeith, Election Address, Edinburgh North, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/4DB.

⁷³ Patricia Hornsby-Smith, Election Address, Chislehurst and Sidcup, 1964, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0401/1/8S.

⁷⁴ The only change Dutton detects is on immigration: *Douglas-Home*, p. 91; Bale sees the changes under Home as institutional and policy making apparatus: *The Conservative Party Since 1945*, p. 132-3.

binding regulations because somebody else thinks he knows best, as happened in the previous period of Socialist rule, is quite another.⁷⁵

Similarly, Selwyn Lloyd quickly saw his prophecy that 'ordinary people in this country would be much more pushed about and interfered with' borne out in the 'multiplication of Ministers and officials'.⁷⁶ Even those who countenanced a good deal of State intervention switched the focus of their rhetoric accordingly. In a widely reported speech to Barnet Conservatives, Maudling proclaimed "we are the party of the Right... there cannot be two parties of the Left".⁷⁷ However, the 'real distinction between Right and Left' lay not in 'differing attitudes to change and process' (although Labour was 'the home of reaction' not modernisation), but in 'the relation of the individual to the society and system within which he lives, the relation between freedom and order'. This 'tension' bound society because 'freedom is impossible without order; the individual can exist only within a system'. But if this was the same model that previously justified State intervention, Maudling acknowledged a new situation. Whilst it was 'no part of Conservatism to break the unions or dismantle the health service', the party needed to 'ensure that, whenever the balance is to be struck between system and individual, the scales are weighted on the side of the individual'. This was especially so, when 'faced with a Left that is distinctly socialist and devoted to the centralisation of power'.

The most significant development was that modernisation became overwhelmingly a matter of competition and release. The Banbury MP and future euro-sceptic, Neil Marten, urged that in reshaping its policies the Conservative party should 'state clearly our belief in enterprise and competition. At the next election, this will be a basic issue. As each week under Labour goes by, freedom and competition are being reduced'.⁷⁸ Marten would have been reassured by his leader's rhetoric. Speaking in Manchester, historically the 'fountain of enterprise and contemporarily the practitioners of modernisation',

⁷⁵ Henry Brooke., Speech to Newcastle University Conservative and Unionist Association, 13 Nov 1964, 254-55 at 255; See also: Henry Brooke, Speech to 1964 Committee, Trinity College Dublin, 15 Feb 1965, Bodleian Library Oxford (hereafter B.L.O), Conservative Party Archive (hereafter CPA), PPB 148, folios 48-50 at 49.

⁷⁶ Selwyn Lloyd, Speech to Annual Dinner of the Edgbaston Division Conservative Association, University of Birmingham, 21 Nov 1965, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 148, folios 231-2 at 232.

⁷⁷ Reginald Maudling, Speech to Barnet Women's Conservative Association Lunch, 30 Mar 1965 reported in: 'Balance of Rights and Responsibilities' *The Times*, 31 Mar 1965, p. 5.

⁷⁸ Neil Marten, Speech to London and Westminster Women's Conservative Association, Caxton Hall, 24 Feb 1965, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 148, folio 11.

Home argued that ‘when competition is replaced by monopoly and direction is over-centralised... the pace of progress slows down and flexibility is lost’. The technological revolution preached the ‘need for adaptation and rapid change. Monopoly stultifies it; competition forces it’. Accordingly, Britain could not live ‘with the prospect of higher and higher taxation; or breathe with more and more centralisation and control; or compete unless incentive and reward and the efficiency which comes from competition and accepted as the order of the day’.⁷⁹ Home’s philosophy was now wholly emancipatory: ‘we can switch over to a policy which releases the energies of the individual and encourages firms with drive and initiative, when life will be fuller and richer and more rewarding than ever before’.⁸⁰ Yet, this was not Powellism: the policy measures Sir Alec’s rhetoric described partnered lower direct taxation and entry into the Common Market with industrial relocation, higher education spending, and more measures to support redundancy, retraining and mobility to persuade ‘labour [to] join management in the drive for modernisation’. The national aim remained full employment, and Home championed partnership ‘because the aims of government and industry are by and large the same’. Rhetorical change was in some respects running ahead of policy.⁸¹

Of course, there were signs of that future ‘neoliberals’ were making their case in the aftermath of defeat. Geoffrey Howe told Birkenhead Tories: instead of ‘restrictive practices, rising taxes, and indiscriminate welfare benefits’, ‘in a world market that is free and intensely competitive we need to liberate our own people of enterprise, even if this does involve disagreeable changes for the laggard industry or firm or individual’.⁸² Similarly, Angus Maude insisted the party must ‘say frankly, honestly and toughly certain unfashionable things that need to be said, for example, that efficiency, competition and free consumer choice can be secured only at the cost of the slow and inefficient being hurt. That a man will be more secure and satisfied in a useful job in a growing industry than in a protected job in a dying one. That once there he must be free to give of his best, unhindered by inefficient management or Trade Union

⁷⁹ Alec Douglas-Home, Speech to Chamber of Commerce, Manchester, 25 Jun 1965, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 9/1, folios 33-7 at 33, 35.

⁸⁰ Alec Douglas-Home, Party Political Broadcast, 28 Apr 1965, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 9/1, folios 56-61

⁸¹ A Heath was charged with co-ordinating a policy review from the first half of 1965, but interim reports were not due until the summer: Ramsden, *The Making of Conservative*, p. 238.

⁸² Geoffrey Howe, Speech at Birkenhead, 22 Jan 1965, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 148, folios 114-5.

restrictions'.⁸³ The crucial point is that *from the outset* such language was not the preserve of the Right. Chasing votes deemed crucial to recovery, Peter Walker argued that 'young people with any gumption and initiative demand the diversity of opportunity that a free enterprise economy offers' and wanted to 'sweep away the restrictive practices of both sides of industry'. Their wishes were 'in stark contrast to the out-dated doctrines of this government – a government that looks upon free enterprise as something to be taxed more, controlled more and, in some instances, something to be turned into a state monopoly'.⁸⁴ Similarly, Maudling was arguing that 'economically the Conservatives must stand for freedom and enterprise, for vigour and competition, and for broadening opportunity'. His proposals included pressing 'the struggle against monopoly and restriction', a tax system that 'encouraged enterprise and expansion', and tariff reductions – indeed, in a strikingly 'neoliberal' agenda State action only vaguely featured as using 'the powers of modern organisation' to make live 'more materially satisfactory and spiritually more enriched'.⁸⁵ The emphasis has certainly shifted, but it was not only the party's right-wing leading the charge.

Extending a campaign theme, freedom of choice joined competition as a prerequisite of efficiency and marker of individual liberty. 'We proclaim our belief in "choice"', Sir Alec told Young Conservatives in February 1965. 'It is good in itself, but it is much more. Individuals will not develop new ideas or take fresh initiative if they are not allowed to express themselves fully'. Indeed, widening the notion of choice to services bound Conservatives' concept of individual freedom with efficiency. Succeeding Lord Blakenham as Party Chairman, Edward Du Cann insisted that Tories were the party of the consumer, not just as shoppers, but consumers of social services, education, health and leisure:

What I am saying, of course, is really a way of stating in terms appropriate to the 1960s and 1970s a theme which has always been central to the Conservative outlook... the paramount importance of treating people as individuals and of extending their range of opportunity

⁸³ Angus Maude, Speech to East Midland Area Conservative Political Centre AGM, Newark, 20 Feb 1965, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 148, folios 24-25 at 24.

⁸⁴ Peter Walker, Party Political Broadcast, 12 Feb 1965, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 1/11, folios 193-194.

⁸⁵ Reginald Maudling, Speech to Barnet Women's Conservative Association Lunch, 30 Mar 1965 reported in: 'Balance of Rights and Responsibilities' *The Times*, 31 Mar 1965, p. 5.

and choice as their resources and the nation's grow. We reject the thick grey blanket of Socialist uniformity. This is something we believe not simply because it is right but also because it is more efficient.⁸⁶

Thus, as an expression of individuality, free choice was now a means of efficiency. Home often coupled this theme with well-worn arguments of direction. Whilst proclaiming his belief in 'freedom of choice and that the secret of efficiency is not to curb the individual but to give him his head', he warned that officialdom arrived 'with smiles and ends in chains', saying that socialism's tendency was 'to advance insidiously and by stealth' and that 'take-over by Socialists of large chunks of our freedom of choice and our local responsibilities are the penalties of socialism and the time for people to rise up and say that they will not have it is now, before it is too late'.⁸⁷ The example Home had in mind was 'liberty of choice' for parents, which the party's broadcasters claimed Labour was destroying 'by insisting on the same comprehensive school system'.⁸⁸

When brought together, these elements formed a rather different philosophy of freedom than Macmillan's careful balance of concepts, and established the thematic framework that Heath's Opposition operated within. As Home continued his speech to Young Conservatives, choice, competition and freedom became further entwined in the argument of direction typical of those used to bring issues into a narrative about Labour governments whether headed by Attlee or Wilson: 'Choice is the very essence of a free society. We must be positive to assert and ensure the right of choice, as it is now under active threat. Nationalisation is monopoly in its most extreme form. Planning is the Socialist cover for control in which Socialists really believe. And the reason why Socialism is bound to end in compulsion is that Socialists do not trust the individual to choose what is right. So they erode freedom of choice until the State takes over, and from then on knows best'. In contrast, Tories would 'curb monopolies and rings which operate against choice... stimulate competition

⁸⁶ Edward Du Cann, Speech at Memorial Hall, East Grinstead, 2 Feb 1965, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 148, folios 91-5 at 94-5.

⁸⁷ Alec Douglas-Home, Speech at Northern Area Conservative Rally, Newcastle, 19 Feb 1965, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 9/1, folios 91-102.

⁸⁸ Party Political Broadcast, 10 May 1965, PPB 11/1, folios 174-178; Similar sentiments: Humphry Berkley, Speech to Manchester Young Conservatives, 20 Mar 1965, reported in: 'Election Fight on Comprehensive', *The Guardian*, 21 Mar 1965, p. 3.

which is the guarantee of choice, and secure its widest range so that the shape of society is decided by the sum of the choices of individuals, and not dictated by the few with the attitude of mind of “We are the masters now”.⁸⁹ Here choice and freedom had merged and stepped beyond an argument about efficiency into an ideal type of society; the rhetorical tools for opposing austerity had been transposed to denounce affluent Britain under Wilson.

A similar mix of moral and efficiency objections produced stronger condemnations of Trade Unions, which Home made the subject of a political broadcast in late April.⁹⁰ The leader of the Opposition segued into the topic from his philosophy of growth through release: because ‘everything depends on the individual’, ‘it simply cannot make sense to lay restrictions on what a man can do’. ‘In this country’, he continued, ‘we are wasteful in our use of manpower. There are all sorts of practices which restrict output, put costs up and hamper sales’. Calling for a Royal Commission, he blamed (despite Conservatives’ thirteen years in office) the socialists, whom, for ‘all their talk of modernisation’, had proved ‘stuffy defenders of habits which should be thrown on the scrap heap’.⁹¹ Efficiency aside, the leadership finally assuaged the rank-and-file by taking up the issue of unionists’ liberties more definitely. Sir Edwin Leather told students at Exeter University that whilst they had humanised the nineteenth century, the Trades Unions’ primary objectives were now mischief and tyranny, and Maudling argued that the ‘petty tyranny’ and lack of authority within the Unions was related to an excessive ‘emphasis [being] placed on the claims of the system and too little on the rights of the individual’.⁹² Indeed, in February Home had attack Unions’ infringements of their members and others’ liberties more strongly than his predecessors had dared, declaring the party would not support reforms which contravened ‘the freedom of man to work – the right to

⁸⁹ Alec Douglas-Home, Speech at Young Conservative Conference, London, 13 Feb 1965, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 9/1, folios 104-11 at 105.

⁹⁰ Ramsden recognised that a tougher policy was quickly devised: *The Winds of Change*, p. 219.

⁹¹ Alec Douglas-Home, Party Political Broadcast, 28 Apr 1965, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 9/1, folios 56-61 at 59

⁹² Reginald Maudling, Speech to Barnet Women’s Conservative Association Lunch, 30 Mar 1965 reported in: ‘Balance of Rights and Responsibilities’ *The Times*, 31 Mar 1965, p. 5.

work, if you like – without intimidation’ when ‘our motto must be “keep Britain free”’.⁹³

Clearly, then, Sir Alec’s time as Leader of the Opposition was not only marked by the construction of new party apparatus to elect a moderniser; the months between defeat in October 1964 and July 1965 witnessed a further shift of emphasis.⁹⁴ Yet, despite the rapidity of that change, this was an evolution rather than right-wing revolution; the party had shorn itself of the defences of planning it no longer needed and developed existing arguments into stronger versions of freedom as efficiency, choice and antithesis to socialism, rather than adding anything radically new. From this perspective, 1963-5 stands out as a missing link between the use of freedom rhetoric under Macmillan and Heath, the recovery of which is important both for our interpretation of the subsequent years of Tory opposition and the wider story of freedom rhetoric. We have seen how one iteration of the basic freedom-versus-unfreedom frame transitioned into another, reordering and repurposing common rhetorical tools to perform new tasks. Recognising the evolutionary nature of such changes allows us to reconnect the oratory of Heath and Macmillan, which in turns suggests that the links between Churchill and Thatcher’s freedom rhetoric are symptomatic of a rhetorical culture passed on through intermediaries. More immediately, exposing Heath’s rhetoric as one stage in a gradual evolution predating his leadership complicates interpretation of his Opposition. First, Heath only had to look to his predecessor for an example of a leader using emancipatory rhetoric but still countenancing a role for the State in policy terms. Second, given the range of actors using strong freedom rhetoric immediately prior to his leadership, Heath can hardly be seen as automatically ascribing to, or making concessions to, ‘neoliberalism’; when talking about liberty and release as the means to growth he was engaging with a party-wide language. Third, the very fact that these processes were underway before his election suggests that we need to dispense with the convenient assumption that a rhetorical change took place in response to Heath’s weak leadership or policy review. Finally, given this was an evolution, not a revolution, we should be prepared to find traces of

⁹³ Alec Douglas-Home, Speech at Northern Area Conservative Rally, Newcastle, 19 Feb 1965, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 9/1, folio 101.

⁹⁴ Standard accounts offer very little on his time as leader of the opposition: Ramsden, *The Winds of Change*, pp. 230-5.

the older rhetorical models used by the party during its thirteen years in government. In sum, 1963-5 calls for us to treat the ownership of freedom rhetoric during 1965-70 as contested, rather than holding all elements of the party calling for liberation to the policy programme of a group which was yet to annex freedom rhetoric.

II

Heath: *Volte Face* or Conman?

More than any other post-war Conservative leader, Heath's reputation has rested on his rhetoric and, in particular, the perceived gap between his words in opposition and actions in office. In large part, this is because historians detected changes in both Conservative rhetoric and policy between 1965 and 1970, which they very often depicted as proto-Thatcherism and juxtaposed with the 1970-4's government's acts.⁹⁵ Heath and others' use of 'freedom' is normally cited as key evidence for this rhetorical and, for some, philosophical break from post-war 'consensus'. However, rather than probe the chronology, nature and extent of the apparent change, or question the simplistic labelling of freedom rhetoric as 'liberal market' or 'libertarian', scholars have accepted a link between such oratory and the growing influence of the New Right. Instead, they debate Heath's *sincerity*, dividing between those who argue that his rhetoric represented a conversion to neoliberalism, only to be 'betrayed' in government, and those who maintain that Heath allowed his oratory to falsely give this impression, either out of opportunism or as a concession to his assertive right wing. On the first view, Heath was good at 'espousing proto-Thatcherism', but 'a good deal less adept at implementing it'.⁹⁶ For Charmley, the betrayal of an initial break with 'consensual politics' showed that Heath ultimately continued post-war Conservatism's 'gap between rhetoric and practice'.⁹⁷ Likewise, Blake saw a rightwards departure from 'progressive paternalism', identifying a 'content and theme' very similar to Thatcherism in Heath's 'reemphasi[s] [on] setting the

⁹⁵ Peter Dorey, *British Politics Since 1945* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), pp. 84-5, 108-11; Dennis Kavanagh, '1970-4' in *How Tory Governments Fall: The Tory Party in Power Since 1783*, edited by Anthony Seldon (London: Fontana, 1996), pp. 359-86 at 363-4; For a useful comparison of the 1964 and 1970 manifestos: Bale, *The Conservatives Since 1945*, pp. 214-9.

⁹⁶ Charmley, *A History of Conservative Politics*, pp. 181, 183, 185-6; At much less distance, Ken Phillips and Mike Wilson offer perhaps the subtlest version of this thesis because they also point to pre-1970 election hints that Heath was not committed to a break with consensus: *The Conservative Party: From Macmillan to Thatcher* in *The British Right* edited by Neill Nugent and Roger King (Farnborough: Saxon House, 1977), pp. 29-63 at 55-6.

⁹⁷ Charmley, *A History of Conservative Politics*, pp. 193-4 at 196.

people free'.⁹⁸ Yet, although he came into government with a 'programme of libertarianism', without the backing of a wider intellectual revolution, Heath quickly made pragmatic U-turns.⁹⁹ Martin Holmes, the staunchest defender of this Norman Tebbit version of history, remains convinced that 1965-70 witnessed a fundamental reappraisal of policy informed by Powell, the IEA, Friedman, and other free-market thinkers.¹⁰⁰ 'The failure', according to Holmes, 'was one of political will rather than a lack of intellectual justifications for [Heath's] original policy stance'.¹⁰¹

Revisionist accounts instead argue that the notion of Heath's opposition adopting a neoliberal programme owes less to reality and more to a combination of Wilson's attacks, the rank-and-file's wishful thinking, and Thatcherites' subsequent desire to tar Heath's government with 'betrayal'.¹⁰² Rather, Heath remained a centralist who attacked *etatiste* economics, but privately restrained those arguing that all State intervention anathema.¹⁰³ This thesis's classic statement, John Campbell's biography, insisted that the impression Heath was 'proto-Thatcherite' 'reflect[ed] the misunderstanding which Heath allowed to arise – indeed positively encouraged – by going along with an aggressively free-market rhetoric which he did not in his heart accept'.¹⁰⁴ 'Behind his superficial rhetoric... Heath's essential views – his belief in regional policy for instance – had not changed' and 'he never intended to break with the post-war social settlement'.¹⁰⁵ Thus, Campbell finds contradictions between Heath's interventionist leanings and 'talk of setting industry free from government control', which he attributes to the influence of Powell, Macleod, and Joseph or his subject's opportunism.¹⁰⁶ Recent work

⁹⁸ Blake, *The Conservative Party*, pp. 300-1.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 310-5.

¹⁰⁰ For 'betrayal' as manipulated by Thatcherites: Norman Tebbit, *Upwardly Mobile: An Autobiography* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988), p. 94; Holmes, *The Failure of the Heath Government*, pp. x, xi, 5-6.

¹⁰¹ Holmes, *The Failure of the Heath Government*, p. x; Holmes wrongly sees Heath as first advocating his radical approach during his 1970 conference speech: p. 10.

¹⁰² Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism*, pp. 231-6; Ramsden, *The Winds of Change*, pp. 302-3.

¹⁰³ Lewis Johnman, 'The Conservative Party in Opposition, 1964-70' in *The Wilson Governments 1964-70*, edited by Richard Coopey, Steven Fielding and Nicholas Tiratsoo (London: Pinter, 1993), pp. 184-206, esp. 193, 198, 199-200.

¹⁰⁴ Campbell, *Edward Heath*, p. 267; Whilst his work is often cited by Holmes and others, Cockett endorsed Campbell's interpretation: *Thinking the Unthinkable*, pp. 200-4; David Butler and Michael Pinto-Duschinsky, *The British General Election of 1970* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1971), p. 91.

¹⁰⁵ Campbell, *Edward Heath*, p. 267.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 234, 246.

follows this view that Heath was 'led astray by the language of the free market' and explains his insincerity either as 'rhetorical concessions to the Right' or cruder 'political expediency'.¹⁰⁷

Shared assumptions about Heath and his party's rhetoric pervade the debate. Typically, historians sketch Heath as a paradoxical figure, armed with an advanced psephological and marketing machine, obsessed with policy detail, but incapable of communicating any overarching philosophical theme.¹⁰⁸ This is intended as an unfavourable comparison not only with Wilson but with Powell and the New Right's ability to energise their brands of Conservatism.¹⁰⁹ In contrast, Heath's pragmatic politics of growth prescribed modernisation through competition and targeted young, nouveau-middle-class voters, but supposedly became trapped in the 'technocratic' 'vocabulary of a management consultant'.¹¹⁰ In Gamble's work, this contrast played directly into the debate above: under 'constant ideological pressure from the Right', the leadership was to adopt the latter's presentation because it lacked a compelling 'politics of support' to match its competition policy or revive the One Nation strategy.¹¹¹

Much of this historiography lacks rhetorical perspective and a secure evidential basis.¹¹² In the context of 1945-64, a detailed analysis of Tory oratory and propaganda between 1965 and 1970 suggests that historians should question the assumptions of change and freedom rhetoric's identity with the New Right or theoretical neoliberalism, which artificially reduce debate to a judgement on sincerity and use Heath's speeches simply as evidence for a *volte face* or

¹⁰⁷ Hennessy, *The Prime Minister: The Office and its Holders Since 1945* (London: Penguin, 2000), pp. 333-5; Kavanagh, '1970-4', p. 367; Garnett, 'Planning for Power', p. 212; Mark Pitchford, *The Conservative Party and the Extreme Right 1945-75* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), p. 132.

¹⁰⁸ Blake, *The Conservative Party*, p. 301; Campbell, *Edward Heath*, pp. 192-3; Charmley, *A History of Conservative Politics*, p. 187; Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, p. 92; John Ramsden, 'The Prime Minister and the Making of Policy' in *The Heath Government, 1970-4: A Reappraisal* edited by Stuart Ball and Anthony Seldon, Kindle Edition (London: Routledge, 2013 [1996]) locs. 705-1275 at 790; Richard Wade, *Conservative Economic Policy from Heath in Opposition to Cameron in Coalition* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 36.

¹⁰⁹ Patrick Cosgrave, *The Lives of Enoch Powell* (London: The Bodley Head, 1989), p. 227.

¹¹⁰ On target votes: Charmley, *A History of Conservative Politics*, p. 183; On presentation: Garnett, 'Planning for Power', p. 203. Ramsden rightly highlights the internal worries about both this target vote and technocratic language: *The Making of Conservative*, pp. 234, 249-51.

¹¹¹ Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, p. 92. Garnett slightly misreads Gamble's emphasis which was on the leadership allowing the interpretation of its competition policy to be dragged rightwards, not so much the substance: 'Planning for Power', p. 212.

¹¹² Some biographers have simply not recognised the rhetorical heritage Heath manipulated through phrases like 'freedom with order' and so dismiss them as signs of confused thinking: Margaret Laing, *Edward Heath: Prime Minister* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1972), p. 191.

opportunism. Instead, Heath and others' freedom rhetoric reflected a complex mix of inheritance and evolution, representing neither conversion nor concession. Moreover, scholars bemoaning Heath and his supporters' vocabulary as 'technocratic' indulge contemporary simplification; such rhetoric was integrated with traditional, 'philosophical' liberation narratives. Having already shown that the changes historians often associate with Heath were not synchronous with his leadership, this section first demonstrates the inheritance and adaptation of freedom rhetoric before and during the 1966 election. It then argues that historians have underestimated both how far Heath manipulated older rhetorical models associated with the Middle Way and the tactical imperatives emanating from the leadership's own policies that encouraged freedom rhetoric. From this perspective we can show disparate groups using similar rhetoric for their own ends, temper Powell and Joseph's reputation as oratorical prophets, and finally reassess both the rhetorical myths of Selsdon Man and the 1970 election.

In electing Heath the Tories gained a more credible moderniser as leader, but his rhetoric was neither as dissimilar from his predecessors' nor as univocally-technocratic as has subsequently been believed. Like Home's later speeches, Heath integrated modernisation with the emancipatory cries continually repurposed by Tories since 1951. When accepting the leadership, for example, Heath partnered the rather dry line, 'there are millions of people who yearn for an efficient government and the opportunity to get on with the job', with a more rousing promise to 'release the frustrated energies of these people so that, by their own enterprise and initiative, they can, and Britain can, do deeds worthy of our own history'.¹¹³ Indeed, Heath articulated 'technocratic' policies through traditional metaphors of liberation and restriction. Conservatives' modernising mission, he told his Bexley constituents, was to 'slash through the jungle of restrictive practices which choke our industrial efficiency and initiative', and an audience at Southampton Guild Hall heard him pledge to 'build a high-wage, low-cost economy which will truly release the energies of our people'.¹¹⁴ Indeed, Heath framed *Putting Britain Right Ahead* (the result of the 1964-5 policy review

¹¹³ Edward Heath, Speech on his election to the Party Leadership, Westminster, 2 Aug 1965, B.L.O., CPA, PPB 12/3, folios 41-4 at 42.

¹¹⁴ Edward Heath, Speech at Bexley Division Public Meeting, Bexleyheath, 30 Sep 1965, B.L.O., CPA, PPB 12/3, folios 76-82 at 77; Edward Heath, Speech at Mass Meeting Southampton Guildhall, Southampton, 5 Mar 1966, B.L.O., CPA, PPB 12/1 folios 145-57 at 150.

often cited as the quintessential statement of technocrat Conservatism) as an answer to the people's desire to 'break out of the tangle of restrictions and controls; to sweep away the industrial cobwebs and the outmoded attitudes which pervade so much of our life; and to break down the barriers of class and prejudice which still remain in this country and divide people'.¹¹⁵ Reflecting on Britain's problems a year on from Home's defeat, this collage of pacesetting, meritocracy, and liberation was how Heath described the political terrain:

We've been seeing one answer over the past twelve months, the Socialist answer, restrictions holding the country back, making sure that no-one, however hard-working, however clever, can get ahead of his neighbours. Clearly that hasn't worked. And it won't. So tonight I want to tell you about the Conservative answer. We all know what must be the basis of any answer, a healthy and growing economy. This is the only way we can make sure of the prosperity and happiness of every man, woman and child of every family. The Conservative approach is to cut away the restrictions, to push open the door to opportunity, to give people a real chance to make the best use of their abilities.¹¹⁶

Admittedly, at this stage, Heath often talked about 'release' over 'liberty', but managerial jargon was in no way antithetical to the dichotomy of restraint versus liberation that structured Tories' post-war rhetoric.

Likewise, in arguing for a modernised welfare state, Heath continued to link freedom with dependency. A 'modern social strategy', he argued, targeted real needs in order to 'lessen the dependence on the State and give back to individuals wherever we can the freedom and opportunity to provide for themselves'. Whereas Labour wanted 'the State to take on more and more of the responsibility for individual men and women', Heath believed 'the time ha[d] come to put a stop to this and to give back to people more power over their own identity', through private pensions and home ownership so as to 'maximise choice and freedom and minimise the misery and delinquency that blot our present prosperity'.¹¹⁷ Equally, Heath's renewed focus on Trade Union reform

¹¹⁵ Ramsden, *The Making of Conservative*, p. 259-50.; Edward Heath, Conference Speech, 1965, pp. 23-7 at 24.

¹¹⁶ Edward Heath, Party Political Broadcast, 3 Nov 1965, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 12/3, folios 129-30.

¹¹⁷ Edward Heath, Speech at Midland Area Rally, Birmingham, 5 Feb 1966, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 12/1, folios 49-62.

was expressed through the traditional cries of protecting individuals' freedoms, who should be 'freed from outdated restrictions, unhampered by fear'.¹¹⁸ At the same time, however, Heath also retained Macmillan's rhetorical position on compulsory incomes policies:

...the Government's path leads on to the introduction of compulsion on wage levels; leading in turn to Government control on overtime and promotion. This is a downward road ending in severe restriction on individual freedom and on the proper role of trades unions. What we need today is a prices policy. The biggest mistake of all this Government's mistakes has been its implicit belief that an incomes policy is an answer on its own.¹¹⁹

As will be argued below, this passage indicates that Heath's predicament over incomes policies was a result of inheriting a frame that derided compulsory wage-settlements as transgressing the free society. Thus, the typical accusation that Heath's leadership marked a change towards 'talk[ing] like technocrats' is misleading on two counts: first, the new leader drew upon the rhetoric of his immediate predecessors, and, second, his use of efficiency, competition, and modernisation was often symbiotic with the older, thematic diagnosis of restriction and liberation he is accused of lacking.¹²⁰ Both points are, of course, uncomfortable for those arguing that Heath's initially technocratic rhetoric was injected with libertarian themes via conversion or concession.

Highlighting Heath's rhetorical inheritance is not to suggest that freedom rhetoric remained entirely static; the essence of the overarching rhetorical culture described in these chapters was its iteration in response to the changing contexts sustaining its use, and the 1966 election provides a good example of how stable rhetorical forms were repurposed to suit the role of an opposition and exploit fresh opportunities. First, Conservatives framed Wilson's decision to

¹¹⁸ Edward Heath, Speech to Adoption Meeting, Bexleyheath, 11 Mar 1966, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 12/1, folios 172-5 at 175.

¹¹⁹ Edward Heath, Speech to North Western Area Meeting, Bolton, 15 Jan 1966, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 12/1, folios 5-11.

¹²⁰ Angus Maude, 'Tory Winter of Discontent', *The Spectator*, 14 Jan 1966, p. 11; Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, pp. 104-5; Historians now generally agree that Maude's criticism was unfair, but they still posit too much of a rhetorical change from Heath and ignore the interrelation between 'technocratic' themes and traditional forms: Garnett, 'Planning for Power', pp. 200-1; Ramsden misquotes the article: *The Winds of Change*, p. 255; Campbell gives the correct context but sees Maude as simply a 'voice' of the Right: *Edward Heath*, p. 206.

seek a bigger majority as a cynical ploy to accumulate ‘more power’ so as to instigate ‘socialism and state control with a vengeance’.¹²¹ Anthony Buck, for example, asked his constituents ‘to remember that the Conservative Party believes in INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM and that the State should SERVE and not dominate us. The Labour Party is committed to creating a Socialist Britain and at this election they seek overwhelming power for this very purpose’.¹²² The narrative of Labour sliding towards totalitarianism had never vanished completely from Tory oratory after 1951, but it took on a renewed salience for a party that could once again rally support behind the restoration of liberty, rather than its mere continuance. CRD’s *Daily Notes* encouraged candidates to do just that by highlighting socialism’s ‘threat to liberty’ and citing the government’s drift towards a compulsory incomes policy and the Land Commission as gloomy portents.¹²³ For Boyd-Carpenter, the latter (an abortive attempt to end speculation by acquiring commercially developable land) was alone proof that ‘the voice of Socialism speaks in the accent of tyranny’.¹²⁴ In an atmosphere similar to the late forties, sinister intentions lurked behind most government initiatives. Hogg told an Oxford meeting that Labour’s proposals for Lords reform, building controls, and steel nationalisation showed how it sought ‘to erect in this country an elective dictatorship’.¹²⁵ Indeed, his claim that ‘in a sentence’ the ‘issue of this election’ and Conservative policy was ‘to give back to Britain her national pride, her self-respect, her self-reliance and her freedom which have been filched from her by the gang of subsidised mediocrities who are British Socialism’ was not an uncommon characterisation of what was at stake.¹²⁶ Still in the fray, Home told Kensington women that ‘...the Government want[ed] power to do whatever they like with peoples’ lives’. Reminding his

¹²¹ William Clark, Adoption Meeting Speech, West Bridgford, 11 March 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folios 24-5 at 24; Paul Bryan, Adoption Meeting Speech, Paddington, 10 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folios 7-9; David Crouch, Election Address, Canterbury, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0405/1/2A; James Moorhouse, Election Address, St Pancras North, 1966, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0405/1/10D; Others stopped short of dictatorship but associated a larger majority with more controls: Dennis Orde, Election Address, Newcastle Upon Tyne, 1966, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0405/1/12.

¹²² Anthony Buck, Election Address, Colchester, 1966, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0405/1/1A.

¹²³ CRD, *Daily Notes*, No. 3, 11 Mar 1966, pp. 58-9.

¹²⁴ John Boyd Carpenter, Speech at Kingston-Upon-Thames, 12 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folio 21; For the story of the ultimately ineffective Land Commission see: Peter Weiler, ‘Labour and the Land: From Municipalisation to the Land Commission, 1951-71’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 19, 3 (2008), 314-43.

¹²⁵ Quintin Hogg, Speech to Adoption Meeting of Christopher Woodhouse, Oxford, 10 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folio 12-4; This was Hogg’s outline speech throughout the campaign: Quintin Hogg, Speech at Watford, 29 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folios 191-4.

¹²⁶ Donald Kaberry, Election Broadcast, 25 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 240, folio 18.

audience that ‘the British people throughout their history have always resisted claims for excessive power’, he warned: ‘there are plenty of examples in the contemporary world of the results of power going to the politician’s head – and we don’t want more. The electors have a chance to stop this new manifestation while there is yet time’.¹²⁷ Whilst the message was a vintage Tory accusation, compared to 1955-64 the spectre of dictatorship had taken on a more pressing, extant form in order to demonise a government derided by some of its own as too centrist.

A similar shift from future threat to present menace characterised Tories’ use of the anti-statist, anti-bureaucratic tropes that accompanied these conspiratorial allegations. Anthony Courtney, for example, argued that Britain was ‘now firmly on the slippery slope which leads towards the Socialist ideal of the central direction of our lives from Whitehall’, and Labour’s commitment to comprehensive education was particularly vulnerable to accusations of ‘dictation from Whitehall’.¹²⁸ In Exeter, the wife of Tory candidate Dudley Williams wrote: ‘Let us face it – not only in this respect [education] but in many others we shall in fact have our lives increasingly controlled by an overpowering bureaucracy’. Because ‘the people of this country understand and love their freedom’, a Conservative government needed to be elected to ‘stop the rot before it is too late’.¹²⁹ Far from merely selecting more efficient administrators of prosperity, these oppositions facilitated a fundamental division between the parties. ‘The choice’, as East Willesden’s candidate put it, was ‘between Labour, who believe in the State having complete control, or Conservatives who put their trust in the individual’. The Socialists, he argued, ‘want[ed] to decide not only how much we are taxed but how much we can earn’, still pursued nationalisation ‘either directly (as for Steel) or by the back door’, and would ‘compel all those who don’t agree. Their philosophy is “The Man from Whitehall knows best”’.¹³⁰ As in 1964, Tory broadcasters used this frame to draw together the campaign issues. Maudling told the country:

¹²⁷ Alec Douglas-Home, Speech to South Kensington Women’s Luncheon Club, Derry and Toms, 8 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folios 4-6 at 6.

¹²⁸ Anthony Courtney, Election Address, Harrow East, 1966, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0405/1/2F; Patrick Jenkin, Speech at Woodford, 14 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folio 42; For a fuller example: CUCO, *For Choice in Education* (London: CUCO, 1966).

¹²⁹ Dudley Williams, Election Address, Exeter, 1966, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0405/1/3C.

¹³⁰ Peter Fry, Election Address, East Willesden, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0405/1/4.

From these great issues, you can see emerging the most fundamental question of all. Personal liberty and the rights and duties of the individual as citizen, parent, businessman, trade union member – here there is a clear divergence between the Socialist, who would increase State control and dictation, and the Conservatives who emphasise individual opportunity, incentive and the protection of personal freedom and human rights. You can see, in the press, disturbing examples of the dictatorial attitude of the Labour Party. Take, for example, Mr. Crosland's attempts to threaten or cajole local authorities who are not prepared to toe the Government line on comprehensive schools.¹³¹

As the deputy-leader's example suggests, the standpoint of opposition certainly enhanced this rhetoric as a frame for understanding Labour's actions as well as its policy. Similarly, Heath used this frame to unite the economic and social policy fronts, but also as a means to link Wilson with past Labour governments and combine this with an attack on *ethos* to predict ministers' future actions. 'Socialists', he told a Newcastle rally, 'do not believe in rewards. It's all talk, taxes and red-tape with them. Freedom of choice they think is bad. This applies right across the board from schools and education to industrial goods. They will soon put a stop to it if they get the chance. First they talk, then they tax, and finally they control. We've seen it all before. We're seeing it now. Don't let's risk it any more'.¹³² The corollary, of course, was a counter-*ethos* connected to an appeal to *pathos* that urged voters to act consistently with national character. Heath's constituency leaflet, for example, eschewed any mention of modernisation for the lines: 'Heath stands for Britain's heritage – your heritage. Freedom of choice. Freedom for the individual. The right of men and women to direct their own futures. It is a heritage worth protecting. It is the Conservative cause'.¹³³ To support its case, the party extended a tradition of publishing statements from Liberal defectors, who justified their actions as loyalty to their version of liberalism, which 'modern Conservatism' represented whilst Labour's recent actions demonstrated it was inimical to.¹³⁴ Changes from 1964, then, were not so much in the content of the Tory message, but in the targeting of

¹³¹ Reginald Maudling, Election Broadcast, 18 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 240, 71-4.

¹³² Edward Heath, Speech at Newcastle, 22 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folios 52-6 at 54.

¹³³ 'Edward Heath Man of Action', 1966, B.L.P.E.S, COLL MISC 0405/8/1G.

¹³⁴ Norman Clarke, Southend West ex-Liberal Statement, 16 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folios 60-1 at 61.

these attacks on what Labour was doing as well as what it may do. Thus, any parallel between 1945-51 and 1964-70 was a function, not of the latter period's rediscovery of such rhetoric, but a reorientation of oratory that had fulfilled different needs during the intervening years. Remade as a call for continuity, freedom rhetoric made the transition into government in 1951-5; by 1966 it was again morphing into a cry for change.

But opposition also opened up new rhetorical opportunities: Tories could associate lack of freedom with the 'decline of Britain'. Sir Cyril Black insisted that 'the present Socialist Government [wa]s forcing Britain into a declining spiral – less incentive, less modernisation, less technology, less opportunity, more restriction, more state-intervention, more taxation'. 'Against this defeatist and reactionary attitude', he told Wimbledon's voters, 'we take our stand on the principles of personal freedom and individual responsibility'.¹³⁵ The election thus represented 'the last chance we have to save Britain from Socialism, real Socialism which would shrivel up our initiative, undermine our independence and damn us for years as defeated'.¹³⁶ The party's broadcasters concurred, adding that 'an immense liberation of the skill and effort' was needed to save Britain, and Patricia Hornsby-Smith asked Eastbourne electors to consider whether 'free enterprise or nationalisation is best likely to put Britain back on her feet'.¹³⁷ Indeed, even though they risked conceding ground to Labour's 'thirteen lost years' jibes, the leadership was remarkably willing to engage with the notion of decline. 'We all know that since the war something has gone wrong', Hogg declared. Despite prosperity, 'all is far from well with us' and 'men and women with skills, manual and intellectual are leaving the country', he continued:

But there is a moral as well as an economic side to all this. If we are to survive as a nation, if we are to prosper as a free people, we must realise once and for all that brains, skill, qualification, self-denial, professional standing, university degrees, self-discipline – are not anti-democratic, are not to be decried as meritocracy. They are the glories of a free society. Our gifted children are not to be despised and held back of set purpose

¹³⁵ Cyril Black, Election Address, Wimbledon, 1966, B.L.P.E.S, COLL MISC 0405/1/1C.

¹³⁶ Edward Gardner, Speech at Shenfield Parish Hall, Billericay, 28 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folio 178.

¹³⁷ Aidian Cawley, Election Broadcast, 18 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 240, folios 71-4; Patricia Hornsby-Smith, Speech at Eastbourne, 22 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folio 119.

as part of our educational system. We must learn to value brains and skill as the Americans do – as the Russians – as the Common Market Countries are learning to do.¹³⁸

Here Hogg was adopting not only the declinist framework, but the comparative perspective central to critiques of Macmillan's government. However, by following his leader's example and eliding meritocracy with older rhetorical models he was able to turn decline into a justification for Tory liberation. Bereft of power, Conservatives could now use the staple components of freedom rhetoric to capture a broader narrative that had previously been levelled against them.

An important variation on this narrative was that the abuse of freedom caused decline. In Lewes, Tufon Beamish told electors: 'We must stop living beyond our means and show the world that we are not a nation in decline. We must accept the disciplines within which we can enjoy freedom without licence'.¹³⁹ On this thesis, the culprits behind Britain's economic woes were militant trade unionists, and arresting decline necessitated escaping the grasp of those who practiced 'industrial anarchy' or 'jungle warfare' by 'free[ing] the nation from the self-imposed bondage of restrictive practices'.¹⁴⁰ Such vocabulary was not coincidental; it represented a reframing of industrial relations that increasingly embraced multiple facets of the rhetorical culture described above. As the leadership's assault widened beyond the traditional condemnation of the closed-shop, Union leaders were at once the ideological cousins of anarchic, *laissez-faire* Liberals and Britain's restrictive, dictatorial jailors. In a good example of how the latter trope was not limited to the New Right, Joseph Godber, the ex-Minister for Labour often portrayed as a counter-weight to Keith Joseph on reform, attacked 'Kangaroo courts' of shop stewards and repeated claims that 'Tyranny is no less evil if it is the tyranny of a Trade Union than if it were the tyranny of a despotic ruler'.¹⁴¹ Even proposed solutions manipulated

¹³⁸ Quintin Hogg, Speech at Marylebone, 24 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folios 156-60 at 158-9.

¹³⁹ Tufon Beamish, Election Address, Lewes, 1966, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0405/1/1F.

¹⁴⁰ John Hobson, Speech at Burford, 24 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folios 164-5 at 165; Edward Heath, Speech at Bexley, 12 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folios 117-22 at 120.

¹⁴¹ Joseph Godber, Speech at Luton, 14 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folios 34-5; Norris McWhirter, Election Address, Orpington, 1966, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0405/1/10C; Geoffrey Lloyd described Union leaders as 'little Hitlers': Speech at All Saints, Birmingham, 24 Mar 1966,

this framing: Hogg argued that the campaign had seen unions intimidate their members, but held that 'responsible Trade Unionism ha[d] everything to gain, and nothing to lose from the daylight of a legal code which everyone understands, everyone respects and everyone obeys. Nobody should be above the law. That is the Conservative policy. Law is not the Big Stick. It is the Big Charter. It is the right to live in freedom with responsibility'.¹⁴² This allusion to Magna Carta (made explicit on other occasions) was an example of a rhetorical shift underway alongside policy developments, one in which 'decline' helped move industrial relations from the narrower sub-frame of individual liberties into a broader critique that advocated reform as a necessary rebalancing of Unions' excessive freedoms akin to the truer freedom constitutional liberty brought over political disorder or tyranny.

Some, if not all, of the elements associated with the later period of Heath's opposition were therefore already in place by 1966, a fact which has importance on three levels. First, the evidence suggests that the supposedly 'technocratic' 131 promises of the *Action not Words* manifesto were not representative of the campaign's more thematic rhetoric. Second, we should see in the rhetoric of 1970 an extension and adaptation of themes present in 1966, not the expression of a conversion following Selsdon Park. Third, via 1966, it is possible to reconnect Heath's rhetoric with that of Macmillan and in particular Home; indeed, we can identify the change between these leaders as a symptom of reorienting similar critiques to the role of opposition and the narrative opportunities such changed circumstances opened up. All of these insights weaken the conversion or concession theses: those claiming Heath either placated Powellism or adopted the ideas of the IEA normally situate such events later in his leadership. The evidence of 1966 suggests, however, that the rhetoric Heath won power with (and which they cite as evidence) was similar to that on which he had lost four years previously.

Despite the voters ignoring his warnings, though, Heath resurrected the Tory alternative though the same dichotomy, telling the 1966 conference:

B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folio 163; Godber had argued for no substantial reform during the policy review: Ramsden, *The Making of Conservative*, p. 244.

¹⁴² Quintin Hogg, Speech at North Paddington, 30 Mar 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 13/2, folios 204-6 at 205.

We have reached this year what I first called in the House of Commons the Great Divide, and at this conference the differences have become clearer, they have been sharpened... The Great Divide between freedom and compulsion represents perhaps the widest, the most dramatic gulf between Conservatism and Socialism today...¹⁴³

As Heath pointed out, the parties had other differences, but the line reprising this theme in the speech's peroration, 'we can show them the great divide between the parties, that freedom is at stake', indicated the battleground on which he intended to fight.¹⁴⁴ Putting aside the wisdom of raising political disagreement to grandiose heights – Wilson was able to mock minor quibbles as evidence that 'the Great Divide' had been reduced 'to a couple of hyphens' – it is fair to say that 'freedom' and 'liberty' joined metaphorical release as core components of Heath's oratory.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, one might be tempted to see in such framing a conversion to 'libertarian' policies, or at least a significant concession to factions demanding their leader do so. But the origins of 'the Great Divide' suggest the opposite: it arose from the reapplication of rhetorical models used by Macmillan to navigate the thorny issue of incomes policies, only this time from the perspective of opposition. In fact, Heath first used the phrase when attempting to move the committee stage of Labour's Prices and Incomes Bill back to the Commons floor. 'In the House and in the country', he claimed, 'we have now come to what I would describe as the Great Divide'. Conveniently, this gulf had been defined by George Brown, whose words Heath now read back to him: "It is time some members opposite made up their minds whether they believe in a free society and consultation and discussion or in a totalitarian society with the right to direct and control", the First Secretary of State for Economic Planning had said in May 1965. 'We have made up our minds', the Tory leader declared, and so too had Brown in choosing 'what he is pleased to call the "totalitarian society with the right to direct and control"', Heath wryly observed, before proclaiming the Conservatives 'utterly opposed' government control over wages and prices. Such powers would lead 'to compulsion, to the complete control of the economy – who can visualise right hon. Gentlemen

¹⁴³ Edward Heath, Conference Speech, 1966, pp. 137-42 at 137-6.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

¹⁴⁵ Harold Wilson, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Fifth Series, Vol. 735, 3 Nov 1966, cols. 654-9 at 657; Campbell rightly points out that Heath's twin attacks on Wilson as doctrinaire and unprincipled were somewhat contradictory: *Edward Heath*, p. 223.

opposite giving it up once they have got it? – and to increasing restrictions on personal liberty, to a freeze on everything, including, above all, a freeze on progress'. Instead, his party maintained that despite the difficulties, it was possible 'to reconcile a free economy with stable progress and individual liberty', if a skilled government followed the right policies. In a narrow sense, the 'the Great Divide' was a by-product of Parliamentary procedure (to disband the standing committee, Heath needed to show that the addition of powers under part four changed the principles of the Bill), but the arguments underlying that division were almost word-perfect recitals of Maudling, Macleod, and Macmillan's in 1962-3, suitably reoriented to condemn a statutory policy rather than defend a voluntary one.

This continuity became clearer as Heath attacked the Bill outside Parliament. 'This is a grave moment in our country's history', he told Bexley's Chamber of Commerce. The Government had taken powers 'unprecedented in peace or war', despite 'their solemn undertaking that in no circumstances would they resort to compulsion'. Accordingly, Labour had failed 'to maintain a free society', a touchstone of Tory planning, because the Bill destroyed Unions' bargaining position and allowed 'government to fix the price of any and every article in the land'.¹⁴⁶ Like Macmillan, an argument of direction was the supporting commonplace: 'If these powers are to be enforced... presumably inspectors will have to circulate in every shop and factory affected by these orders to see that no man is paid a penny more than the Government decrees and that no price is raised a penny more than the Government orders', Heath predicted.¹⁴⁷ Indeed, although the public, Unions, and businesses may at first welcome control, liberty should be preserved above expediency, not least in view of consequences further down this slippery slope. 'But let all beware', Heath warned, 'this process cannot stop here. This way lies ever more centralised control, control on the return on people's savings, control of investment. It will lead to the smothering of initiative and the flight of the enterprising from this country to other freer lands. This way too lies the path to the side deals in the factory, the under-the-counter sales in the shops, the black market in men and materials, the bribery, corruption and petty crime which all too often goes with

¹⁴⁶ Edward Heath, Speech to Bexley Chamber of Commerce, Eltham, 5 Oct 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 14/1, folios 99-101 at 99.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

it'.¹⁴⁸ Just as in 1962-3, a statutory incomes policy represented a red line which, once crossed, heralded a return to the late-forties command economy or worse.

In the aftermath of two defeats in short succession, Heath's rhetorical strategy was to generalise this critique of incomes policies into a fundamental, thematic distinction. Thus, a late-September broadcast abstracted the compulsion versus voluntarism frame from its immediate policy context to paint the contrasting Labour and Tory *ethos* on a larger canvas:

I think the differences really between the two great parties is this, that faced with these formidable problems, mostly of their own making, the Labour Government has moved further and further along the path of control, control and direction. We, on the other hand, believe that compulsion is wrong and we want to move along the path of voluntary action, of consultation, of encouragement for the individual to do of his best and to get the rewards for doing it. Now that is quite a clear division. In fact it's what I've called the Great Divide.¹⁴⁹

Having leveraged opposition to Labour's incomes policy into a broader binary choice, other inherited rhetorical tropes reinforced that frame. These included critiques which had been off-limits to the party of government since 1951. For example, at the Bexley Association Garden Party, Heath condemned Labour's handling of the economic crisis, in particular the balance of trade and pressure on sterling, by saying that 'the proud British people' were tired of 'seeing their freedom of action limited by their international indebtedness. The proud independent British people want to be able to throw away their crutches, stand on their own feet'. 'We can do it', Heath claimed, because 'with enterprise, with enthusiasm, with initiative, with incentives, with a firm determination to face the reality of the situation, we can triumph over our difficulties, break out from our restraints and re-establish ourselves in the eyes of the world'.¹⁵⁰ Like Churchill, he accused the Government of hindering the people's ability to escape their difficulties by 'pil[ing] restriction on restriction, add[ing] regulation to regulation, [and] impos[ing] control on control'. The follow up line, 'we are back to the

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., folio 100.

¹⁴⁹ Edward Heath, Party Political Broadcast, 28 Sep 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 14/1, folios 95-6 at 95.

¹⁵⁰ Edward Heath, Speech at Bexley Conservative Association Garden Party, Bexley, 18 Jun 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 14/1, folios 48-51 at 48-9.

dreariest days of post-war Socialism', rendered the analogy explicit.¹⁵¹ Heath simultaneously widened the scope of the divide to encompass Labour's alleged attack on civil liberties; an address to the Young Newspaperman's Association in Scarborough provided a convenient platform to weave this theme into the Great Divide. Instead of adversaries, Parliament and the Press should unite behind the 'maintenance of individual liberties and the values of a free society' in 'the face of a Government that is deliberately and steadily eroding them'.¹⁵² Choking Parliament with legislation and preventing it from debating Selective Employment Tax (SET) or the principle of wage control were 'the arbitrary acts of an authoritarian government which must be fought by the press and all in Parliament who value freedom'.¹⁵³ Whilst reminiscent of those under Churchill, we have seen these accusations survive as warnings when in office and resurface as a frame for Wilson's actions in 1966, but now Heath meshed civil liberties with the concept of freedom as independence to distinguish the 'principles which decide the great divide between people in Britain today'. Conservatives wanted to 'solve our problems in freedom' and looked to 'responsible men and women'. In contrast, the Government had 'been making more and more take-over bids for matters which properly speaking should be our own responsibility...'. This went against the principle of a 'free society', which meant a 'responsible society' and, in turn, 'an open society in which people argue'. 'If we wish to enrich the lives of ordinary people within the framework of a free society', Heath argued, 'then we must create a climate which enables them to think for themselves, which makes it possible for their voices to be heard and their ideas to have effect'.¹⁵⁴ In Heath's oratory, then, multiple facets of the rhetorical culture described above (economic, civil liberties and social) merged to frame politics.

Whilst inveighing against Wilson's slide into totalitarianism sometimes pushed the limits of plausibility, Heath's construction of 'the Great Divide' is significant for two reasons. First, whilst there is a case that from 1966 Heath talked about freedom more extensively than his immediate predecessors (although they too had done so more than is commonly assumed), historians should avoid the

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, folio 51.

¹⁵² Edward Heath, Speech to Young Newspapermen's Association, Scarborough, 29 Oct 1966, B.L.O. CPA, PPB 14/1, folios 107-12 at 107.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, folios 108-9.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, folio 110.

implication that this represented a qualitative shift, symbolising a conversion or concession; instead, Heath was giving higher billing to a frame that he inherited. Second, having recognised this, we can complicate interpretations of Heath's refusal to countenance a statutory incomes policy, which Ramsden and Campbell consider a tactical error given the party's promise to curb inflation and because attacks on Labour policy look like dangerous hostages to fortune in light of the 1970-4 government's actions.¹⁵⁵ On their reading, Heath's alternative (a wider 'prices policy' encompassing a competition measures and Trade Union reform) was an unconvincing cover for intractable differences between Maudling and Macleod.¹⁵⁶ For Ramsden, the 1970 manifesto's public rejection of compulsion whilst Ministers privately countenanced the necessity of such a policy represented an 'apparently cynical approach', reflective of Heath's view 'that all such matters were no more than tactical means'.¹⁵⁷ For Campbell, the issue epitomised the pull that 'opportunism and rhetorical momentum' exercised on Heath, who, despite having no intellectual objections to an incomes policy, was 'under too much political pressure as leader of the party of economic freedom' to resist the 'language of outraged libertarianism'.¹⁵⁸ Aside from overlooking Maudling's very similar condemnation of compulsion, the evidence suggests that these accounts' lack rhetorical perspective.¹⁵⁹ Surely Campbell would not contend that Macmillan's equivalent oratory was a concession to the Right? Such rhetoric need not have been 'libertarian' or extracted under pressure; Heath redeployed arguments that had long guided the leadership's attitude to State intervention. Moreover, to dismiss the claim that Conservatives would reconcile a 'free society' with economic progress as 'woolly bathos', underestimates the hold this model exercised over senior Tories, particularly when they previously considered the dilemma. Finally, believing that Heath had any realistic option but to reject compulsion in 1970 requires a sizeable dose of hindsight: to do so would have been an immediate (as opposed to possible future) U-turn, not merely over one policy, but on the foundation of his rhetorical strategy.

¹⁵⁵ Campbell, *Edward Heath*, pp. 230-2; Ramsden, 'The Prime Minister', locs. 842-71.

¹⁵⁶ Campbell, *Edward Heath*, p. 232.

¹⁵⁷ Ramsden, 'The Prime Minister', loc. 871; *The Winds of Change*, pp. 303-4.

¹⁵⁸ Campbell, *Edward Heath*, p. 232.

¹⁵⁹ Reginald Maudling, Speech at Finchley, 30 July 1966, Quoted in: CRD, *Notes on Current Politics*, No. 17, 3 Oct 1966, p. 465.

Heath's conference speeches add further weight to the view that his freedom rhetoric continued to represent a complex mix of inheritance and evolution, rather than conversion or opportunism. His 1968 address, for example, devoted a long section to freedom as a cornerstone of party philosophy.¹⁶⁰ Having argued that the eternal question of government was 'how to ensure that the freedom which is essential to human development is within the framework of order that is so vital for man's security...', Heath, like Macmillan, proclaimed the nature of Conservatism was 'to keep a balance in society' and recited the familiar history of a party which had fought 'soulless *laissez-faire*' and turned the battle against 'the insidious encroachment of collectivism under Socialism'.¹⁶¹ Notwithstanding the significant additions of 'monopoly capitalism' and 'uninhibited trade unionism' to the traditional line-up of bureaucratic monsters, it is clear that Heath's rhetoric built on the rhetorical model favoured not by Powell, but by Middle Way Conservatism. Yet, like Macmillan, Heath was manipulating his party's rhetorical heritage, tailoring 'balance' to his own ends. In this case, he incorporated both his pet theme of administrative competency and the evolving connection between morality and freedom identified in the 1964 and 1966 campaigns above. 'Each generation must redress the balance to meet its own needs', he declared, before adding: 'Today it is both the morality and the competence of Government which is being challenged'. On the first count, government had become immoral in its attitude towards the individual, encroaching on his liberty, making excessive demands upon his income and property, and 'constitutional guarantees' were now needed to protect the individual 'against socialist authoritarianism'. On the second charge, the government was incompetent, 'outmoded in its structure, outdated in its techniques, presumptuous in its demands and totalitarian in making its decisions'. Key to understanding Heath and others' freedom rhetoric, however, is recognising that they regarded these critiques as intrinsically linked. 'Nor is there any lack of connection between morality and competence', Heath argued: 'The State — ever grasping for more power over the individual — steadily undermines its own effectiveness and brutally increases the opposition to its own sway and thus it sows the seeds of its own curtailment'. Equally, the

¹⁶⁰ Edward Heath, Conference Speech, 1968, pp. 124-9.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 127-8.

'morality of the Government' was connected with 'the morality of the Governed'. In Heath's words:

Respect for law and order, regard for financial probity, endeavours towards enterprise and efficiency – these cannot flourish where the State itself overrides the right of the citizen, shows little concern for its financial prudence, and whose ideas of organisation, administration and decision making are so antiquated as to be unrecognisable by modern minds. We must restore respect for government, its morality and its competence. In its morality it must set the example; in its competence it must deliver the goods.¹⁶²

Although by no means as neat a manoeuvre as Macmillan achieved regarding planning, Heath's version of emancipation flowed directly from the familiar duality model as a list of areas 'where the balance needs to be redressed' considering those moral and efficiency defects. In a series of anaphoric lines, he promised: 'We will remove the shackles of government from industry. We will banish the regulation and control of business activities. We will withdraw the Government from holdings in private firms... We will puncture the swollen corpus of bureaucracy, cut free the octopus like grip of over centralisation. We will purge the body politic of the toxins of waste, extravagance and procrastination'. Heath's next items show once again how integrated dry, 'technocratic' proposals were with that liberation. 'It is to this end', he claimed, 'that I shall establish a smaller Cabinet as a decision making body, create federal Departments to reduce interdepartmental friction and streamline administration, prune drastically the number of civil servants, and inject the modern techniques of business management and technology into Whitehall'. All this culminated in a traditional trope guaranteed to generate a standing ovation: Britain's role as a 'lighthouse that proclaims fairness and tolerance, democracy and freedom' was at stake.¹⁶³ The party's task was to 'keep that light ablaze' so as to provide the 'light to guide', for this was 'Britain's heritage'. The character of Heath's freedom rhetoric, then, is in some respects better described as neo-Macmillan than proto-Thatcherite. It manipulated the models intrinsic to Middle Way Conservatism and integrated its 'technocratic' prescriptions into very

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 128.

¹⁶³ Ibid., p. 129.

traditional language of liberation. This runs against, not only those who argue part of Heath's communication problem was that he failed to translate managerial policy into a thematic programme, but also for both sides of the debate about his sincerity. Whilst this is not the place to pass final judgement on Heath's guilt either as a turncoat or conman, freedom rhetoric is clearly not a reliable witness for either conversion or concession theories. If anything, the anatomy of Heath's supposedly 'libertarian' rhetoric suggests he was continuing a tradition of rhetorical adaptation, one which did not measure sincerity against consistency with liberal-market theory.

As well as failing to place his speeches within a continuous rhetorical culture, historians have been reluctant to countenance alternative explanations for Heath's use of freedom rhetoric, such as the tactical imperatives emanating from those policy initiatives he was personally committed to. In particular, the 'presentation problems' identified by CRD (which reported directly to Heath) were a more plausible motivation than New Right concession or conversion. In 1966, Brendon Sewill recognised that 'the main theme of our economic policies can be summed up in the word competition', but worried this was 'a cruel and hard word; for the small trader, competition is what ruins his business; for the worker, competition is something that puts his job at risk'.¹⁶⁴ Despite the collapse of Labour's National Plan, Sewill's party had still 'not found the right word to describe what [it] would put in its place. "Indicative forecasting and government action to remove obstacles to growth" is a bit of a mouthful', CRD's director wrote. The problem was how to sell economic prosperity through a 'somewhat more altruistic' theme than 'get rich quicker with the Tories'. Instead, according to Sewill, 'the ideal is a theme which the great British public will recognise as good for themselves but which they can adopt because it sounds good for others'. Alongside 'ownership', a developing answer to this dilemma should be 'freedom and honest government, with the economic overtones of freedom of opportunity, competent administration, sound finance and honest money'. These suggestions were compounded by the need to treat politics as 'matters of individual human concern', not to 'talk in the language of management or of economists'. The latter was a symptom of a cultural problem: that the education and background of the party's officials, politicians and reliable

¹⁶⁴ Brendon Sewill, 'Presentation of Conservative Economic and Trade Union Policy', 3 Nov 1966, B.L.O. CPA, CCO 600/17/14.

upper management supporters were ‘conditioned... to think that competition, enterprise and incentive are good things [when it was] too easy to assume that the great bulk of the rest of the population also share[d] this reaction’. This insight was reflected across a range of officials’ advice, which encouraged Heath to translate his economic message ‘into English the C2s can understand’ with ‘more philosophy less fact’.¹⁶⁵ Indeed, the connection between these presentational problems and the rhetoric discussed above should not be downplayed: the Economic Policy Group, for instance, recommended policies be pitched as ‘opportunity’ and ‘incentive’ because they helped link initiatives to ‘distinctly Conservative concepts’, which reduced the risk of being accused of ‘promising to do the same thing better’.¹⁶⁶ The truth, then, is that the party’s officials recognised the dangers of ‘talking like technocrats’ early on and encouraged the framing of policy into precisely the emotive themes identified above.

But historians also underestimate the extent to which party ‘technocrats’ privately understood economics in these terms. Russell Lewis, head of the CPC, derived the Tory economic strategy from the central problem of inflation, but clearly reflected Heath’s liberation oratory in his private briefing.¹⁶⁷ The decade’s ‘intellectual fashion’, wrote Lewis, contended that wage-price spiral could only be escaped through increased production, achieved through ‘modernisation’. The ‘essential feature of modern socialism’ was the assumption this modernisation (management training, education and science) should be paid for by higher taxation; a notion not only ‘self-defeating’ because it ‘sap[ped] incentive to use these increased resources efficiently’, but also dangerous since the unavoidable creation of ministries with compulsory powers ‘seriously reduce[d] personal freedom’.¹⁶⁸ In contrast, Lewis argued, ‘the alternative we should present must rest on the belief that it is from the energies of the people

¹⁶⁵ Tim Rathbone and Tommy Thompson, ‘Mr Heath and Public Opinion’, c. Feb 1968, B.L.O. CPA, CCO 600/17/14; ‘Action Ideas from Latest Image Survey’, c. Feb 1968, B.L.O. CPA, CCO 600/17/14.

¹⁶⁶ Economic Policy Group Minutes, 16 Nov 1967, B.L.O. CPA, CCO 600/17/14; On Heath’s image the party’s advisors made a range of suggestions to help Heath escape the image of a weak leader: Tim Rathbone and Tommy Thompson, ‘Mr Heath and Public Opinion’.

¹⁶⁷ There are conflicting readings of Lewis’ thought. Cockett reads him as an IEA economic liberal, whilst Gamble positions him as a ‘growthman’: Cockett, *Thinking the Unthinkable*, p. 163; Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, p. 97. In fact, Lewis is a good example of someone who defied either category.

¹⁶⁸ Russell Lewis, ‘The High Wage – Low Cost Economy’, 7 Nov 1966, B.L.O. CPA, CCO 600/17/14, pp. 1-2.

that economic or indeed any other progress springs'. His solution – low taxation and a 'legal framework assuring freedom to be enterprising' – envisaged Government 'find[ing] a just balance between the freedom to compete and the freedom to combine', denying the 'freedom to form rings and restrictions', which would 'carry the principle of freedom to the point of its own suicide'.¹⁶⁹ In some instances, the State would provide services, but 'on the grounds both of freedom and efficiency, the principle of free choice for the consumer should be given every chance to operate', extending this into health or education provision. Crucially, Lewis recognised that this economic ideal 'may seem deficient as a political ideal', and quickly assented to Disraeli's condemnation of a '*laissez-faire* utopia', but argued that a 'modern social market economy' could avoid that history in its 'balance of market forces and social conscience'.¹⁷⁰ In short, it is reductionist to imagine that advocates of 'competition policy' were concerned only with cold efficiency and ignored the metaphysics of the problem. There is no need to explain Heath's rhetoric primarily as a concession or conversion to New Right policy; rather the 'competition policy', long central to his programme, both called on such rhetoric for its presentation in electorally acceptable terms and was itself conceived in these terms.

Having broken the automatic link between freedom rhetoric and the New Right, which encourages others' similar language to be read as pale imitation, 1965-70 should be understood as a period in which many strands of Conservatism invoked 'liberty' to express disparate viewpoints across a range of issues. For example, generic anti-statist cries to 'get the Government off the people's backs' remained a key theme across the party, but these were often rooted, not in Powell's economics, but in a critique of Labour's threat to civil liberties that had survived in Tory oratory beyond 1951, and which could now return to the level of hyperbole levelled against Attlee.¹⁷¹ Hogg, for example, told a Blackpool meeting of Pressure for Economic and Social Toryism (PEST) that a constitutional conference was needed to end the 'tyranny of Whitehall', and, in something of a flashback to 1949, calls for a Bill of Rights gained traction,

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁷¹ Iain Macleod, Party Political Broadcast, 25 Nov 1968 reported in '£1 Owed to Everyone on Earth', *The Times*, 26 Nov 1968, p. 8.

although Lord Lambton's attempt was predictably defeated.¹⁷² This framing produced some surreal episodes, not always aligned with the New Right's condemnation of permissiveness.¹⁷³ In August 1967, for example, three Conservative MPs broadcast from pirate radio stations that Wilson's government was attempting to suppress, justifying their actions with the line: 'a voice of freedom will have been silenced when Radio 270 goes off the air'.¹⁷⁴ But aside from claims that Sussex University's leftist sociologists were compiling undergraduates' voting preferences into the 'odious dossiers' of 'totalitarian states', Dame Irene Ward's protests over the application of a guillotine timetable to the 1968 Finance Bill marked the peak of hysteria.¹⁷⁵ Suspended from Parliament, she had taken a stand against the 'erosion of parliamentary democracy' by a 'dictatorial' Labour party and told Conservative women they were 'now entering a battle to protect our own liberties in our own country'.¹⁷⁶

But within this inheritance of rhetorical forms lay more complex critiques that distinguished between the threats to liberty posed by Attlee and Wilson. On the 'erosion of freedom', *Notes on Current Politics* argued that 'whereas the post-war Labour Government, by maintaining the wartime paraphernalia of controls and food rationing, had a direct impact on individual freedom, the first impact of Socialism this time has come on the independence of corporate bodies, such as companies, trade unions, local authorities, charities etc'. Expressed via the same tropes of unintentional erosion, centralisation, and legions of incompetent bureaucrats, Labour was accused of destroying 'corporate freedom' through heavy taxation, which made 'Whitehall increasingly the repository of the nation's available capital resources and thus the arbiter of the fate of individual enterprises'.¹⁷⁷ Nor were these fresh losses to liberty owned by the New

¹⁷² 'Tory Bill of Rights to Defeat "Hidden Bureaucracy"', *The Times*, 30 May 1969, p. 3; Nigel Lawson, Conference Speech, 1968 gave the idea momentum.

¹⁷³ On the New Rights discomfort with permissive laws, crime and social agitation: Gamble, *The Conservative Nation*, p. 110-5.

¹⁷⁴ 'Tory Attack by Pirate Radio', *The Times*, 11 Aug 1967, p. 3

¹⁷⁵ Sally Oppenheim, 'Sussex Questions', *The Times*, 28 Nov 1968, p. 9; 'Suspended MP Stays Defiant', *The Times*, 24 May 1968, p. 2.

¹⁷⁶ Her suspension was for defying the Speaker's orders: Irene Ward, Speech at Conservative Women's Conference, London, 28 May 1968 reported in: 'Standing Ovation for Dame Irene', *The Times*, 29 May 1968, p. 2.

¹⁷⁷ CRD, *Notes on Current Politics*, No. 17, 3 Oct 1966, pp. 462-3.

Right.¹⁷⁸ Peter Walker, who had run Heath's leadership campaign, told conference 'we have witnessed freedoms gradually disappearing – the freedom of the business man to buy a piece of machinery and to know that he would get an investment allowance for it. Now he goes to the bureaucrats, who say whether or not a grant can be given. Do you know that to get an investment grant for a tractor requires 13 letters?'¹⁷⁹ The tropes themselves were also updated: by 1968, the 'bastions of freedom' resisting socialism were no longer independent traders, but the 'smaller companies of 500 employees or less'.¹⁸⁰ These changes reflected a set of infringements suited to the agenda of the party's quasi-corporatist modernisers just as much as the New Right's moral crusade for small capital.¹⁸¹

But whilst the leadership encouraged condemnation of Labour's attacks on constitutional and corporate freedoms, it was less comfortable when the Right turned same language of civil liberties to race relations.¹⁸² Several MPs, including Ronald Bell, Gilbert Longden, David Renton, and Eldon Griffiths, critiqued Labour's Race Relations Bill as an affront to freedom.¹⁸³ Harold Gurden, Selly Oak's MP, manipulated the language of liberty in a particularly unsavoury manner, telling a Birmingham audience that the city had been built 'without immigrants' and 'by individual freedom to discriminate'.¹⁸⁴ Indeed, after dismissing Powell from his Shadow Cabinet, Heath had to counter accusations that he had stifled freedom of speech, reassuring a West Midlands rally that 'there can be no question of interfering with freedom of speech. Everybody has freedom of speech in this country within the law'.¹⁸⁵ Like Heath's own rhetoric,

¹⁷⁸ Nigel Lawson critiqued the removal of passports from Kenyan-Asians as an infringement of civil liberties, for example: Conference Speech, 1968, pp. 78-9.

¹⁷⁹ Peter Walker, Conference Speech, 1968, pp. 81-2. Walker dissented even from Heath's attempt to dismantle interventionist controls: Ramsden, *The Winds of Change*, p. 303.

¹⁸⁰ Joan Hall, Conference Speech, 1968, pp. 18-9 at 19.

¹⁸¹ Gamble points out that the modernisation the 'Right Progressives' talked about was often of large companies: *The Conservative Nation*, p. 98.

¹⁸² For his own views on the Race Relations Bill infringing the 'freedom of the majority': Eldon Griffiths, 'The Tories and Race', *The Times*, 13 Jul 1969, p. 9; David Renton, 'What is Essential', *The Times*, 9 Jul 1968, p. 9.

¹⁸³ Ronald Bell, *The Times*, 8 Jul 1968, p. 9; Gilbert Longden, 'Infringement of Freedom', *The Times*, 22 Apr 1968, p. 11; Eldon Griffiths, 'The Tories and Race', *The Times*, 13 Jul 1969, p. 9; David Renton, 'What is Essential', *The Times*, 9 Jul 1968, p. 9; '22 Tories Look to the Way Ahead', *The Times*, 3 Oct 1968, p. 2.

¹⁸⁴ Harold Gurden, Speech at Birmingham Town Hall, 18 Apr 1968 reported in: 'Immigrants Return is Urged', *The Times*, 19 Apr 1968, p. 2.

¹⁸⁵ John Hall, 'Mr Powell's View on Immigration', *The Times*, 22 Nov 1968, p. 11; Edward Heath, Speech at Dudley, 27 Apr 1968 reported in: 'Heath Asks Nation to be Calm, Fair, Responsible, Constructive', *The Times*, 29 Apr 1968, p. 2.

then, Conservatives' anti-statist oratory is best explained as classic illustration of the continuity of a rhetorical culture, tailored to new issues and used to advance different agendas.

Of course, it cannot be denied that the old and new Rights used freedom rhetoric to advance their wider causes more loudly than before in attempts to gain members and influence the party's direction. Appealing for funds, the Monday Club described its aim to bring about 'a society where the individual has the maximum freedom of choice, and a Britain, strong, free and independent'.¹⁸⁶ Similarly, *What We Must Do*, a mini manifesto produced by 22 Tory MPs, including Griffiths and Ian Lloyd, called for a restatement of faith 'rooted in the tried Tory principles of freedom, responsibility and un-abashed love of country', and an unofficial pamphlet from *Tory Northern Thought* insisted that state interference with free market forces always constituted a threat to liberty.¹⁸⁷ This rhetoric was often a means of attacking previous Tory administrations whilst professing loyalty to the Conservative tradition, a tactic especially implicit in Powell's narrative about 'the tendency to take more and more responsibility and therefore freedom and therefore self-respect away from the governed and transfer it to the government', which had, he argued, been 'running for at least a decade, perhaps more, and has been accelerating all the time'.¹⁸⁸ Like historians, some contemporaries identifying freedom as a 'watchword coming into fashion again' read similar rhetoric as 'tentative Powellism' and a sign that 'some Tories were never really converted to Macmillan planning'.¹⁸⁹ Yet, David Howell, now Guildford's MP and the party's 'technocrat in chief', provides an instructive counter-example.¹⁹⁰ Howell had embraced planning and still believed that the State should be an 'active partner' in economic growth.¹⁹¹ However, he shared Powell's narrative, arguing that the power of the State had been growing under all parties for 'more than 100 years', and highlighted the gap between the party's past rhetoric and defence of

¹⁸⁶ 'Monday Club Appeal', *The Times*, 8 Jun 1967, p. 2

¹⁸⁷ '22 Tories Look to the Way Head', *The Times*, 3 Oct 1968, p. 2; *The Guardian*, 4 Aug 1967, p. 3.

¹⁸⁸ Enoch Powell, Speech at Basingstoke, 24 Jan 1969, Powell Archive, POLL 4/1/5, folios 1-2.

¹⁸⁹ 'Conservative Critics of the Old "Macmillanism"', *The Times*, 19 Aug 1968, p. 6; David Wood, 'Planning is Outmoded – and Tories Find a Cry', *The Times*, 20 Mar 1967, p. 12.

¹⁹⁰ On Howell and plans to streamline the operation of government: Butler and Pinto-Duschinsky, *The British General Election of 1970*, p. 85.

¹⁹¹ Garnett, 'Planning for Power', p. 203; David Howell, 'Towards Stability' in *Conservatism Today: Four Personal Point of View* edited by Robert Blake (London: CPC, 1966), pp. 34-47 at 43.

freedom in office, questioning whether it could ‘truly be said that [1951-64] were years... in which the frontiers of government rolled back and individual freedom significantly enlarged’.¹⁹² Because the narrative was independent of either Powell or Howell’s ideas, both could attach it to their equally genuine programmes of reform.

Likewise, Maudling continued to refresh the model he had adapted to new scenarios since 1961. ‘The basic conflict’ in politics remained ‘freedom and order and their reconciliation’. ‘The great paradox’, Maudling maintained, ‘is that freedom cannot exist without order, yet order is purposeless and evil if it destroys freedom. Our party philosophy has always been based on the belief that the purpose of order is to enrich the life of individuals and enhance the meaning of freedom’. The deputy leader simply switched his focus back onto the freedom half of the duality: ‘under the Labour Government’, he alleged, ‘we are seeing a major movement in the direction of state domination in one form or another over the lives and actions of individual citizens’, the most insidious expression of which was ‘the spreading assumption that state control is a good and comfortable thing in itself and that it has inevitably to go on expanding’.¹⁹³ Yet, it was still possible for Maudling to extend the traditional concept of liberty. In 1969, for example, he redefined the value at a conference fringe meeting, saying ‘what I believe our objective should be is to present to the people a new and positive concept of freedom: not merely the negative absence of control or regulation, not merely freedom *from* restriction, but freedom *for* achievement’.¹⁹⁴ Meanwhile, Maudling could use the same emancipatory rhetoric as Powell on macroeconomics, but dismiss the latter’s prescriptions.¹⁹⁵ Doing so was not a cynical concession on Maudling’s part but a consequence of both *continuing* to articulate their views through the same rhetorical culture.

Moreover, whilst Julian Critchley correctly surmised that the Conservative party was not the home of social libertarianism, his observation that ‘...where the word freedom does occur its reference is to economic matters not social’ was

¹⁹² David Howell, ‘Controlling Growth of Government’, *The Times*, 14 Mar 1967, p. 13; For his programme see: *A New Style of Government*.

¹⁹³ Reginald Maudling, ‘Letter to the Tories of Barnet’, *The Times*, 16 Feb 1967, p. 11.

¹⁹⁴ Reginald Maudling, *The Ever Changing Challenge* (London: CPC, 1969), p. 18.

¹⁹⁵ Reginald Maudling, Speech to Law Society Luncheon, London, 27 Oct 1969, reported in: ‘Maudling Doubts about Market, 28 Oct 1969, *The Times*, p. 19; On earlier policy conflicts between them: Butler and Pinto-Duschinsky, *The British General Election of 1970*, p. 70.

an incomplete reading of Tory rhetoric.¹⁹⁶ Admittedly, Macleod's insistence that 'the first freedom of the people of this country ought to be the freedom of spending more of their own money' could give this impression.¹⁹⁷ Yet, this obscures freedom's rhetorical role in other policy areas: according to many conference delegates Labour's attempt to force comprehensive schools on local authorities 'put into jeopardy the very principles of freedom which the British people have fought to preserve...'.¹⁹⁸ Doubtless, for some, such as Joan Hall who argued the 'hint of compulsion as with comprehensive education' represented 'softening up' for 'socialism Russian-style', their rhetoric expressed New Right beliefs.¹⁹⁹ But for the party leadership and others, framing education as an issue of freedom was not a concession to this group but a conscious ploy to avoid being drawn into potentially unpopular defences of public or grammar schools.²⁰⁰ Whilst it would be unwise to rule out the possibility that senior Tories saw 'freedom' as a useful mechanism for engendering party unity, to see this as a concession to 'neoliberalism' or the broader New Right agenda ignores the ability of those who Gamble calls Right Progressives to continue clothing their own programme in a common rhetorical heritage.

In this context, we can complicate Selsdon Man's rhetorical genus. For ardent Thatcherites and some historians, the Shadow Cabinet's retreat to Selsdon Park at the end of January 1970 witnessed its conversion to a neoliberal or New Right programme, which Heath betrayed in government.²⁰¹ Scholars have rightly exposed this as a myth, albeit one which the party subsequently came to 'live by'.²⁰² The impression of a rightwards turn, they argue, was 'neither initially intended or deserved' but arose from 'the context of its reception', namely a 'climate of expectation' amongst Tory supporters and Wilson's subsequent attacks, which inadvertently lent the party's programme 'a cloak of philosophic

¹⁹⁶ Julian Critchley, 'The Case for a Whig Revival in the Tory Party', *The Times*, 15 Feb 1969, p. 8.

¹⁹⁷ Iain Macleod, Speech at Institute of Directors Conference, 6 Nov 1969, reported in: *The Times*, 7 Nov 1969; p. 23; The same could be said of Heath's version of Big Brother the consequence of which was a loss of 'freedom and cash': Edward Heath, Speech to Local Government Conference, 1 Mar 1970, reported in: *The Guardian*, 2 Mar 1970, p. 5.

¹⁹⁸ Michael Turner-Bridger, Conference Speech, 1969, pp. 36-7 at 36.

¹⁹⁹ Joan Hall, Conference Speech, 1968, pp. 18-9 at 18.

²⁰⁰ CRD Memorandum, 19 May 1967, B.L.O. CPA, CCO 600/17/14.

²⁰¹ For claim of direct connection to 'neoliberals': Holmes, *The Failure of the Heath Government*, p. xi; Keith Joseph's biographer attempts to link the episode to his speeches: Morrison Halcrow, *Keith Joseph: A Single Mind* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989), p. 43.

²⁰² Green, *Ideologies*, p. 234.

unity and political impact [it] had hitherto lacked'.²⁰³ Whilst Green concedes that Tories contributed to this impression by refusing to repudiate an image they found useful during the 1970 election, the leadership's agency is often reduced to opportunism: Campbell argues that Selsdon Man came about 'almost by accident' and was a classic instance of Heath 'allow[ing] himself to be identified with ideas and attitudes which were not really his own'.²⁰⁴ Moreover, law and order, the subject of the briefing that triggered journalists' suspicions of a rightwards tack, was allegedly chosen 'in an attempt to win some headlines', despite it having 'nothing to do with what we had been talking about', according to Robert Carr.²⁰⁵ Without reverting to myth, we should distinguish between the contingencies of the weekend's coverage or Wilson's reaction and the deliberate rhetorical strategy these stemmed from and contributed to. If we extend the search for Selsdon Man to cover the early months of 1970, it becomes clear that he represented, not a 'libertarian' lurch, but an evolution of older rhetorical models in response to the demands of pre-election campaigning, emerging issues, and a *proleptic* engagement with Wilson's critique of 'Tory Freedom'.

The party's broadcasters had done much to generate a climate in which Tory statements were read as expressing philosophies fundamentally different to their opponents'.²⁰⁶ On New Year's Eve, Anthony Barber told Radio 4 listeners that the British of 1969 had been disillusioned, cynical, and felt helpless in the face of government.²⁰⁷ Predictably, Labour's 'refusal to trust the people' was to blame. Democratic governments, he argued, must not 'adjure the very meaning of the word democracy by creating a climate where the voice of the people who elected it becomes gradually stilled, sullen, silent, ignored'. But 'the nature of Socialism', Barber argued, 'is – quite genuinely – to believe that the

²⁰³ Anthony Seldon, 'The Heath Government in History' in *The Heath Government, 1970-4: A Reappraisal* edited by Stuart Ball and Anthony Seldon, Kindle Edition (London: Routledge, 2013 [1996]) locs. 275-704 at 503; Green, *Ideologies*, p. 231-4; Garnett, 'Planning for Power', p. 213; Campbell, *Edward Heath*, p. 265.

²⁰⁴ Green, *Ideologies*, p. 232; Campbell, *Edward Heath*, pp. 264, 266; Gamble regarded the episode as evidence of the leadership retreating into a more radical interpretation of its competition policy: *The Conservative Nation*, p. 123.

²⁰⁵ Quoted in: Campbell, *Edward Heath*, p. 264; Garnett, 'Planning for Power', p. 213; Ramsden points out the subject had been discussed in the context of a draft manifesto: *The Winds of Change*, p. 301. 'cynical' Macleod is normally named as suggesting the topic.

²⁰⁶ The end of 1969 had seen similar heightening of Tory rhetoric: Peter Walker, Speech to Public Meeting, Worcester, 12 Dec 1969, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 65/2, folios 82-3; John Braine, Party Political Broadcast, 28 Nov 1969, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 65/2, folios 6-8.

²⁰⁷ Anthony Barber, Party Political Broadcast, 31 Dec 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 65/2, folios 92-5.

Government knows best. They really do believe it. It is as if that famous and fatal remark of a Labour Minister – “we are the masters now” – had sunk so deep into the Socialist subconscious that not all the grappling-irons of psychiatry can uproot it’. Whilst the State’s power was immense, the ‘bed-rock of liberty, and of freedom of individual choice’ was that it could only defy its true ‘masters’, the people, for a time. Such a diagnosis led the future chancellor to observe that whilst there was ‘a great deal of talk these days about involving the people more closely with government decisions’ the truth was that ‘by far the most effective way to encourage personal involvement, and personal responsibility and decision, is for the Government itself to cut down its own area of decision – to stop the constant and growing intrusion into the smallest details of our daily lives’.²⁰⁸ This ‘attitude of mind’ represented the ‘gulf’ between the parties. The next day, Christopher Ward, triumphant at Swindon the previous October, continued this theme. Notwithstanding, ‘some common ground’ on aims, the parties differed radically on ‘routes’. Despite his pretence to ‘prefer to look ahead’, Ward demonstrated these conflicting approaches through a reflection on the past half-decade filled with familiar tropes:

Was there a zest to life, a sense of purpose and direction?... Or were they the drifting years? The years of the locust in which there was a slow sapping, a subtle erosion of all that’s best in our national character?... Were they the years of the individual or of the bureaucrat with his genius for combining the maximum of irritation with the minimum of effect? Above all were these the years of confidence and trust in our people, or of ever encroaching regulation and restraint?²⁰⁹

Thus, Selsdon came in the context of a concerted pre-election assault on Labour’s *ethos*, which encouraged Tory statements to be read as signalling deep philosophical differences. Speeches in the weeks following the meeting reinforced this interpretation.²¹⁰ Macleod, for example, presented Bristol’s Chamber of Commerce with a series of contrasts: ‘With the Tories there will be fewer subsidies but lower taxation. Less intervention and more choice. Less

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Christopher Ward, Party Political Broadcast, 1 Jan 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 65/2, folios 113-4.

²¹⁰ Geoffrey Rippon, Speech to Public Meeting in West Derby Constituency, Liverpool, 20 Feb 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 65/1, 39, folio 135; Sir John Eden, ‘A Policy for Enterprise – Public and Private’, Speech at Loughborough, 30 Jan 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 65/1, folios 3-7.

direction and more freedom. There will be greater rewards for risk taking. Britain will be an exciting country to live in'. 'But', he added, 'we are equally determined that the Exciting Society must not also be the Ruthless Society' and promised targeted welfare.²¹¹ Whilst such oratory reveals a more active role in creating the impression of a coherent philosophical difference from Labour, it was not, as we have seen, very new and to see it as indicative of a rhetorical decampment into New Right territory ignores the fact that each of the speeches cited above manipulates tropes and models used persistently since 1945.

More novel was Tory rhetoric concerning the infamous Press briefing's overt topic: law and order was not a proxy for a neoliberal Selsdon Man, but his core rhetorical substance. Against the background of student protests and anti-apartheid demonstrations, law, order and the limits of freedom had risen up the agenda. To frame these and other defects of the permissive society, Tories integrated anarchy and morality into their balance model.²¹² In December 1969, for example, Hogg warned that Christian civilisation was 'in danger of sliding into anarchy'.²¹³ Whilst the new generation 'hate[d] the restrictions placed on them by tradition', he could not see 'what liberties and rights' they would substitute. Instead, Hogg supposed that Britain belonged to a 'dynamic tradition', older than private enterprise, socialism or even Christianity. 'Liberty under law', as he called it, 'welds together the tradition of freedom in Greece, of law in Rome, or morality and religion in Jerusalem, of representative government in Britain'. This tradition insisted that 'law and liberty are not opposites', but 'coordinates'; that both were the 'sworn enemy of anarchy on the one hand, oppression on the other'; and that this made a 'nonsense of the socialist jibe that the alternative to regulation is a Tory free-for-all' because 'freedom had nothing to do with licence'. Until this point, we can place Hogg within a lineage including Eden, Macmillan, and Maudling, all of whom occasionally moved beyond 'balance' to assert a truer definition of freedom.²¹⁴ Yet, the new context of permissiveness provoked a further evolution: law and freedom now entered a triumvirate with 'justice' (objective moral judgement)

²¹¹ Iain Macleod, Speech to Bristol Chamber of Commerce and Shipping, Bristol, 20 Feb 1970, B.L.O., PPB 65/1, 33, folios 112-3.

²¹² Anthony Barber, Conference Speech, 1969, pp. 24-8.

²¹³ Quintin Hogg, Speech to the 64 Club, Trinity College Dublin, 6 Dec 1969, B.L.O., CPA, PPB 65/2, folios 59-65 at 59.

²¹⁴ As we saw above, Hogg himself did so regarding the relationship between freedom and planning.

since ‘law and liberty has no meaning except in the context of morally responsible individuals’.²¹⁵ Hogg then used this alliance of values to condemn University teachers, students and demonstrators’ detestation ‘of all forms of authority save their own opinions’ and to accuse those planning on disrupting South African sports tours of ‘encouraging the slide into anarchy... [and] being enemies to the law... of being enemies of freedom because they intend to interfere with the freedom of others’.²¹⁶ By changing its terms, a model previously deployed to divine the limits of state intervention became a guide to social upheaval.

A parallel elision of law, order, anarchy, morality and freedom also reached maturity regarding industrial relations, which ensured the discussions at Selsdon were connected to the briefing’s theme.²¹⁷ According to Michael Heseltine, Trade Union legislation was needed ‘so that the incentive will be for those who keep the law and not for those who find short-lived prosperity through anarchy’.²¹⁸ Indeed, Dudley Smith had used this critique to pin onto Wilson the very image the latter used as the basis of Selsdon Man: the country was ‘now seriously threatened by the biggest wages free-for-all in our history. Everyone is frightened of being left behind. Indeed, “threaten and grab” seems to be the order of the day...’.²¹⁹ Law and order, then, was deeply connected to the economic policy discussed at Selsdon, a fact which Carr should have remembered given his own accusations in the following weeks that Labour had created ‘the “Get-it-by-Force” Society’. ‘Law and Order’, he claimed, ‘is not only, or even mainly about catching and punishing criminals. Above all, it is about supporting freedom and responsibility. And it is here – particularly in our industrial life – that the Socialist Government have a criminal record’.²²⁰

Yet, the real significance of Tory rhetoric throughout February and March was its combination of these themes into a narrative about Labour. Hogg was the

²¹⁵ Ibid., p. 60.

²¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 62, 64.

²¹⁷ The argument that excessive or abuses of freedom necessitated State intervention in Trade Unionism had been part of the Oppositions approach to the subject, the difference was the increasing prominence given to accusations of anarchy: CUCO, *A Fair Deal at Work: The Conservative Approach to Modern Industrial Relations* (London: CPC, 1968), p. 10.

²¹⁸ Michael Heseltine, Speech to Motor Agents Association, 9 Jan 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 65/2, 42, folios 12-3 at 123.

²¹⁹ Dudley Smith, Speech to National Union of Bank Employees, Leamington Spa, 9 Jan 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 65/2, 41, folio 120-1 at 120.

²²⁰ Robert Carr, Speech at the Bridgewater By-Election, 5 Mar 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 65/1, 498, unfoliated; He is quoted to that effect in Campbell, *Edward Heath*, p. 264.

chief architect of this strategy, which *did* rebuke Wilson's claim that Conservative policy represented a return to the jungle free-for-all. At Marylebone on 11 February, Hogg repeated claims that 'law and liberty are two sides of the same coin' and that 'chaos and licence are only another name for multiple tyranny'.²²¹ A fortnight later, he expanded these arguments in a rousing address to the Young Conservatives South Eastern Area conference. Pointing from the platform, he explained:

Inscribed on that banner is not "Law and Order" but "Freedom under Law". The purpose of law is the protection of freedom and not the imposition of obligations, which are only its means to that end. But the condition of freedom is the observance of law, which ought to be only the name we give the rights of others. Neither freedom nor law has much sense unless you believe in a national justice which inspires the law, and a natural morality and sense of responsibility which prevents freedom degenerating into mere permissiveness. Freedom under law is the banner which I oppose to Mr Jenkin's permissive society.²²²

For Hogg, law 'buttress[ed]' the morality of those slipping into incivility, and in this form was now tied to the tropes of Labour misrule and Conservative release. Permissiveness, he claimed, was 'almost always the result of undue repression'. Like 'the permissiveness of Charles II's reign' (caused by Cromwell's tyranny), 'the excessive permissiveness of the present... [was] at least partly due to the stifling oppressiveness in the economic and social spheres of the Socialist dogma'. Society needed 'more freedom, not less, more opportunity, not less', to avoid dire consequences, which Hogg listed in series of *staccato* lines: 'Result, economic stagnation. Result, industrial chaos... But in other fields, result, the spendthrift society, the unhappy society, the divided society, the permissive society, and the lawless society...'²²³ The alternative, encapsulated in a mirror series of 'let us return...' formulations, culminated in a

²²¹ Quintin Hogg, Speech to St Marylebone Young Conservatives, St. Marylebone, 11 Feb 1970, PPB 65/1, 19, folios 68-72; The speech was covered in the press: Gordon Greig, 'Hogg Hits Back at Wilson "Clap-Trap" on Law and Order', *Daily Mail*, 12 Feb 1970, p. 10; The same theme recurred a week later: Quintin Hogg, Speech to Conservative Law Students Association, House of Commons Dinner, 17 Feb 1970, B.L.O., CPA, PPB 18/2, 31, folios 102-110.

²²² Quintin Hogg, Speech to Young Conservative South-Eastern Area Conference, 21 Feb 1970, PPB 61/1, 40, folios 136-145 at 137; The Sunday press carried the speech: Nora Beloff, 'Hogg: How I Would Deal With Police Killers', *The Observer*, 22 Feb 1970, p. 4.

²²³ Quintin Hogg, Speech to Young Conservative South-Eastern Area Conference, 21 Feb 1970, PPB 61/1, 40, folios 136-145 at 139.

traditional liberation: 'Let us get Socialism out of our hair and throw excessive government off our backs. Let us return to freedom'. Confronting his opponent directly, Hogg then insisted that 'by a paradox the real free-for-all takes place not under a Conservative Prime Minister, but under Harold Wilson. The permissive and lawless society is a by-product of Socialism. The real free-for-all is what is going on in industry and society under Socialism'. Into March, the Spokesman on Home Affairs continued to expound the irony of 'our little Prime Minister's' caricature.²²⁴ 'A free-for-all', he contended, was 'a kind of fight, and, in times of fighting no one is free'. Because Labour refused to uphold the law which made freedom possible, it was 'Socialism which mistakes permissiveness for freedom, and arbitrary government for the rule of law, and, because it refused to 'bring law into industrial relations', Labour had created a "free-for-all" when everybody is allowed to scramble for wage increases, and the big increases go to the people with the biggest stick'. Far from accepting Wilson's image of Tory cavemen, the rhetoric alluded to at Selsdon Park attempted to paint Labour as uncivilised.

Campbell rightly insists that Selsdon Man did not represent a conversion to New Right economics. But, if we accept that he owed his existence to the 'context of [his] reception', Conservatives must be attributed a greater agency in generating that context. Rather than positing a rhetorical concession to 'neoliberalism' as a cause, much of this immediate context was simply a restatement of the philosophical divide through established tropes. Yet, in retrospect, the topic of the press conference given at Selsdon was more significant than normally presumed: it heralded the adaptation of old models to oppose, not regulation, but excessive freedom – an evolution required to frame industrial relations and permissiveness as threats to freedom, which could then be used to condemn Labour and directly refute Wilson's caricature of Selsdon Man. In one sense, this could be read as a rhetorical swing to the right (perhaps in Hogg we can see alternative origins for the 'free economy and the strong state'), but such a simple label underplays the extent to which this rhetoric grew out of that used to defend Macmillan's Middle Way.

²²⁴ Quintin Hogg, Speech to Eton and Slough Conservatives AGM, Slough, 6 Mar 1970, PPB 65/1, 54, folios 184-188.

We can now conclude this section by re-evaluating whether Heath won power in June 1970 on the back of rhetoric he did not believe in. Broadly, the evidence fits the pattern above: freedom rhetoric in the 1970 campaign had evolved in some respects from 1964 and even 1966, but it remained connected to the rhetorical models, tropes that framed those and previous elections. Perhaps the most obvious extension of the themes identified in 1964 and under Home was the now dominant interpretation of freedom as choice, particularly in terms of services and money. When Heath referred to ‘freedom’ as ‘the single most important quality that the Conservative Party stands for’ and the ‘one essential thing you’ll be voting for’, he was not primarily referring to the threat State ownership posed to liberty:

We think your life is your own and you should be free to arrange it as you think fit. You should have freedom to live in your own house and the Government should make it possible for you to do so. You should have the freedom to be better off if you work harder, and the government should see to it that you have the incentive of keeping more of the money that you earn. You should have the freedom to spend your money or to save it. You should have the freedom to have more real say in the way the country – your country – is run. In short, you should have the freedom to be an individual and no one individual should have to be like any other. That’s what I believe in. That is what every Conservative believes in – the freedom to choose. That is the alternative to a kind of government that just can’t keep its fingers out of any pie.²²⁵

As discussed in relation to 1959 and 1964, earlier versions of this appeal were not purely materialistic, and in 1970 the links between independence, freedom, responsibility, and the overbearing state received even more attention. At Blair Atholl, for example, Home argued that ‘a man must have freedom to exercise responsibility. A responsibility for earning his own living. Opportunity for responsibility in the education of his children. Responsibility for keeping a good home. The chance to be responsible for his health care and his old age’. Depriving people of the opportunity to provide for themselves negated their ability to establish an identity, ‘confined’ the human spirit, ‘slackened and stultified’ human instincts, and ultimately led to a population drifting ‘always

²²⁵ Edward Heath, Party Election Broadcast, 1 Jun 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 18/1, folios 108-12

under the eye of the State'. A Tory Government, therefore, would 'provide the opportunity for the exercise of these individual responsibilities' and 'offer the freedom to choose'.²²⁶ Thus, the Bow Group's definition of freedom under Macmillan was now reflected in criticism of the welfare State, which had become a restriction on liberty. Of course, this rhetoric can be read as evidence of New Right influence, especially when cries like 'the government – any government – is ill-equipped to usurp the functions of management or to annex the free choice of the individual' came from the lips of Tories like John Eden who later became associated with such policies.²²⁷ But to do so denies both the critique's gradual emergence and alteration, especially from 1959 to 1965, and an alternative lineage stretching back to forties Conservatism's concern with independence, John Boyd-Carpenter's link between tax and freedom in the late fifties, and also more recent conceptions of freedom like Maudling's, which had found some expression under Macmillan and Home's leaderships. In Eden's case at least, ignoring his wider inheritance has left historians perplexed by his use of other supposedly Macmillanite rhetorical models.²²⁸

One consequence of narrowing freedom to this definition was that, whilst candidates still constructed an *ethos* of protecting the individual against 'the system' and alleged that socialism was diseased with bureaucracy or heading towards dictatorship, the focus of anti-Whitehall rhetoric shifted further towards wresting greater choice from the State.²²⁹ 'And what is our theme', Macleod began the peroration to his party broadcast. 'In one word – choice. I believe in people – not in Ministers', he declared. 'I believe in giving the people the freedom to spend more of their own money in their own way... I believe in choice resting in the family and with the individual and not in Whitehall'.²³⁰ Denial of choice had, of course, always been implicit in the 'knows best' element of bureaucracy's threat to freedom.²³¹ What is interesting though is that

²²⁶ Alex Douglas-Home, Speech at Blair Atholl, 4 Jun 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 20/2, folios 146-54 at 152-3.

²²⁷ John Eden, Speech at Kirkdale, Liverpool, 4 Jun 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 20/2, folios 160-2 at 161.

²²⁸ Wade cannot understand his use of the 'middle way': *Conservative Economic Policy*, p. 38.

²²⁹ Hugh Rossi, Election Address, Hornsey, 1970, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0711/3I.; John Stevens, Election Address, Stechford, 1970, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0711/4F; Tufton Beamish, Speech at Chailey, 6 Jun 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 19/1, folio 11; Tufton Beamish, Election Address, Lewes, 1970, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0711/ 1D; John Eden, Speech at Deal, Kent, 11 Jun 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 20/2, folios 50-2.

²³⁰ Iain Macleod, Party Election Broadcast, 8 Jun 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 18/1, folios 90-1 at 92.

²³¹ See chapter two.

the same rhetorical structure used in 1955 to attack rationing and controls was now applied to subjects like health and education, and, most often, ‘freedom to choose how you spend your wage packet without the state taking most of it in tax’.²³² Indeed, Heath used the issue to distil the parties’ competing philosophies. Having compared the summer of 1970 to that of 1940 when freedom was in peril, he confronted listeners with a stark series of questions: ‘Let me ask you frankly: Do you want the worry of the last five years all over again? Or do you want a better tomorrow? Do you want a government whose basic philosophy is to tell you what’s good for you, and what you ought to like, whether you like it or not? Or do you want, not a free-for-all (no one wants that), but freedom to choose, freedom to breathe?’²³³ In his appeal to an anti-authority *pathos*, we can see continuity in how Tories’ made their frame emotive at most post-war elections. Indeed, senior figures were very consciously operating within this post-war tradition: Speaking for Randolph Churchill’s son, Winston, at Urmston, Macleod reminded his audience that ‘more than twenty years ago Winston Churchill, your candidate’s grandfather, coined the slogan that took us to victory. Set the people free! We need that call again...’. As in 1950, socialism had ‘bred faceless men by the tens of thousands’, ensuring ‘too many people [were] minding other people’s business’ and administering a ‘suffocating’ ‘weight of paper and rules’. ‘We are not small children unfit to control our own decisions, spend our own money, live our own lives’, Macleod demanded, ‘we need a sense of destiny again. Once more we must set the people free’.²³⁴ The framing, tropes, and rhetorical model of release were the very similar; what differed was the kind of release offered by Churchill in 1950 (for production) and that by Heath twenty years later.

There were also continuities in the connections posited between freedom and prosperity, which were archetypal of late-fifties and early-sixties Tory rhetoric. Heath, for example, maintained that ‘prosperity is a kind of freedom, in its own way’: ‘It’s freedom to live in your own house; it’s freedom to have some of the things you want around you, to bring up your children and give them some of the things you never had yourself. It’s freedom to do what you want to do in

²³² Stuart Thom, Election Address, Greenwich, 1970, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0711/4B.

²³³ Edward Heath, Party Election Broadcast, 16 Jun 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 20/1, folio 22.

²³⁴ Iain Macleod, Speech at Urmston, Manchester, 9 Jun 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 20/2, folios 101-2; For similar manipulation of the phrase: Peter Rawlinson, Election Address, Epsom, 1970, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0711/3A.

your own way. Without prosperity you can't have choice. And a country that has lost the power to choose can't choose the kind of country it wants to be'.²³⁵ Thus, to create choice the State needed both to loosen its grip on the provision of services and to foster a prosperous economy. As well as reinforcing the message that 'prosperity means more choice' message, some candidates even dared to venture back to the 'thirteen wasted years' to remind voters how much 'freedom to choose' had increased.²³⁶ All Britain had to do to return to this situation, as Carr put it, was 'wake up... and escape from the dead hand of Labour misrule. There's a much brighter future there for the taking'.²³⁷ Moreover, the metaphorical model of growth deployed by Barber in a broadcast on 1 June also revealed continuity in framing prosperity as dependent on freedom:

We want greater freedom of opportunity, greater freedom of choice, and greater freedom from Government regulations and interference. Because the genius of our people flourishes in a free society. It doesn't flourish in the break dank soil of socialism, with its theory and its dogma and its inevitable levelling down of life. Its roots are in a quite different tradition – the tradition of the liberty of the individual under the law. And it is from these roots that Conservatism springs.²³⁸

Here was a basic, profoundly-metaphorical model of growth-as-release, supposedly naturally suited to the British, which could have been taken from any election since 1945.²³⁹ Thus, whilst late-sixties Conservative rhetoric was dealing with different economic problems than in the mid-fifties and called for change not continuity, it owed its pattern to links made in that earlier period and inherited Homes moral justification for prosperity in attaching economic success to free choice.

But if the 1970 campaign in some respects inherited its freedom rhetoric, it also showcased the more recent evolution discussed above. 'Anarchy' and the relationship of liberty and law were undoubtedly much more prominent themes

²³⁵ Party Election Broadcast, 15 Jun 1970, CPA, PPB 18/1, folios 32-3.

²³⁶ Cranley Onslow, Election Address, Woking, 1970, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0711/3J; Party Election Broadcast, 4 Jun 1970, CPA

²³⁷ Robert Carr, Speech at Mitcham, 15 Jun 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 20/2, folios 16-7 at 17.

²³⁸ Anthony Barber, Election Broadcast, 1 Jun 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 20/1, folios 221-2 at 222.

²³⁹ Patrick Mayhew, Election Address, Dulwich, 1970, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0711/3E.

than in even 1966. Like Julian Amery, some continued to express concern about excessive freedom through an identical version of the balance model used by his father.²⁴⁰ Home and others, however, insisted like Hogg that 'one can be no more be against Law and Order than one can be against Freedom and Democracy for they are all the same thing, looked at from different points of view'.²⁴¹ This frame was used to make 'anarchic' unofficial strikes an election issue from which to confront Wilson's image of Selsdon Man.²⁴² At Bebington, for example, Hogg elaborated his critiques above to cover a wide range of strikes: 'We sometimes hear a great deal about a Tory free-for-all. Tories don't stand for a free-for-all. They stand for freedom under law. But look at the free-for-all that has developed under Labour. Chaos in the National Health Service. Chaos in Fleet Street. Chaos in the motor car industry. Every man for himself. Union against union. Class against class. I'm alright Jack'.²⁴³ Although Hogg's rhetoric incorporated a moral condemnation of excessive freedom in industry, the main threat of anarchy lay in moral standards themselves, particularly those linked with protest. For those on the Right given to hyperbole, the crisis was urgent. Patrick Wall claimed 'the mocking of all forms of authority which lies at the heart of the anarchists' philosophy, is the key to the disruption of our society, the destruction of our family life and the root cause of the generation gap'. For Wall, 'permissive legislation' had assisted a 'systematic erosion of moral values', 'all in the name of freedom. Freedom for the individual to do as he likes'. He then asked the electors of Anlaby to 'consider for a moment how far down this slippery slope we have moved during the last five and a half years' and asserted that the election would decide if Britain should 'follow America into chaos or reverse our steps before it is too late'.²⁴⁴ The MCC's decision to abandon plans for South Africa's cricket tour, allowed Tories to supplement this narrative with attacks on Labour's supposed complicity in the desecration of liberty. 'The issue goes deep', Maudling told party workers in late May. 'It is the fundamental issue of liberty under the law which has been called into question by the Government's action... I do not understand the morality of prohibiting

²⁴⁰ Julian Amery, Election Address, Brighton Pavilion, 1970, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0711/1F.

²⁴¹ Alex Douglas-Home, Speech at Blair Atholl, 4 Jun 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 20/2, folios 146-54 at 151.

²⁴² Edwin Leather, Speech at Craigton, Glasgow, 3 Jun 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 19/1, folios 25-32 at 26.

²⁴³ Quintin Hogg, Speech at Bebington, 11 Jun 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 20/2, folios 54-7 at 57.

²⁴⁴ Patrick Wall, Speech at Anlaby, Haltemprice, 8 Jun 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 19/1, folios 12-3.

South African cricketers so long as their Government practices racial discrimination, while welcoming Russian athletes when Russia is suppressing human liberty in Czechoslovakia. Whatever form it may take, tyranny is always tyranny... The Government have encouraged those who think that they must develop their own tolerance and expand their own freedom by denying them to others'.²⁴⁵ But, whilst for Maudling the danger was to traditional values, others like Julian Byng in Holborn and St Pancras attempted to bring the threat closer to voters: 'Our freedom under the law has been put in peril by Labour's weakness in giving way to the demonstrations they encourage. Last month it was the Springbok Tour; next month it may be your office or your factory which the demonstrators seek to close...'.²⁴⁶ Late-sixties politics, then, both repurposed an established rhetorical model, extended critiques nascent in 1966, and brought together a number of issues into a story which still framed politics as freedom versus unfreedom, but defined the latter term as disorder.

Thus, in Heath's summary of his programme, 'a better tomorrow with greater freedom: freedom to earn and save, freedom from Government interference, freedom of choice, freedom from fear of crime and violence', we should see one iteration, specific to its context, of an overarching rhetorical culture.²⁴⁷ It will always be possible to read Heath's rhetoric with a degree of cynicism that allows one to argue that he adopted this language simply to pacify the Right. However, like the case that he was genuinely converted to neoliberalism, Campbell's thesis is often unlikely and in some ways unbalanced. First, personalising the use of this rhetoric to Heath is unfair: most senior Tories (who also remained unconverted) used supposedly 'libertarian' rhetoric. Second, whilst some strengthening of freedom rhetoric occurred, the chronology of change does not suggest that this was linked either to Heath's opportunism, weakness, or an injection of neoliberalism. Much of the rhetoric cited by historians was present ahead of policy changes under Home, and the changed tempo of this rhetoric was partly due to Conservatives' reorientations to their opposition role. It is the latter, not the rediscovery of such tropes, which explains

²⁴⁵ Reginald Maudling, Speech to Party Workers, London, 23 May 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 20/2, folios 271-5; Hogg called it 'a sad day for British freedom': Quintin Hogg, Statement on Cricket Council Decision, 22 May 1970, B.L.O, CPA, PPB 20/2, folio 275.

²⁴⁶ Julian Byng, Election Address, Holborn and St Pancras, 1970, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0711/1B.

²⁴⁷ Edward Heath, Election Address, Bexley, 1970, B.L.P.E.S., COLL MISC 0711/2I.

the period's rhetorical similarity with 1945-50. Third, that Heath and others' rhetoric was characterised by a continued evolution of that deployed under Macmillan exposes the fallacy of using it as evidence of New Right conversion or concession. Indeed, Heath integrated his supposedly technocratic rhetoric into these traditional liberation narratives. 1965-70 was a time when all sections of the party could use freedom rhetoric to advance their programmes, and to deny this is to not only enthrone neoliberalism as the hallmark of sincerity, but to remove Heath from a rhetorical context in which his predecessors had used such rhetoric to defend far more interventionist policies. Whilst we may want to agree with Campbell that Heath was never committed to a neoliberal programme, it is wrong to use his rhetoric to convict him of dishonesty; instead Heath continued to adapt the tools of a rhetorical culture that rooted his oratory in the recent past.

III

Conclusions, 1951-70

The aim of this and the two previous chapters has not been to explain the origins of Thatcher's oratory, but to escape that question's hold on the interpretation of earlier periods and the accompanying tendency to use 'neoliberalism' as a standard for gauging the sincerity or significance of freedom rhetoric. Hence chapter two questioned the validity of the common parallel between 1945-51 and 1975-9, not through side-by-side comparison, but by revealing the historical specificity and contextual dependence of the earlier period's rhetoric and how this articulated different ideas and strategies to the 'neoliberalism' allegedly linking Thatcher and Churchill's oratory. This and the previous chapter extended that argument by demonstrating that the narrative of an interregnum, intrinsic to the misleading parallel between Tory freedom rhetoric at either end of the supposed post-war consensus, is unjustified and arises from the shadows Thatcherism and neoliberalism cast over the party's historiography. In fact, the rhetoric described in chapter two remained important for very different Conservatives throughout 1951-70 and saw significant development. Nor should it be regarded as insincere. Crucially, rather than imagining a consistent set of ideas or policies fuelling this continuity, the evidence suggests that Tories articulated disparate views through an overarching rhetorical culture, consisting of models, commonplaces, tropes, and

figures. The precise forms and dominance of these rhetorical tools certainly changed – to the extent that distinct iterations of the culture can be detected – but all ultimately attempted the same speech-act: framing politics as a choice between freedom and unfreedom.²⁴⁸

In showing this continuity, direct comparisons with later periods have again been avoided, partly because this would be to commit the same error of organising analysis around the presence or absence of future connections rather than reading each period on its own terms.²⁴⁹ That said, all four chapters suggest a model by which *apparent* similarities between different periods of Tory rhetoric can be explained as the product of a shared, iterating rhetorical culture, inherited through the intervening years and not in spite of them. If not entirely baseless, then, the parallels between 1945-51 and later periods drawn by historians, and Powell at the head of chapter three, are very selective perspectives, which conflate policy and rhetorical continuities, ignore specificities or contextual imperatives, and mistake indirect for direct connections. Whilst Powell and Thatcher consciously recalled Churchill's cry 'set the people free', from the standpoint of 1970 or 1975 respectively, each was summoning a rhetorical form, not the context, policies, or strategy that first generated it. Nor could they or their audiences help but hear such phrases through the filter of the intervening quarter-century of Tory oratory.²⁵⁰

Three brief extracts from Thatcher's speeches in 1975 elucidate the nature of this connection with post-war Conservatism. In her first speech as leader, Thatcher argued that the next election was crucial because 'if by any chance the Socialists were to win again we would be set irretrievably on the path to the Socialist State'.²⁵¹ She was confident of success, however, because 'every time the people are faced with the choice – the choice between a free society or a socialist/communist state – when they are faced with it and they recognise it,

²⁴⁸ Iteration is preferred because it implies reconfiguration as much as changing content.

²⁴⁹ Of course, those terms included the past but not the future. On that basis comparisons informing an overall analysis are informative and valid for describing changes in retrospect and continuities, but also distinct from the act of reading earlier periods through comparison with later periods.

²⁵⁰ Indeed, speaker's purpose in using the phrase was an appeal to Churchill's authority and the association with the 1951 victory: in this sense, the intervening history has entirely changed the meaning and rhetorical function of the phrase. Margaret Thatcher, Speech to Scottish Conservative Conference, Dundee, 17 May 1975 available at: <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/>. [Accessed: Sep 2014].

²⁵¹ Margaret Thatcher, Speech Accepting the Conservative Leadership, London, 20 Feb 1975 available at: <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/> [Accessed: Sep 2014].

they totally reject it'. Thatcher certainly sounded Churchillian in her use of an argument of direction and free society model to frame a binary choice, but then so too had Eden, Macmillan, Home, and Heath. Of course, each remoulded these rhetorical resources to achieve different tasks, but Thatcher should be read as doing much the same rather than returning to an 'authentic' form. Likewise, when telling the National Press Club that 'the whole fabric of our society is under strain and attack' from economic and moral crises, her insistence that 'we must revive belief in freedom under the law', should be understood as a specific expression of rhetoric that had its own history, in this case somewhat independent of her ideas: rooted in the balance model associated with the Middle Way, 'freedom under law' had recently helped condemn Trade Union power and the permissive society, but had in the past justified Tory planning.²⁵² From this perspective, Thatcher's inaugural conference address can be read not as a revival of late-forties Conservatism, but as a sustained attempt to manipulate rhetorical traditions that had survived between 1951 and 1970:

Let me give you my vision: a man's right to work as he will, to spend what he earns, to own property, to have the State as servant and not as master – these are the British inheritance. They are the essence of a free country and on that freedom all our other freedoms depend. But we want a free economy, not only because it guarantees our liberties, but also because it is the best way of creating wealth and prosperity for the whole country...²⁵³

Given the above analysis, those lines now evoke Macmillan or the 1955 election as much as they do Churchill and 1950. These examples are not intended to pinpoint the origins of Thatcher's rhetoric; they merely illustrate that we should distinguish between the origins and history of a rhetorical vocabulary and the ideas and contexts that sustained specific utterances and further evolved that language. Whether or not one accepts that ideas and policies have lineages, inferring those connections from similar rhetoric or reading back that history onto earlier Conservatives' oratory has proved dangerous. This is not to claim that the history of a rhetorical culture can be written without constant reference

²⁵² Margaret Thatcher, Speech to the National Press Club, Washington DC, 19 Sep 1975, available at: <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/> [Accessed: Sep 2014].

²⁵³ Margaret Thatcher, Conference Speech, 1975, pp. 128-31 at 130.

to contexts, debates, and policies; but the latter stories have to remain contributions to the former history rather than become synonymous with it.

Failure to separate these tasks led historians to write the history of 1951-1970 in negatives; freedom rhetoric was a sign of constrained beliefs, adrift from policy, completely absent or insincere when compared to 'neoliberalism', or a minority expression of dissent foretelling Thatcherism, which finally closed the gap between rhetoric and practice. Escaping this narrative to recover the story of how the majority of Tories used freedom rhetoric to articulate policies they did campaign on, permits a different picture of post-war Conservatism to emerge. First, as in chapter two, the association between liberal-market or 'neoliberal' ideas and freedom rhetoric needs to be challenged. Whether candidates or party leaders, Tories happily deployed freedom rhetoric whilst advocating what would subsequently be seen as 'corporatist' measures. Yet, far from being dishonest, senior Conservatives could believe liberty imposed limitations on Tory planning without subscribing to neoliberalism. Similarly, alternative strands of Tory thought bolstered the Middle Way model of freedom, and Heath's technocrats did not need the New Right to pressure them into presenting policy as liberation. This is not to deny that those committed to what in retrospect may look like proto-Thatcherism used freedom rhetoric; however, historians should be careful not to characterise freedom rhetoric as a minority language of dissent when the leadership responded to their criticisms through the same terms. Second, rather than replace freedom rhetoric, Conservatives integrated newer political languages of prosperity, opportunity, modernisation, or efficiency into the basic frame. In general terms, this suggests that incorporation was mid-twentieth-century Conservatism's chief reaction to changing contexts, roles, and opposition narratives, a process which consistently drew concepts like affluence and growth into partisan, highly-ideological battles. As a result, Conservative rhetoric was neither as materialistic under Eden and Macmillan nor as technocratic under Heath as has often been maintained, and was also more continuous and ideological than suggested by those who detect a clear distinction between the rhetoric of austerity and prosperity or a politics of growth devoid of ideology. Third, individuals' rhetorical reputations need reassessing. Macmillan did not preside over the nadir of freedom rhetoric; in fact, he expended considerable effort evolving such language to defend his changing

policy positions. Moreover, Home's rhetoric was more significant than normally assumed, particularly because his leadership witnessed a crucial tipping point between the rhetoric of Macmillan and that normally associated with Heath. In ignoring this chronology and his inheritance of freedom rhetoric, the latter has been particularly harshly judged by historians who reduce his rhetoric to a test of sincerity measured against neoliberalism. Instead, there were both strong continuities between Macmillan, Home and Heath's leaderships and significant moments of change not necessarily linked to New Right pressure, all of which meant that Heath and his colleagues had no more reason to think that their freedom rhetoric committed them to a New Right programme any more than their predecessors.

Forces driving the iteration of the rhetorical culture have also become clearer. For example, 1955 and 1966 stand out as moments of reorientation, when new perspectives of government or opposition prompted Tories to convert their rhetorical tools into election cries for continuity or change respectively. Similarly, new issues or policies rising up the agenda, such as student protests or Lloyd's pay pause, often forced the evolution of older rhetorical models or the extension of the frame's sub-concepts, such as anarchy. Meanwhile, stable models and tropes ensured continuity: the model of economic growth as release, for example, situated Churchill, Macmillan, Home and Heath's programmes within a common frame. Similarly, despite ever-changing omens, tropes of patronising bureaucrats and would-be socialist dictators were remarkably consistent threats to Britain's heritage. 'Evolution' is, therefore, a helpful analogy in characterising rhetorical change between 1951 and 1970: some components were retained, others were developed in response to new imperatives, whilst some fell into disuse. Although this change could leap (as with the defence of Tory planning) change was normally gradual, and, as in the case of 1964, two different iterations could briefly co-exist as one set of typical defences or attacks replaced another. Indeed, looked at over the long term, very little completely new was added to Tory rhetoric between 1951 and 1970; instead, facets of the existing culture were morphed, transposed into new policy areas, or revived to meet fresh scenarios.

Together, these themes bring us closer to answering a core question of this thesis: why did freedom survive in British political debate? On one level, of

course, the above research suggests its ability to change and absorb new agendas, whilst maintaining a veil of continuity may be part of the answer. But this begs the question why did Conservatives, despite very different policy positions, debates, and strategies continually speak through, adapt, and develop freedom as a frame for politics? Two related rhetorical imperatives may shed some light: First, the frame described above is always linked to division. Given the value placed on distinctiveness, especially during elections, it is reasonable to suppose that Tory politicians returned to 'freedom' as a well-established means of demarking themselves and new policies from their opponents. Linked to this is a second countervailing pressure of party identity, in which Conservatives used the agreed language of the group as a means of demonstrating their allegiance. In practice, of course, this was often defined negatively, but perhaps the strongest evidence is that a succession of senior Tories, including Macmillan, Heath, Powell, and Maudling all used freedom rhetoric as a means of eliding their particular policy agendas with Conservatism. This should not be taken to imply a purely functionalist explanation of freedom rhetoric; rather, we can see these background pressures enforcing what ought to be regarded as a more complex relationship between ideology and rhetoric, a theme taken up in this thesis's conclusion.

Appendix A – Description of Party Conference Corpora (PCC)

During the research for this thesis two original corpora of party conference speeches were created. Because the corpora are used to contextualise the far larger parliamentary corpus a very brief description of their creation is provided below.

Both corpora were constructed from the Annual Party Conference Reports published by the Labour and Conservative Parties.

The corpus includes every speech by Conservative delegates between 1947 and 1975 and every speech made by Labour delegates between 1946 and 1975.

Each text was digitised using custom software that allowed speeches to be extracted from the text directly, despite low quality print and formatting not suited to traditional OCR (i.e. poorly defined column and text structure). During this process the texts could be corrected for spelling errors.

The debates present researchers with several difficult decisions regarding what should be included or excluded. Should single line interruptions be included? Do the Chairman's brief procedural contributions constitute a speech? Does the different speaking context and structure invalidate comparisons between Labour and Conservative conferences? In the event, the version of the corpus used in the statistics above simply excludes all procedural contributions by the Chairman and all minor interruptions by delegates.

The texts were cleaned and prepared for analysis using standard text mining procedures (setting all words to lowercase, removing punctuation)

Custom programs can then read the text in much the same way as the Parliamentary corpus, although at present no attempt has been made to assign meta-data to the speeches beyond the speaker's name.

Appendix B – Sample Concordance Data Free Society in PCC

CONCORDANCE B.1 *Free Society in Conservative Party Conference Speeches 1947-75 (Selections of full data on USB stick)*

Year	← Span →	Node	← Span →
1948	is the question of the survival of a	free society.	It is the question of the survival of Christian
1949	saving and individual thrift. We cannot have a	free society	built up on forced saving and permanent Budget
1949	whatever of their economic plans succeeding in a	free society.	Therefore they desire to impose their control without the
1950	Unions are essential to the proper functioning of a	free society	its belief that the policy of Socialism is
1950	plain common sense Public expenditure is the clue. A	free society	cannot operate with taxation at these levels because a
1953	you wish to continue to live in a	free society	you will [not] permit a State monopoly of this
1953	to the task of building and consolidating that	freer society	in which you and I wish to live
1955	and thereby raise the whole quality of our	free society.	Well now from questions of peace in industry
1956	how to combine progress and stability in a	free society	that is how to have at the same
1957	about compulsion. It seems to me that in a	free society	as we know it and with increasing sympathy
1957	Some see in Communism the deadly enemy of all	free society	others believe it to be something that can
1958	in this country. We want to maintain a	free society.	If you nationalise steel as well as coal
1960	it suits of course the needs of a	free society	and fits the structure of our very complex
1960	implement the spirit behind this resolution. In a	free society	which thank God we enjoy here a well
1961	Mr Hardman I agree we must not in our	free society	try to do that. Can we therefore do
1961	Economist the other day about collective bargaining in a	free society	and the danger of constant inflation caused by
1961	equal competition as it was in Berlin with a	free society	has lost and in consequence it is having
1962	discipline and responsibilities of home ownership in a	free society.	We unlike the Socialists do not look upon
1962	[NEDC] will undoubtedly help immensely in this. But in a	free society	there are very definite limits to planning. People

1962	Way. We cannot as Mr Grant said in a	free society	arrogate to the Government the power to determine
1962	We opposed the motion because we believed that in a	free society	better and more lasting results would come from
1962	is applicable in a nation. But in a	free society	it is not possible to order exactly
1963	our job to give people opportunity in a	free society	and to trust them how best to use it
1963	value the role of voluntary organisations in a	free society.	The Minister of Health who has done more than
1966	its failure to solve the problems of a	free society	It has done so by resorting to compulsion. It has
1966	He cannot prevent it. No politician in a	free society	can guarantee full employment for all time for everybody
1967	Socialist planning failed as it must fail in a	free society	but that their planning efforts are not even
1967	Conference for free enterprise a free economy and a	free society.	
1969	will be movements of population and in a	free society	and in a free prospering society obviously that must
1969	dedicated to one end the destruction of our	free society.	For that reason of course they must first
1970	freedom and with freedom must go responsibility. The	free society	which we aim to create must also be
1970	the rights which they must have in a	free society.	We are asking essentially two things First we
1970	which individuals can best achieve success in a	free society.	The education system must aim to fit the rising
1970	with scrounging as far as we can within a	free society.	The second theme I come to is that
1970	the most disgusting statement of all licences in a	free society	for the independent schools If we had read
1971	strengthen the role of trade unions in a	free society.	It is in their interests that no member
1971	their members. But in the end in a	free society	we cannot forget our duty to the individual
1971	we achieve the key to success in a	free society	which is to get responsible private interests marching
1952	together with us voluntarily and unselfishly in a	free society	in a fair accommodation of interests to curb [inflation]

Note: Span = 8, Data: CUCO, Annual Conference Reports, Minor additions to ensure sentence sense retained in square brackets.

Appendix C – A Note on Sources

The varied methodologies implicit in this thesis necessitate a word on sources. Chapter one describes the construction of the Hansard corpus from publically available data, the software written by the author to analyse this, and the statistical techniques involved.¹ During this research, an original Party Conference Corpora (PCC) containing all Conservative and Labour conference speeches delivered between 1946 and 1975 was also compiled. Whilst a systematic comparison of conference and Commons rhetoric is insightful, a decision was made to focus statistical analysis on parliamentary speech, not least because explaining differences between corpora from two domains necessitates a thorough examination of more conventions than possible within chapter one's scope. That said, because basic comparisons between the Hansard corpus, the PCC, and other corpora help contextualise parliamentary speech within British English, Appendix A provides a technical account of the PCC's creation.²

Making the software used to interpret corpora accessible is a significant challenge for those working in the digital humanities, especially as our tools become more sophisticated. Researchers face a difficult choice between free or commercial software and writing their own programs. The former offer readers a greater degree of accessibility, but limit the questions researchers can ask. Unfortunately, the analysis conducted in chapter one would be impossible with even the most expensive commercial software because this is designed to read many kinds of *texts*, not a complex mix of text and metadata. Instead, the analysis below was generated using programs written specifically for the purpose of reading Hansard. Unfortunately, such specialisation masks the process of transforming text into data, and the solution is not as simple as providing the source code.³ Speed and efficiency become all important when handling 'big data' and both require the compression of functions into single actions, which makes deciphering the code time-consuming despite annotation.

¹ www.hansard-archive.parliament.uk (unparsed XML) or via www.publicwhip.org.uk/project/code.php (XML with linked metadata). Because the latter website is sometimes temporarily unavailable a full set of the raw files used has been provided on USB attached.

² The presence of many similar trends and formulations in both the Conference Corpora and Hansard is one reason for the chapter's confidence that the minor editing process which makes Hansard a non-verbatim source does not distort the kind of research carried out below.

³ Although it has been made available on request.

Nor can readers always be provided with the software. Programs are rarely single objects; instead, code draws upon wider resources to perform 'menial' tasks. Commercial programs escape all these problems by compiling stand-alone executables and designing Graphical User Interfaces (GUIs) so that users need not interact with the code. These are, however, very labour-intensive tasks with diminishing returns. All this makes openness about data and results very important, but displaying findings about 500 million words can itself present challenges: printing the results for just one of the complex queries below, for example, requires a table with over 300,000 entries.

To balance the need for specialist tools with a desire for openness, this thesis is supplemented by a USB stick loaded with a prototype public version of software that allows users to compare the frequency of any word over time and party.⁴ Although this is only the most basic functionality, it gives the reader some access to the dataset. For more complex processes, the original scholarship on the calculation is cited in the text, along with enough information about its coding implementation to allow others to conduct a similar analysis. Where the data displayed in figures or discussed in the prose is necessarily a subsection of a very large set of results, the principles of selection are stated and tabular versions provided on the USB.⁵

Of course, linguistic data forms only part of the evidence. Chapters two, three, and four use a range of archival and published material to conduct a rhetorical analysis stretching well beyond prominent politicians. Indeed, whilst historians have often neglected election addresses on the assumption that these merely reprinted national templates, if read carefully to distinguish national material from personal messages, addresses can be a useful source of campaign rhetoric.⁶ But this thesis also aims to capture the process of generating and disseminating that rhetoric, and internal strategy documents, minutes, drafts and educational material tell this part of the story. The historiographical problem being addressed in each chapter shapes the distribution of these sources: whilst chapter two uses memoranda to dispute the influences behind freedom rhetoric, these sources play a secondary role in chapters three and four, which

⁴ Unfortunately, this can only be run on Windows systems currently.

⁵ If opening very large excel files, ensuring all others programs are closed is a good precaution.

⁶ Butlers' studies, cited below, suggests on the basis of polling that the readership was reasonable for much of the period.

focus more on showing the continued existence of freedom rhetoric. The interaction between quantitative and qualitative sources requires some justification. For reasons chapter one discusses in detail, automated techniques are deployed not as a replacement for close-reading, but to provide context and reveal phenomena normally hidden to historians. To avoid them overstepping this role, this thesis largely restricts quantitative analysis to chapter one. Whilst an alternative approach would be to spread this quantitative analysis more widely, the advantages of framing questions according to different scales of analysis justify separation at this stage of the methodology's introduction to history.

Technical and Rhetorical Glossary

Accumulatio: Repeating points in a slightly altered, often compacted, form.

Anadiplosis: Repetition of the last word in one line or clause to begin the next.

Anaphora: Repetition of the same word in several successive clauses.

Antimetabole: Inverting the order of repeated words.

Collocation: Two words which co-occur within a defined word span more frequently than chance alone would suggest. One word may be said to collocate with another. Although it is possible for words to collocate with grammatical forms (sometimes referred to as colligation) this thesis measures the strength of lexical collocation.

Corpus: A large collection of naturally occurring text. Often in corpus linguistics corpora are designed to be a representative sample. This thesis avoids what can be a very complicated process of selection by using the full text of Hansard 1936-90 as its main corpus.

Ethos: Persuasion through an appeal to the speaker's character.

Formulaic Sequence: Although definitions are very broad in corpus linguistics, in this thesis a formulaic sequence is a chain of words that is repeated so often it begins to act like a single term. (Here these are arrived at by calculating Kita's Cost Criteria)

Hyperbole: A use of exaggeration as a rhetorical device.

Lemma: A headword for all of a word's possible word-forms. The lemma 'England' would include 'English', 'Englander' etc.

Logos: Persuasion through an appeal both to consistency and substantive reasons.

Parallelisms: Giving two or more parts of a sentence similar form.

Pathos: Persuasion through an appeal to the audience's emotions.

Prolepsis: anticipating possible objections.

Staccato: Where each sound is sharply detached from the last.

Symploce: starting a run of lines, clauses, or sentences using the same word or words whilst repeating a different word or phrase at the end of each element.

Synecdoche: Part for whole substitutions.

Traductio: Repeating the same word throughout a sentence or paragraph.

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At the People's History Museum, Manchester

Labour Party Archive

At the British Library of Political and Economic Science (B.L.P.E.S), London

Electoral Ephemera Collection

Digitised Archives/Microfiche

Mass Observation Archives

Public Record Office, Cabinet Papers

Powell Papers

Churchill Papers

Thatcher Papers

II

Official Records

Conservative Party Annual Conference Reports

Labour Party Annual Conference Reports

Parliamentary Debates, Fifth Series

III

Newspapers and Periodicals

News of the World

Notes on Current Politics

Political Quarterly

The Beacon

The Daily Express

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V

Electronic Resources

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British National Corpus

British Political Speech Archive

Google Ngram Viewer and Data

Hansard Parliamentary Debates
Politicalresources.net
The Guardian Online Archive
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