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LEOPOLD MAXSE AND THE BRITISH UNIONIST PARTY: 1906-1914

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Jerrold Joseph Schwartz, B.S., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1973

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

LAP. Leopold Amery Papers.
ABP. Arthur Balfour Papers.
ACP. Sir Austen Chamberlain Papers.
JCP. Joseph Chamberlain Papers.
BLP. Andrew Bonar Law Papers.
LMP. Leopold Maxse Papers.
JSP. J. St. Loe Strachey Papers.
Berkeley, C.M.G., K.C.M.G. (1832-1883). He became a lieutenant-colonel in the army, served in the Crimea and promulgated a reformed constitution when governor of Heligoland. Before his death he served as governor of Newfoundland.  

Frederick Augustus was the second son, born in 1833. He entered the navy, obtained his lieutenancy in 1852 and was promoted to the rank of commander three years later. As aide-de-camp to Lord Raglan after the battle of the Alma he displayed conspicuous gallantry in carrying dispatches. Frederick Maxse retired from the service in 1867. Eight years later he was made a rear-admiral. In retirement he sought a seat in the Commons. As a Radical candidate for the borough of Southampton in the General Election of 1868, he found himself at the bottom of the poll. The same was true in Tower Hamlets six years later. Maxse never tried again.

Because of his early service at sea, the Admiral had little formal education. This clever man passed on to his journalist son a hotheaded, warm-hearted nature as well as a propensity for amusing idiosyncrasies. Indeed, the curious peculiarities, which made his character an interesting study to his friend George Meredith in Beauchamp's Career, unfitted him for modern political life, as they unfitted his son Leo. Though a professed Liberal, on certain questions like Home Rule and woman suffrage, he was as tenaciously conservative as the crustiest Tory. In 1886, he followed his close friend Joseph Chamberlain into Liberal Unionism and became a keen imperialist. His retirement years were filled with the pursuits of a cultivated country gentleman. Admiral Maxse

Ibid.
became an accomplished art lover and a speaker and writer of some renown on military campaigns as well as on topics concerned with education, suffrage and Ireland. Throughout his life Maxse was ever ready to throw himself enthusiastically into controversy. He defended his usually extreme views with great ability and incisive, but always plain, language. The Admiral entertained his large circle of friends at his home in the Surrey hills at Dunley, where he also served as Justice of the Peace for Hampshire and as county councillor for the Dorking division of Surrey.

Unfortunately, the Admiral made an unhappy marriage. In 1862, he wed Cecilia (1812-1917), daughter of Brig. Gen. James Steele, C.B., a Cockermouth, Cumberland squire who had served in the army in India. The union produced four children, but the match of a restless, opinionated husband with a passionate spouse devoted to the arts proved incompatible and they later separated. Admiral Maxse died on 25 June 1900, after a bout with typhoid contracted on a visit he made with his younger daughter, Violet, to her husband, Lord Edward Cecil, serving in the army in South Africa.¹

Elder son Frederick Ivor Maxse (1862-1958) followed his father and uncle into the military. After Rugby and Sandhurst, he saw duty in Malta, Egypt and South Africa in the Coldstream Guards. His quick mind and war experience awakened him to the danger threatening the sheltered world of Edwardian England. He displayed a flair for penetrating written criticism, denouncing, among other things, the English public school

education as wholly inadequate in a competitive world. In 1910, Maxse earned promotion from brevet colonel to brigadier general. As major general in 1914, he saw action at Mons, on the Marne and at Aisne. After the war, he retired as a full general to a successful career as a commercial fruit grower. In 1899, he married Mary Caroline Wyndham, eldest daughter of the second Baron Leconfield.

Leopold James Maxse followed his brother into the world in 1861. Education was stressed greatly in the Maxse household, perhaps because the Admiral felt his children should not suffer as he had in this respect. Discussion of all questions flowed freely round the dinner table. Exercise and sports of all kinds also received their due. The Maxses did not attend church. They possessed an abiding love for France and the French, rented a Paris flat and sojourned frequently across the Channel. Leo's great affection for the French, personally and politically, can be traced to these early days. Strengthening these ties was the Admiral's intimate association with Georges Clemenceau, dating from 1872. In later years this Grand Old Man of French politics would rely on the judgment of the Admiral's son Leo.

At Harrow, under the headmastership of Dr. Montagu Butler, and later at King's College, Cambridge, Leo Maxse acquired a reputation for wit and independence. He could not understand why people cared about letters after their names or titles before them. He crusaded passionately for causes in which he believed. He delighted in employing his exuberant vitality in making pompous authority look ridiculous. As in later years,
he never tired of baiting any establishment figure. Oscar Browning, Fellow of King's and University Lecturer in History, considered a snob by many, was never the same after Leopold Maxse passed his way.

We have a rather early picture of Leo Maxse, written by his friend Lord Newton, the biographer of Lord Lansdowne:

My earliest recollection of Leo Maxse goes back to the year 1882, when I saw him, a pallid and anemic-looking youth, defeat a stalwart University Cricket Blue at lawn tennis, much to the surprise of the latter and to the consternation of his friends. Leo was then about eighteen, perfecting his knowledge of French at Paris, and I, already married, was a secretary at the Embassy. The acquaintance made on the lawn tennis court quickly ripened into friendship and he was constantly at our house during the remainder of his stay in Paris. I cannot remember that he manifested any particular interest in politics in those days, but nevertheless, in consequence of having passed much of his boyhood in Paris and of his father's close friendship with Clemenceau and other well known politicians, he probably acquired considerably more knowledge of France and of French feeling than I ever assimilated in the rarefied atmosphere of the Embassy, where we consorted chiefly with the Faubourg Haute Finance and the American Embassy. 6

From Paris, Leo went up to Cambridge where he read history and continued to poke fun at sacred cows. He made sport of the Cambridge Union, but entered it as a sophomore, rose to secretary the next year and, as a senior, was its president. As speaker and debater, Maxse exhibited remarkable force and eloquence. In 1886, he took a second in the historical tripos, though, in keeping with his philosophy, not his degree. Great success in politics was predicted for this young man, a Radical and Home Ruler who seemed to thrive on controversy. A year of travel in Europe and in all the self-governing colonies of Britain's far-flung Empire brought this serious student into contact with the

rising forces and problems with which his country would soon have to deal. Maxse returned to England a convinced and unremitting champion of the imperial faith, accepting the indefinite postponement of Home Rule as necessary to the British Union.

It was on his Grand Tour that Maxse evinced the characteristic, overweening self-confidence which would remain his lifelong trademark. When presenting his letters of introduction to the governor of Tasmania, the youthful traveller was asked if he wished to make a public speech. Maxse consented. When questioned further as to his subject matter, Maxse blithely replied that he would be pleased to lecture on Tasmania.

Upon his return home and after an unsuccessful campaign plunge into by-election politics, Maxse settled down to read for the bar. This study enabled him to prevent his later scathing attacks on politicians from crossing the faint line into libel. While so engaged, Maxse met and married Katharine, eldest daughter of Vernon Lushington, K. C., of Pyport, Cobham. Maxse's life with 'Kitty,' who was a gifted pianist, especially in Bach, seemed a happy one, despite the absence of children and Kitty's illnesses. She died in 1922. Soon after their marriage in 1890, Maxse suffered a sudden break-down in his own health. After a slow, but only partial recovery, it was clear he would have to abandon any hope of a parliamentary career. In 1893, his father purchased the National Review for Maxse as a vehicle for his philosophy. Maxse became a fearless editor.

The monthly National Review originated from Lord Beaconfield's suggestion that there was need for a periodical to diffuse the imperialist

---

7 Interview with Major and Mrs. John Maxse, 26 January 1972.

8 He was undoubtedly a difficult husband, but she, with her "tight, neat, pretty smartness" and her "lovely mocking voice," the original for Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway, seemed well able to cope. Quentin Bell, Virginia Woolf (2 vols., New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972), I, 80, 80n.
faith, to maintain British interests in all parts of the world and to allow no materialist considerations to influence its policy. The first number of the Review appeared in March, 1883. The journal led a rather dull, if blameless, existence under the rather dull, if blameless, Poet Laureate, Alfred Austin, until Leo Maxse took hold of it ten years later to preach the gospel of imperial unity, necessary for British survival in a hostile world.

Maxse's pungent style soon made his 'Nat' the outstanding periodical of the imperialist cause. As the new century dawned over Britain with ominous imperial and international clouds, Maxse favored a change of course to better ride out the coming storm. Fittingly, it was a crusade involving other nations which established Maxse's reputation as a fearless editor. Between 1894 and 1898, Maxse travelled in France and Germany where he conducted his own highly professional investigation of the famous bordereau which had convicted Alfred Dreyfus. Maxse printed his conclusion that it was a forgery perpetrated by a high official in the French War Office. Colonel Henry's subsequent confession, arrest and suicide confirmed Maxse's finding. The young crusader became England's Zola and shared with him the triumph when the long-delayed day of justice finally came.

The Venezuelan Episode, the Jameson Raid, Fashoda, the South African War and the growing German Navy indicated to Maxse that "splendid isolation" had outlived its usefulness. Fear of the goals of German competition, military and economic, became an obsession with Maxse, aggravated by a visit to Germany in 1899. The next fourteen years saw a steady stream of warnings about Kaiser Wilhelm's intentions in the
editorial pages of the National Review. Maxse's belief in his own prescience with regard to Germany earned him sobriquets like "crazy Leo" and "lunatic Leo" from men of all parties. Never one to hide his light under a bushel, Maxse republished all fourteen years' worth of warnings in 1915, under the title, Germany on the Brain, or the Obsessions of a Crank. His mania would not permit him to accept Lord Milner's 1899 offer to come to South Africa to edit the Cape Times; he felt compelled to remain in England to warn of the German menace. His great love for France enabled him to express the necessity for English rapprochement with France and with Russia. Domestic affairs did not receive short shrift from editor Maxse. The bulk of this thesis will deal with Maxse and his political party, the Unionist.

For the first fortnight of each month Maxse shut himself up in his large London house and researched and wrote the forty-odd pages constituting the "Episodes of the Month," the most important and most anticipated paragraphs of each month's Review. These blistering reports and judgments on everything and everybody connected with British politics also made frequent reference to news of the Empire and to all phases of international relations. With the aid of his long time, trusted assistant, John Weldon, work on the literary articles was completed by the twentieth of the month. Publication came just before the first of the new month. Circulation achieved its pre-War peak in 1908, at 8,000, and remained steady until 1914 when it rose twenty-five percent, doubtless due to some extent to Maxse's warnings coming true. Though the circulation

9 Practical Advertising (London: Mather & Crowther Ltd., 1908), 237.
figure was not large, it should be remembered that those 8,000 numbers lay each month in the drawing rooms of the governing class. The magazine showed no profit until 1906; Maxse's own capital shored up the defenses until then. No income figures are available, but we know that in 1913/14, receipts totalled £7,000, £1,000 of which came from advertising. Manager Weldon received £250 per year, and there were two clerks for canvassing and account keeping.¹⁰

The National Review achieved its maximum influence during the Edwardian and early Georgian years. Views counted more than news. Maxse, as noted, believed in the German military threat. He believed in tariff reform. "He was not exactly a High Tory--High Tories are Christian gentlemen with a fondness for farming and blood sports"--but in a sense he was their man. They admired him as a fervent and articulate enemy of the Liberal party, in which they saw the seeds of social revolution. They did not want to be bothered with strategic matters, except as a means of holding the Radicals at bay. Those in the Tory party who shared Maxse's romantic ideas were themselves lapsed or suppressed Radicals, like Joseph Chamberlain and Alfred Milner,¹¹ one day to be Maxse's brother-in-law.

The famous slogan B.M.G.--"Balfour Must Go"--was coined by Maxse, who turned against his friend and party leader because of Balfour's ambivalence on the fiscal issue and insufficient awareness of the German menace. More orthodox Tories were disappointed in Balfour merely because

¹⁰Nat. Rev., LXXII (December, 1918), 505, 511.

he had been worsted by the terrible Lloyd George. They read the National Review, but more for Maxse's delightful polemics than for the more literary contents. Maxse wanted a well-armed and united British Empire; they were primarily concerned to extirpate land tax and super tax. But he backed the Diehards in the struggle over the Parliament Bill, using language even the most unsophisticated could appreciate.\textsuperscript{12}

Given his state of health, Maxse engaged vigorously in many extra-journalistic endeavors. Aside from a voluminous correspondence,\textsuperscript{13} platform exhortations and memberships in various non-social clubs and leagues, he played an excellent amateur game of tennis. In his younger days he once advanced to the first round at Wimbledon. Tennis stars were good friends and frequent house guests, though Maxse generally disliked overnight visitors as they might interfere with a sudden journalistic inspiration. His personal habits provided amusement for his intimates. Food meant very little to both Leo and Kitty; dinner guests did not anticipate a gourmet meal. Maxse's one abiding gastronomical passion was cheese. Indeed, his likes and dislikes were all passionate. He loathed golf,\textsuperscript{14} bankers and solicitors. He was a devoted ornithologist. Turned out in an Edwardian version of a wet suit, he would troop off with his binoculars from country house weekends to the glades and swamps near by to observe for endless hours his winged friends.

\textsuperscript{12}\textit{Ibid.}, 205.

\textsuperscript{13} His own handwriting was appalling and he usually typed his own letters.

\textsuperscript{14} He once debated Balfour in public, Balfour supporting golf, Maxse defending tennis.
Maxse was also prone to frequent severe headaches, perhaps from overwork or perhaps of a migraine nature. His sense of humor was sharp and dry and he loved intellectual repartee. He spoke his mind without inhibition. He was not afraid to dispute, with violence, the views even of his host at the latter's table. Were his host the prime minister it made no difference and he was always invited back. Leopold Amery and the entire Chamberlain family were among the closest of his large circle of friends.

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II. SETTING THE POLITICAL STAGE

By the time Arthur Balfour's Ministry ended late in 1905, Maxse's economic, political and international philosophy had been fully developed. In the years to follow, as the Unionist party took on the novel role of His Majesty's Loyal Opposition, Maxse left no stone unturned in an effort to convert the party and especially the leadership to his views.

What were these views? Leo Maxse observed the military disaster at the hands of guerilla farmers on the Rand; the loss of British markets to German and American competitors safe behind their tariff walls; the political rise of a Labour party; and the Kaiser's naval program. Maxse saw all of this and resolved that Britain and her Empire required much more than the skillful rhetorical flourishes of nineteenth century parliaments if they were both to survive. He believed that the Liberals had fallen under the spell of socialism, which made the Campbell-Bannerman party anathema. Upon the Unionist party, by historical tradition, he believed, devolved the destiny of enlightening and protecting their national constituency—all of Britain save the hopeless Celtic fringe. And to Maxse fell the task of enlightening the party. So great were the stakes that Maxse spared no one's sensibilities in his effort to make the Unionist party the party of national efficiency. His poisonous barbs even pricked the impenetrable hide of his long-time tennis partner, Arthur Balfour, nephew of Lord Salisbury, Prime Minister from 1902 to 1905 and Leader of the Opposition thereafter until his resignation in
That Balfour was not suited for his responsibility was clear to from the very beginning of Balfour's Administration.

As early as March, 1901, two years before Joseph Chamberlain's second great conversion, Maxse had preached tariff reform as the only way to deal with Britain's mounting economic difficulties. Noting in 1901 the formation of the United States Steel combine as a further menace to the none-too-flourishing British industries, Maxse wrote bitterly,

...we may safely assume that Britain will not take steps to protect herself until her iron and machine trades are in ruin. Forewarned with us is not forearmed, and the doctrinaire objection to a tariff...will delay remedial measures until it is too late. ...We fight...with bows and arrows against men armed with rifles and cannons, and our defeat under these conditions is as certain as can be anything in life. Yet Parliament and the Press have small thought for these things: What is their interest compared with that of Party politics?¹

By October, 1902, Maxse's opinions had become even more pronounced with regard to the necessity for tariffs, and Colonial Secretary Chamberlain had also declared that he deemed food taxes necessary as part of a decidedly protectionist proposal of tariff reform. Balfour's ambiguous position, announced at Sheffield the previous October, was his way of waiting for the fog of popular opinion to lift. By now, though, party unity demanded a clear lead as Chamberlain prepared to make his move. Maxse awaited, along with the rest of the Unionists, the definitive word from Carlton Gardens.² Years later, Lord Newton recalled that he took Maxse with him to Manchester in October, 1902, to the Unionist Party Conference.

¹Nat. Rev., XXXVII (March, 1901), pp. 11-12.
²Balfour's Pall Mall flat.
AJB addressed that evening an enormous meeting, packed with enthusiastic workers obviously waiting for a strong lead. Balfour, who was never at his best as a platform speaker, spoke for more than an hour and a quarter, almost exclusively upon the Education Bill, in a desultory and detached style which was not at all suited to the audience, and the effect upon Maxse was to work him up to a white heat of fury. I think it must have been that meeting which incited him to start the B.M.G. (Balfour Must Go) cry.  

Whether or not this incident did plant this seed in Maxse's mind, it is clear that the aristocratic Balfour, who thrived on the use of vague language, did not fit into Maxse's scheme for national efficiency. In the early years of his search for this elusive goal, Maxse joined a small dining club, the Coefficients, organized by Sidney and Beatrice Webb in November, 1902. These monthly dinner meetings were meant to promote serious discussion of the Empire and subsequently formulate policy. The Coefficients included men of all parties who met in the cause of national efficiency to provide the nucleus of a new political grouping. Each member was an active participant and an expert in his field. Liberal Imperialists Richard Haldane and Edward Grey represented law and foreign affairs; Oxford Reader in Geography H. J. MacKinder stood for Liberal Imperialism in general; Sir Clinton Dawkins, finance; Bertrand Russell, science; Director of the London School of Economics W. A. S. Hewins, economics; W. Pember Reeves, New Zealand Agent General, the self-governing colonies; Lt. Carlyon Bellair, writer and later MP, the navy; Leopold Amery, the fighting services; H. G. Wells, literature and original thinking; and Leo Maxse, journalism. Many of the Coefficients subsequently contributed articles in their special fields to the National Review.

3Thomas Wodehouse Legh, 2nd Baron Newton, Retrospection (London: John Murray, 1941), 117.
The Club was the Webbs' idea of a brains trust or general staff to promote the Fabian beliefs about foreign affairs and municipal socialism or semi-socialism at home. The Liberal Imperialists and progressive Tories who assembled each month included experts in all aspects of public interest. Although the Club continued to meet into 1909 and attracted men of the caliber of Lord Milner, J.L. Garvin, C. F. G. Masterman, W. F. Monypenny and Josiah Wedgwood, the Coefficients foundered on the rock of tariff reform. By January, 1903, the split was clear. The division sharpened after the May bombshell of Joseph Chamberlain. As a brains trust without an agreed political objective, the Club petered out. Liberal Imperialists like Grey hastened back to the free trade fold.  

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4 Alfred Lord Milner (1854-1928), High Commissioner for South Africa, 1897-1905; Viscount, 1902. D.N.B.

5 James L. Garvin (1868-1947), Tory editor of the Outlook, 1905-06; of the Observer, 1908-42. D.N.B.

6 C. F. G. Masterman (1874-1927), politician, author and journalist; Liberal Member for West Ham (North), 1906-11; wrote The Condition of England, 1909. D.N.B.

7 W. F. Monypenny (1866-1912), journalist and biographer of Disraeli. D.N.B.

8 Josiah Wedgwood, 1st Baron (1872-1943), politician; Liberal Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme, 1906-42. D.N.B.

9 Chamberlain's May, 1903, announcement of his full conversion to tariff reform and imperial preference.

Despite the rapid decline of the Coefficients, it should be noted that Leo Maxse's inclusion as a founding member is indicative of the respect and influence he had acquired among some of the most advanced thinkers of the realm. H. G. Wells has left with us a portrait of the Club in its early days which includes some rather biting comments about a fiery Irish journalist who, it is fair to assume, was Leo Maxse.

We were men of all parties and very various experiences, and our object was to discuss the welfare of the Empire in a disinterested spirit. We dined monthly at the Mermaid in Westminster, and for a couple of years we kept up an average attendance of ten out of fourteen. The dinner-time was given up to desultory conversation, and it is odd how warm and good the social atmosphere of that little gathering became as time went on; then over the dessert, as soon as the waiters had swept away the crumbs and ceased to fret us, one of us would open with perhaps fifteen or twenty minutes' exposition of some specially prepared question, and after him we would deliver ourselves in turn, each for three or four minutes. When every one present had spoken once talk became general again, and it was rare we emerged upon Hendon Street before midnight. Sometimes, as my house was conveniently near, a knot of men would come home with me and go on talking and smoking in my dining-room until two or three. We had Fred Neal, that wild Irish journalist, among us toward the end, and his stupendous flow of words materially prolonged our discussions and made our continuance impossible.\(^{11}\)

Wells claimed to have learned the habits of mind of the Coefficients, most of whom he called New Imperialists. They were Oxford men by and large and mysteriously and inexplicably advocates of tariff reform "as if it were the principle instead of at best a secondary aspect of constructive policy." They seemed obsessed with the idea

They were also keen advocates of military organization, "and with a curious little martinet twist in their minds that boded ill for that side of liberty. So much against them." They were, on the other hand, disposed to spend money much more generously on education and research of all sorts than the Liberals, "and they were altogether more accessible than the Young Liberals to bold, constructive ideas affecting the universities and upper classes." 12

That Maxse had established himself as a man of stature is also revealed in a letter written by Lord Milner in South Africa expressing his usual disgust with politics in general and with the Balfour Ministry in particular. Milner was writing to Lady Edward Cecil, Maxse's sister Violet, who became Milner's bride in 1921.

The Ministry has weak members, but it has also very strong ones. As a whole, they are a failure. So will their successors be, because there is no consistent national mind about any political question, no standard, no cohesion, system, training anywhere. Even the few people who think consistently or constantly about public affairs, and think of them as a whole, such as Leo(Maxse), Spencer Wilkinson, Amery, your humble servant, are all "on their own" without touch, without being a school, without correlated effort toward common ends.... 13

For Maxse the tenth of May, 1903, saw his abstract cause of national efficiency break through into the realm of practical politics. Joseph Chamberlain's pronouncement in favor of a comprehensive system of tariff reform launched Maxse into a state of ecstasy. His closest friend, Leo Amery, has left us a memorable description of the "aggressively

12 Ibid., 315.

truculent, sardonically witty and always lovable" Maxse the day after the famous speech. Amery was working on his history of the South African War in his office at The Times.

But my mind was on far wider horizons than the South African battlefield when in burst Leo Maxse. Seizing both my hands in his he waltzed me round the room as he poured forth a paean of jubilation at the thought that, at last, there was a cause to work for in politics.\textsuperscript{14}

Maxse carried his joy into the pages of his journal, proclaiming that Chamberlain's epoch-making speech was destined to open "a new era, not only in the development of the British Empire, but also in the prosperity of the United Kingdom."\textsuperscript{15} The tariff reform cause was to remain an essential component of Maxse's policy until his death. In the months to come, he became an integral member of Chamberlain's brains trust. As in his Radical days, Chamberlain needed a policy-making team to examine controversial issues and work up a case for the new policy. Son Austen agreed with his father so often that no clash of creative ideas was likely. This understandable defect, Julian Amery tells us, was made good by Maxse. Just as the then Captain Maxse had opened new doors for Joseph Chamberlain when the latter first came to London, so Maxse's son served as a link with the group of men who were to form Chamberlain's general staff in the political battles ahead. Maxse was also a close friend of Austen. He had made the National Review the foremost periodical on the imperial side. A strong advocate of imperial preference, he had published articles on the subject and was in touch

\textsuperscript{14}Leopold Amery, \textit{op. cit.}, I, 230, 238.

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Nat. Rev.}, XLI (June, 1903), 525.
with most of those in journalism and academic life who shared his views. 16

In the final months of 1903, Maxse was in full and frequent contact with Chamberlain, reporting in person and by mail on his progress in securing converts to the new religion. The bulk of the correspondence involved fiscal reform. Notable are Chamberlain's numerous expressions of thanks to Maxse for services rendered. After his resignation from the Cabinet, Chamberlain told Maxse how sorry he was to resign but that he would now be free to pursue his goal unfettered. He praised Maxse's splendid support in the *Review* and encouraged him to hammer at the "dear food bogey" which he predicted could not survive the depression at hand. 17

Maxse, however, saw in the resignation another victory for Balfour and Company. He expressed the same disgust at what Leo Amery described as the opening up of the "palsied old bladders" of the members of the Cabinet which had made Joseph Chamberlain flee to his Highbury retreat in Birmingham, and the subsequent "autocastration" of the Unionist party. Maxse was of a mind to join with Amery in the latter's suggestion that they

get together a small gang to blackmail and bully Unionist members who won't declare themselves Chamberlainites--themselves to go into their constituencies in red ties and agitate for a labour member.... Can't we get together a small band to do some booing and to interrupt AJB with lewd remarks about the state of the floor in 10 Downing Street? 18

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18Ibid., Amery to Maxse, 20 September 1903, 451/693.
Though Amery, Maxse and others proceeded with their plans against the dissident Tories, Chamberlain did not believe this course a proper one. He was pleased to receive reports in which Maxse announced the conversion of important people, like H. W. Wilson of the Daily Mail, to the side of tariff reform. He accepted less joyfully Maxse's references to Balfour in his summary of the Sheffield Conference which Chamberlain, as a Liberal Unionist, could not attend. Maxse and Amery attended as members of the Tariff Reform League delegation. Balfour's speech declared for fiscal reform but without preference or food taxes. It bitterly disappointed both journalists. Recording his Conference impressions, Maxse noted the great pressure exerted to keep the delegates in line with the "colourless attitude of the Government." He talked with people from all parts of the country and was delighted to find the genuine enthusiasm which tariff reform and imperial preference elicited from all constituencies. From his interviews Maxse concluded that the split in the party among free traders, Balfourites and tariff reformers was really a split among the Unionist Members of the House of Commons with little in the constituencies to correspond to it.

Nothing impressed Chamberlain's reporter more than the silence which greeted Balfour's emphatic pronouncement against food taxes.

That an audience mainly composed of working men should receive such a declaration in the way they did shows that half the battle is won...It is not my enthusiasm which makes me say that Mr. Balfour's speech is generally regarded

19 Maxse to J. Chamberlain, 3 October 1903, quoted in Garvin and Amery, op. cit., V, 297.

20 The Tariff Reform League was an influential non-party organization established in July, 1903, to support Chamberlain's crusade. The League served as a powerful engine of propaganda and its political influence effectively served the cause of Chamberlain's policies for a decade.
as unsatisfactory if not positively discouraging. To me, if those who care about your 'big policy' are to be expected to support the Ministerial small policy we have a right to ask that the PM and his colleagues shall at any rate abstain from throwing cold water on your proposals and deliberately creating difficulties by denouncing them as impractical and contrary to the 'ingrained' feelings of the British people. There was very strong feeling at Sheffield with regard to Mr. B's phraseology.21

It was the concluding remarks about the Prime Minister which led Chamberlain to reply to Maxse quickly and with some anxiety. Chamberlain thanked Maxse for the report but exhorted him to understand that Balfour's position as leader of the party differed from his, Chamberlain's, own. The Prime Minister had to arrange his speeches to avoid a serious and perhaps permanent split.

What you complain of in his speech is due to this necessity, I think, and I beg of you most earnestly in what you write not to emphasize any distinction between him and myself. We are making for the same port but in different boats, and the stroke in each case depends on the character of the boat.22

In his own literary vessel Maxse rejected this advice and carried on the fight, both fore and aft. Chamberlain, of course, understood that Balfour was creating muddle in the constituencies, but, for the moment, Chamberlain preferred muddle to an open split in the ranks. He could only sigh. Letters to and from Maxse continued, dealing with the success of the crusade with chambers of commerce, chambers of agriculture and Unionist political associations, and also commenting upon Chamberlain's speeches, which were being published in the National Review and elsewhere. Occasionally an anecdote was included which symbolized the position of tariff reform within a party under Balfour's lead.

21Carvin and Amery, op. cit., V, 139-144.

22LMP, J. Chamberlain to Maxse, 5 October 1903, 451/698.
Did I tell you of an incident in the Leamington election? The editor of one of the local papers went over to see how things were going. He came across about forty glove makers waiting after dinner outside the factory, and telling them that he was not in politics but only a newspaper man, asked them how they were going to vote.

They said, "For Berridge."

He expressed surprise and said, "I thought the glove trade was in a bad condition, and that you would vote for Mr. Chamberlain's policy." The answer was, "Yes, you bet, if it was Joe we'd all vote for him, but this chap is a 'arf and arfer."

The moral is evident.23

Maxse idolized Chamberlain and the older man regarded his disciple with pride but also with anxiety. As the Edwardian years passed, Maxse, alone and with his wife, was a frequent guest at Highbury, for luncheon, tea, supper or for the weekend.24 In October, 1903, Birmingham held its annual Musical Festival. Along with Milner and others, Maxse was a house-guest at Highbury for the occasion. Chamberlain spent the entire weekend in bed, sleeping off an attack of gout. His wife, Mary, noted sadly in her diary, "I am so sorry for Mr. Leo Maxse, who abjures music and who has really come to sit at his feet."25

In 1904, Maxse, Amery and other Chamberlainites began to feel that the imperial side of tariff reform was being overborne or even sidetracked by the growing demand for industrial protection with its more immediate appeal to industrialists and working men. To prevent such a calamity the two journalists met in January in Amery's rooms in the Temple, with

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23 Ibid., J. Chamberlain to Maxse, 6 November 1903, 151/711.


25 Ibid., Diary, 14 October 1903, 23/2/3.
Mackinder, Hewins, Garvin, H. A. Gwynne\(^26\) and F. S. Oliver\(^27\), to form a mutual energizing and propaganda body, the Tariff Reform Compatriots. This practical successor to the Coefficients was composed of men who claimed the common wider patriotism of the Empire. The Compatriots were soon joined by all the keenest Empire enthusiasts in Parliament and met regularly for vigorous mutual discussion. They arranged speakers for meetings and gave lecture series and public dinners. Chamberlain, Milner and Alfred Lyttelton were active Compatriots, and the group for ten years sustained a vigorous, effective life.\(^29\)

Chamberlain saw great hope for this speakers' club. He wished it to remain separate from other organizations, with membership contingent upon speaking at election time or whenever asked. Informal fortnightly or monthly dinners held to talk over all aspects of the situation would, he thought, strengthen the convinced and help to convert the doubtful. Chamberlain agreed with Maxse that time was necessary to overcome the conservatism of the ordinary party voter who followed the party even if he differed from it on an important point. Such was the lesson of the Home Rule controversy. The Birmingham leader neither anticipated nor hoped for victory for his policy at the next election. Given the popularity of the Government, any victory would be too incomplete to justify

\(^{26}\)H. A. Gwynne (1865-1950), journalist; editor of the Standard, 1904-11; of the Morning Post, 1911-37. D.N.B.

\(^{27}\)F. S. Oliver (1861-1934), businessman and publicist; Chamberlainite tariff reformer. D.N.B.

\(^{28}\)Alfred Lyttelton (1857-1913), Liberal Unionist MP, 1895-1913; Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1903-05. D.N.B.

\(^{29}\)Leopold Amery, op. cit., I, 264-65. The Compatriots still flourish as a dining club of MPs and others who meet three or four times a year to discuss some topic of Imperial importance and to drink the toast of Commensis Patriae, "our wider home."
a revolution in fiscal policy. Chamberlain would be satisfied with a small Liberal majority, since it was the following election, after the propaganda had had time to work, which would be crucial.\(^{30}\)

Another auxiliary Maxse activity, as noted above, involved Amery, R. D. Blumenfeld, editor of the Daily Express, and Garvin, then with the Daily Telegraph, in the movement to capture as many Unionist newspapers as possible in the interest of Chamberlain’s great idea.\(^{31}\) As the Government marched to its doom, Maxse continued to speak out for tariff reform and imperial preference. A letter from a close friend indicates the esteem in which Chamberlain held the fiery journalist.

I must tell you that whilst you were speaking this morning Mr. Chamberlain turned to me and said he thought your speech was ‘very strong indeed’ and that he was disposed to agree with all you said. I felt it must be very nice to earn the appreciation of a great man. Hence this letter.\(^{32}\)

By the summer of 1904, Chamberlain was becoming more and more concerned to secure an early election. He hoped to see the Unionist party defeated, quit of its accumulated unpopularity and free to concentrate on the policy now enthusiastically endorsed by the great majority of the party. Accordingly, at the end of June, he suggested to Balfour that when the party was returned to office, Balfour should call a special colonial conference to get down to business and settle details of a mutual preference scheme. Balfour, still mainly concerned with party unity, responded at Edinburgh on 4 October by repeating the Sheffield formula of retaliation\(^{33}\) and by further suggesting that if a full conference

\(^{30}\) LMP, J. Chamberlain to Maxse, 21 January 1904, 452/734.
\(^{32}\) LMP, Victor Russell to Maxse, 12 April 1904, 452/740.
\(^{33}\) Balfour's September, 1903, speech asserting the Ministry's right to impose retaliatory tariffs but which precluded the use of a general tariff or food taxes.
convened by a future Unionist Government came to conclusions as to imperial preference, these would be submitted to yet another general election. According to a letter from Maxse, the audience was "disgusted" by Balfour's performance. "He is simply destroying the Unionist Party by taking all the heart out of it."

As the Ministry clung tenaciously to power throughout 1905, Maxse watched the prospect of a Unionist debacle increase due, he thought, to Balfour's ambiguity on the fiscal question. The unpopular Government created new enemies each day and Maxse knew the longer the delay the greater the disaster.

But, unfortunately, the Prime Minister is master of the situation and having inflicted a greater injury on the Conservative Party than any leader since Sir Robert Peel lost his head in 1816, he may be tempted to fall back on that tragic dictum, 'après moi le déluge.'

By-elections went against the Tories and Maxse knew why: Party wirepullers persuaded pronounced Chamberlainites to recant their convictions and become "Balfourites." Since no one could say exactly what it was a Balfourite believed, he was liable to lose more votes than any other species of Conservative candidate. Maxse begged the leader to commit the party officially to a positive program "in language understood of the people." Unity was essential for party success. If the price of unity behind a policy which included a general revenue tariff on foreign manufactures, free imports of raw materials and readjustment of food taxation to permit Britain to extend colonial

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34 Leopold Amery, op. cit., I, 274.
35 Nat. Rev., XLVI (September, 1905), 21.
preference without any cost of living increase, if all this required a handful of extremists to be removed from the Tory benches, so be it. Maxse knew the Government had lost popular esteem because of its domestic legislation, but the Chamberlain program could restore what was lost and then some. Balfour had only to climb down off his high hobby horse to the reality of the political range.

For the time being, Balfour remained impervious to Maxsian exhortations. At the Unionist Party Conference in November at Newcastle, the Chaplin Resolution declaring for tariffs to secure fairer treatment for British manufacturers, to prevent dumping and to increase reciprocal and preferential trade between different parts of the Empire, won overwhelming endorsement. Balfour, true to form, refused to bow and declare for tariff reform. He offered instead a nebulous, elusive pronouncement, which declared no change in policy unless one hundred percent, not a mere ninety percent, of the party supported the alteration. Even Maxse could hardly believe that one man would consciously subordinate the preponderant opinion to "Lord Londonderry and a handful of Cobdenite cranks... No army was ever led successfully to battle on the principle that the lamest should govern its march."
Though disgusted with Balfour's weakness as a leader and the general condition of the party resulting therefrom, Maxse cast about for any straws which could be used to prop up the Tories and to prevent a disaster in the January general election. He found such a prop in Balfour's mid-December speech at Leeds. There the new Leader of the Opposition, despite a characteristic ambiguous reference to himself as a free trader, accepted the principle of fiscal reform as a means to deal with dumping and fiscal union and commercial union with the colonies. Differences on preference, he maintained, were differences of method rather than principle and should not, therefore, divide fiscal reformers. A small duty on foreign corn, Balfour concluded, was not objectionable in principle. From this speech Maxse determined publicly that Unionists could now close their ranks and fight under the banner raised by their leader. The party could march behind both Chamberlain and Balfour to the crossroads described by the latter, and then reconsider the position if he refused to accompany them any further. Chamberlain expressed pleasure with Maxse's response to the Leeds' speech. In private he agreed with Maxse that it was very little and that the ambiguity and the word quibbling were sickening, but Radical Joe was determined not to make a breach and implied that he was glad Maxse had acted in the same manner.

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40 Balfour's Ministry had resigned on 4 December 1905.
On the eve of the election, Maxse had other reasons to find his party remiss in its record and policies. He held firm to his belief that the party and the country were better off for the moment with the Tories in opposition. Time away from the Treasury Bench would give Unionists the chance to reorganize and reorient themselves to the new national realities. After the inevitable and short-lived Liberal botch, Conservatives would resume their destined hold on the reins of power, but only if divested of deadwood and dead ideas.

One of the new ideas which the Ministry had failed to endorse was that of universal military service. Maxse knew that ever since Trafalgar the British public had apathetically accepted the navy as the end all and be all of defense. This admiral's son believed that the navy had become weaker relative to that of Germany and, more important, understood that no navy, however great, could alone defeat a great military nation such as Germany. Maxse was a wholehearted supporter of Lord Roberts and his movement for reform of the army, with universal training at the core of his program. Clearly, the Tory Government had ignored the lesson taught with a vengeance by the Boer farmers six years before. As to the navy, Maxse was appalled that many simply refused to see that Britain was the obvious raison d'être of the Kaiser's extensive naval building program. Editor Maxse castigated the Ministry for failure to lay down more than one battleship to Germany's two in 1905. His countrymen could not remain forever indifferent to the fact that they were the sole obstacle to William II's overweening ambition. The Moroccan incident

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43 Nat. Rev., XLVI (December, 1905), 568.
in 1905, provoked by the Kaiser, clearly aimed at severing the fledgling
Entente Cordiale with France.\textsuperscript{lh}

As the new year dawned and the polls opened, Maxse remained unsatis-
filled with the leadership of his party whose inept response to the
punishing lessons of South Africa would surely reap worse punishment
from Berlin. Most important, the official Tory attitude toward commer-
cial ties with the Empire bordered on the disastrous. Moreover, a Lib-
eral Government could be expected to promote the free trade. Little
Englander, little navy and socialistic schemes which would, in the end,
derroy the great achievement which was the British state and her Empire.
The Unionist task was to fight a holding action against such Liberal
thrusts while stocking their ranks with men who would fight for their
country's real interests in a hostile world. Maxse himself would play
a part in both the preliminary skirmishes and the final battle.

\textsuperscript{lh} Ibid., (October, 1905), 188-89, 195-99; (November, 1905), 386-96;
(December, 1905), 566-68.
The electoral disaster which struck the Unionist party in January, 1906, was believed by Arthur Balfour and several Tory journals to be in great part a result of the inevitable swing of the political pendulum. Conservatives would return to Downing Street as soon as the Liberals' socialistic schemes were presented to a horrified country. Only the Spectator, the lively free trade Tory weekly edited by Maxse's close friend and political foe J. St. Loe Strachey, saw, in its unique, convoluted fashion, an unmitigated victory for the "tried and true Tory policy" of free trade. Strachey pleaded with the party to return to its heritage, admit its great blunder, purge itself of Liberal Unionism and await Balfour's reaccession to power in a few years as leader of a free trade party.

Most criticism, however, centered on the ambiguity that had made much of the party seem to support what Strachey believed it had clearly repudiated. The Daily Express, while parading the pendulum excuse, urged loyalty to the leader, but also wished for a party unanimous in support of one fiscal policy. The policy referred to was clearly tariff reform. With the vociferous, if small, free trade section, the amphibolic Balfourites and the ardent Chamberlainites, the party had indeed faced the electorate divided.

\[1\] Liberal Unionists were those Liberals who followed Joseph Chamberlain out of the party after he split with Gladstone over Irish Home Rule in 1886. They allied themselves with the Unionists and later formally fused with them.

\[2\] Spectator, 20 January 1906.

\[3\] 27 January 1906.
Party organization and the activities of the Conservative Central Office in particular came in for their share of the blame. The Daily Mail called for reorganization from top to bottom following an inquiry into the causes of the defeat, though it understood the pendulum to have played its part. Even the mouthpiece of the Balfour circle, the Daily Telegraph, pressed for an overhaul of the central organization, under Balfour's leadership of course, and greater loyalty to the chief's fiscal policies, which its editorials did not define.

Few attacked Balfour himself, though several journals assailed those around him. The Outlook, now with J. L. Garvin as its editor, saw in the election the end of the dynastic cliques which had ruled the party for years—but somehow placed Balfour, a son of the House of Cecil, high above suspicion. Garvin's journal did advocate, however, a more constructive imperial and social program, including tariffs and preference.

Garvin served two years, 1905 and 1906, as editor of the Outlook before beginning his long career with the Observer (1908-12). He was a close friend to Maxse and a frequent correspondent.

After pointing to poor candidate selection methods and the dearth of working class influence in the party, the Globe acknowledged that part of the defeat was due to Balfour's untenable "half-way house" policy. The Globe demanded bold support for the entire Chamberlain program. The Saturday Review asked a purge of the Tory free traders and wished tariff reform to be spread by leading Unionists in and out of Parliament, an indirect reference to Balfour.

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1 26 January 1906. 2 20, 22 & 24 January 1906. 3 20 January 1906. 4 23 & 26 January 1906. 5 27 January 1906.
Each newspaper thus contributed a piece to the puzzle, but restraint seemed the hallmark of the comments, especially when the party leader was mentioned. A rapid perusal of most journals made it difficult indeed to understand that a catastrophe had befallen the party. Leo Maxse was not a man of restraint. He did not hesitate to produce a reasoned, comprehensive picture of the illness, the causes and the stiff dose of medicine required for cure. Sacred cows, as has been seen, did not exist for Maxse. His scathing, bitter editorial remarks appeared in the Review in February, 1906, and were preceded and followed by letters and speeches whose sole purpose was to wake up the party to the truth that this time the pendulum alone would not provide a panacea.

We believe that the true explanation of the Unionist débâcle is to be found in the fact that the country had grown utterly disgusted with the maddening methods of the late Government, and was ready to use any weapon whether it called itself Liberal, Labour, or Socialist, in order to vent its long-pent-up wrath.

The Government had performed good works in foreign affairs, Maxse continued, with Japan, with France and with Ireland, but the "general exasperation was not a passing emotion," but had been building for years: "Ministers and their parliamentary followers remained blissfully unconscious of its existence until the very moment of their doom." Many were the reasons, but the foremost cause of their downfall was the gross mismanagement of the greatest national enterprise in which Great Britain had been engaged for the last one hundred years—the South African War. The War had taken a very long time to sink into the public mind, but it made a deep impression. The Government had done nothing to prepare the army for a war which could have been foreseen as long before as the Jameson Raid. Worse, after 1902, statesmen remained impervious to the
lessons of the crisis and no real reform of the War Office had taken place. Hence, the numberless defections of Conservative working men to the Labour party. Further, the War showed the wonderful loyalty of the self-governing colonies, but no serious effort was thereafter expended to convert the Empire into a reality by harnessing this sentiment which had saved the situation in South Africa. An extraordinary Englishman who won the nation to imperial preference but failed to win the "Tapers and Tadpoles" in the House of Commons had likewise been undermined by the detachment of the Prime Minister. Balfour's wobble meant that the party also wobbled, and the consequences became apparent as the election progressed. The party organization of necessity experienced paralysis, the party press was divided, Tory MPs a spectacle of doubt and pain. The Ministry might have been defeated in any event, but by propounding a fiscal policy neither Chamberlainite nor Cobdenite, the Government made itself unintelligible to the plain man. Intrepid Maxse ended his remarks with a blistering, sarcastic, but thoughtful summary of Balfour's "unsettled convictions."

Great Britain was not to impose duties on foreign manufactured goods, but she was to ascertain, in the first instance, whether the foreigner would oblige us by abolishing his tariffs, failing which we should impose retaliatory duties, the nature of which was never divulged, and the effect of which might be to introduce the worst form of Protection. Then, again, while refusing to declare positively in favour of Imperial Preference, the late Government announced its willingness to discuss the subject at a Colonial Conference, but if successful the Conference was to be followed by a further General Election! Thus was the whole Fiscal Reform movement damped down, while Free Traders could plausibly declare that Balfour aimed at the introduction of Protection on the sly. When finally it was decided as a matter of Parliamentary tactics that the Unionist Party should run away whenever the subject was discussed in the House of Commons, there was no room for doubt as to the result of the General Election. We went to the country with little to show for a just and necessary but much mismanaged war, whereas we
might have gone with a reformed army and a programme of Fiscal Federation combined with less taxation and more employment for Englishmen.9

Maxse further berated Balfour for failure to dissolve Parliament in 1903, when trade returns were down and after by-election returns showed that fiscal reform was in the flow of an exultant tide. Since a large, vigorous and expensive policy of social reform seemed the Liberals' only alternative to protection, Balfour was to blame for the socialist legislation to come. Finally, Maxse pleaded with Balfour to take a well-earned rest. The election had witnessed the defeat of all but a handful of Tory free traders. About eighty percent of the Unionists were now convinced tariff reformers, and no man of common sense would deny that the party henceforth must either stand for tariff reform or would cease to be a party. Maxse would be amazed if a man like Balfour who had emphasized the differences between himself and the Chamberlainites should be elected leader. Maxse therefore urged Balfour's retirement from the post, along with emancipation from the cliques which had brought the party to its present sorry state, plus a modernization of the party machinery.

The Tory oligarchy is dead; we must restore the Tory democracy. Mr. Balfour is a very clever man and a delightful personality, but no one will suggest that he is the man for such a task. We all know that Mr. Chamberlain has a chivalrous and insuperable objection to be placed in competition with Mr. Balfour. In that case, Mr. Walter Long ought to be asked to reorganize the Unionist Party.10

9Nat. Rev., XLVI (February, 1906), 949-55.
10Ibid., 971-73.
While admitting that the outlook for the imperial cause was ominous, Maxse did not view the situation in tones of unrelieved black. In the first place, he argued, the election had been fought on anything but free imports. Also, the colonies had been somewhat backward in expressing their views, doubtless owing to sensitive reluctance to interfere in a party conflict. Every conceivable and irrelevant topic was introduced in order to prevent a straight vote on tariff reform. The Liberals had disseminated the most horrible lies regarding Chinese slavery. Unscrupulous canvassers told the more ignorant voters that the importation of coolies into South Africa would be extended to England if the Unionists were returned to power. The Education Act of 1902 also endured wicked misrepresentations, while the Taff Vale decision was regarded as a deliberate Tory attack on the trade unions. Finally, the calamitous "tactics" of the Balfour Cabinet convinced the country that the public interest was being sacrificed to the discreditable desire "of an inept Government to retain office, while the ex-Premier's oracular utterances on the Fiscal Question seemed to make confusion worse confounded, and to further inflame the electorate." Despite such restricting handicaps, Maxse found hope in the "few constituencies sufficiently enlightened to give unprejudiced consideration to Tariff Reform," constituencies such as Birmingham, Liverpool, Sheffield, the City and the Universities.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, XLVII (March, 1906), 12-13.}

On the whole, though, the party was in a dreadful state and Maxse was disgusted. He did not confine his feelings to his journal. The "Episodes," if anything, showed much restraint, particularly with regard to Balfour. Maxse poured out his feelings to his good friend and
one day Balfour's replacement, Andrew Bonar Law.

I have hardly the heart to write to you, as I was so grieved over your defeat. What a calamity it was for us that B'ham should have come so late in the Borough pollings, and Manchester so early! Had their places been transposed, it would have been an immense influence on the whole course of the election. After the rejection of Balfour at Manchester by such a humiliating majority, people became crazy to vote for the winning side. The extraordinary thing about the Manchester election is that Balfour and his friends were quite confident of victory up to the end. I suspect that like many other accomplishments for which our eminent leader is responsible, the political organization of Manchester is absolutely rotten. Conservative organization is one of the first problems to be tackled by the Party but I am afraid that jealousy of Joe will prevent anything being done. One obvious inference from the voting is that we have lost the Tory democracy, thereby fulfilling the remarkable prophecy of Randolph Churchill's when he heard that Balfour had become leader of the Party in the House of Commons: "So Arthur Balfour is really leader—and Tory democracy, the genuine article, is at an end!" You may not agree with me, but unless the Party is prepared to fearlessly face the situation as it is, and to realise the impossibility of recovering the confidence of the country under the present régime, we may be in opposition for half a generation. Your absence from the new House is most serious, but I trust an opportunity may present itself of your getting back.12

Maxse added a postscript, asking Law to write an article for the Review, disposing of some of the principle Cobdenite fallacies.

Maxse clearly wished Balfour's political demise. However, due to the traditional structure of the party, the leader was responsible, in the end, to none but himself. For the moment, Balfour did see the need to make some public accommodation to Joseph Chamberlain, since the latter claimed the loyalty of 102 out of 157 Tory MPs. In return for Chamberlain's vow not to seek or intrigue for Balfour's job, the party leader sealed this compact on St. Valentine's Day, 1906, by declaring tariff reform to be "the first constructive work of the Unionist Party," and by

agreeing that there was no objection in principle to a moderate general tariff on manufactures and a small foreign corn duty to achieve closer imperial union or to produce revenue.\textsuperscript{13}

Maxse had asked Chamberlain to become Balfour's rival for the leadership. But his 'idol, conscious of his Radical and disruptive past, responded that the "worst of our position is that while you say that many of our people are confident we cannot win under Balfour's leadership, it is equally certain to me and others that we can't win without him." Yet, the older man counseled, "If we could secure thorough change in the organization and especially in its control we might manage, and perhaps this is the best thing to go for now."\textsuperscript{14}

Maxse decided to follow Chamberlain's advice and seek tariff reform domination of the party organization; but, at the same time, he continued his verbal assault on the enigmatic aristocrat who was his leader. On the eve of the Valentine agreement, he wrote to The Times a blanket denial of Balfour's ability to lead in a constructive manner. "Balfour's leadership," Maxse wrote, was a "party and national disaster, for the simple reason that, however successfully the ex-Premier may hypnotise his Parliamentary followers, he bewilders and exasperates and consequently repels the democracy whose support is essential if Unionism is to remain an effective force in the State." Further,

\textsuperscript{13}Denis Judd, \textit{Balfour and the British Empire} (London: Macmillan, 1968), 137.

\textsuperscript{14}LMP, J. Chamberlain to Maxse, 30 January 1906, h55/229.
It must be clearly understood that the selection of Mr. Balfour at this crisis of our fortunes, though a triumph for intrigue, would be in direct defiance of the wishes of the people throughout the country, and would therefore have no moral sanction. So far as can be ascertained on impartial investigation, Mr. Balfour's leadership is only desired by (1) the little clique of personal friends and political henchmen who are partially responsible for our present plight; (2) the Tamers and Tadpoles who bear the balance of this responsibility; (3) the Radical party, who count on Mr. Balfour to paralyze the opposition. But for the feebleness of Tariff Reformers, inside and outside the City of London, the whole question of the Leadership, as well as many other questions, would have been comfortably disposed of, and Unionists would now be able to face the future with some degree of confidence.

Oh, for an hour of Randolph Churchill!\textsuperscript{15}

Two days later, as noted above, Balfour was given a blank check to continue in office. Tory journals rejoiced that the controversy within the ranks had been settled and that common sense had prevailed. With the leadership issue ended and tariff reform impossible to push until power was reacquired, or so the papers argued, attention could now focus on the real bugaboo, party organization.\textsuperscript{16} Only the Daily Express noted that a decision with regard to the Tory free traders was still essential, since coalescence between them and the tariff reform majority was impossible.\textsuperscript{17} The Spectator naturally observed in the entire exchange the wholesale surrender of the party's free trade principles.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{15}The Times, 12 February 1906.

\textsuperscript{16}Daily Telegraph, 15 February 1906; Globe, 15 February 1906; Outlook, 17 February 1906; Saturday Review, 17 February 1906; Standard, 15 February 1906.

\textsuperscript{17}16 February 1906.

\textsuperscript{18}17 February 1906.
Strachey could find in the Valentine an ironic victory both for himself and his political arch-enemy of the National Review. He wrote to his “Dear Leo:"

The Balfour climb down is a great triumph for the Nat. In another way it is also a triumph for the Spec for, as you know, we have always declared that Balfour was in reality a Chamberlainite though he had not the courage of his convictions. Thank Heaven, we have now got a clear issue, and shall have no more tedious Balfourian psychology in the newspapers.19

Maxse was not deceived by the mountain of favorable verbiage which greeted the Balfour-Chamberlain letters. Despite the "delightful personality" of the ex-Premier, "who mesmerises his friends and colleagues," despite his "unusual intellectual distinction and unrivalled dialectical skill, he bewilders and exasperates and consequently repels the democracy, and it is with the democracy that we have to deal."

All the causes with which Unionism is associated, the Church, no less than Tariff Reform, the unity of the United Kingdom, equally with our Imperial interests, are imperilled by a continuance of the Balfour régime, which means the Acland-Hood[Chief Whip] régime and the Londonderry[Unionist free trade leader] régime—in other words, the continued subjection of the Party to a clique.

Moreover, Maxse went on, the Valentine accord in which Chamberlain honorably refused to be placed in competition with a cherished colleague, spurred on by his rooted idea that as a Nonconformist and former Radical he could never hope to secure the loyal support of the Conservative party --this refusal complicated instead of solved Unionist problems. If the eirenicon had happened six months before, the party would have sustained merely an ordinary defeat at the polls "instead of an unprecedented rout." In the subsequent Lansdowne House appeal of Unionist free traders

19LAP, Strachey to Maxse, 16 February 1906, 455/213.
under the Duke of Devonshire to place tariff reform on the shelf until the Liberal Ministry had run its course, Maxse saw, in Chamberlain's words, "the death knell of the policy and the Party." The rank and file were not encouraged to air their many grievances and the oligarchy which governed the party and despised the democracy ruled on.20

Maxse remained unpacified by the February accord and pledged to continue his fight. Although most of Chamberlain's followers halted their attacks on Balfour after the Lansdowne House meeting, Maxse neither lost heart nor gave way. The leader's subsequent twelve-month silence on the fiscal issue only added fuel to the fighting editor's all-consuming fire. Frustrated in his direct effort to purge Balfour, Maxse chose for the moment to follow his mentor's counsel and shifted to a campaign to gain control of the party organization. He aimed to end the control of the Conservative Central Office by whips appointed by the leader and replace them with whips popularly elected from the ranks of the party.21

But Maxse continued his siege of Balfour and the "charmed circle of Tapers and Tadpoles which congregates at the Carlton Club" who had no understanding of Unionist feeling throughout the country.22 Maxse did not understand, nor would he have cared if he had understood, that without Chamberlain's help any rebellion against Balfour or his regime was doomed. Balfour's supporters could always point to the critics and ask

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whom they proposed to put in his place—and there was no one else.

After his stroke in June, 1906, Chamberlain's physical condition removed him from even the list of threats to Balfour's position, and that list had precious few likely candidates.

So Maxse began his assault on the party structure. Before 1922, the Conservative party was almost completely devoid of any formal organization. The leader, his colleagues and the whips controlled affairs exclusively. The whips, their deputies and associates were all appointed by the leader personally. All worked smoothly except in periods of crisis when the leader was dangerously isolated from his backbench supporters in Parliament. Maxse believed that such a crisis indeed existed in 1906 and that Balfour and his 'aristocratic clique' certainly stood isolated from Tory opinion in the country, if not in the House. And it was the country which mattered, since it was another Maxse maxim, cynical and apolitical, that from the moment of its election any House of Commons ceased to be representative of opinion in the constituencies. If the forces of tariff reform and imperial defense could penetrate the party hierarchy, it was argued, they could force the leader to share responsibility for policy formulation.

Maxse was not unaware of the difficult path upon which he had embarked.

It is evident to all politicians who care to see things as they are that there is little or no prospect of any serious reorganisation of the Unionist Party. Reform would jeopardise those powerful vested interests which have so long dominated and paralysed us. Doubtless the Party will be bemused by the announcement that "Reorganisation Committees" have been constituted, but care will be taken to retain all power in the hands of the irresponsible and incompetent Junta who organised the recent débâcle.

23Mackenzie, op. cit., 57.
24Nat. Rev., XLVII (June, 1906), 554.
In an unsigned article in the same number of the *Review*, Maxse, after sniping at the chief's leadership capacity, also pursued his advisers "who guide him in all matters, a small and selfish clique of egotistical politicians who would sacrifice the whole future of Unionism to their own personal vested interests."25

By the end of June, Maxse's specific recommendations became clear. Change had to come to Unionist policy and personnel, and revolutionary reform to the Central Office. He pounced upon Chief Whip Sir Alexander Acland Hood for being totally ignorant of politics and completely out of touch with public opinion. Paper schemes of reorganization would not save the situation if personnel were not likewise shifted. The plan which had been presented by a joint committee of party leaders and the National Union did little to help.

The so-called "advisory Committee" to the...Central Office (of which the Chief Whip is "the boss") consists of seven persons, of whom one is actually the Chief Whip, while three others are the nominees of the Chief Whip, leaving a permanent minority of three to offer "advice" for the other four to reject. The "organisers of defeat" remain masters of the situation, and, as a consequence, the rank and file are disgusted. Mr. Balfour's declaration that all is for the best in the best of all possible Parties tends to deepen the general gloom.26

The "Advisory Committee" was heralded in the pro-Balfour *Daily Telegraph* in June as part of a major overhaul of Conservative organization. The newspaper saw the presence of the three National Union members on the committee as assurance that "close and intimate relations with the recognised spokesmen of the party leaders" would occur and that therefore there would be "no occasion for such friction as had occasionally existed in the past." The National Union was to have a larger

budget and control of the propaganda literature, but party funds remained in the guardianship of the whips. Other structural changes included making the National Union more representative by quadrupling the number of delegates on the Council based on electoral strength of each division and by securing a full proportion of working men on the Council.27

From a careful reading of the reorganization scheme, the heart of which was the Advisory Committee, it was clear to Maxse that Balfour and his subordinates were not about to make themselves the servants of the National Union. The party Conference on reorganization to meet in July would, however, be confronted with their scheme or no scheme. But Maxse's call for a total party overhaul had implied open discussion before the assembled party delegates. Only thus would the mandarins be face to face with the discontent seething beneath the surface. Chamberlain himself had more directly requested such a meeting of Balfour, to consult the rank and file on the tariff question. Chamberlain's refusal to contest the leadership, however, indeed represented a Valentine to Balfour, who viewed party gatherings as merely a devise for blowing off steam. With no threat from Birmingham, Balfour staged the Special Conference in London in late July as an early meeting of the National Union and so planned it as to forbid a confrontation between the clear Chamberlain policy and his own vague scheme. Rhetorical release remained the Conference purpose throughout. Maxse's prediction proved correct. Balfour also accepted the prudent advice of his private parliamentary secretary, Jack Sandars, to speak out in a general sense on tariff reform, while refraining from specific proposals which could incite either group of fiscal extremists to destroy the party.28

Aware of the odds against success, Maxse and a few other journalists proceeded with their campaign. The Morning Post, edited by Maxse's friend Fabian Ware, denounced the Central Office as "arbitrarily constituted, unbridled in the exercise of its power" and allotting to the accredited mouthpiece of the constituencies, the National Union, "the bare semblance of its rightful authority." The Post demanded not merely a multiplication of consultative machinery, but the transfer of executive authority to the representatives of the popular will. The Central Office should be abolished and the delegation of full executive power devolve upon persons duly elected at the annual conference.

Of course, if the present leader and his immediate entourage are convinced that they do not command popular support, they will oppose any such proposal. In this case the National Union will, no doubt, be guided by those instincts which have always enabled the British people to rid themselves of autocracies to which they object. 29

The Saturday Review, long critical of the Central Office, wondered if it was

...too much to hope that the Whips may absorb some part of the duties now carried on by the Central Office, and that the rest of its work be taken over by the National Union which, properly reformed, can thus become the one official organisation of the party sensitive of and responsible to every breath of feeling in the constituencies. 30

Maxse sympathized fully with the revolution proposed above.

Until it is realised that the Conservative Party does not exist for the sake of the Central Office, but that the Central Office exists for the sake of the Conservative Party, we shall remain in our present obscurity. Let every contributor to the Party funds make it a condition of his subscription that... Acland Hood and his associates—or their successors—shall accept effective popular control. 31

29Morning Post, 19 July 1906.
Maxse brought his righteous indignation with him when the Special Party Conference assembled in London late in July. Maxse was also a vice president of the National Union.

After rubber-stamping approval of the Valentine accord accepted by the party meeting at Lansdowne House, the Conference turned to the business for which it had been summoned--party organization. A verbal picture of the ensuing scene has come down to us:

On the suggestion of the chairman, a tall, pale, dark man of youthful appearance stepped to the front of the platform to propose a resolution which was to meet with a veritable storm of approval from a considerable section of the seven or eight hundred delegates assembled on the floor of the marble hall or in the galleries. The gentleman then called upon was Mr. L. J. Maxse, the terms of whose motion were as follows:

"That in the opinion of this Conference no reorganisation of the National Union meets the unanimous demand for the reform of the "central management" of the Conservative party, which can only be satisfied by bringing the Central Office under more effective popular control."

Surrounding Mr. Maxse on the platform were Sir Alexander Acland-Hood, Mr. Chaplin, Mr. Akers Doublas,...and many other prominent members of the party.32

Maxse introduced his motion for reform by recalling a bitter criticism of the National Union by the late Lord Randolph Churchill, who, he remarked, had other claims to fame than that of being the father of his son, and declared that the only healthy thing about the Unionist party at that moment was that it was seething with discontent. Maxse continued,

As that was thought to be the only conference that would be held this year, some of them had thought it wise to raise a question which, though not within the four corners of the scheme they had met to consider, vitally affected every member of the party. It was as a popular body that last year at Newcastle they passed a unanimous resolution not in favour, as some persons seemed to imagine, of reconstructing the

32Pall Mall Gazette, 27 July 1906.
National Union, but in favour of strengthening the central management of the Conservative Party by adding a popular representative element. Everyone recognized that the great bone of their party was the divorce between the headquarters and the rank and file. But no attention would have been paid to the Newcastle resolution were it not for the catastrophe of the general election. That calamity brought home, even to the most ardent Nicawbers, the fact that the time had come to set their house in order, and in the months following the disaster the enthusiasts of the party were encouraged to dissipate their energies in a plethora of committees. A committee of seven had been formed at headquarters, four of whom were nominated by the Chief Whip and three by the National Union Council. These three gentlemen were to assemble month by month mainly for the purpose of making recommendations for the other four to reject. It was notorious that the Central Office had failed lamentably on the question of candidature owing to a weakness for proposing square men for round holes which would not have them. It was universally admitted that the machinery of their party was antiquated and out of date. They had been endeavoring to run a democracy on oligarchic lines with the inevitable results. (Cheers)

Maxse sat down amidst a storm of applause. His motion was seconded by Mr. Bridgeman of Oswestry and supported by Mr. J. Howard, who had seconded the Newcastle resolution to which Maxse had referred. Acland Hood then rose to defend his scheme. He thought it deplorable if the party should split on the reorganization question. The Chief Whip explained that the Advisory Committee which Maxse had criticized had been

33The Times, 28 July 1906.
34This resolution was a reaffirmation of the resolution submitted by Henry Chaplin at previous conferences urging reform of the fiscal system. It read, "that these national and Imperial objects (freedom to negotiate with foreign powers and closer union with the colonies), so vital to trade and to the full employment of the industrial classes throughout His Majesty's dominions, can and should be obtained by a readjustment of taxation which without increasing the cost of their food to the poorer classes of this country, will tend to secure a fairer treatment of British manufactures by foreign nations, while preventing the practice of dumping, and will largely increase reciprocal and preferential trade between the different parts of the British Empire." Nat. Rev., XLVI (December, 1905), 575.
appointed to form a permanent and ready two-way channel of communication between the leader and the party. The result of the recent consultation would give the National Union a great deal of hard work which he was sure they would tackle in an earnest and strenuous manner. The party, admonished Acland Hood, would stand a great many things, but would never stand a caucus.

Maxse ignored these remarks and also another demand for withdrawal of his motion. He followed by requesting that at least the nomination of the three National Union members be made representative by allowing the entire Conference instead of the Council to elect them. The chairman, however, ruled the request impossible, as it might result in a conference electing representatives who might not be members of the council which they were to represent.

Mr. Chaplin then pointed out that if Maxse's resolution was carried in its present form, the entire agreement between the Central Office and the National Union must fall to the ground, a consideration which weighed heavy on Chaplin's mind. Maxse thereupon withdrew the resolution in deference to the wishes which had been expressed, stating to an applauding audience that it now appeared it might, if passed, disturb the harmony of the party.

If Maxse failed in his ultimate purpose, his courageous confrontation politics did nothing to narrow the rift in party harmony. The Daily Telegraph expressed relief that the "incipient and rather clumsily organised revolt against his (Balfour's) leadership had been effectively..."

35 Pall Mall Gazette, 27 July 1906.

36 Globe, 27 July 1906.
squelched....The Leaders are just as anxious as Mr. Maxse to put the organisation of Conservative forces in the country upon what is called a democratic basis," but, citing Acland Hood, no party can stand being dictated to by any committee. 37

The Pall Mall Gazette was also buoyed by Acland Hood's victory. "The firmness, straightforwardness and tact of the Chief Whip have converted a misguided and mischievous unrest to complete tranquility..." 38 And the Standard pointed out that no Chief Whip could disregard with impunity the moral authority of the National Union representatives and saw in this "great step forward" a democratizing process which there was no reason should not continue to develop. 39

The left wing of the party, however, came to Maxse's defense. The Morning Post derided Acland Hood's justification of his Committee against Maxse's resolution as the final rejection of democracy. "If Mr. Maxse's resolution had been accepted, the majority of a Conservative whip, so far from being diminished, would have received additional strength from the fact that in all his proceedings he could rely on the unqualified support of the party." Maxse preferred to live to fight another day. The Post concluded gloomily that given the disregard of tariff and organization proposals passed at Newcastle, plus Balfour's failure to propound a constructive policy, Unionists had every right to feel despondent about the future of the party. 40

37 28 July 1906.
38 28 July 1906.
39 28 July 1906.
40 28 July 1906.
J. L. Garvin also recognized Maxse's contribution and his wisdom in withdrawing his resolution after the Chief Whip's appeal to the other provisions in the Central Office-National Union accords. The Outlook editor noted that three members was a sign of progress, however gradual, and the most which could have been achieved at present. He added,

We would, however, point out that the Leader of the Opposition, who represents the country, spoke at considerable length on current politics on that same night without any reference either to the reform of the Unionist organisation or to the policy which that reform is destined to promote. In all other respects his speech was admirable—so far as any critique of Hamlet can be admirable which forgets to mention the Prince of Denmark.\(^1\)

A more recent observer of this interlude has concluded that the Unionist party's antagonism to aggressive, noisy types like Maxse proved to be Balfour's greatest asset. Even the seconder of Maxse's motion, Mr. Bridgeman, subsequently wrote a letter to Balfour professing his loyalty to his leader.\(^2\)

Unlike the situation five years later when Maxse withdrew a motion critical of the leadership announced weeks earlier because he had in the interim secured his objective, this time Maxse had withdrawn in disgusted defeat. He would henceforth work within the system with the new, if piddling, reforms at his disposal to undermine the leadership clique by evolutionary means. His support was clearly insufficient to carry the day and he was not prepared at that time to shed party blood on the Conference floor for the sake of principle. His brash, frontal assault a failure, Maxse remained undaunted, relentlessly pursuing his prey, Balfour,

\(^1\)Outlook, 4 August 1906.  \(^2\)Heberle, op. cit., 64.
not in a personal vendetta, but because of what Balfour represented. Hardly a month passed without Maxse finding something to criticize or ridicule in Balfour's handling of his parliamentary or party responsibilities.

Editor Maxse's caustic comments became, if possible, even more to the point after the Conference. He accused the Balfour-Acland Hood regime of themselves being the caucus they denounced, a caucus "irresponsible as it is inefficient." This clique bore responsibility for the party's pitiful, futureless plight. Maxse reiterated his demand for popular representation as a drawbridge between the rank and file and the isolated leadership. He preached the lesson of the Cockermouth by-election in which a Tory, while reversing the recent Liberal victory, still suffered a decline of fifteen percent in the poll because of a Labour party candidate. Maxse recognized the fledgling Labour phenomenon as just as great a threat to Unionists as to Liberals. He warned that Labourites as well as Liberals had to be defeated if the Tories were ever to return to power. Maxse implied that, quite naturally, Balfour failed to understand this truth. He added that a purely negative attitude on the part of the Opposition Front Bench on all political questions spelled ruin.³³

The editor of the National Review frequently accused the party leaders of living in a world all their own. In Bonar Law he found a man of like mind. A few days after his own setback, Maxse wrote a letter to Law who had suffered a greater defeat in January and who was still feeling down on his luck. Law agreed with his friend's pessimistic view

of the party's future prospects. Law also admired Balfour personally, but denied the latter any understanding of the man in the street, much less the working man. The future prime minister sadly affirmed his belief that not even the terrible January catastrophe would enable Balfour to understand and meet properly the changed conditions. Law added his recollection upon first entering Parliament that the Unionist party was far more reactionary there than the party in the country. That fact, the once and future Member suggested, resulted in the consequent disregard of opinion outside the House and the chief cause of the overthrow of the Unionists. Law concluded with a promise to Maxse to write the requested article on the future of the party upon his return from a holiday in America.\(^4\)

Maxse and Law were united in more ways than practical politics. In September, Law turned to his friend to help in the search for a new editor for the influential Glasgow Herald. The newspaper's Conservative owners had sacked the previous editor because of his anti-tariff views, but were not yet prepared to hire a "wholehogger." Law also relied on Maxse to furnish him with inside information, such as the seriousness of Chamberlain's indisposition, still in doubt in the late summer.\(^5\)

J. L. Garvin was another Maxse intimate and frequent fellow fighter. Garvin recognized in Maxse a leader in the fiscal reform movement and determined to employ Maxse's nonjournalistic talents also in that cause.

\(^4\) LMP, Law to Maxse, 30 July 1906, 456/334.
\(^5\) Ibid., Law to Maxse, 15 September 1906, 456/371-72.
League meeting in November, Garvin replied with one name—Leo Maxse. "No front bench man has the power, the ability or the courage or the freedom to be as interesting as you would be." At the same time Garvin cautioned that Maxse ought not to do anything to widen the divisions within the party, however insufficient Balfour's lead. The party had to pull together against the common foe in order to win ever again at the polls. "Balfour is not going to be knocked out." Garvin urged Maxse to stress the "big(tariff) policy," to tell the audience how idiotic the reigning superstition was, "and tell them--Heaven forgive me and you if you say it as I think you ought--that the Unionist Party is united upon it! You won't agree with this. I shall listen to you with pleasure anyhow, and say something about the Empire in the meaning of the Board of Trade returns...." Garvin could not have chosen a better man to expound upon tariff reform, but he should have known that Maxse would not declare what he knew to be a sham unity even for the sake of electoral victory. Always Maxse preferred out and out enemies to lukewarm supporters.

As the year neared its end, Maxse intensified his attacks on the Tory Front Bench for its failure to awaken from the sleeping sickness which had befallen it in January. He harkened back, as he frequently did, to Lord Randolph Churchill who, with his Fourth Party colleagues, Arthur Balfour among them, succeeded in forcing Gladstone's enormous majority in the Parliament of 1880 to flee from his verbal assaults.

46 Ibid., Garvin to Maxse, 27 September 1906, 456/382.
47 Ibid., Garvin to Maxse, probably October 1906, 456/397.
Maxse denounced in no uncertain terms the attitude of philosophical detachment which pervaded the present leaders of the Opposition, the shelving of disagreeable questions of party organization and management, the sham committees, the leaders who refused to lead. Paraphrasing Dr. Pangloss, Maxse implied that the attitude that "all is for the best in the best of all possible Parties," would lead to revolution unless the higher personnel of the party reformed and an attempt was made "to efface the deplorable impression made on the country by the lamentable performance of the late Government, which was the main cause of the débâcle and is the operative obstacle to any Unionist revival." While the Liberal Ministry excited no enthusiasm, the Unionist party was making no progress toward recovery and by-election results were not encouraging. Worst of all, the party was ignoring the Labour party which itself resulted in large measure from Unionist failure to respond to the claims of an industrial democracy which had once found shelter under the Tory roof. Of all the late Cabinet members, only the views of Austen Chamberlain raised Maxse's hope that some shafts of light had penetrated the tomblike Front Bench. But, given the former's family bias, this was not very much.

Early in November, Maxse delivered the heralded speech to the Tariff Reform League of Beckenham, near London. Garvin, one of the few London journalists to report the address, saw in it and its reception another indication that fiscal reform and imperial union as the extension and safeguard of national power were unquestionably more popular in all parts of the country than at any time since Mr. Chamberlain's first campaign.

\[48\text{Nat. Rev., XLVIII (November, 1906), 373-75.}\]
a campaign which would have been irresistible had the Unionist Cabinet of the day been more wisely advised. Garvin went on,

On Wednesday night, ... Mr. L. J. Maxse, whose platform gifts are as unique as the trenchant and incisive quality of his writing, delighted an audience at Beckenham in a speech blazing with wit. This address dealt particularly with the unprecedented growth of Trusts and Socialism in the last few years despite the assurance to the country that free imports are a preventative of both. Yet the Beckenham meeting went hardly noticed by the London press...although Mr. Maxse is easily the most brilliant speaker in the country outside the walls of Parliament, and would rank at once if returned with the first half dozen forces in the House. 49

Garvin waxed even more enthusiastic in a personal letter to his friend.

Your speech was incomparably brilliant last night and amazed even me who had warned them from the first that you were the man to make for, nobody else. You must print it in the National.... For God's sake, don't answer this by any rotten counter compliments.

The writer added that he was pushing on with the "unity" movement despite Chamberlain's retirement from the "rough and terrible purposes of this life." 50

By year's end, Maxse's confidence that tariff reform was sweeping the country was greater than ever. He lauded Austen Chamberlain's November speech at Canterbury in which the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer stepped into his father's shoes to declare that there would be no turning back from Balfour's pledge to make tariff reform the first constructive work of the next Tory Ministry. The Liberals, Maxse noted, were also doing their part by pushing for expensive social reform legislation.

"Even the Spectator can see that Old Age Pensions spell Tariff Reform, 49Outlook, 10 November 1906.

50LMP, Garvin to Maxse, 8 November 1906, 456/411.
hence the consternation in Wellington Street. " Even former leaders of
the cabal against Joseph Chamberlain, Lords Stanley and Londonderry,
were edging across the border into tariff country. Acland Hood's posi-
tion had shifted noticeably in the direction of reform. Still, Maxse's
year ended as it began, with grave doubt about the one man whose views
really counted—Arthur Balfour. Maxse lamented that "the subject of
Tariff Reform has been practically boycotted by the official Leader of
the Opposition " since the Valentine Compact and that "the Conservative
Central Office continues to intrigue against all Tariff Reform candidates." 51

Maxse could not understand that vagueness about fiscal reform was
Balfour's way of holding the party together. Where Maxse looked at the
nine-tenths of the party in favor of reform, Balfour saw the one tenth
who supported free trade or free food, several leaders of which were
his Cecil relations who might, if pressed, bolt the enfeebled party and
strengthen the Liberal ranks. If these men who represented valuable
votes for other Tory causes could be held until the party returned to
office, they might well be reconciled to the change. Time was an impor-
tant commodity to Balfour. Maxse, on the other hand, thought Balfour
blind to what time had already wrought.

By the end of 1906, the Unionist leader knew that Tories in and
out of Parliament were dissatisfied with his performance. Jack Sandars
told his chief, who claimed not to read the daily press, that "with
the exception of the Daily Telegraph, we have not a single organ of the
London Press which would support the orthodox Party and its Leader...."
Further, "There has been a general weakening of your authority

51 Nat. Rev., XLVIII (December, 1906), 586-87.
throughout the country. To this weakening, Austen and Long and Bonar Law, Maxse and Amery and others have contributed and are contributing.\textsuperscript{52}

Although Maxse had become the Shadow Government's gadfly-in-residence, it must not be supposed that his critical flak raised welts on unfortunate Tory hides alone. From the moment of their "hypocritical" assumption of office, the Campbell-Bannerman Ministry was stung by his poisoned barbs with ever-increasing frequency and intensity. Balfour and Company were merely ignorant aristocrats, wallowing in their self-deluding natures; the Liberal Government was anathema. As a big brother will taunt his younger sister when alone with her, so Maxse never ceased to criticize the Opposition for its passive, ineffective response to Liberal threats. When, however, the Liberals assumed the role of big brother, sibling defense became the order of the day for Maxse. He was quick to discover in the House of Lords an important weapon in the Tory arsenal, an arsenal which had become much depleted by the events of January and by the further, preventible losses inflicted by the leadership.

Liberal foreign policy traditionally held to "Little England" precepts, and Maxse was not further encouraged by Campbell-Bannerman's famous 'methods of barbarism' speech in the midst of the Boer War. Maxse feared for the fledgling Entente Cordiales with France and wondered if the brave words of the new Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, during the election campaign would stand under the wave of "inverted Jingoism" which, Maxse claimed, led most Liberals to be friendly to England's enemies and hostile to her friends.\textsuperscript{53}

\textsuperscript{52}Kenneth Young, Arthur James Balfour (London: G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., 1963), 262-63.

\textsuperscript{53}Nat. Rev., XLVII (March, 1906), 1-3.
In domestic affairs, the Liberals offered even more cause for alarm. Lloyd George came under vigorous Maxse attack for his "total ignorance of existing conditions of international competition" when he declared that Britain was not only holding her own in the world's neutral markets, but beating her tariff-protected competitors.\(^54\) Even for the few positive possibilities in the Cabinet—Liberal Imperialists Asquith, Grey and Haldane—Maxse held out little hope. How could they hold out against the "cheese paring" economists and disarmament-mongers? And, sure enough, Maxse soon turned against Haldane when the specifics of his army reform proposals became clear.

In South Africa, the Radicals were already discarding the wise precedents of the past and wantonly plunging the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony into the "turmoil of Responsible Government, i.e., Party Government, while they (were) still in the shadow of War."\(^55\) So much for Liberal disdain for the Empire. Closer to home, the "Radical horde" planned to place the trade unions above the law and, in Birrell's Education Bill, to create a Nonconformist ascendancy. Maxse was undecided as to the advice he would offer to the Lords as to the best tactics to follow with regard to each measure.\(^56\) He was still contemplating the counsel offered to him and a number of other Tory leaders and journalists to avoid the "lawyers'" view of Taff Vale. Such an attitude would complete the alienation of the working class since the Judgment had in great measure called the Labour party into existence. Garvin, who offered this advice, concurred with Maxse's view that the Unionist attitude

\(^{54}\text{Ibid.}, (April, 1906), 193.\)
\(^{55}\text{Ibid.}, 185.\)
\(^{56}\text{Ibid.}, (May, 1906), 375.\)
toward labour and the Labour party was crucial to the Tory future. Consequently, the Outlook editor urged his friend to see the logical consequences of his own belief that the party had lost the Tory Democratic fighting spirit of both Randolph Churchill and the new Chamberlain Unionist Radicalism.57

Maxse took Garvin's advice and pressed the Lords to ignore the "clamour of those inept Tory lawyers in the Upper House." Though he had studied for the bar, Maxse had a lifelong enmity for the gentlemen of the robe, and Garvin easily hit home by pushing him to reject the "lawyers'" view and support passage of the Trade Disputes Bill. Maxse acknowledged that the principle which Taff Vale denied had been accepted de facto for twenty-five years and more without any danger or iniquity. And Maxse adduced several additional reasons for passage. The Lords could not afford to go on doing the Government's dirty work by rejecting proposals which Ministers secretly disliked but feared to oppose. He recognized that the issue had been important in the campaign and approved overwhelmingly by the industrial democracy and now by an immense majority in the Commons. The "Birreligious Education Bill" was another matter, of course, since the peers' opposition clearly represented majority opinion in the country. Maxse frankly admitted the opportunistic nature of his advice, but wondered if any other course offered fewer objections. Party, national and imperial survival required the Lords not to play the Liberals' game by rejecting every labour bill. On the Education Bill, however, Liberals and Labour were divided and the Tories had an opportunity they could not afford to pass up.58

57 IMP, Garvin to Maxse, 4 April 1906, marked "Private," 455/295.
58 Nat. Rev., XLVII (August, 1906), 905-06.
Although Maxse saw in the Lords the key to Tory resurgence, the Upper Chamber represented nothing untouchable, venerable though the institution was. Maxse resented the peers' purely passive role during Conservative Ministries and understood that a popular appeal could be made for their radical reform on the basis of their appearing to debate and study and reject legislation only when a Liberal sat in Downing Street. The Unionist party itself should take the initiative, thought Maxse, and offer proposals to reform the House of Lords so as to make it the really impartial deliberative body it was meant to be. Since the laissez-faire disposition of Balfour's Front Bench conflicted with such proposals, Maxse took it upon himself to ask his friend Lord Newton to write an article on the Upper House and its mismanagement by the Conservative wirepullers. Maxse further asked that Newton propose a House of Lords Reform Bill in that chamber, a bill that would strengthen their lordships so that they would not feel their existence endangered every time they corrected a House of Commons' blunder. The article and the bill were soon forthcoming.

In the return to power of Gladstone's party, Maxse could be expected to discover a new strain of that ever-virulent Liberal malady, Irish Home Rule. As the year drained away, the crusading editor found that the "notorious nationalist" head of the Irish Civil Service had been convinced to draft legislation to this end. Such treachery was to be expected. But events soon disclosed that treachery had been perpetrated by this same

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59 Ibid., XLVIII (November, 1906), 381-82.

60 Newton, Retrospection, 152; Nat. Rev., XLVIII (December, 1906), 593-601.
MacDonnell apparently with connivance by higher ups during Balfour's
Premiership. Maxse denied the party leaders the right to be irritated
with their querulous supporters when it became clear that Lord Lansdowne
had seen a draft of devolution written by MacDonnell and, further, that
Balfour's Irish Secretary, Walter Long, affirmed that all which MacDon­
nell did was done with the understanding that these were the wishes of
the Government. Maxse accepted Balfour's denial of personal involvement,
but reminded his chief that the taint of such heresy would devolve swiftly
upon the party and its leaders. 61

In 1906, then, Maxse pronounced in one forum or another upon all
the issues which would dominate the British scene until the Great War.
A few more words need be said about Maxse and foreign relations, though
it is here that his reputation is best known. With the Little Englanders
awash over the land, Maxse intensified his ever-vigilant scrutiny of the
Teutonic mailed fist abroad and of those who would make its way easier
at home. He ridiculed the blundering efforts of the Wilhelmstrasse in
Morocco to intimidate France into renouncing the Entente Cordiale. He
demanded unyielding opposition to German provocation and undeviating
support to French diplomacy at Algeciras. 62 Maxse believed with all
his heart that "in order to preserve peace we must be prepared for war,"
and a Liberal Ministry could not be depended upon for that purpose if
the Tories themselves had proved inadequate. Maxse worried that whatever
their policy, the mere existence of a Campbell-Bannerman Cabinet caused
dismay and apprehension to Britain's friends and allies abroad, Sir
Edward Grey at the Foreign Office notwithstanding. 63 Radicals were

62 Ibid., XLVI (February, 1906), 979-98. 63 Ibid., 975.
generally impervious to British interests and would presumably be
unmoved by the damage caused to England by a German defeat of France.
Maxse prayed that they would see that there was no more flagrant treason
to civilization, apart from the violation of sacred moral obligations,
than for Britain to stand aside and permit the French Republic to be
struck down. 64

The Algeciras Conference offered Maxse unmistakable proof that, as
the personification of Pan-Germanism, the impulsive Kaiser menaced the
liberties and independence of other nations and that the only way to
save Europe from his dictatorship lay in the loyal cooperation of the
Concert of Powers interested in maintaining the status quo. The peace
of Europe depended upon the continued isolation of Germany. 65 Maxse
explained the change in Germany's tactics after the failure of her Moroccan assault on the Anglo-French accord. Germany would now kill England
with kindness and professions of undying affection in order to remove
British suspicions until the German navy was ready to strike the deadly
blow. The German offer of a competitive venture in the construction of
the Baghdad Railway was likewise indicative of the Kaiser's wish to help
England to cut her own throat—the lifeline to India—with her own razor. 66

And even if Grey's will prevailed at the Foreign Office, plots were
afoot in other Cabinet offices to undermine diplomatic success by removing Britain's key bargaining tool, her system of national defense. Maxse
had been willing to give Haldane's army reform scheme an honest hearing.

64 Ibid., XLVII (March, 1906), 5.
65 Ibid., (May, 1906), 353-55.
66 Ibid., (June, 1906), 539-41.
Nothing had been done since the Boer War, despite the efforts by Tory War Ministers Arnold-Forster\(^67\) and Brodrick\(^68\) to give England a prepared army. And, Liberal Imperialist or not, Haldane endured the same close scrutiny to which Maxse had subjected his unfortunate predecessors. It should be stressed once more that no one was sacrosanct to Leo Maxse.

Haldane's professed faith in an efficient fighting force earned him no blank check from the editor of the *National Review*. In a letter to Leo Amery, then military correspondent of *The Times*, Maxse expressed shock at the suggestion made by Charles \& Court Repington, an Amery colleague, in the previous day's *Times* that because Haldane was a good fellow he should be allowed to play the devil with the army for fear a worse fellow might take his place. This was to Maxse

...the fatal habit which is largely responsible for our present political plight. I would much rather that the British artillery were destroyed by a man of the type of Winston Churchill, from whom one expects nothing, and whose presence in any office is a challenge to the community, than under the auspices of Haldane, who thus becomes a cloak to conceal iniquity. There seems to me to be an added element for treachery in the latter's performance, as he is clearly sinning against the light. I am indeed sorry that the *Times* should seem to give any countenance to his scheme, but of course Haldane is clever in nobbling newspapers.\(^69\)

Maxse subsequently denied the efficiency of the plan Haldane proposed to reduce the peace forces by 20,000 men, to cut the regular troops in war time by 42,000, and to add a home militia. Maxse preferred Lord Roberts' *National Service League* conscription proposals which would have

\(^67\)H. O. Arnold-Forster (1855-1909), author and politician; Liberal Unionist; tariff reformer; War Secretary, 1903; army reforms frustrated; energetic critic of Haldane. D.N.B.

\(^68\)St. John Brodrick, 9th Viscount Midleton and 1st Earl of Midleton (1856-1912), statesman; Tory MP, 1880-1906; War Secretary, 1900-03; Colonial Secretary, 1903-05. D.N.B.

\(^69\)Leopold Amery Papers, property of Julian Amery, London, hereafter LAP, Maxse to Amery, 6 July 1906.
meant training for large groups of reserves. Lawyer Haldane's 
inexperience in military affairs was understandable, but nothing could 
justify to Maxse a further decline in the already precarious position 
of British military preparedness. 70

The navy, Britain's traditional first line of defense, was also 
under attack by the Liberal horde and Maxse was equally vociferous in 
its defense. At any time he would have stood in the forefront of the 
battle to preserve the British supremacy of the sea, but with the ever­
growing German navy following the precepts of the "navy in being," 
Maxse predicted that a few more years of Lord Tweedmouth at the Admiralty 
would so weaken British sea power as to transfer automatically the British 
sceptre into the German fist without the disagreeable necessity for fight­
ing. The First Lord's action in dropping one dreadnought from the building program of 1906 and holding out hints of dropping another flew in the 
face of the Cawdor Memorandum which declared that four armored ships must 
be regarded as the irreducible minimum per annum to secure the requisite 
margin of safety. While other powers announced substantial additions 
to their naval programs, First Sea Lord John Fisher and Tweedmouth 
announced further economies at the cost of efficiency, while bamboozling 
the press into believing naval strength had in fact been increased. 
Maxse wondered what surrender to Germany would occur next. 71

The silence of the Opposition Front Bench in the face of these raids 
on British defense did not further endear the Tory leaders to Maxse. With 
the external defense of the nation now in the hands of men who would at

71 Ibid., XLVIII (November, 1906), 384-85.
the same time shake imperial unity to its foundation and undermine by vast social expenditure internal peace; and with an Opposition preaching negation and planning only to wait for a phantom pendulum to regain office, Maxse had good reason to be despondent as the year ended. And 1906 was merely a portent of years to come.
In the year which saw the first anniversary of the Valentine Compact, tariff reform was no closer, and Maxse became, if possible, even more disillusioned with Balfour's leadership, more anxious for the future of his party, and more active in his denunciations and calls for change. In his letters, his platform performances, his active membership in the Confederacy and his ever-constant "Episodes," Maxse expressed his hatreds more feelingly than ever. The grievous state of the party left him deep in gloom and he verbalized his dismay in a New Year's letter to his friend and confidant, Bonar Law. After a year, there had been no popular reaction to the Liberal Government, he wrote. The Opposition was only waiting for the pendulum's swing, a policy of "perilous nonsense." Balfour's Ministry had been smashed because it deserved to be and whatever the charming leader's position within the House of Commons, he, along with his former ministers, had fallen into complete disrepute outside. "If we waited till the crack of doom, the country could never tolerate the reappearance of this combination." Balfour was utterly discredited as Unionism would continue to be until all the members of the late government gave up the idea that their fortunes were inextricably bound up with those of the leader. This is what particularly depressed Maxse. How could the party sacrifice its future for the sake of the vested interests responsible for its debacle?

More specifically, Balfour's friendly, i.e., treacherous, attitude toward tariff reform had managed to damp down activity in its behalf.
Added to this was some innocent backsliding from Birmingham itself, where some of Chamberlain's followers felt no need to push vigorously ahead while their mentor was incapacitated. Though Maxse believed at this time that the old Radical still had an active future ahead, he repudiated any policy of hibernation. Maxse considered himself to have been a tariff reformer long before his idol and viewed the cause as greater than any man. Full steam ahead was his motto. He concluded by informing Bonar Law that many people in the present situation looked to him as an independent leader on tariff reform, as well as on many other questions. Here Maxse unknowingly presaged the future. "What is required is the development of an independent opposition. The Front Bench may remain purely passive and negative. We must be constructive."¹

Bonar Law was equally pessimistic. He agreed that the keystone of the situation was that Balfour did not mean to take tariff reform seriously and that his strong hold on the party machinery precluded any "shove." Law accepted Maxse's proffered lead on behalf of any cause so long as it would not shatter the party for some time, but he refused to take any risks in shoving Balfour unless at least "a forlorn hope" existed for success.² Here was another example of the warning of caution and restraint Maxse so often received between the lines from the practical politicians he tried to advise; struggle, yes, but not in a battle lost before the start. Maxse's blind spot was his refusal to view events with the eyes of a Member of Parliament, much as he might understand parliamentary maneuvering.

¹BLP, Maxse to Law, 2 January 1907, 18/3/28.
²LKP, Law to Maxse, 5 January 1907, 457/463.
On this issue, though, even J. L. Garvin saw things with the same diehard attitude. He believed that all was lost unless there appeared very soon a definite tariff group in Parliament, however small, independent of every one, including the Chamberlains. Otherwise, argued Garvin, Balfour's silence would surely kill the cause more effectively than any repudiation. Ignorant propaganda about food taxes was not helping the cause and any food tax should be considered by an entirely separate vote. Garvin spoke more freely now that he was unmuzzled from his position as editor of the Outlook; his reign at the Observer would not begin for a year.

Amidst the disconsolation of January, Maxse again took to the platform. On the eleventh he spoke at Bromley Public Hall. Here he roundly denounced the pundits and professionals who praised the marvelous prosperity revealed by the trade returns. His own study, replete with facts and figures of the trade of competitive countries, concluded that the relative condition of the British people vis-à-vis the Germans and the Americans, protected behind their tariff walls, had indeed declined. Maxse's reading of the situation convinced him all the more of the necessity for fiscal reform.

Five days later, at the Stevenage Public Hall, he spoke to the issue which was a natural concomitant of Liberal failure to read the stars correctly. The Unionists were the only ones left to save Britain and the

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3 Tbid., Garvin to Maxse, 10 January 1907, 457/466.


5 The Times, 14 January 1907.
Tory leaders apparently neither understood nor accepted their destiny. Maxse called his speech, "Mr. Balfour and the Rank and File. A Plea for Information." Balfour was coupled with Campbell-Bannerman and his followers, who included professed imperialists like Asquith, Haldane and Rosebery, in a blast at all those who refused to preach with enthusiasm the panacea of tariff reform. He denounced Chamberlain's fair-weather friends who scuttled like rats when they erroneously imagined their ship to be sinking. As party leader Balfour had spoken out on every conceivable subject in the course of a year, but the constructive work to which he had pledged the Conservatives in February had received not one syllable. Balfour's henchmen and the party machine had followed the example of their chief who clearly was less than enthusiastic about the policy which he had sworn to support. The rank and file, which Maxse claimed were ninety-nine percent in favor of that policy, had been cut off from communication with the Front Bench and were forced to resort to speaking out and warning the powers-that-be that if the boycott did not end an internal convulsion within the party would affect many things beside tariff reform, including the personal vested interests to which the larger public interests had been unduly subordinated. Expediency as practiced by the Tory leadership was lowering the whole tone and standard of public life. It was therefore essential that Balfour declare himself definitely, without qualification, "whether he was, in a fiscal sense, fish, flesh, fowl, or good red herring." Maxse concluded his attack by posing the inevitable question to the leader. In plain language, did he or did he not pledge himself to a general tariff on foreign manufactured goods and imperial preference? The speaker promised the loyal
support of the rank and file to Balfour if he made good his Valentine declaration, "but they would not follow him in abandoning Fiscal Reform, and if he would not lead them they must find someone else who would."  

Maxse's colorful style made it all sound so easy. If Balfour was loyal to the cause, let him but lead and all would fall before it. If he professed heresy, let him retire and a true leader of the faith emerge. But nothing was so cut and dried with Balfour, engaged in peculiar, subtle and unenthusiastic rhetorical battle to keep the party together. Politicians like Bonar Law appreciated this. At the time of Maxse's speech at Stevenage, Austen Chamberlain was complaining to his friend Lord Ridley, head of the Tariff Reform Commission, of the few true allies to his father's cause. He added,

...though I share fully Maxse's hatred of AJB and his policy, I also realise that we can only work for the possible, and I don't believe till things further develop (as they will) that it is possible to do more than push him.  

Maxse was not alone in pressing Balfour for a clear-cut lead. Some of the chief's political friends were doing the same. In that same week Balfour was advised by his parliamentary secretary that, although his leadership was being condemned by men like Austen Chamberlain, Bonar Law, Maxse, Amery, George Curzon and Lord Ridley, there also existed general disgruntlement with Balfour's long silence with regard to fiscal reform. Jack Sandars urged his chief to make a simple statement of belief in tariff reform.  

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6_The Times, 17 January 1907._

7_Chamberlain to Ridley, 19 January 1907, Sir Austen Chamberlain Papers, hereafter ACP, University of Birmingham Library, AC 7(6), quoted in Heberle, _op. cit._, 76.

Many of the London newspapers pressed for this same scheme while disclaiming any attempts to undermine Balfour's leadership, something Maxse never feared to do. The Outlook asked for a "refresher" statement on fiscal policy. Even the free trade Spectator called for a clear and vigorous policy one way or the other as the only way to avoid a long wait in the political wilderness.

Balfour responded. In a public letter on 26 January and in a speech at Hull on 1 February, he formally reaffirmed his adherence to the agreement of 14 February 1906, in which he pledged himself to imperial preference and fiscal reform without venturing to describe details. The Outlook was gratified and the Standard, noting the refusal of Walter Long and the younger Chamberlain to consider a challenge to Balfour, saw no reason to question further the leader's intentions. The Globe expressed pleasure but also pointed out that the criticisms were not without rather solid foundations. The journal disclaimed division on the issue of leadership, but admonished Balfour to lead without ambiguity. The Daily Express agreed, urging a more active campaign for tariff reform and calling on Balfour to show that he wished a unified party by purging the free food minority, led by Lord Hugh Cecil, with whom compromise was impossible.

Maxse had gotten at least the words he wanted from Balfour, but, with the rather direct method he employed, he also garnered criticism.

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9 26 January 1907. 10 5 January 1907
11 2 February 1907. 12 2 February 1907.
13 2 February 1907. 14 Ibid., 15 February 1907.
15 16 February 1907.
and apparently lost respect. The Daily Mail had fallen back on electoral
victory as the only means of furthering tariff reform, since nothing
could be done without the keys to No. 10 Downing Street. Perusing the
February National Review, which was replete with trenchant thrusts at
Balfour and his mandarins--"no one knows what a Balfourite is, and life
is too short to find out"--the Daily Mail deplored Maxse's self-stultification
resulting from his petulant attacks on Balfour's lead, both
generally and with regard to tariff reform.

For one evening at least Maxse managed to silence his raging doubts
about his leader and stump instead for working class votes by attacking
the opposition. Speaking to a Tariff Reform League meeting at Bishops
Stortford, Maxse argued that hundreds of thousands of men who at the
last election felt bound to vote for the Liberal party had now seen that
they could not do so again, but must go for the side of tariff reform.
Maxse believed it to be accidental that the Liberal party, which was a
party of reform, should have been antagonistic to tariff reform. Their
traditions were in no way bound up with free trade. They did not intro-
duce it and could not truthfully follow it. This certainly was not
vintage Maxse. One wonders if he was feeling at the top of his form
when this speech was delivered, for even an audience of poorly educated
working men would find it difficult to understand who, if not the Liberals,
were bound up with free trade.

16 Nat. Rev., XLVIII (February, 1907), 920.
17 9 February 1907
18 Standard, 8 February 1907.
Maxse's frequent overly simplistic views of complex situations were the subject of a letter from another close friend, Rowland Hunt, MP for South Shropshire. Hunt expressed agreement with Maxse's February editorials, but found it necessary to educate his friend to some facts of political life. Front benchers, he related, were made by Balfour, while back benchers were new men coerced by Balfour's whips and frightened out of any sort of rebellion by the threat that they would wreck the party if they opposed the leader. Hunt admitted that back bench members acknowledged privately that they saw no chance of victory with Balfour at the helm, but in public none would open his mouth. Even critical newspapers like the Outlook appeared to back the former prime minister after Hull. But to Hunt Balfour was really an "old chip of wood in a glass of milk," doing his best to make tariff reform and imperial preference impossible. The party required a Randolph Churchill, but all potential rebels of his class had been gotten to. Finally, Hunt predicted that Balfour was likely to prove too clever for the small number of tariff reformers willing to oppose him. Hunt presumably numbered himself among the latter. Shortly after this letter he made a speech in the Commons containing similar sentiments. The Tory leaders then withdrew the whip from Hunt.

The Maxse spirit remained undaunted by this pessimistic, defeatist news. Quite the reverse. In a letter to Amery he urged The Times to give full coverage to a great tariff reform meeting at Brighton which Austen Chamberlain was to address. Maxse plumped for more vigorous action than ever before.

19LMP, Rowland Hunt to Maxse, 9 February 1907, 457/481-83.
I think the one moral of recent events is that tariff reformers should be continually showing their teeth and making themselves thoroughly disagreeable to the powers-that-be. No movement has ever been promoted by mere amiability, such as is recommended by some of our friends, and all these lectures of the Times and the Front Benches to the "Hotspurs" are supremely ridiculous, as it is only the "Hotspurs" who effect anything.20

A few weeks later a new number of the Review appeared containing even more slashing attacks on the Opposition leadership as well as praise for Rowland Hunt for his courage to say in the House what he had told Maxse in his letter.21 Hunt wrote quickly to thank Maxse for his kind words. He noted that great pressure had been applied on him from above through his Shropshire friends to apologize to Balfour. He added his conclusion that until Balfour retired, an unlikely prospect given the many people so infatuated with him, the free fooder hold on him would prevent any energetic lead for tariff reform, and the party would be no good until that occurred.22

Maxse received further confirmation of the disaster Balfour was bringing about when a political foe in the person of the chairman of the Labour party, Keir Hardie, wrote that Balfour was doing to his own party what the Liberals were doing to Hardie's. Both the Tory and the Liberal leaderships would use the House of Lords' agitation to damp down dissent within their own ranks. Liberals pleaded with Labour to refrain from fielding candidates against them since three-cornered contests meant Tory victories and the Tories were not likely to protect Labour from the House of Lords as the Liberals would. Balfour, likewise, while

20LAP, Maxse to Amery, 15 February 1907, marked "Private."


22LKP, Hunt to Maxse, 22 February 1907, 157/168.
urging the peers to veto the Education Bill, was really preparing the way for agitation against the Lords, in the throes of which many other awkward questions, Balfour's unloved tariff reform among them, would be shelved at least for a time. 23

More and more Maxse saw that, however many his public professions of faith in the new religion, really getting through to the inner Balfour by the direct approach was futile. Maxse involved himself in a project with Lord Leconfield, 24 a relative by marriage whom he much admired, to convene a large tariff reform meeting in the Albert Hall when the Colonial Conference assembled in London in May in order to prevent the Government from hiding the issue from the premiers, and also to entice Tory voices, including Balfour's, in support of imperial preference. 25

At the same time, Maxse continued to be active in person and in his journal in the cause of Lord Newton's Bill to restructure the House of Lords. On this question Maxse had Bonar Law's complete support in thinking that it would not do for the Unionist party to rest contented with things as they were without making some proposals for change or at least showing readiness to consider such proposals. 26 Maxse pressed these views and Newton's Bill with vigor at a Compatriot's Club meeting in March. He asked the party to support it and employ all the influence at its command to induce the House of Lords to carry the Bill. 27

23 Ibid., Hardie to Maxse, 21 February 1907, marked "Private," 457/487.
25 LMP, Leconfield to Maxse, 3 & 17 March 1907, 457/493, 497.
27 The Times, 19 March 1907.
In his sorties against the leadership, Maxse never faltered, though a serious operation on his dear wife Kitty at this time must have caused him some anxiety. To the world, though, even to his own family, he remained imperturbable. His brother, Col. Ivor Maxse, wrote to offer best wishes for Kitty's recovery.

I cannot help congratulating you on the fortitude you have both displayed in keeping the whole matter quiet until the trial was over, and I must say I thoroughly agree with the view that this is how a necessary operation should be conducted.28

With Kitty recovering, Maxse was free to continue his crusades. His involvement with the Colonial Conference may be recited as typical of the wholehearted manner with which he flung himself into his projects. He launched a devastating attack on the Campbell-Bannerman Ministry, calling them political pigmies who displayed from the first their inability to take an imperial view of any question. Blindly committed to free trade, the Liberals made no concessions to the premiers and the Conference was stillborn. The Colonial statesmen, Maxse claimed, asked the consolidation of the common Empire, but were rebuffed at every turn.29 Yet the Conference had brought some good to English shores in the person of Alfred Deakin. A convinced federalist, Deakin had been prime minister of Australia since 1905. Despite the anti-protectionist verdict of the British electorate a year later he came to the Conference in order to persuade the British public of the necessity for imperial consolidation via preferential tariffs. Deakin was a forceful, eloquent leader and,

28Iv. Maxse to Leo Maxse, 11 May 1907, 457/522.

29Nat. Rev., XLIX (June, 1907), 469-91.
given his views, a messiah to Maxse and his cause. Maxse met the premier several times socially and waxed most enthusiastically about him. He dined with Deakin at the home of Austen Chamberlain, who agreed that the Australian was "a man." After dinner, Maxse warbled to his host, "What luck that Australia should have thrown up a man just when he was so wanted."  

Maxse's refusal or inability to understand the realities of politics and his desperation at the plight of the party, caused his imagination to run wild. He jumped joyously on a farfetched suggestion of the Standard's H. A. Gwynne, concerning Deakin and discussed it with Leo Amery.

I dare say the suggestion has been mooted to you by Gwynne, who mentioned it to me that we should make an effort to try and get Deakin to enter British politics and lead our Party, which is now derelict. I believe that in a year or two under him we should knock out Cobdenism and the present Government, and change the whole face of British politics. Our movement requires a Man, which is the one thing we have not got. I mentioned the matter the other morning to Deakin, but it is naturally not a suggestion which would smile upon him ab initio, though he promised to listen to anything we had to say. Why should not you and I breakfast with him one morning before he goes to the Hotel Cecil, and regularly tackle him? But there is little time to lose as he goes at Whitsuntide.  

If Amery and Maxse tackled Deakin over kippers soon after and urged him to replace the existing Cecil leadership, his reply has been lost to posterity. At any rate, Maxse's vision, doubtless attractive, of a messianic leader who would march the Unionist party and the British nation out of the heat of an Egypt plagued with Cobdenism across the Jordan of

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31 LAP, Maxse to Amery, 14 May 1907. The Hotel Cecil referred to No. 10 Downing Street, since it passed from one Cecil, Lord Salisbury, to another, his nephew Arthur Balfour.
tariff reform into the Promised Land of strength and prosperity did not appeal to Deakin and when he returned "down under," down under he remained. Small wonder that a man at the top of his nation should not wish to trade his position for that of a member of a weak opposition party with no assurance of success and challenge the popular and powerful leader of that party. Certainly the epithets 'adventurer' and 'carpet-bagger' must have crossed his thoughts if he entertained the idea seriously at all. We hear no more of this brash scheme, but Maxse's words and ardor in this sidelight to history speak volumes about his honesty of purpose, his bold, if simplistic and naive solutions to difficult problems. Maxse's almost apolitical belief in one strong leader advocating one strong policy as a panacea may in part harken back to his years as a Coefficient.

In 1907 or in any other year, partisan politics did not devour every Maxse hour. By now his name had become synonymous with warnings about the German menace. No number of the Review was complete without at least a few pages by Maxse, plus an article or two, on the Kaiser's latest instance of breastbeating or the Government's newest example of blindness to the threatening Teutonic menace. This thesis will not pursue Maxse's ongoing, Cassandra-like prophecies of calamity through all the pre-war diplomatic vicissitudes--from Baghdad to Morocco to the Balkans and back again--but it must be understood that his preoccupation.

32 Perhaps Maxse's enthusiasm was damped down by a letter he received from Valentine Chirol, director of the foreign department of The Times. "Surely you who have made so strong a stand against the Trade Disputes Bill and have fulminated against the Ministers who passed it cannot want to drag us into a policy which blesses that Bill and asks for more of the same type and hoists on to a pedestal the colonial politician who of all others is "on the knee" to Labour. Even hide-bound Cobdenism is less fraught with disaster." LMP, Chirol to Maxse, 2 October 1907, v. 457.
with German intentions took up many of his journalistic working hours. Maxse taunted William II even more mercilessly than he did Balfour. In 1908, Punch published a splendid, humorous satirical poem about Maxse and the Kaiser, an indication of the impression Maxse had made (see Appendix B). Many people thought Maxse crazed with Germanophobia, with a perpetual Prussian war scare on the brain. If Maxse's attacks on Balfour never met with the same often witty reaction, perhaps a jingo is more appreciated than a suspected backstabbler.

Maxse's foreign policy and national defense views were of course intimately connected with the Tory party. Unless the Unionist descendants of Disraeli opposed with vigor the Little Englander heirs of Gladstone, the Unionists would also come in for their share of verbal bombardment from Maxse. Maxse spoke often to local branches of Lord Roberts' National Service League, and did not hesitate to besiege fellow Tories if he felt them lax in obstructing the pacifist policies of the Government.

Maxse's pointed spears frequently found targets in problems of less than crisis proportion. His unique, thorough approach, however, seldom failed to raise them to that level, at least in his own mind. One such issue was that of public banquets, which Maxse attended with frequency. These became the object of his scorn and derision in a letter to *The Times*.

> It is evident that the organisers of our public dinners have failed to grasp the fact that the London Press goes to press much earlier than formerly. It is exceedingly difficult to do justice to any long speech delivered after 10 p.m., and almost a physical impossibility to report those made after 11

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33 The National Service League was an organization devoted to promoting compulsory military service as a prerequisite to national survival. Lord Roberts (1832-1914), Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, 1899-1900, served as president from 1905 until his death.
p.m. May I suggest, for the sake of the greatest happiness of the greatest number, that all public dinners shall begin at such an hour, and that the menu and toast-list shall be so arranged, as to enable the speaker of the evening to be on his legs by 9 p.m.?

May I suggest another yet more terrible innovation, the need for which must have been borne in upon many observers of recent functions, at which the speakers of the Mother Country have usually cut such a poor figure beside the speakers from Greater Britain—that is, in arranging the toast-list, a serious effort should be made to select speakers who have something to say and who know how to say it?

Another favorite object of Maxse's sport was the legal profession. Although, perhaps because, he had read for the bar, Maxse remained a lifelong critic of lawyers. According to Lord Newton, who had invited him to address a National Service League meeting at Disley, Maxse made an excellent speech, but gave great offense to some of the audience by saying that solicitors ought to serve in the army because they "knew how to charge."

In the months following his stroke, Joseph Chamberlain communicated with friends through his son Austen. In 1907, he was well enough to renew old friendships personally. Maxse was among the very first friends outside the family to be invited to visit the old leader. Mary Chamberlain wrote in June, 1907, to ask the Maxses to Highbury to tea as a quiet beginning to her husband's new life as a semi-invalid. She added, "the more gossip you can tell him of our interesting Rival (presumably Balfour) the more grateful I shall be."

There was no autumn session of Parliament in 1907 and politics languished considerably after the Autumn recess. Not so Leo Maxse. The August Review launched a full scale offensive against the Government's

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34The Times, 8 May 1907. 35Newton, Retrospection, 160.
36MP, Mary Chamberlain to Maxse, 12 June 1907, h57/532-33.
attempt to "fill up the cup" of indignation and outrage at the actions of the Lords. Balfour's inability to see the necessity for a reform of the Upper Chamber to make it more responsive to the will of the people, which it somehow represented more accurately than the Commons, provoked additional biting sarcasm from Maxse.  

Maxse found another matter concerning which the Tory record was stained, "the debauchery of many constituencies by bribes in the shape of 'subscriptions,'" i.e., the open sale of safe seats to the highest bidder with the connivance of the Conservative Central Office to secure as many rich men in the House as possible. In this evil, Maxse discovered an "organised robbery (which) largely accounts for the intellectual poverty of the personnel of the Unionist party in the House of Commons, and explains our difficulty in getting decent candidates."

Among those poverty-stricken Tories were those lawyers who contested the by-elections that summer in Jarrow and Colne Valley, both captured by the Labour party. Given the "inept, hypocritical" Radical Ministry, Maxse was not surprised that the working classes should turn from Liberalism in disgust. Nor was he shocked that they did not vote Tory, since the barristers who were briefed for the occasion on tariff reform neither understood it nor could they make it attractive or intelligible, especially when they watered it down for "local reasons." Only vigorous statements of conviction by men who believed in the cause would move tariff reform along its destined path.

Balfour, as noted above, reaped his share of the summer accolades.

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37 Nat. Rev., XLIX (August, 1907), 820-27. 38 Ibid., 841-42.

39 Ibid., 842-43.
Though his rapier parliamentary skill was employed to full effect in "pinking the Premier," the Opposition leader remained the primary reason for the "profound discontent" in the party. His continued sophistry on fiscal policy, valentines and Hull aside, was again revealed when, upon the third reading of the English Land Bill, he delivered a speech, "the unbending Cobdenism of which" was described by the Spectator. Maxse related, "as somewhat too strong for us."\(^4\) Then, Balfour seemed to have involved himself in preventing the Unionist party in Norwood, "Tariff Reformers to a man," from choosing one of their belief to replace a prominent free fooder. Such activity by the leader against candidates in sympathy with his self-pronounced goals should, Maxse hoped, disillusion Parliamentary tariff reformers of the "open-your-mouth-and-shut-your-eyes persuasion."\(^1\)

Maxse soon mounted another platform against his chief. He returned in triumph to the Beckenham Tariff Reform League to voice earnest discontent with leaders of both the major parties. Maxse recalled the history of the recent Imperial Conference and the fact that the new Australian tariff, about which the Cobdenites were moaning and groaning, was directly traceable to the action of the Home Government in telling their cousins from down under in parliamentary language to go to the devil. The angry editor denounced Winston Churchill's insolent boast that the "door had been banged, barred and bolted" on the Colonial offer and that the Mother Country would never concede a single pennyworth of preference on a single peppercorn so long as Campbell-Bannerman remained the national

\(^4\)Ibid., L (September, 1907), 30-31.

\(^1\)Ibid., 31.
hall porter. And what of his own party, asked Maxse? Tories at any rate professed to be imperialists and had formally declared through their leader the now famous pledge about Unionist priority number one. The rank and file earnestly asked only for a clear, straight, strong and decided lead on the imperial issue. Such a lead would surely secure the cooperation of the best elements in the Liberal electorate. The lukewarmness of the Conservative Front Bench to this request was not encouraging. Balfour's equivocal utterances were terribly disheartening, all the more as he was surrounded by advisers notoriously hostile to reform of all kinds, including tariff reform. It was high time, asserted Maxse, for the country to interfere to prevent its splendid heritage from being squandered by any political party. The nation belonged to the people whose duty compelled them to warn their elected representatives, "You can play any parliamentary tricks you please but you shall not gamble away our Empire." 

By his very nature Maxse could not rest content unless a full-fledged battle for tariff reform was under way. Conversion of nonbelievers to the words of the dogma offered no guarantee against backsliding and sabotage, as Balfour's performances clearly demonstrated. The leader and his close mandarin advisers were obviously marking time and certainly had no plans to drum the free trade Tories out of the Commons. Accordingly, Maxse joined with other extreme tariff reformers to do the essential job. The origins of the Confederates, indeed all of their activities, remain shrouded in secrecy, but history has afforded a few glimpses of this whole-hog, rebellious group at their feverish work.

\[12\text{The Times, 7 November 1907.}\]
H. G. Wells described a conversation he held at this time with a presumed Confederate who was also a Coefficient colleague.

"Are you a Confederate?" I asked suddenly.
"That's a secret nobody tells," he said.
"What are the Confederates after?"
"Making aristocracy work, I suppose. Just as, I gather, you want to do."

The Confederates were being heard of at that time. They were at once attractive to me, an odd secret society whose membership nobody knew, pledged, it was said, to impose Tariff Reform and an ample constructive policy upon the Conservatives. In the press, at any rate, they had an air of deliberately organised power. I have no doubt the rumour of them greatly influenced my ideas...

Confederate arguments surfaced throughout the year. All preached to one degree or another against the heresy of the free fooders. The Daily Express, as noted above, pointed to the mutually exclusive nature of the views of the Chamberlainites and the followers of Lord Hugh Cecil; no compromise or coalescence was possible. "Both duty and self-interest," announced the Outlook, "compel Unionists to inform the...scanty band of dissentients that by their present attitude they are inflicting a disastrous injury on the Party." With Unionist free traders, the Globe predicted, "Unionists would have nothing to do. Their help will be accepted if it is offered, but it will not be sought, and it must be given on our terms, not theirs."

Nothing in the Maxse Papers reveals his membership in the Confederacy, but everyone else took it for granted. Austen Chamberlain himself informed Balfour about the activities of their mutual friend.

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^43 H. G. Wells, op. cit., 316-17.
^44 16 February 1907.
^45 23 March 1907.
^46 13 May 1907.
How much I can do, I do not know, for whatever the "Confederates" are, they are not the Tariff Reform League. Indeed, I believe them to be a small knot of men who are dissatisfied with the Tariff Reform League and with me and others of its leaders because we have not been willing to engage in or to countenance a general attack on the Free Food Unionists. I have heard that Leo Maxse is one of them, but I have never been able to learn their names, nor can I find that they have any organisation or headquarters. Maxse is my personal friend, as he is yours, but I have as little political influence with him as you have, and could do nothing in that quarter.

Chamberlain told Balfour that the free fooders had not been terribly cooperative and asked his chief point blank, "Can you do something more to help us?" He begged him to use his ability, his authority and his position to give the party the lead it desired. Chamberlain acknowledged that the Liberal enemy now had an ally in Labour to oppose the Tories, an ally with a socialist appeal to the working classes and to the young. 'A strong lead would demoralize the small dissident faction within the party, result in its quick demise and leave the party free to fight the real enemy. More specifically, the younger Chamberlain requested Balfour to use his influence with Lord Henry Bentinck and others who aggressively and violently denounced tariff reform and tariff reformers. Chamberlain was not a Confederate nor did he sympathize with their divisive tactics. At the same time, he did not justify such tactics from the other end of the fiscal reform spectrum. Finally, he asked for more specific details of Balfour's intentions toward the broad bases of his fiscal policy. Chamberlain advised an end to a policy of negatives, saying what the party would not do, substituting passive leadership for an army of active workers. 47

A few days later Balfour received confirmation of Chamberlain's report. One of his private secretaries told the other that Leo Maxse was certainly a Confederate and it was believed that Tariff Reform League President Lord Ridley had been but had recently quit. 48

That Maxse was a member would not have come as a surprise to Balfour and made no real difference since Maxse was known as his avowed political enemy anyhow. 49 Maxse himself spelled out his feelings in his monthly advice column to Balfour in November. The editor confessed himself unable to discover Balfour's true attitude toward fiscal reform, and urged his leader to lift the fog of "doubt, hesitation and pain" at the annual conference at Birmingham that month. Alluding to the rift in tariff reform circles, Maxse pointed out that

Mr. Balfour may be as enthusiastic for Tariff Reform as Mr. Austen Chamberlain imagines and wants us to believe, but no politician has ever been at such pains to conceal his emotions on any public question, and the effect of this reserve upon his followers is catastrophic. It is somewhat significant that all the Tapers and Tadpoles who, having no souls of their own, take their cue from Mr. Balfour, practically never mention Tariff Reform in their public speeches, either in Parliament or on the platform. 50

As the annual conference approached, the controversy grew more heated. The Pall Mall Gazette, ardent for tariff reform, opposed any measure of proscription for nonjuring Tory free traders, a disappearing species, destined to fall naturally to time and the spread of the gospel of fiscal reform. 51 Gwynne's Standard also argued against ABP, B. M. Add. Mss. 49765, Jack Sandars to W. M. Short, 28 October 1907, quoted in Heberle, loc. cit.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid.


51 5 November 1907.
proscription, but pleaded for a more active policy of disarming the dissenters' hostility by requiring, instead of a repudiation of views conscientiously held, a subordination of their convictions to the preponderant sympathy with the full tariff reform program. To this end Balfour had to take an unmistakable lead. The Daily Express went further.

The Unionist Party is not a Free Trade party, and those who reject the main plank in its platform cannot be Unionists. This...is a matter for the delegates. We urge them to let their united voice be heard in vigorous protest against the disunionists, who would not hesitate to destroy the party if they could cripple Tariff Reform.

The Saturday Review took the opposite tack. The debate, claimed the weekly, was wasteful and petty. What did it matter if a handful of Unionists hesitated to repeat the exact formula acceptable to the Tariff Reform League. Fiscal reform was fixed in the party program and there were better things to worry about than petty prosecutions.

The Unionist Conference met in the tariff reform stronghold of Birmingham and eagerly awaited Balfour's pronouncement, none more so than delegate Maxse. In the afternoon the delegates unanimously adopted that hardy perennial, the Chaplin Resolution, which merely restated the major plank in the Valentine accord, now somewhat dog-eared. In a letter to the Conference Balfour approved the Resolution. But letter or no letter Balfour was not spared the Maxse wrath. Speaking for Chaplin's motion, Maxse levelled a fusillade at the party leader.

Mr. Maxse...flung stinging words at the two thousand delegates, arousing cries of agreement and dissent, and sometimes even mutterings among the gathering on the platform. He stood at the chairman's table, a slim figure,

526 November 1907.
5313 November 1907. 5431 August 1907.
pouring forth scorn on the Unionist leaders for their inaction with regard to Tariff Reform. He did not think there was any use in passing any more fiscal resolutions. Hitherto they had gone into the Whip's waste paper basket.  

Maxse continued,

We have been paralysed by unsettled convictions in high places. (murmurs of dissent). Can anyone pretend that our front benches are devoting themselves with ordinary enthusiasm to secure the national mandate for the great policy? (Cries of "yes" and "no"). Many of those so anxious to set about smashing socialism are shrewdly suspected of seeking an opportunity of shelving Tariff Reform. Official Unionism has been waiting to see which way the cat jumps, and during that time the party has been leading a dog's life.

Referring to Balfour's speech to come that night, this loyal son of the Confederacy concluded:

We hope that the oracle will speak tonight with no uncertain sound, and that the country may be told, in language understood of the people, that Tariff Reform is an integral part of the programme of the Unionist Party. Finally, we hope to learn that every Unionist candidate will be expected to support the party policy of Tariff Reform.

Mr. Chaplin's motion was carried amid cheers.

Maxse's speech expressed concern that tariff reform should not be subordinated or inundated or swept under the rug in favor of the down-with-socialism cry, much as Maxse did agree with the latter's objective. His one-track mind did not, however, win him any friends on the staff of the Daily Express, who felt that neither policy could be disposed with if the party was to succeed and that each would bring recruits into the party.

We note that Mr. Maxse deprecated the anti-Socialism cry in his speech to the Conference. When Mr. Maxse learns to master the bad habit of supposing that his own ideas represent the beginning and end of Unionist doctrine, his services will be more useful to the party. The net result of yesterday's business is that henceforward the whole Unionist party is definitely committed to fight for Tariff Reform and against Socialism.
The editorial writers of the *Daily Express* could not be expected to understand the depth of Maxse's mania, his conviction that if a full scheme of tariff reform was implemented the resulting prosperity would eliminate socialism as a viable rival economic system attractive to workers. Maxse did receive some applause for his efforts. Gwynne noted that Maxse had competently explained the serious misgivings of good party members toward Balfour's attitude to his admitted, supposed goal. And, though Maxse was "overcome by the evident sense of the great majority, it was, on the whole, well that he should make this demonstration."

There was, continued the editor, "no use or value in these annual meetings if the members of the national union shrank from saying exactly what they believed and discussed their opinions with absolute freedom."

Balfour's anticipated evening speech contained something to satisfy almost all elements in the party. To his loyal *Daily Telegraph*, the leader had dispelled all anxieties in the minds of his less stable supporters and erased the misrepresentations of his enemies. His tariff reform stance remained unchanged since February, 1906. The journal fell back on the old argument that no leader existed qualified to supplant Balfour. The rash, extreme protectionists ought therefore to rally round the only man capable of guiding their cause to victory by returning them to power. The leader's middle ground position of refusing both to cast the free trade minority into the wilderness or to permit them to hold aloof from their old party rather begged the question of what to do with them, but the *Telegraph* was pleased with such Balfourisms.

58 *Standard*, 15 November 1907.
59 *Daily Telegraph*, 15 November 1907.
The Outlook pronounced itself completely satisfied with Balfour's performance. With regard to fiscal reform he went beyond his statements heretofore. He supported a general tariff for revenue purposes if raw materials remained untouched and the proportion of taxation paid by working men stayed constant. He also sketched a generous program of social reform. Altogether this positive plan signalled a significant step forward for the party. The Pall Mall Gazette likewise rejoiced in the settled convictions of a leader who enjoyed such a "firm and true perception of both the objects and methods of statesmanlike policy." The right tone was set, according to the Standard, when the party leader proved the heartiness of his imperialism by declaring that when next a Tory Ministry governed its first act would be to summon an imperial conference. The Globe, Daily Express and Daily Mail expressed equal pleasure with the new offensive posture.

Of the major Tory organs, only the Morning Post questioned the necessity of recalling the Colonial Conference, which seemed to the editor the only real move beyond Balfour's previous positions. The independent Dominions gave preference without the aid of such a conference. Otherwise the Post found nothing to criticize in Balfour's statement of the guiding principles of his tariff reform. Yet if the speech showed virtually no movement, why was the Spectator up in arms at a speech which furthered its cause "not one iota"? Balfour had done it again.

16 November 1907. 15 November 1907. 15 November 1907.
managed to say a great many things in a very muffled tone so few would hear the whole.

As if to seize upon the smallest straw and perhaps to forestall a Maxse tantrum, Joseph Chamberlain wrote immediately to Maxse to express his thorough satisfaction with the work of the Conference and Balfour's address which showed "great advance in our direction."

I do not see how the Unionist Party can again come into office without putting tariff reform in the forefront, and you will see that Balfour no longer shys at the prospect of a moderate duty on corn and meat which I think essential for our negotiations with the Colonies.

Reports from Balfour, Chaplin and Austen further indicated to the old Radical great progress for the cause among leaders and rank and file, while free fooders were nowhere. Chamberlain tendered Maxse advice presumably intended for the eyes of all Confederates.

I think that our tactics should be to make the most of this unanimity, and we ought not in any case to play into the hands of our opponents whose interest it is to magnify differences and to declare that we are a divided party. I do not think that this is true. As far as men can speak alike on a subject on which they are agreed, we are all saying the same thing. No differences exist for any practical purposes. It would be small encouragement for him (Balfour), if, after having made definite advances towards us, he found our strongest men unwilling to recognize the change and still harping upon the differences which may yet remain.

Chamberlain seemed at pains to emphasize to Maxse the good will and understanding which resulted from Balfour's visit to Highbury after the Conference.

My conversation with him was very satisfactory and I have come to the conclusion that there is no practical difference between us except, perhaps, in the treatment of free fooders like Hugh Cecil. The best thing in my opinion is to leave these people strictly alone. They will find themselves in a small minority and I think we may safely and truly claim Balfour as one of ourselves.69

69IMP, Chamberlain to Maxse, 22 November 1907, marked "Private and Dictated," 157/603.
As might be expected, Maxse was less concerned with the rhetoric of party unity than with the real thing. He was not prone to ignore the lessons of Balfour's recent past. He disputed the claims of his political idol in tones of respect in a letter on the following day.

The Conference and the meeting seemed to me as an outsider to go very well, and Balfour, probably influenced by the strong and healthy atmosphere of Birmingham, went further and was more explicit than he had hitherto been as regards Tariff Reform, though he is so careful in avoiding the ordinary Tariff Reform terminology, as for instance the words "Tariff Reform" and "General Tariff"—but the forms do not matter if the substance is sound. One cannot, however, help feeling, in the light of many past unsatisfactory experiences during the last four years, that one never has quite got him, however satisfactory he may be for the moment, partly because he is surrounded by sinister advisers who detest Tariff Reform and everyone connected with it, and partly because the critical spirit has so got hold of him that he finds it very hard to be positive and constructive. Still, of course, we must make the best of an utterance which concedes so much and about which one would feel perfectly comfortable if one believed, not only that Balfour would stand to the position he adopted at Birmingham, but would also see, as he easily could if he chose, that all his friends would do the same, and if the official machinery of the Party became permeated with the enthusiasm which is necessary to carry through any great reform. I am so very glad to hear that his talk with you was satisfactory, in spite of his penchant towards Free Fooders, which is likely to lead to further difficulties, as Tariff Reformers must work for the solidarity of the Unionist Party; otherwise, whatever our Parliamentary majority, we can never hope to carry the policy, as we should find ourselves at the mercy of a handful of Free Food malcontents in a new Parliament. I imagine that the best thing would be for the Constituencies to take separate action, and insist that these recalcitrants shall toe the line and accept the very moderate programme which Balfour has laid down, and which Tariff Reformers are prepared to accept for the sake of Party unity, sans arrière pensée. I had written my notes for the coming month before getting your letter, to the effect that Balfour had answered the questions that Tariff Reformers wished to have answered in a substantially satisfactory manner, and that he provides a platform on which we can all work. I only wish I personally could feel more confidence in him. He always seems to be a drifter, who happens now to have drifted in our direction, and may at any time drift somewhere else. I do hope there will be no relaxation of vigilance and activity on
the part of Tariff Reformers. We have had a terribly uphill business during the last years, and it is really wonderful that in spite of impossible handicaps the situation is as satisfactory as it is. But it is no thanks to Balfour or any of his friends, and if he had his way in forming a cabinet tomorrow, with the exception of Austen and Bonar Law, it would hardly contain a single stalwart and reliable Tariff Reformer. This strikes me as another very serious problem as regards the future.

I should be delighted to have a talk at any time and would come down some afternoon to Highbury.

P. S. I am sure you heard of the exceptionally excellent and stirring speech which Goulding, one of the staunchest and most reliable Tariff Reformers, made at the Conference on Old Age Pensions. It was quite the speech of the Conference.70

In a lighter vein, that Balfour went as far as he seemed to go in his speech cost Maxse some money. A note from friend George Wyndham urging better organized propaganda campaigns for the party contained these remarks,

Many thanks for your letter and enclosure. I don't wish to win more money, so am content to prophesy that Balfour's speech will never be withdrawn. I note what you say about 'ginger' and inadequate criticism of ministerial policy.71

If Maxse was publicly more optimistic about his cherished panacea as another Christmas passed,72 his revealing letter to Chamberlain voiced his real doubts about Balfour and his firm conviction that a microscopic minority—the Unionist free traders—must bow to the wishes of the overwhelming majority or the party would go under. Unless the flame was kept hot under Balfour and his friends, tariff reform would never come to a boil. Maxse was unhappy, but vowed to do his part in seeing that the fire did not go out.

70JCP, Maxse to Chamberlain, 23 November 1907, 22/96.
71MP, Wyndham to Maxse, 26 November 1907, 457/605-06.
72Nat. Rev., L (December, 1907), 507-21.
Despite his inner certainty that one never quite "had" Balfour, Maxse met the third year of Tory opposition in a restrained manner. This reservation continued throughout the months ahead. He publicly supported Balfour's apparent acquiescence in the pages of the \textit{Review}, but, as a loyal Confederate, maintained his castigation of the Unionist free traders. Stymied for the moment by the party leader, Maxse involved himself in 1908 much more with national defense policy and attacks on the Government, along with the ever-constant warnings about German intentions.

Privately, Maxse's disbelief in Balfour's latest expression of devotion to the cause weighed heavy on his mind. Though a lull in the battle had indeed occurred after Birmingham, Maxse had not ended his opposition to all for which Balfour stood. Rather, the editor was biding his time and storing ammunition for the ultimate struggle which would no doubt some day come.

As noted, Maxse professed optimism in the party's outlook in the opening months of the year. He extolled Balfour's November pronouncement as the final settlement of Tory domestic differences on the fiscal question. That the complete and final break between Unionism and Cobdenism had indeed taken place, Maxse proclaimed, was underscored by a Tory triumph in a mid-winter by-election at Mid-Devon, a campaign fought primarily on fiscal policy lines.\footnote{Nat. Rev., L (February, 1908), 850-52.} Maxse applauded Bonar Law's subsequent declaration that only those supporting Balfour's Birmingham policy had the right to party help in by-elections and general elections.\footnote{Ibid., 858-59.}
Perhaps it would be well to repeat that throughout these years of increasingly embittered political disagreement, Maxse and Balfour remained personal friends. In 1908, for instance, in the only personal letter written by Balfour to Maxse in the Maxse Papers, the leader urged "Mr. Maxse" not to hurry with a book he had borrowed. It would not be presumptuous to assume that the book in question had been mentioned at some social function attended by both men. It is also not unreasonable to surmise that the "Mr." was soon after dropped, for, at the height of the campaign to shear some ermine from the robes of the peers, in that heated summer of 1911 when Maxse and Balfour stood on opposite sides of the issue, in the very week before the showdown they likewise stood day after day on opposite sides of a tennis court. And when, a few months later, after Maxse's scathing B.M.G. (Balfour Must Go!) campaign, Balfour did in fact 'go', he remarked that he really ought to have Leo Maxse to dinner that night as they were undoubtedly the two happiest men in London.

All this lay ahead. For the present, Maxse contented himself with a "wait and see" attitude not unlike that of the man who succeeded to the premiership in 1908, Herbert Asquith. Maxse acted effectively less than he was acted upon in 1908. Letters to him urging restraint and careful judgment, as well as his rather petulant journalistic feuds, make one wonder if his influence had not diminished. Finally, at year's

\[3\] LMP, Balfour to Maxse, 11 March 1908, 458/661.

\[4\] Interview with Major John Maxse, 26 January 1971.

end, the Morning Post published an unauthorized Unionist party program concocted by many Maxse intimates over the course of a year, but without his knowledge. He was apprised of it on the eve of publication.

Maxse's mailbox in 1908 contained some letters which must have disturbed him. Austen Chamberlain wrote in February to head off any National Review opprobrium for the party in Parliament. The Tories had voted with the Government against a rather harmless resolution proposed by Labour leader Ramsay MacDonald. The Morning Post quickly berated the Conservatives for failing to vote the opposite way and thereby turn out the Ministry. Chamberlain denied the Post's argument, pleading instead that had they voted for a resolution "indelibly associated with the Socialists," the country would have seen only that the Tories were led by or at least sullied with the brush of the socialists. Any opportunity to stake out a distinct social reform position would have been lost. Chamberlain laid all this before Maxse so that he would understand if he went on to condemn them in his journal or elsewhere. But neither slackness nor feebleness motivated this parliamentary procedure, explained Chamberlain. Rather, this was a definite and deliberate policy. Chamberlain predicted that similar situations would doubtless arise in the coming session, "which is why I am bothering you with a letter. Though we are slack and feeble sometimes, I do not think on this occasion we are open to the charge, though you may (I hope you don't) think us wrongheaded." 6

This would not be the last letter of self-defense Maxse would receive. His Parliamentary champion, Bonar Law, soon offered another. 6

6IMP, Chamberlain to Maxse, 2 February 1908, marked "Private," 458/643-45.
By the way, you had probably noticed my refusal in a debate this week to say anything about food taxation. I have never been yet in the House of Commons in so great a difficulty as I was in regard to that point. I knew that Lloyd-George would press for my answer, and I had to make up my mind before I got up what line I would take. A year ago, I should not have had the least hesitation in saying exactly what my views are, because then I would have thought that we could not count altogether on A. J. B., and that I at least ought to show no hesitation. Now whether I am right or wrong may be an open question, but I do believe that Balfour does mean the same thing that we mean, and if I am right in that view, then certainly it would not be wise or right for me to say anything which he would disapprove of. I thought also that as he had to speak himself he would be compelled to say something on the subject, and that if I had said anything whatever the statement he made would seem mild in comparison with mine and would lose effect.

Of course, as a matter of fact, I don't think he is right in making the efforts which he is obviously still making to get the vote on his side in the House of Commons of the half-dozen recalcitrants. But after all, nothing I could have said would, for the present at least, have made any difference in his attitude on that point, and on the whole, after the event, I think I was right in taking the line which was certainly very distasteful to myself.

Law then concluded his self-vindication. "I write all of this to you, because I don't wish you to think that I am any more timid now than I have been in the past in saying what I mean."7

Maxse referred to neither incident in public. He did respond to Law's apology with a reaffirmation of "complete confidence in your steadfastness, and (I) did not suppose for a moment there was any backsliding on your part." Maxse admitted his failure to understand parliamentary proceedings, and had imagined it had been decided to confine the discussion to pure finance.8

7Ibid., Law to Maxse, 4 June 1908, marked "Private," 458/705.
8BLP, Maxse to Law, 5 June 1908, 18/4/66.
That Chamberlain and Law believed apologetic letters necessary indicates Maxse's strength as well as his weakness. His eloquent journalism fell under the monthly gaze of 8,000 of the most influential people in the British Isles. Clearly most of his subscribers as well as those who might subsequently become the objects of his platform oratory would not understand the intricacies and the stratagems of parliamentary maneuverings. A deprecating word from Maxse, then, though his biases be clear for all to see, would do no Tory politician any good. That these denials of pernicious intent were sent presumes anxiety on the part of experienced parliamentarians concerning Maxse's possible displeasure. Despite his denial, Maxse was certainly intelligent enough to understand the necessity for compromise within legislative halls. For the sake of political idealism he chose not to see. Indeed, he used political idealism as an excuse for refusal to see. First, as noted above, he denied understanding the parliamentary game. Then he asserted that a game whose rules he did not understand was being played incorrectly, i.e., not according to Maxse's rules.

What I don't like about Balfour is that he always seems to me to be trying to evade the issue. He gets screwed up to a certain point, and we all imagine it is all right, and then he invariably plays into the hands of the enemy, and discourages his own friends by some piece of mental gymnastics, which may be very ingenious but which is getting most wearisome. It is ostensibly done in the interests of securing the support of two or three men who the very next day go off and give their blessings to the Free Food wreckers, organised by Cromer and Co. It is really very futile. Even if one cared nothing for the larger Imperial issues, Balfour's proceedings would appear to me as an outsider to be deplorable tactics. If he sincerely wishes to carry a decent Tariff Reform Bill when he comes in, of which it is permissible to entertain grave doubts, he will require the support of a solid and determined Unionist Party, prepared to face the music. To suppose that Bowles and Co., will be among these stalwarts is to my mind a piece of lunacy, and the sooner we recognize the facts the better. The only effect of
Balfourian tactics is to prevent the constituencies of Free Food Members taking the action they wish to take, but of course to Balfour politics is nothing more than a very entertaining game, and the issues count for nothing. One always comes back to this. 9

Here Maxse resembled, as do so many idealists, a child, a little boy who cries that the game is one 'for babies' if he fails to win.

The potential damage to reputations and causes from well-meaning idealists preaching political purity is incalculable. Whether Maxse held back in these two cases because of friendship or because the underlying meaning of the written messages broke through his chronic blindness to the color grey is not known. In any event, a man who it was thought was inclined to take facts at face value without ascertaining the causes behind them could become as formidable an obstacle as one's political foes. At the very least, the positive influence of a man with such political blinds is never maximized.

For all his gnawing doubts and blind spots, Maxse remained uncharacteristically quiet during 1908. His monthly "Episodes" which repeatedly lauded Balfour's Birmingham oration appear either as a supplication to the leader to mean what he said or as an effort in self-persuasion. Maxse attacked Balfour only indirectly in public for continuing to court Unionist free traders. His thrust in May is representative.

To tolerate the development of a faction of nominal Unionists on the floor...who would enter the next House of Commons avowedly to obstruct the first constructive work of the Unionist Government, with the inevitable result of wrecking that Government, would be an act of political suicide which we feel Unionists generally are too intelligent to contemplate. Unless sitting 'Free Trade Unionists' are sufficiently public-spirited and patriotic in the interests of the nine questions out of ten on which they are in agreement with their Party, to waive their objection on the tenth

9 Ibid.
question on which they are in a minority so insignificant as to be almost invisible, the local Associations will have no option but to request them to stand aside in favour of candidates prepared to cooperate in maintaining the next Unionist Government by supporting the very moderate measure of Tariff Reform to which it is pledged, and the passing of which is a condition of its continued existence.\(^\text{10}\)

Maxse also pounced upon the leadership for refusing to divest itself of the foolish notion that tariff reform could be accomplished merely by a return of Balfour's last cabinet to office. "The old gang in the old place" simply would not do. Their intellectual caliber and dearth of business capacity rendered them incapable of performing the difficult, intricate task of framing a satisfactory tariff reform bill much less carrying it against a Liberal opposition "remarkably rich in debating and critical talent." Maxse suggested that the present period in opposition be utilized to reinforce intellectually the personnel of the party in Parliament. To this end he submitted the names of Hewins, Mackinder and Amery, old Coefficient colleagues and staunch tariff reformers, for whom he hoped the whips would find seats.\(^\text{11}\)

Balfour was also the indirect object of yet another Maxse volley at the "drones and deadheads" who formed the bulk of the "attenuated Opposition." The party practice of selling seats to the highest bidder resulted in a disproportionate number of plutocrats as rank and file Members who took "little or no interest in politics, and are in a Parliamentary sense probably useless, because they do not even attend and vote." The central office bore the brunt of the responsibly for this intolerable situation.\(^\text{12}\) Probably Maxse would have fought to change

\(^\text{10}\) Nat. Rev., LI (May, 1908), 359. \(^\text{11}\) Ibid., 365.
\(^\text{12}\) Ibid., LII (September, 1908), 28-9.
this state of affairs in any event, but more outspoken, political activist Members would presumably offer more of a leadership challenge to Balfour, no doubt a not unpleasant thought.

If Balfour's speech at Birmingham subsequently muzzled Maxse from directly faulting his chief, the leader soon proved himself adept at wending his way back into the bad graces of the eminent journalist. In September, Balfour denied what to Maxse amounted to the belief in God, or, rather, in this case, the devil. In a rare, unambiguous simple sentence, Balfour informed a correspondent, "I cannot conceive what interest Germany has in attacking us." Maxse, predictably, was irate.

The amazing incapacity of superior persons to see what is obvious to inferior persons is largely responsible for the growth of German seapower and a powerful faction in producing the present naval crisis.

The Liberals and Tories alike who saw no menace in German war preparations and so saw no need for costly counter preparations were equally responsible for the sad state of the navy and the army. War was not inevitable, said Maxse, but the Government and the people had to shore up the defenses before Germany took advantage of the present British weakness.13

Balfour's statement followed closely in principle the one he had made three years before (11 May 1905), in which he declared that the invasion of the British islands was not a problem with which serious statesmen need concern themselves. This, Maxse claimed, absolved his successor of the necessity to create a serious army for home defense.

For several years, Maxse had preached strong defense and 1908 saw him take a bigger part in this debate than ever before. He spoke at 13bid., (October, 1908), 168-74.
local meetings of the non-partisan National Service League at Ascot and in March at Brighton. At Brighton, he delivered a scathing denunciation of both major parties for their indifference to the safety of the country and for their equal responsibility for the deepening anxiety which the international situation inspired among Englishmen and their foreign friends. Both parties shared guilt for raids upon the army and navy estimates in the name of economy, a policy fraught with peril and certainly not economic in the long run. Maxse cited chapter and verse, ministry by ministry, the decline of the British fighting services; the Unionists' muddling of the South African War, the "tinkering and botching" misnamed army reform which followed. And now a Liberal and German philosopher was being allowed to complete the task of reducing an already diminutive Regular Army and to defend that reduction on the pretext of the existence of a Territorial Army which would begin to train when the emergency arose, "that is to say, when the German legions were knocking at our door."

This hazardous foray upon the army, continued Maxse, found its unhappy counterpart in the Little Navyites who were systematically disarming Britain's first line of defense by failure to build enough dreadnoughts, destroyers, secondary vessels and repairing docks. Clearly the Kaiser's strenuous naval building program was aimed at his uncle's kingdom across the North Sea, since maritime strength was not necessary to defeat any other potential German enemy, given her military preponderance.

Maxse made a searing reference to the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Tweedmouth, who had been involved in an embarrassing correspondence

11 The Times, 9 January 1908.
with William II about the British navy just when the naval estimates were under scrutiny. Apparently the Kaiser was finding helping hands, chided Maxse, in his attempt to run both his own fleet and that of his uncle. The abandonment of the two-power standard, the abandonment of naval supremacy, would lead not to universal peace but to universal bloodshed.

Maxse concluded his powerful speech with an emotional appeal to working class members of the audience to share in the burden of defense of British liberties. He did not doubt the Englishman's ability to defend himself against competition in any sphere of endeavor, but only given conditions approaching equality; "but a contest between a nation in arms and an unarmed nation could have only one result, without some providential intervention which we have no right to expect, because God only helps those who help themselves." Participation in a cadet corps throughout the years of public school and three or four months' training for all men between eighteen and twenty-one, plus a few days a year thereafter, would provide at minimum cost and minimum disturbance to civil life, a powerful national militia which "would convince aggressive neighbors that we are no longer the line of least resistance, and the German cyclone would burst elsewhere." Conscription with its invidious exceptions and substitutes played no part in the KSL scheme which was absolutely democratic. The regular army would remain voluntary, but fortified now with a reservoir of trained men, the only ones who would be compelled to serve.15

15Ibid., 18 March 1908.
16Nat. Rev., LI (April, 1908), 303-16.
Maxse's words at Brighton merely summarized what he had been saying for years and would continue to say about national defense in general and the German menace in particular. He never stinted in his praise of those of any political persuasion who followed his precepts. Sir Edward Grey was the subject of a long paragraph of praise in a Maxse peroration at an open air demonstration of the Louth Working Men's Conservative Club. Maxse hailed the Foreign Secretary as the greatest asset in a Government with little else to commend it. Foremost among his many achievements stood the enlargement of the circle of Britain's international friendships. Grey refused to be inveigled with bogus ententes, presumably German, which would be exploited to Britain's detriment. That Grey's policy was correct was indicated by the inordinate amount of criticism he received from his fellow Radicals.17

Maxse's Germanophobia aroused the usual comments from Liberal Ministers anxious in these early years of the Government to transfer as many funds as possible from any source to their fledgling social welfare innovations. Churchill typified this Liberal reaction. Of the 50 to 60 million Germans, he estimated not 10,000 wished to attack England. Furthermore, "I do not believe there are even that number to be found in our own country, if you exclude the inmates of Bedlam and writers in the National Review."18

An unnamed Churchill Cabinet colleague apparently saw things in a different light. On almost that same day Maxse wrote to Lord Northcliffe, his friend, tennis partner and new owner of The Times,

17 Standard, 14 August 1908.

A friend of mine was taken into dinner a few days ago by a Cabinet Minister, who said to her: "If the public knew what we know as to Germany's war preparation there would be a tremendous panic." An interesting comment on Churchill and other types. I am very anxious to have a word with you.19

As the year drew to a close Maxse must have felt a deep sense of frustration. Balfour's apparent refusal to purge the Tory free traders continued to gnaw; his chief's attitude toward German intentions did not reassure him. Noncontributory welfare schemes promulgated by the Government, such as old age pensions, while objectionable in the matter of funding in the short run, did at least make up for the deficiency by hastening the demise of free trade. The only positive, bright color in the British spectrum was Grey, the Foreign Secretary, and time alone would tell if he could withstand the Little England onslaught.

In October Maxse received what must have been yet another blow--this time to his self-confidence. It took the form of a concise letter from his closest friend, Leo Amery.

You will see in the Morning Post in the course of the next week or so a statement of constructive policy resulting from discussions between a number of leading Unionists. You may like to know in confidence the genesis of this document and how it got into the K. P. It has been the result of a series of symposia and interchanges of letters extending over a little more than a year. Milner, Austen, Bonar Law have been the leading people in it on the political side, and through Austen Joe has also been consulted. Among the minor people were Jebb, Ware, Hills and myself. In the end the actual editing of a draft was undertaken by Jebb, and in view of this and of Ware's help, it was eventually decided to let the document appear in the Morning Post rather than to launch it in The Times or send it round to the press in general.

As for the document itself, it is not in the nature of an unauthorised program, but rather an attempt to discover and state the chief points on which we may call the advanced wing of the Unionist party are in general agreement. It is just a basis of discussion and consideration

and not an attempt to run a policy or to queer a pitch. I mention all these things so that you should not misunderstand the document when it comes out. I don't know that the document will have any particular effect beyond possibly stimulating an interest in the future constructive policy of the party. Its greatest value lay in the interchange of ideas which preceded. But it was felt a pity not to publish the result in some form or other when we had arrived at it.

P. S. Of course, none of the names of the persons concerned must come out.20

Upon receipt of this fait accompli, Maxse must have wondered whether he was considered any longer a member of the advanced wing of the party. His exclusion cannot have been an oversight and Amery's letter certainly is at pains to secure a favorable response from him. Perhaps the symposia members feared a deluge of Maxse verbiage similar to that of which H. G. Wells complained at the post-Coefficient dinner talk sessions. Perhaps Maxse's inflexible posture on most questions or his penchant for bringing all questions round eventually to a defense of tariff reform was the reason for his failure to be consulted. There is no way to learn his private reaction to what must have come as at least a surprise, but in public he affably supported what he did term an "unauthorised programme," published in the Morning Post on 12 October 1908.21 Maxse found no difficulty in upholding tariff reform as the first work of the party, the two-power standard and national service. On the other hand, he certainly did not agree that Haldane's army reform was a step in the right direction, and a vague progressive social policy which left unspecified the

20LMP, Amery to Maxse, 8 October 1908, marked "Confidential," 158/757.

21The "statement of constructive policy" professed support for tariff reform as the first constructive work of the party, with an import duty varying "with the value of the article imported and the labour which might have been employed upon it in this country." Also included were a two-power standard for the navy, national service, and a progressive social policy without mentioning its scope or method of finance.
method of finance surely raised his bushy eyebrows. Nonetheless he
defended the program, blaming its errors on moderation. In some unsta-
ted areas he advocated more progressive proposals, and, most of all, he
repeated the urgent necessity for a root-and-branch reform of the higher
personnel of the party.22

The new program was so vague about so many vital points that its
value was minimal. Few Tory journals deigned to notice it. J. L. Garvin,
now launched upon his long career with the Observer, summed up general
opinion:

    It is full of good suggestions, but it shows that the
Unionist party as a whole will have to undertake a much more
thorough process of clear thinking before it becomes intel-
lectually and morally ready for the immense responsibilities
with which it is to be trusted.23

Perhaps the vagueness of the proposals offers the best clue to the
reason for Maxse's absence. He held little affection for social welfare
plans, but, if they had to be, then financing must come from contributions.
Maxse also possessed very definite ideas as to the form the tariff should
take. It is difficult to conceive of him signing his name to such a doc-
ument. The program apparently aimed at becoming an umbrella under which
Unionists of all denominations, except free fooders, could relax in har-
mony. The authors must have known that Maxse was less concerned with
the numbers huddled together under the brolly than he was with the prin-
ciples which guided their thoughts.

November brought Maxse to the party Conference at Cardiff. There
he submitted a resolution, passed unanimously, "That the first duty

22Nat. Rev., LII (November, 1908), 372.
23Observer, 18 October 1908.
against external aggression."  This was surely a far different Maxse than that of a year before. In the face of a unanimous Conference vote of confidence in Balfour's fiscal leadership, the value of which was demonstrated at the recent Newcastle by-election, Maxse had to hide his nagging doubts and revert to an innocuous resolution, which only very indirectly cast aspersion on the leader. Balfour consolidated his position further that evening in a speech which produced almost universal journalistic applause. The Pall Mall Gazette exclaimed, "Tariff Reformers cannot complain that Mr. Balfour did not give their cause sufficient emphasis in his Cardiff speech last night, for he made a particularly neat and effective exposure of the practical working of Free Trade."  

The Saturday Review lauded the chief's "uncompromising adoption of fiscal reform as the rally cry of the party," but ridiculed his foolish shying away from the word "protection" in favor of the synonymous "safeguarding." The Daily Mail expressed confidence in a general election victory after observing the enthusiasm which greeted Balfour. Garvin pronounced Balfour's conversion to fiscal reform full and complete.

Maxse may have felt as crippled as Chamberlain when, early in December, Mrs. Maxse and he went up to Highbury for tea. More than ever Maxse seemed outside the mainstream of the party. Balfour had apparently come round and was carrying all before him. Maxse had been told in effect several times that he was feared because of his refusal to see that strategy often involved tactics which appeared questionable on the surface or at the moment. Certainly there was such a message in Amery's October

24 Standard, 20 November 1908.  
25 20 November 1908.  
26 21 November 1908.  
27 20 November 1908.  
28 Observer, 22 November 1908.
epistle, though it is not suggested that Maxse's friends were deserting him. Indeed, Amery attended that same Chamberlain tea. And even Garvin, who professed belief in Balfour's conversion, soon published an editorial in praise of an anonymous article in the December National Review which laughed at the very idea that Balfour could, upon resumption of office, even contemplate the submission of the same names for the cabinet which so little graced it before. The unqualified old gang could not begin to produce, much less to pass, the tariff which Balfour had come to realize was vital.29

Maxse also had his Confederate friends, his Tariff Reform League allies and his National Service League cohorts. He was not alone, but his apparent success in the domestic cause nearest his heart had certainly not rendered him ecstatic. Persistent misgivings continued, qualms which he could do little in public to express without seeming to be narrowly pedantic, doubts which only the resumption of office by the Tories would prove or disprove, or, failing that, another policy crisis mooting confidence in the leadership. Time would bring the day of reckoning with Balfour which Maxse believed was essential for the health of the party. Time, however, was not prepared with the issue in 1908. Without a solid issue, Maxse jumped about like a nervous cat pouncing at a rubber mouse but waiting for the real thing to appear.

29Ibid., 13 December 1908.
VI. FINAL PREPARATIONS

Things continued much as before in the first months of 1909. Maxse's skirmishes round Balfour went on and the fire of the Unionist free trader controversy burned ever brighter. Then, in midyear, the constitutional crisis which emerged from the Lloyd George budget seemed to bring Maxse and Balfour together for a brief moment. The fight for control of the House of Lords led to Balfour's fall. R. T. Mackenzie mistakenly implies that the tariff movement and the struggle to clip the wings of the peers were unrelated. But for Balfour's more extreme followers, with Leo Maxse in the forefront, Balfour's treachery in the House of Lords controversy followed close upon the heels of his rebuff to tariff reformers in the second election of 1910. This rebuff merely confirmed Maxse's suspicion about the leader's real view of tariff reform. For Maxse and his like-thinking colleagues, Balfour's failure to lead antedated 1911, and harkened back to the days of his premiership from 1902 to 1905, years which presaged the decline of the party.

In early 1909, though, Maxse contented himself with sounding the usual alarms, especially about Tory free traders. He was not alone in his concern about their destructive potential. Confederate and non-Confederate journals alike expressed strong opinion about the group as a whole and about the controversy roused by Confederate disclosures concerning the most prominent Tory free trader, Lord Robert Cecil. Lord Robert was the Member for East Marylebone. On questions other than

\[1\] Mackenzie, op. cit., 76.
fiscal policy his voice was well respected in high party councils. He
had, however, recently concluded a pact with the Unionist association
in his constituency which stated that he would be the party candidate
at the next election and would, should the Tories emerge victorious in
the country, resign his seat if he felt unable to support Balfour's
fiscal program. The question was obvious: should Lord Robert have the
financial support of the Conservative Central Office despite his views
about tariffs? Further, wasn't it likely that others less eminent who
shared his views would construe his case as a precedent and demand like
treatment? And, ultimately, would this not lead to a group seated on
the Government benches with the avowed purpose of embarrassing the
Balfour Ministry and perhaps causing it to delay or water down its pro-
posals?

The Balfourite Daily Telegraph deigned to acknowledge the existence
and even the minor inconvenience of the zealous Confederate "juveniles."
The journal professed agreement with their efforts to secure an over-
whelming triumph for fiscal reform but denied the ill-effect that the
candidacy of a few members tainted with Cobdenism would have on the
central office or the party as a whole. In their zeal, continued the
editorial, the Confederates had purchased a pig in a poke, because the
Central office, even if it so wished, could not support financially or
otherwise candidates who refused to pledge themselves to the defined
policy of the party.

If the electors are not in sympathy with the Leader, they will doubtless adopt a candidate who is equally schis-
matic, and in any case the seat for which he fights may be
reckoned as lost whether he is returned or not. This incon-
trovertible fact renders meaningless the efforts of irrespon-
sible vigilance committees bent upon sifting the wheat from
the tares. They are simply attempting to dictate to the electors for whom they should vote and whom they should eschew. The electors can and will perform that simple task for themselves.

The journal thus dismissed Confederate efforts to blacklist the free trade Unionists. Purges were good for neither fiscal reform nor the Empire.2

The Confederates were attacked from another source. St. Loé Strachey, the spokesman for the Unionist free traders, naturally opposed the efforts of an "anti-English" "secret tribunal" to impose a "root and branch" policy on the party. His Spectator published what he believed to be a partial list of Confederates, including the names of Bonar Law, Viscount Ridley and other MPs. The list did not include the name of Strachey's close friend, Leo Maxse. Strachey understandably went further than the Daily Telegraph. In the event a local association chose a man who could not accept Balfour's stated fiscal views and a tariff reform candidate opposed him, the central office, advised Strachey, should remain neutral, offering neither sanction nor aid to either man.3

The Saturday Review opposed the official central office policy because, unlike the Confederates, it saw tariff reform as one of a number of policies the next Unionist ministry needed to pursue, among them educational and poor law reform and improvement of army and navy defenses.

To keep the personal level of public life high is more important than any policy or any economics. Some of our Confederate and Tariff Reform enthusiasts will be angry with us for saying this, but we are as good friends of Tariff Reform as they.4

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2Daily Telegraph, 27 January 1909.
3Spectator, 23 January 1909.
4Saturday Review, 23 January 1909.
The Observer took a middle position. Garvin urged that the tail of the party not be permitted to wag the dog, that is, that the free fooders' influence should not exceed their number unless, as in the case of the Cecil brothers, Lord Robert and Lord Hugh, there had been exceptional service to the party. Unionists could not afford to have "more than one or two seats neutralised on personal grounds." 5

The Globe, contending that "he that is not with us is against us," offered no compromise to anyone, Cecil or otherwise. 6 Equally adamant was the Daily Express which wanted no coddling of free traders in any constituency. "We admit the great ability of Lord Robert Cecil and his friends. We wish them good luck—and good bye....There is no place in our ranks for wobblers." 7

The editor of the Standard, H. A. Gwynne, held out hope that Tory free traders would yet turn and follow the rising sun of tariff reform, placing their decision in the political perspective that they agreed with their fiscal foes on so many other issues. Sad it would be if the rebel group were permitted to sit on the ministry benches and then fight fellow Tories at by-elections, rending the party in two. Gwynne appealed to the higher instincts of the malcontents. He pointed out that the central office, while not offering them support, was, at the same time, not pledged to aid their tariff reform opponents. This implied compromise should be an example for them to follow, in the interests of party unity and electoral victory. Realistic subordination, not humiliation, was Gwynne's policy. 8

Gwynne opposed the Confederates' tack while professing belief in their good intentions. He believed Tories fighting Tories on the hustings was essentially irrational. Any purge was likewise bad policy. If the Unionist Members who agreed with the party platform on all but one plank wished to desert to the enemy, let them, but they ought not to be given the chance to say they were pushed out. If, as Gwynne understood, these men held out for the sake of conviction and not self-interest, coercion would not change their minds. Yet coercion was the sole policy offered by the "ill-timed intervention of the Confederates." Though meaning well, these zealots stood for no recognized element or considerable principle in the party.

The only thing achieved by hanging the dirty linen of internal disagreement on the public washline was exaltation for the real enemy, the Radical minority which would thus be able to divert attention from its own misdoings. Hence the East Marylebone bargain provided no acceptable solution; nor did the Neanderthal policy of the Confederates.

Gwynne presented no way out other than for Balfour to deal with the dissenters in the spirit of compromise and conciliation to prevent either a lasting fissure or reunion at too high a cost.\(^9\)

Maxse quickly added to the controversy. At a "smoking concert" of the Unionist Association of Isleworth at St. Margaret's, he dismissed the view that the Conservative free traders were so insignificant a minority that they could safely be left alone. Rather, the mischievous nature of a free food cabal, regardless of the size of the Tory majority, would prove to be out of all proportion to its numbers. Perpetual intrigue with the goal of watering down tariff reform was intolerable. It was

\(^9\)Ibid., 1 February 1909.
far better to lose a few seats at the general election than to grant a body of nominal adherents a veto of the policy of the majority in the next Parliament. "Only a party that had taken leave of its senses," Maxse warned, "would consent to tolerate the development in its ranks of a group whose avowed aim and purpose was to paralyse that party."

In political conflict, as in other conflict, "an open foe striking a blow in the face was infinitely less dangerous than a false friend who stabbed one in the back." 10

Maxse was, however, willing to accept the East Marylebone compact "because in spite of fiscal heresies Lord Robert Cecil is a first-class fighting man, who enjoys everybody's esteem." But extension of the veto to other Members without his claim was a different matter. The first demands for equal treatment had already been sounded in East Hertfordshire by the sitting free trader. Such symptoms of a contagious disease could be fatal to a new Tory administration. "It is not a question of losing a Parliamentary majority but of losing prestige without which no Government can succeed." Maxse advised local associations to abandon dissident candidates and support instead those prepared to uphold tariff reform and imperial preference even at the cost of three-cornered contests and the loss of a few seats. Losing a few seats at the general election was infinitely preferable to losing them afterwards in the opening days of a new ministry.11

Maxse never acknowledged his membership in the Confederacy. But his views regarding its tactics and strategy were unmistakably enthusiastic.

10 The Times, 28 January 1909.

11 Nat. Rev., LII (February, 1909), 897-901.
More power to the elbows of the Confederates and of others who have done and are doing the valuable spadework in harmonising and consolidating our Party, and in saving the next Unionist Government from the danger of harbouring a nest of traitors in its own camp who would work hand in glove with the enemy to restore a Little England, pro-Boer, Radical Socialistic, Home Rule Government.

Maxse assailed those who chided the Confederacy for its "secrecy" and "un-English" methods by pointing out the "secret and very un-English committee now engaged in misgoverning the country and wrecking the British Empire." 12

Early 1909 saw the beginning of another Maxse campaign against dissent, against the women of all classes who had formed organizations to promote the cause of female enfranchisement. Maxse held to the Victorian view that women should remain seen but not heard by any save their husbands. Once a female ventured out from behind the ear of her spouse, her influence, her powerful influence, would end. As usual, Maxse detected in this new movement a threat to his cherished tariff reform and a further reason to chastise Arthur Balfour.

It is surely time for the Conservative Party to cease trifling with a topic which is too grave to remain "open." People who differ on woman suffrage will find it increasingly difficult to co-operate on other issues, and unless Mr. Balfour puts down his foot, the Unionist Party will be riven from top to bottom at the very moment when cohesion and concentration are urgently required.13

Maxse praised the "splendid work" of the fledgling National Women's Anti-Suffrage League as well as the Men's Committee for Opposing Women's Suffrage.14

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12 Ibid., LIII (March, 1909), 31.
13 Ibid., LII (January, 1909), 723.
14 Ibid., (February, 1909), 903-04.
During the lull in home affairs which existed in early 1909 before the new session of Parliament met, Maxse busied himself with the anti-free food and anti-suffrage fights. He continued to push for reform of the composition and for strengthening the power of the House of Lords.\textsuperscript{15} He also engaged in a typically Maxsian melodramatic exchange of public letters with Lloyd George over the disaster Maxse claimed was fast overtaking the navy due to the demoralizing policies of First Sea Lord Sir John Fisher. Maxse followed up Garvin's cry of "We want eight" (dreadnoughts)\textsuperscript{16} in a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer published in The Times in which Maxse accused Lloyd George and his Liberal colleagues of a grievous failure to appreciate the security needs of the nation as exposed by their inadequate shipbuilding program. In order to prove that he was not a paper patriot but was willing to support his share of the burden, Maxse, "although only a man of modest means," enclosed a substantial portion of (his) income to be devoted to the construction of the second quartet of Dreadnoughts now trembling in the balance. All patriotic British would do the same given the full disclosure of the facts by the Ministry.

Maxse asked for the return of his check, which would be donated to some other patriotic cause, if the Cabinet decided against the additional four dreadnoughts.\textsuperscript{17}

Lloyd George responded quickly to this grandstand play. He returned the check with a perfunctory statement of belief in Maxse's good faith and the faith of the Government in the patriotism of the British people. But, chided the Chancellor, Maxse had forgotten that the Government was responsible not only for the national security but for the prevention\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., 894-95.\textsuperscript{16}Observer, 14 March 1909.\textsuperscript{17}The Times, 3 April 1909.
of unnecessary expenditures and was culpable if it failed in either sphere. He regretted the "jumpy" patriotism then in fashion which, though sincerely motivated, detracted from national dignity and prestige. 18

Thus did Leo Maxse hopelessly try to equate the defense spending of the Liberals with lack of patriotism. It is curious that in a wholly different area of public policy, that of social reform, the methods and degrees of which were then being furiously debated in all the political parties, Maxse had barely a word to say. The very few times he referred to social ills, like mounting unemployment, he was quick to denounce "quack socialistic nostrums." But he never mentioned any remedy other than fiscal reform and contributory plans for relief of the aged, the poor and the sick. He professed religious faith in the panacea of protection in an age when religious fervor was dying. A man who could likewise argue that the extension of the suffrage should not be debated because it would create differences of opinion in a political party which had men as diverse as Joseph Chamberlain, Lord Halsbury, Arthur Balfour and Lord Robert Cecil within its ranks, was clearly a man who thought absolute truth had been revealed to him. Yet, uncertainty was the order of the day: How far should Liberal reforms go? How should Tories respond to them? What role was Labour to play in Parliament? One answer to all of Britain's problems, an answer moreover which professed to be above politics and in the interests of the nation alone, made for good rhetoric, but was bound to lack credibility. 18

VII. THE BATTLE

Lloyd George introduced his famous budget at the end of April, 1909. To pay for the expanding navy and the old age pension program, the Chancellor sought new revenue sources in a sharp increase in inheritance taxes; higher income taxes which continued to distinguish between earned and unearned incomes, including an additional supertax on very large incomes; new taxes, of which the most significant was a twenty percent tax on the unearned increment on values when land changed hands; and higher taxes on tobacco and spirits. Readers had to await the June number of the National Review to find out what editor Maxse thought of the scheme or, rather, to learn in what terms he would demolish what he would surely feel was the latest Radical plan to ruin the nation. In the interim, Tory journals of all persuasions were slow to recognize the 'revolutionary socialism' inherent in the budget. Soon, however, their protests rose loud and clear.

Maxse accepted the general Conservative consensus that this was the last free trade budget because it touched almost everyone's pockets and taxed almost everything taxable; hereafter the basis of taxation would have to be widened. By presenting the "very worst Budget ever presented to Parliament in peacetime," wrote Maxse with tongue in cheek, "Lloyd George was completing the good work of the German Emperor and Mr. Asquith of converting the country to Tariff Reform." Moreover, the budget exasperated
a number of idle, useless people, who normally do nothing but amuse themselves. These drones can never be induced to attend a meeting during an election. But now their pockets are affected, they will probably become keen politicians and active campaigners. That property should periodically be made to "squeal" by the Radicals is an excellent thing for the Unionists, though unfortunately the heaviest punishment falls on the most valuable class in the community, the resident country gentlemen. Hitherto, by great sacrifice, he has just managed to keep his head above water, but this Budget looks like his death-blow.¹

Maxse then turned to specifics. To meet a deficit caused by bad finance, bad times, old age pensions and the German navy, Lloyd George's "hotch-potch" of suggestions was governed by two principles: the desire to inflict the maximum injury on all political opponents or on those so suspected, particularly publicans, brewers, landlords and capitalists generally; and secondly, the necessity of protecting foreign competitors from making any contribution to the British Empire.²

Maxse agreed entirely with the ex-Liberal Prime Minister, Lord Rosebery, who declared the budget "a social and political revolution" of the first magnitude. The budget clearly did not constitute a Money Bill, said Maxse, and accordingly there was no reason for the House of Lords to hesitate to reject such an iniquitous measure, one which would in fact signify the peers' self-annihilation. If the Lords asserted their right to reject bad legislation hastily passed by the Lower Chamber, respect for the House of Lords would increase. At the same time, Liberal efforts to knock the peers out of the Constitution by the policy of "filling up the cup"--waiting until the Lords vetoed enough Liberal legislation and then going to the country with the cry that the Lords were interfering with the operation of the Constitution--would fall flat.³

¹Nat. Rev., LIII (June, 1909), 548-49. ²Ibid., 549.
³Ibid., (July, 1909), 72-4.
Two themes are found in Maxse's objections to the tactics of the Tory opponents of the budget in Parliament. He wished the budget were more frequently discussed from the standpoint of national defense. Further, he regretted that tariff reformers had not responded to Asquith's repeated demands for an alternative budget simply because Lloyd George's magnum opus was being "so ably and exhaustively dissected in Parliament and in the Press." 4

Maxse sought to remedy the latter deficiency himself. He wrote to Bonar Law for help.

I am sorry to have seen so very little of you this year, but I have hesitated to badger you because I know what a dreadful time our friends in the House have been having by night as well as by day. I can't help regretting that Tariff Reform seems to have been allowed to some extent to be put in the background under the stress of fighting the budget. It seems to me in politics as in warfare, the only way to score is to choose one's own ground and not to allow the ground to be chosen by the other side, and by far the best weapon, indeed the only effective and permanently successful weapon with which to destroy Lloyd Georgeism, is our alternative policy of Tariff Reform, and I am glad to see that in Balfour's speech a couple of days ago he made one of his rare references to this subject, and I imagine will now relapse into silence for many weeks or months, as he never seems to refer to it under compulsion. The point of all this...is the desirability of responding to Asquith's continued challenge for an "Alternative Budget," as much harm has been done by giving it the go-by. Won't you step into the breach, and write a paper for the National Review setting forth the general lines of such a Budget, without in any way being committed to details, pointing out what great sources of revenue are available when once we abandon our present narrow basis of taxation? I take it the chief sources would be, (1) small preferential duties on wheat, meat and dairy produce; (2) moderate duties on foreign manufactured goods; (3) heavier duties on imported luxuries. Do at any rate think it over, as I am sure such an article would be of the utmost value. With a view to starting a discussion on Tariff Reform, I have let in a Free Trader, J. A. Hobson, in the August NR to attack the doctrine that tariffs promote employment, and I shall try and get Hewins or some other expert on our side to reply.

Do please consider the possibility of writing the Article on an alternative Budget. 5

4Ibid., (June, 1909), 548. 5BLP, Maxse to Law, 29 July 1909, 18/5/100.
Law replied immediately, in the negative. He hoped to see an article such as his friend proposed and wished he could be the one to write it. Since no advantage accrued to an anonymous article, he argued, he could not be the author. Any such piece needed to go into more detail than he was accustomed to in speeches and "every attempt to give a detailed outline of our scheme creates a target for the criticism of our opponents." That in itself would not be objectionable, Law continued, but any such article would surely suggest points to which some supporters of the cause would object, and "any publicly expressed difference of opinion on points, however slight, would do us a great deal of harm." Law offered to think the matter over, but his mood was not positive. In the end the article was never written.

Maxse found a more sympathetic ear in J. L. Garvin, whose Observer called for a party and a leader united in demanding a rejection of the budget by the Lords—anything else would be "moral suicide" and an anti-budget campaign based on the tariff reform alternative. Maxse agreed that Unionists had drifted into a mess because tariff reform was not recognized as the first plank in their platform. He warned that he would not remain silent on the subject much longer, that is, refrain from blasting Balfour for tergiversation, and he blamed the Opposition as much as the Government for the fact that protection had been sidetracked. Garvin's goal, however, differed from that of Maxse. He wished to refocus the fiscal division in the country from free trade versus tariff

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6 IMP, Law to Maxse, 30 July 1909, 460/343.
7 11 July 1909.
8 8 August 1909.
reform to the broader battlefield of socialism versus tariff reform. He also hoped to build up Balfour in Tory and Radical eyes as a dynamic, popular successor to Chamberlain who would reunite the party and its malcontents.\textsuperscript{10} In that same week, Balfour's letter to Garvin expressing agreement with this extreme point of view of his journal\textsuperscript{11} convinced him that his course was correct. Maxse, on the other hand, though very much alive to the socialist menace, adamantly refused to silence himself on the Unionist free food threat, a very real and ever-present danger to a party pledged, at least officially, to the reverse policy.\textsuperscript{12}

Maxse received as much advice as he gave about the political future in that summer and fall of 1909. He was deluged with counsel from the eminent jurist A. V. Dicey who was writing a National Review article about Blackstone's Commentaries. Dicey penned long messages, obviously with the hope that his suggestions would be acted upon by a man whose own letters made clear he was "fully occupied with the political conflict" and who regarded the situation produced by the budget as serious indeed. Like Garvin, Dicey viewed the coming showdown as essential to push back the socialist horde. Due to Radical tactics, the House of Lords stood on the front lines of that battle. By reforming themselves, the Lords could shift any Liberal diversion of public interest away from the alleged abuse of constitutional power and back to the real arena where the imperialists and the social revolutionaries were standing off. At the same time, again like Garvin, Dicey somewhat inconsistently demanded a compromise between Unionist fiscal reformers and Unionist free traders in the interests of a united front against the common enemy—the budget and its\textsuperscript{10}Ibid., 116. \textsuperscript{11}Ibid., 113.\textsuperscript{12}Nat. Rev., LIII (July, 1909), 731-32.
socialist and free trade authors. 

Dicey, then, awaited combat between Unionists and Budgeteers. Lord Winterton, editor of The World, urged no contest at all. If a general election was called on the budget issue, he argued, Tories would submit the tariff reform alternative to the populace. Winterton believed that this would do Tories little good with working class people with whom the budget was undeniably popular. As in 1906, tariff reform would become lost in the shuffle if it was mixed up with the budget. Winterton begged Maxse to think twice before supporting a budget election. His Lordship wished a general election later, on tariff reform alone. If unemployment continued its upward spiral, he prompted, the Conservatives would occupy as favorable a position as they had before the Lloyd George bombshell, and "I would prefer to sacrifice Dukes and big landowners than the success of the cause." Also, as iniquitous as the budget was in principle, with the modifications imposed by Commons and Lords it would not have the same practical effect. Later the Liberal Ministry could be removed by the tariff reform issue when their panaceas had failed so miserably.

Neither Dicey nor Winterton's game plan convinced Maxse. We have no record of his replies to these counsels, but a subsequent letter from Dicey makes clear their friendly disagreement.

The one thing on which I think you and I probably differ...is the absolute conviction I feel of the necessity, no less than the justice, of making such concessions on all sides as may enable Unionists to act together in an attack on the Government. I have said to Strachey and I say to you, that each division of Unionists must be prepared to surrender a good deal. The more each surrender the more patriotic it would be.

13LWP, Dicey to Maxse, 15 September 1909, 46/0/01-03.
14Ibid., Winterton to Maxse, 18 August 1909, 46/0/373-75.
15Ibid., Winterton to Maxse, 1h October 1909, 46/-/130-32.
Maxse ignored such admonitions for a while. In August, he applauded Lord Lansdowne's prediction that the House of Lords would not swallow the budget when it came up from the Commons merely because it was mixed up with the financial affairs of the nation. "The worse the Budget," Maxse crowed, "the greater the triumph of the House of Lords, the greater the setback to the House of Commons,...and the greater the Radical smash, which promises to be unparalleled." Maxse was always a wholehogger.

The duty of Unionists, he went on,

is as clear as the noonday sun--to fight this Budget to the last gasp in Parliament, to keep Tariff Reform in the forefront in the constituencies, and coûte que coûte, to force a dissolution at the earliest possible moment, so that the issue between the parties of the Houses may be submitted to the only possible tribunal.16

By October, however, some of Garvin and Winterton's advice appears to have penetrated. In one of his rare tête-a-têtes with political reality, Maxse had come round to Garvin's point of view. While he remained no less adamantly in favor of a clear cut battle between tariff reformers and free traders, he accepted for the moment that Unionist party infighting would weaken the party considerably in its conflict with the socialist foe. Accordingly, Maxse silenced his doubts about Balfour's real intentions and accepted the leader's public views. His Review praised the peroration at Birmingham in which Balfour stated "the issue before the country with crystalline clearness."17 So strong were Balfour's statements that tariff reform stood as the only alternative to Lloyd George's social revolution that Maxse allowed himself to forget, if only for the moment, the bane of his existence--the Unionist free traders.

16Nat. Rev., LIII (August, 1909), 917. 17Ibid., LIV (October, 1909), 211.
In short, Maxse accepted Garvin's politically sensible, if theoretically inconsistent, lead, just as he had done in 1906, and marched obediently behind. As might have been anticipated, though, Maxse did not keep in step. Together with his belief that true party unity could never exist unless Conservative free traders recanted or crossed the floor, there was also ever present the insuperable block of Balfour's inner hesitation about tariffs. Maxse nonetheless permitted himself to act as if party unity did exist. Indeed, when the Lords rejected the budget in November and Asquith called a general election, Maxse took positive action to promote external party harmony. He went up to Manchester in mid-November to the Annual Conference of the National Union. Balfour addressed the first evening session and his unusually clear statement of total commitment to tariff reform and his call for preparation for the coming election fray brought unreserved satisfaction. Maxse added to the harmony as the first speaker when the Conference resumed the next morning. He moved that, "This conference approves the adoption of Unionist Labour candidates in suitable constituencies, and trusts that before the General Election it may be possible to add to their number." In his ensuing speech, Maxse must have surprised even himself at the vigor with which he lauded the virtues of his leader for his views and the expression of those views. Maxse almost fawningly begged leave to withdraw his motion, submitted weeks before, if anyone felt it reflected in any way upon the part or present leadership of the party.18

Given his previous platform and editorial performances, this speech attests to Maxse's courage and party loyalty. Surely no one who knew Maxse believed that Balfour had been forgiven for his many sins. And

18Standard, 19 November 1909.
Maxse's motion, passed unanimously, did of course reflect upon the party management. However, Maxse knew that Balfour had at least spoken the correct words for a leader of a party facing a general election, and apparently decided than an extreme or dissenting position at this time would bear little electoral fruit. Maxse had long been bogged down by the difficulty of scoring points against a man he believed to be insincere but whose words clearly followed accepted dogma. Maxse accepted Balfour's lead for the moment and hoped that the leader's past vacillations and tenuous stance regarding the free trade minority would pass largely unnoticed in the larger fight ahead. At the same time Balfour remained under Maxse's watchful eye; any future lapse by Balfour would find Maxse prepared with fire and brimstone.

Manchester was not Maxse's only effort at promoting party solidarity. He spoke at the Boston Unionist Association, scoring against the Radical candidate, and was invited to return later in the campaign. Maxse even gained some degree of intimacy as a political conferee of Balfour himself. He apparently wrote of his Boston success to Jack Sandars and received in reply a friendly letter of appreciation in which the private secretary asked to be kept posted of "any hints or suggestions which occur to you in connection with your experience at meetings." Sandars wrote again soon after in a letter which must have gratified Maxse and encouraged his belief in Balfour's commitment. Sandars listed several questions on tariff reform that might be asked of a Tory candidate, such as, "What is the best Liverpool argument on Tariff Reform?" and "Why don't you tax the 'raw materials' if it is the Foreigner who pays and

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19 IMP, E. G. Kimber to Maxse, 3 December 1909, 460/477.
20 Ibid., Sandars to Maxse, 7 December 1909, 460/484.
not the British consumer?" Sandars added, "I don't say I don't know
the answer to (each of) the questions; but you probably know the best
answer for the platform." 21

Maxse also kept Joseph Chamberlain informed of his campaign experi-
ences, 22 and transmitted his and Austen's election addresses to the
London papers so that they would receive them at the same time as did
the Birmingham press. 23 Maxse engaged in a heavy speaking schedule
throughout the campaign, 24 but, curiously, little record of his speeches
can be found. His friend and tennis partner, Lord Northcliffe, did offer
to report his speeches in The Times if Maxse would let him know where he
was to speak. 25 Since, however, only one such report exists in The Times
for the period, 26 it can be assumed that either Maxse did not send a list

21 Ibid., Sandars to Maxse, 21 December 1909, 460/497.
22 Ibid., Mary Chamberlain to Maxse, 8 December 1909, 460/485-86.
23 Ibid., Mary Chamberlain to Maxse, 21 December 1909, 460/493-94;
Mary Chamberlain to Maxse, 26 December 1909, 460/498-99; Joseph Cham-
berlain to Maxse, 28 December 1909, 460/501; Austen Chamberlain to Maxse,

He apologized to Sandars: "I have neglected a letter of yours,
but the fact of the matter is I am fearfully beset just now, as between
this and Saturday week I am making twelve speeches, most of them easily
an hour, and as I loathe repetition it means a good deal of looking up

Another apology, this one in the Review, regretted the deficiencies
of the February "Episodes" because they were written under exceptional
difficulties. "As the National Review vehemently protested against the
idea of surrendering to the Demagogues, and clamoured for a fight, the
writer felt it his duty to devote every moment of the past month to the
fight and between December 29 and January 26 made over 20 speeches in
different parts of the country." Nat. Rev., LIV (February, 1910), 916.

25 NP, Northcliffe to Maxse, 9 December 1909, 460/487.
26 This was a small notice of a speech Maxse delivered at Stamford-
hill Schools in support of the Tory candidate for Tottenham District.
His oration was an encomium of Joseph Chamberlain. Maxse asked his audi-
ence to end Britain's slip backward under "small men" by waking up to
their error and retrieving the situation by massing beneath Highbury's
banner. The Times, 16 December 1909.
of speaking dates to Northcliffe or that Northcliffe or one of his subordinates felt that The Times could only publish accounts of talks by major Parliamentary figures, as indeed it did. Likewise the other major journals.

Nevertheless, from previous performances it seems certain that Maxse's basic platform arguments differed little from those in his Review. He complimented Balfour for an election address which discussed public affairs with due regard for their relative importance: The urgent necessity to prevent the attack on the Lords, which was nothing less than the culmination of a long-drawn Ministerial conspiracy "to transform the British Constitution into a single-chamber constitution like that of Greece;" and the unrestrained presentation of tariff reform as not only the antithesis of the budget, but the only way to retain colonial preference, modify commercial treaties in Britain's favor, and secure from unfair competition the home producer in the home market. On other issues too Maxse found no cause to disagree with the leader. Both favored the development of small ownership of land and lamented the negligence in naval shipbuilding. Finally, with characteristic aplomb, Maxse concluded that a vote for the Unionist party was a vote for England; a Radical vote was a vote for Germany.27

The election results buoyed Maxse's spirits.

The Unionist Party returns with a mighty reinforcement of over a hundred new Members, and is more compact, united and enthusiastic than at any previous period of its history. The Radicals and Labour Party have lost over a hundred seats and the terrible tail which wagged the dog in the Poisonous Parliament has disappeared, constituencies having selected for rejection many of the worst Members of the last House of Commons. As a result the Demagogues, who always played up to the tail, are paralysed and humiliated, dependent as they are on the Irish Nationalists, whose constituents hated the

Budget even more fervidly than Englishmen, while within the Nationalist ranks there is an obvious cleavage.\textsuperscript{28}

In short, Maxse believed that the Tory electoral recovery had scotched the enemy. If Unionists continued to raise the issues of national defense and tariff reform on every possible occasion, the Radical-Irish-Labour coalition would finally succumb.\textsuperscript{29} If the battle against Lloyd George's hateful budget had been lost, the wider war was being won, as former Tories and disillusioned Radicals trooped into the fold in January, 1910, to bolster the forces. Excited with the apparent turn of the tide, Maxse remained active in the Tory lists. Unionist free traders, with the exception of Lord Hugh Cecil who had followed Balfour's lead and supported tariff reform, had virtually vanished from the Commons and the "unbroken unanimity of the Unionist Party" was a very impressive fact. It was likewise clear that since the Ministry depended upon Irish and Labour votes, the Irish and Labour parties would become the next targets for Maxse's vituperation. Maxse immediately accused the Nationalists of wedding themselves to Cobdenism in return for the promise of Home Rule.\textsuperscript{30}

After the House of Lords accepted the budget, Maxse knew that the peers would thereupon be penalized by the Government precisely for following the dictates of the country. Their powers were to be so curtailed as to make the House of Lords a sham Second Chamber. Instead of awaiting the stab in the back in the dark, Maxse proposed that Unionists present to the country as soon as possible a plan of reform for the Lords in broad daylight, a positive, constructive reform policy such as Lord Newton \textsuperscript{28}Ibid., (February, 1910), 898. \textsuperscript{29}Ibid., 916. \textsuperscript{30}Ibid., LV (March, 1910), 4-5.
had introduced at Maxse's urging several years before. Maxse wanted to draw public opinion to his side so as to strengthen the party to resist attack and render a public service to the nation.

As the campaign of the militant women seeking the franchise continued and mounted in shrillness, Maxse planted himself firmly in opposition. At a March meeting of the Men's League for Opposing Woman Suffrage at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, he related that his experience during the recent campaign had convinced him that female suffrage was of no interest to either candidates or country beyond the shouts of a few eccentric souls. In the next few years Maxse involved himself actively against the women's vote. As might be expected, he also managed to find an excuse to dredge up his dormant fears about Balfour's intentions, this time with regard to female enfranchisement. Naturally Maxse's mind boggled at the calamity, indeed the dire destruction, facing his party if any movement, however feeble, was made by any Unionist to support the ladies.

Maxse's opposition, however, did not go so far as to preclude any expression of the feminine point of view; he wished merely that their views should have no opportunity to secure political backing. At the Eastborne Town Hall in October, Maxse said that he would be only too pleased to see the formation of a great women's council, elected by women and containing only women, with power to discuss subjects interesting to women and to pass resolutions on those subjects—much like the Anglican Church's Houses of Convocation—and then to submit those

31 See above, p. 59.

32 The Times, 19 March 1910.

resolutions to Parliament. Maxse thought in view of the many measures which had been carried for the benefit of women the House of Commons would be only too ready to give legislative effect to any well-considered plan laid before it for the establishment of such a council. With the exception of the militant suffragette, Maxse declared, he had never met a woman who did not consider that a very reasonable resolution of the present difficulty.34

Maxse, then, believed that by public repudiation of the outrageous and violent tactics of the militant females, all the while respectable women were being given a respectable forum in which to express their presumably respectable ideas, the problem would go away. The problem of hostile Liberal intentions with respect to the House of Lords would not go away. It was only beginning. Their lordships had obeyed the registered will of the country and passed the budget of 1909. The Ministry, however, was now dependent upon Irish Nationalists adamant for Home Rule, which the Lords would never willingly sanction, and Labourites whose very political existence had been threatened late in 1909 by the hated Osborne Judgment.35 Since 1906, the Liberals had stood by helpless as their own cup of grievances was filled up by the peers. Ministry resolutions, therefore, were soon forthcoming which called for ending the rejection or amendment of money bills by the Upper Chamber and substituting a two-year suspensory veto for non-money bills. The single-chamber tyranny Maxse had predicted seemed closer to reality.

34The Times, 21 October 1910.
35In December, 1909, the Law Lords decided that all financial support of political action by trade unions, including putting forward candidates or subscribing funds to the work of the Labour party, was illegal.
During these early months of 1910, Maxse remained true to his party unity pledge. Indeed he actively promoted closer links between himself and Balfour. He sent an article about the "Cocoa Press" to Jack Sandars who replied that he was grateful and that Balfour himself was much interested in the piece. Sandars read the article carefully and returned it with his observations. He urged his friend to publish it, but only if he was sure he could not be successfully sued for libel. Sandars claimed no legal expertise, but thought Maxse's caustic criticism had indeed ventured across the line into libel.

What is important here is that Maxse was acting and Sandars responding as if Maxse and Balfour both stood on the same side of the political and fiscal fence. Maxse's peace with Balfour was deceptive, however; it was really an armed truce which Balfour, true to his casual form, broke by Christmas. For the moment all was well. Maxse was pleased with the way in which Balfour was "making mincemeat of the preposterous proposals to which Mr. Asquith (had) been coerced into committing his Cabinet" with regard to the Lords. So strong was his editorial support that even Maxse's perennial nagging fears about a future Balfour Cabinet were couched in terms which disavowed any hint of sinister intent on Balfour's part.

36 Leopold Maxse, "The Cocoa Press and Its Masters," Nat. Rev., LV (May, 1910), 402-15. The Cadbury family, Quaker chocolate makers from Birmingham, operated the Daily News, the anti-imperialist Liberal paper which supported free trade, all the while manufactured chocolate was protected by a tariff. Importers of unmanufactured cocoa were taxed 1d. per pound; manufactured cocoa importers paid 2d. per pound. Hence, the "Cocoa Press," an excellent, obvious target of justification for Maxse's fiscal beliefs.

37 IMP, Sandars to Maxse, 15 April 1910, 462/609.

38 Ibid., Sandars to Maxse, 17 April 1910, marked "Confidential," 462/610.

...it is feared by Unionists that Mr. Balfour may prove too good-natured to resist the tearful importunities of old friends and former colleagues who honestly believe that the country is calling for them and that they hold a prescriptive right to hold office in any and every Unionist cabinet that may be formed.\textsuperscript{40}

Such a road would lead to catastrophe, Maxse solemnly predicted, but the speculation was concerned with the future. For the moment, Maxse was occupied with a new calamity, the death, early in May, of the "harassed" monarch, King Edward VIII. Maxse wrote, "A tragedy the death of the King....Little doubt from all one has heard that Asquith & Co., harried the King into his grave."\textsuperscript{41} Any further criminality by Asquith and his Cabinet, such as a resumption of the bitter, barren strife provoked by their Veto Resolutions, "would probably lead to a bloody civil war which would certainly be brought to an abrupt and ignominious conclusion by the opportunity afforded for foreign aggression."\textsuperscript{42} Maxse supported the spirit prompting the Observer's suggestion of a conference and found prudence and common sense in the Government's invitation to the Opposition to join in a constitutional conference for a settlement of the issue by general consent. Still, Maxse confessed pessimism as to the probable outcome given the volatile presence of Lloyd George and the opposition of the excluded Labour and Irish shadow

\textsuperscript{40}Ibid., 376.

\textsuperscript{41}J. St. Loe Strachey Papers (hereafter JSP), Beaverbrook Library, London, Maxse to Strachey, 12 May 1910, 5/9/10/11.

\textsuperscript{42}Nat. Rev., LV (June, 1910), 561.
members of the Ministry.\textsuperscript{13} The ultimate Unionist triumph would come, conference or no conference, for eventually a Radical prime minister would be compelled to make the grotesque demand of the sovereign for the creation of 500 hereditary peers for the express purpose of emasculating the House of Lords. Once there, though, these "puppet peers" would view the world and particularly the relations between the two chambers in a different light and soon find excuses to absent themselves from the Upper House and so knock the bottom from the Parliament Bill.\textsuperscript{14} Surely this was questionable speculation on Maxse's part. But he did believe that Lord Lansdowne would hold fast, as he had in the budget crisis, and not allow himself to be bullied. Maxse was prepared to resume the fight without gloves whenever the Liberal "demagogues" were ready, since the final outcome of the constitutional struggle, however many general elections were called, could only end in confusion and annihilation for the Radicals.\textsuperscript{15} How surprised Maxse would have been to know that the annihilation would be his own.

With regard to the conference itself—a wayside inn offering

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., (July, 1910), 707-08. Behind the scenes, in a series of letters to Garvin, Maxse tried to warn his friend of the dangers in the Observer appearing too enthusiastic at the prospects and too trusting of the Ministry's intentions. "...All they want is time that a regicide government may get itself forgotten...our LG we all know.(10 June 1910) And, again, another admonition, this one coupled with the indirect expression of resurrected fear about Balfour. "I do not believe there is any good faith on the Liberal side as regards the Conference, and protest against (F. E.) Smith's gush as simply misleading the public. ...The enemy wants time, time, time—and nothing more. If we had Joe (Chamberlain) to look after our interests we should be all right and the Conference would be turned to splendid purpose....One feels his absence every hour of every day." (17 June 1910) Both Maxse letters are quoted in Alfred Gollin's Garvin, p. 198.

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., 710.

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., 711.
protection until the unsettled weather of May had passed and King George V sat secure on the throne—Maxse publicly expressed satisfaction with the Tory members, Balfour, Lansdowne, Lord Cawdor and Austen Chamberlain, as men who could be trusted to do all that reasonable men could do to make the conference a success, "if success be within the range of practical politics, without sacrificing the Constitution."\(^6\)

The conference met in secret through the summer and fall, accompanied by a voluntary ban against press speculation about the meetings. By September Maxse's private expression of unease with the static political situation was finding receptive ears. Most important, his unhappiness with Balfour's leadership, repressed for so long, began taking a commanding place in his private communications. Jesse Collings\(^7\) wrote in agreement about the "unsatisfactory position of the leaders of our party," but predicted this could not last. Collings related Joseph Chamberlain's belief that when Parliament reassembled the conference would end; the Ministry would press for their resolutions; the peers would reject them; and an election appeal would follow. ",...\(H\)ad we a 'crusader' for a leader," Collings lamented, "there would be no doubt as to the result."\(^8\)

Maxse was also displeased with the support among many rank and file Tories for payment of members, an issue raised after the Osborne Judgment the previous December threatened to decimate the ranks of the Labour MPs by declaring trade union support of the Labour party illegal. Maxse found Balfour himself the culprit in this divisive, irresponsible agitation. The leaderless condition of the Unionist party existed, he cried,\(^9\)

\(^6\) *bid.*, 713.

\(^7\) Jesse Collings (1831-1920), politician, close associate and personal friend of Joseph Chamberlain; enthusiast for land reform, "three acres and a cow." \(D.N.B.\)

\(^8\) *LMP*, Collings to Maxse, 2 September 1910, \(162/701.\)
because of a "tactician" without enthusiasm or conviction who would only espouse a cause under pressure from his relations or his cronies. Now this man was working entirely beyond range of the party's eyes. Such conditions accounted for the sporadic outbursts from the rank and file damaging to party prestige and contemptible because based on ignorance of the effects of their proposals. There was nothing democratic about paying members, fumed Maxse, because independent working men would be left out in the cold as paid seats became the monopoly of trade union officials or professional politicians—the latter being the French and American experience. 49

From another personal friend, tennis partner and close ally in the struggle to come, came more support for Maxse's criticism of Balfour. Lord Willoughby de Broke 50 wrote, "If only Balfour would say something, it would relieve the situation one way or another." His Lordship's unease with the secret conference slipped into fear that "surely our friends can't have given it away." 51

Thus far Maxse's anti-Balfour opinions were confined to his correspondence. Garvin pleaded with Maxse to keep his views so restricted. For heaven's sake, don't revive at present the movement against him. I am as sensible as you are of his deficiencies, but there is nobody else. Austen is more not less Conservative and never can hold the lead successfully unless he gets Balfour's blessing. To attack Balfour in the Morning Post manner simply makes the fortune of the Radical press platforms and does more injury to Tariff Reform than other efforts can make good. 52

49 ELP, Maxse to Law, 29 September 1910, 18/6/124.
50 Richard Verney, 19th Lord Willoughby de Broke (1869-1923), Tory MP for Rugby, 1895-1900. D.N.B.
51 LNP, de Broke to Maxse, 30 September 1910, l62/718.
Garvin was too late. Maxse had returned publicly to the Balfour hunt, flailing away at the leader for his ignorance of the party, his lack of all interest in its management and his absolute inability to make his platform utterances intelligible to the mass of his audience. Maxse was clearly preparing his readers for the election sure to come when the conference failed. Unless the party was organized on a war basis for the fight over the House of Lords, the consequences to the country, Maxse thought, would be incalculable domestically and internationally. The Standard also pressed for action, for a campaign of education and enlightenment to swing working class voters back into the Conservative fold. Balfour was not mentioned by name, but the editorial averred that loyalty to the leader did not preclude disagreement. Carping, which was not the same as mere dissent, was deplorable, but the attitude of the party leaders concerning questions of national defense was greatly to be deprecated.

Garvin chafed at such calls for a strong lead while the conference was still meeting. However sincere and understandable the renewed "crabbing" about Balfour and his leadership, public expression at this juncture did unreasonable mischief to the party and its prospects in the coming showdown. The Observer counseled patience until Balfour was unmuzzled by the failure of the conference and the political fray could be joined in a united, forceful fashion. The Daily Telegraph was also quick to defend Balfour's party organization and reported that the National Union had long been busy preparing for the upcoming fight.

53Nat. Rev., LVI (October, 1910), 214.
54Standard, 16 September & 7 October 1910.
55Observer, 9 October 1910.
5620 September 1910.
The critics were not silenced. In mid-October a new group was formed. Initiated by Lord Willoughby de Broke and Henry Page Croft, the Unionist so-called "Reveille" movement sought to break the silence imposed by the conference. "Reveille" aims were tariff reform and imperial preference as a means to promotion of national security and prosperity; maintenance of naval supremacy; insurance and other limited measures of social reform; and small holdings of landownership. By staying clear of all official Unionist influences, the "Reveille" movement thought it would work wonders in educating the public and the Tory press to the great work of the party.58

The Morning Post and the National Review gave considerable publicity to the activities of the Unionist "Reveille." The Pall Mall Gazette marvelled at the modest aims of the movement and applauded the eagerness of its members, the more strenuous of Balfour's supporters everywhere, to get into battle array.59 The "Reveille" movement was a reminder to Balfour, as if he needed any, that his extremist followers were chafing at the bit. The failure of the conference soon freed Balfour to build upon the educational propaganda of the Reveillists, but, true to form, he soon managed to alienate entirely their already shaky loyalties.

At least one observer thought Maxse might be an active member, not merely an active supporter, of the new pressure group. On 5 November 1910, Maxse sent his friend Strachey a clipping from that day's Morning Post which contained the "Reveille" Manifesto on Home Rule. It opposed

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57Henry Page Croft (1881-1947), keen imperial preference supporter of Joseph Chamberlain; Tory MP for Hampshire, 1910-40; founder of the "Confederacy." D.N.B.
58Morning Post, 19 October 1910. 5919 October 1910.
Irish Home Rule in any form under any name. Maxse wrote:

I think you have occasionally been somewhat unfair to Tariff Reformers by suggesting that they would sell everything for the sake of Tariff Reform. I know that the Reveille movement consists exclusively of keen Tariff Reformers. I am sure that the readers of the Spectator would be interested in the reproduction of their manifesto which on all grounds would do good. I am sure it commands your sympathy.

Strachey replied that he had already seen the manifesto and, indeed, had read it with rapture. He added,

I was so enchanted with it that I read it aloud to Amy, and said at the end: "It is so ably and pointedly written that I really believe they must have got Leo to do it for them." This was rather a curious shot as I had no hint that you had anything to do with the Reveille people. Was my shot right I wonder and were you really the writer?

Another Tory free trader, Lord Hugh Cecil, was less understanding. He viewed the "Reveille" group as yet another cover for the old tariff reform gang.

Tariff reform may be right or wrong; but I am quite sure that what is called a 'constructive policy', that is to say a polemical constructive policy, is bad electioneering—especially bad for the Conservative Party. In England a negative attitude is far more popular on controversial matters. We won in 1895 and in 1886 by uniting in opposition to revolutionary schemes with the advocacy of generally approved social reforms.

Undaunted by such advice, Maxse pressed on in anticipation of the election. At the annual meeting of the Tariff Reform League at Manchester, he moved an amendment to George Wyndham's resolution expressing satisfaction with the spread of support for fiscal reform. His amendment urged the party to do its utmost to destroy the present Government at the earliest possible moment so that a colonial conference might be held.

60JSP, Maxse to Strachey, 5 November 1910, 5/10/9/114.
61LMP, Strachey to Maxse, 7 November 1910, marked "Private,"
62Ibid., Hugh Cecil to Maxse, 12 November 1910, 462/751.
under the auspices of a government imperial in nature as well as in
name. Maxse described Lloyd George as the 'artful dodger' from Carnarvon, and the appointment of Louis Harcourt as Colonial Secretary he said was an affront to the Mother Country and an outrage to the Dominions beyond the sea. Maxse's amendment and Wyndham's resolution were, of course, adopted unanimously.63

The next night Maxse addressed a large gathering at St. George's School, South-West Manchester, in which he belittled modern Cobdenism by pointing out the hypocrisy of believing in free trade for other people's commodities and in protection in some form for their own businesses. The cocoa press and multimillionaire manufacturer Sir Alfred Mond, treasurer of the Free Trade Union, were both guilty of this offense according to Maxse.64

A week later, promising to be active on the platform as well as in his journal, Maxse moved his Manchester amendment as a resolution at the party's National Union Conference at Nottingham. He warned that the party could never succeed as a mere imitation of the Radicals, but contended the Tory policy was so wide it could included everybody of Conservative leanings as well as every real reformer. Their duty was to rally round the Crown and insure that the King's name was not needlessly dragged into political conflict. Maxse's motion won unanimous endorsement.65

Unionists would soon have their chance. The failure of the constitutional conference was announced in mid-November. Prime Minister Asquith had private assurance from King George V that if the election sustained

63 The Times, 9 November 1910.
64 Standard, 10 November 1910.
65 The Times, 18 November 1910.
the Ministry and the Lords remained obstinate, he would employ the royal prerogative to end the deadlock. The election was called for the three weeks before Christmas. The Unionist left their Nottingham love fest united, but their union was shattered within a fortnight. At the Albert Hall on 29 November, on the eve of polling, Balfour made a new pronouncement on tariff reform. He pledged the party to submit the tariff policy in its entirety, after successful passage through both Houses of Parliament, to a further, final confirmation by the country before it became law. In endeavoring to eliminate tariffs and the "dear food bogey" from the election and concentrate attention on what Tories agreed was the blatant Radical attempt to subvert the Constitution, Balfour hoped to win Tory free traders and moderate Liberals to the side of the Lords. His success in wooing Liberals by his tactics was doubtful. The composition of the new Parliament and the Liberal-Labour-Irish majority varied by only a few seats from that of the January election. He did succeed, however, in taking the heart out of the most enthusiastic Tories. The referendum pledge meant that Balfour had repudiated the Valentine compact. The "first constructive work" of the party when returned to office would be subject to public veto. Despite his noble and no doubt sincere aim, Balfour appeared to have hedged again. In one evening he had lost all the goodwill his halting steps toward tariff reformers had produced. He had justified all of Maxse's latent suspicions.

Wholehog tariff reformers were trapped. If they repudiated the referendum their public image would suffer. If they supported it they would appear as political opportunists. They could only make the best of an embarrassing situation. Some journals saw nothing amiss. Indeed,
the Daily Telegraph found in the Albert Hall speech Balfour's finest example of leadership in twenty years. The Pall Mall Gazette expressed confidence in the ability of tariff reform to win popular approval when it was the sole issue, and the Standard saw "Trust the People" as a "good, sound victorious policy."

J. L. Garvin was more than pleased since his Observer had advocated the referendum two days before Balfour's pronouncement. Garvin predicted that given enough time for their message to sink in, the Tories would sweep the country. Two weeks later he was still sanguine, but thought there had not been enough time in the ongoing election for the new departure to operate with full effect.

Some newspapers were less enthusiastic. The Outlook saw no other course open to the leader. The Morning Post submitted, reluctantly:

It remains for Unionist candidates, whatever disappointment they may feel, to make the most of their present leader's pronunciation as an answer to the Free Trader's challenge; and afterwards, when the time comes, to checkmate the attempts which will be made to postpone the Referendum indefinitely. In any case, let them be sure that individually, at any rate, they return to the new Parliament, supported by as clear a mandate on Tariff Reform to require no further authorisation. The Referendum pledge, though it never ought to have been given, may be treated by them as an earnest of sincere belief in the capacity of their national and imperial policy to win a genuine national ministry.

Maxse thought Balfour treacherous. It is perhaps just as well that the next number of the National Review did not appear until after the election as it is doubtful if he could have imposed restraint upon his

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68 16 December 1910. 69 4 December 1910.
70 18 December 1910. 71 3 December 1910.
72 30 November 1910.
editorial comments. We know he was very busy campaigning, but again have no record of his public oratory. Privately he was seething. He poured out his wrath to Mary Chamberlain while resting at Manchester between speeches. "Nothing will justify Mr. Balfour's deplorable tactics except an unlooked for success." He expanded on this theme to Bonar Law in mid-campaign.

On reflection, and after a good deal more experience, I must maintain my original opinion that Balfour's speech at the Albert Hall was nothing less than a crime. It has not, as you see, been attended by any degree of success which would have justified it. For a long time Unionists have had to choose between Tariff Reform and Balfour, as well as between Unionism and Balfour, because Balfour so palpably means continuous disaster. Up to now those who count in our Party have sacrificed the cause and their principles to this sinister individual, but I feel quite sure that this cannot last as the discontent is too profound and widespread.

For the sake of the semblance of party unity during the lackluster campaign, Maxse and others of the Tory press had had to muzzle their true feelings. But this was the third general election defeat under Balfour's leadership. Unionists began to choose up sides for the internal party battle which would be fought the following summer. It was clear that Maxse would secure a prominent position in that engagement.

With victory not forthcoming, recriminations spread. Although Alexander Acland Hood was soon made the scapegoat and dropped as Chief Whip, half measures were no longer acceptable to the extremists. Maxse himself saw in the new year from a sick bed, laid up with a bad cold and other ill effects of his strenuous campaign effort. There was, however, nothing sickly about his "Episodes" for January. His reflections on


JBLP, Maxse to Law, 11 December 1910, 10/6/1115.

Heberle, op. cit., 195.
politics recent and future were aptly summarized by the latest "Reveille" manifesto entitled, "Go on fighting," which he printed in full and lauded to the skies. The Unionist party, Maxse promised, refused to sit quietly and watch the British Constitution pulverized when half the electorate was dead set against the Radical revolution. Unionist efforts at conciliation, proposals for reform of the Lords, even the democratic referendum had been scorned. Should the Parliament Bill succeed, in its wake would follow Irish Home Rule and civil war, not to mention postponement of tariff reform while foreigners crushed British industry. In short, Maxse supported the die-hard position; the Parliament Bill had to be fought to the death.

Maxse heaped scorn on Asquith for allowing the costly, needless contest. He chastised Balfour for his painful blunder which threw away the forty or fifty or more seats the Unionists might have gained by springing a brand new issue on the electorate at the eleventh hour, (an issue) which had the further disadvantage of bearing an unknown foreign name and of appearing to be an electoral dodge though it was nothing of the kind.

He then proceeded to lump Balfour together with Asquith as two leaders who between them have got the country into its present muddle and are largely responsible for the growing anxieties of the British Empire, owing to their want of foresight and refusal to prepare betimes, and who would be well advised to hand the reins over to one or other of their colleagues.

For the first time Maxse had spoken the profane words directly and without any prevarication. Not only had he classed the leader of his own party with the leader of the despised opposition; he had urged his leader to step down from his post.

Maxse went on, alluding perfunctorily to Balfour's engaging personality but declaring forthrightly that the Tories had no future under him.
Maxse knew his phrases would be hard to swallow for some, but asked them to remove their blinkers and look at the facts: Three general elections followed by general slackness and slumber with no interest in party organization demonstrable in the leader's conduct; Manchester, Bradford, Leeds and London all scandalous as far as organization and electoral preparation were concerned because the leader, uninterested in practical affairs, allowed them to drift into inferior hands.76

Maxse apologized to his readers for his own inept electoral optimism, but shifted the blame to Balfour whose "appalling blunder made at the eleventh hour" had converted victory into "stalemate." 77 He cited chapter and verse from the pinnacle of party unity at Nottingham to the blunder at the Albert Hall where the leader pulled the rug from under his Conservative colleagues. Maxse concluded that while Balfour was personally pledged to the referendum, the party, having lost the election, was bound no longer. 78 In effect, Maxse had declared open warfare on Balfour.

Although no other Journal dared venture so far in repudiation of the leader, the end of the election did open other outlets for discontent. Newspaper criticism referred mainly to the unimproved party organization, an indirect reference to Balfour. Even the Balfourite Daily Telegraph expressed what it considered the "unanimous opinion" of the party that a top-to-bottom reconstruction was essential, to weed out slackness and inertia and to concentrate on large cities that would swing districts as the Radical coalition had done. 79 Party policy, continued the Telegraph,

77Ibid., 719. 78Ibid., 732.
7912 January 1911.
also needed more thought, especially in the area of social reform on which the entire Tory future might rest. The duty of the party, for example, was to accept the principle of Lloyd George's Insurance Bill of 1911, which aimed at national health, accident and unemployment insurance, while adding constructive criticism to improve the Bill for the advantage of the people. The journal asked the party to move forward, under Balfour of course, as the historical party of the people, the party of the Factory Acts. 80

Party management of the Central Office was criticized by the Pall Mall Gazette. That office left much to be desired as the election clearly revealed—inadequate knowledge of local conditions, late selection of candidates, poor arrangements for political meetings and failure to coordinate efficiently valuable help from other agencies, including the National Union and the Liberal Unionist Association. Balfour's Albert Hall bombshell created no difficulty which his lieutenants, who knew beforehand what he would say, could not have minimized by taking their country subordinates into confidence and preparing them for the new plan of attack. The journal somehow found Balfour's popularity among the Conservative democracy to be higher than ever; the fault clearly lay in his intelligence department. The Gazette was pleased that the Central Office, in the person of Acland Hood, had been censured for failure in this area. Inept subordinates like the Chief Whip and his friends had embarrassed Balfour by sleeping on their jobs. 81 The Gazette never ventured further to question the judgment which had placed those men in positions of responsibility. Engrossed in the constitutional machinations

80 Februay 1911.
81 Pall Mall Gazette, 12 January 1911.
of the Ministry, Balfour needed to be enlightened about the rotten structure beneath him. The journal suggested that he appoint a blue-ribbon committee with full responsibility to reorganize the party completely.

These arguments, particularly the criticisms of the Central Office and the refusal even to consider any perfidy on Balfour's part, were echoed in the Standard and the Outlook. The Observer took a four-square stand behind the referendum and deprecated any claim that the party could never win under Balfour.

The Saturday Review went further. Without mentioning him by name, it denounced Maxse's attacks. Balfour, it claimed, remained the leader desired by virtually the entire party save the "buzzing busybodies." If there was blame to distribute, Balfour's small share was earned by virtue of the circumscribed vision common to House of Commons' men who overrated the importance of that body. Though not an ideal leader, continued the editorial, ideal leaders appeared only once in several centuries; no one stood anywhere close to Balfour in capacity for the job, so why should a few gnats be permitted to destroy the unity of the party in full view of the opposition? Balfour alone had made tariff reform practical politics, by excluding extremists on both sides. Maxse had done a disservice to the Unionist cause. Two weeks later the Saturday Review found Maxse's neurosis spreading to others and organizational faults insignificant when compared with the great struggle the Tories faced over the House of Lords.

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82 24 January 1911. 83 23 January 1911.
86 Saturday Review, 7 January 1911. 87 21 January 1911.
Of all the major Conservative journals, then, Maxse's Review stood alone in its willingness to criticize directly the man at the top who, Maxse believed, should shoulder the responsibility for defeat just as he would justly garner the victory laurels. By February, Maxse was physically recovered. His "Episodes" lashed out at The Times for its abuse of the National Review. At Chelsea Town Hall in mid-month he gave a long, strong speech on the truth about the recent reciprocity agreement between Canada and the United States, but, while alluding to the disgusting way in which tariff reform was toyed with in Britain to suit the demands of political expediency, he refused to criticize Balfour more directly because of the death that day of the latter's younger brother. Maxse further involved himself at this time in the campaign against the women, agreeing with much pleasure to chair an Anti-Women's Suffrage meeting at the end of March.

With regard to the most pressing issue, the Parliament Bill, J. L. Garvin now returned to Maxse's good graces by advocating that if ministers refused every Unionist concession the Tories should "stake all upon a

88 Nat. Rev., LVI (February, 1911), 904-11. Among The Times' remarks to which Maxse took exception was the following: "In any case, the election was not won, but these ardent Tariff Reformers still think that it ought to have been won, and believe that Tariff Reform is on the verge of immediate triumph if only they make enough noise about it, or get other leaders, or do something else foolish. It may be magnificent not to know when you are beaten, but to cry nous sommes trahis is both mean and weak." (12 January 1911).

89 He claimed that Asquith's Ministry had encouraged the agreement, thus taking work away from the British worker.

90 The Times, 15 February 1911; Standard, 15 February 1911.

91 JSP, Maxse to Strachey, 22 February 1911, 5/10/9/15.
policy of fight waged without intermission and pushed to the uttermost extreme. "Never have I read The Observer with greater enjoyment," said Maxse. Only by exposing the threat to the peers as a bluff would the compromisers come round. "More power to your elbow," he added.

Maxse was glad for any allies in the diehard cause. He pressed his 'no surrender' views on all who would listen, and worked closely with Lord Willoughby de Broke, who contributed several articles to the Review. Maxse confessed himself bewildered at Strachey's sudden about face, the Spectator having abandoned its post-election stance which had urged Unionists to submit to the creation of any number of peers rather than knuckle under. Maxse chided Strachey,

But now my "Spec," which is never lacking in moral courage, orders one to run away and swallow the Parliament Bill which is now admitted by that miserable skunk Asquith to involve a Home Rule Bill!!! I don't propose writing a letter giving the "Ed Spec" an opportunity of annihilating me in a footnote, but I own to being bewildered.

Strachey tried to defend his views, or rather those of the Government, by pointing out to Maxse that Asquith's hands had been tied by Labour and the Irish. "You can never make a compromise with a man who is being blackmailed by people in regard to whom he is in a state of abject terror." As the debate on the Parliament Bill continued, most Tory press opinion came down strongly on the side of resistance and Maxse found himself, for once, in the mainstream of editorial thought. Most papers accepted the logical conclusion that a Home Rule Bill would follow close

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92 Observer, 5 March 1911.
93 Maxse to Garvin, 6 March 1911, quoted in Gollin, Garvin, 325.
94 JSP, Maxse to Strachey, 27 April 1911, 5/10/9/16.
95 LKP, Strachey to Maxse, 29 April 1911, 463/59.
on a successful Parliament Bill as a reward to the Irish though there was no popular mandate for either. The magnitude of the crime about to be perpetrated—the establishment of single chamber government—appalled the Tory press. But the prospect was made worse and more real by the uncertainly of the "backwoodsmen"—country-loving peers who seldom ventured up to Westminster unless a constitutional question was being debated—as to what attitude the Unionist leaders would take. Clearly the Government had the votes in the Commons. The question was whether their lordships should acquiesce. Asquith had received the King's assent to the creation of Liberal peers in November, contingent upon a Liberal victory at the subsequent election. The Lords received the Bill from the Commons at the end of May and proceeded in a series of severe amendments to destroy it. By the first week in July the Prime Minister was able to inform His Majesty that the contingency envisioned in November was imminent. The King agreed, asking only that the peers should not be created until the Lords, having seen their amendments rejected by the Commons, had the chance to reconsider their position.

At this point in the crisis, as Roy Jenkins has observed, the King and the Government became mere bystanders to what became essentially an internal battle within the Unionist party between the "hedgers"—those willing to surrender quietly to the inevitable without the embarrassing dilution of the House of Lords by Radical 'puppet peers'—and the "last ditchers"—those who would fight and die in the last ditch if necessary rather than have their name associated with the infamy about to be inflicted upon the country. Maxse found his natural place among the ditchers.

Such a fight was the continuation of the tariff reform battle. The Balfourian "treachery" soon to come would surprise Maxse not in the least. He fought a two-front war—against the Parliament Bill, and against Balfour's method of fighting that same Bill. He attacked Balfour's dilatory tactics in the Commons before the second reading.

There has been a discouraging failure on the part of the Front Opposition Bench—which bears a striking resemblance to the Front Opposition Bench in the 1880 Parliament which excited the ire and provoked the activity of the Fourth Party to which, it will be remembered, Mr. Balfour belonged—to make the most of the countless openings offered by as vulnerable a Government as has ever held office in this country, or to take the gloves off and to deal faithfully with the Demagogues and their Decoys.97

In May, Maxse found that Balfour, seeming to wake up for a time to the deadly challenge ahead, attacked Asquith for his announcement that the Parliament Act would be followed by Home Rule for Ireland as the payment for Irish cooperation in the Budget fight of 1909. Even on this occasion, though, Maxse's barbs did not cease.

Mr. Balfour, who is always skillful in debate, if too lenient in dealing with educated blackguards, effectively replied to the Prime Minister, though there was too much kid-glove business in the Opposition Front Bench. Mr. Balfour is always "surprised" at every intrigue perpetrated by Mr. Asquith; by this time he has had sufficient experience of the Government of "dirty tricks" to be prepared for anything.98

Maxse hoped that Balfour would now press forward with vigorous opposition to "the most monstrous measure presented to Parliament for 250 years....There is no future for Unionism should this infamous measure become law with the criminal connivance of the Unionist leaders."

Maxse preferred that the "creation of five hundred Cocoa Peers" should

97Nat. Rev., LVII (April, 1911), 214.
98Ibid., (May, 1911), 389.
occur rather than witness any empty Tory acquiescence under protest and empty threats of later repeal of the measure. They would never be in a position to repeal, he asserted.99

Into the battle Maxse could bring all his cherished goals—empire union via tariffs and preference, superior national defense—goals which would be irrevocably lost if a single chamber, Liberal "tyranny" were imposed. And all the while Balfour could be attacked for failure to wield the saber; his position could be further undermined by Maxse's usual criticisms of Balfour's neglect of his party housekeeping duties. By June, Maxse was convinced that Balfour was relapsing into his evil habit of helping the Liberal "Demagogues" out of every parliamentary difficulty in the debates. But, of course,

no minimum of criticism is ever permitted to reach Mr. Balfour, who is surrounded by an impenetrable zariba of sycophants, and he has not the faintest conception of the sentiments of all that great portion of his Party who have no private axes to grind.

Balfour, it seemed, had bottled up the report of the party organizational committee appointed at the beginning of the year, clearly with hopes that it would be forgotten. Here Maxse touched upon the nub of the Unionist problems.

For our own part we have never anticipated any serious results from the devoted labours of the organisational committee. It is not our organisation which is so much at fault though doubtless it is in many respects rotten. It is not the organisation which is responsible for the leadership, but the leadership which is responsible for the organisation, and innumerable minor scapegoats might be made without improving the position of the party by one iota, so long as Unionists deliberately elect to sacrifice everything for which Unionism stands, in deference to a particular individual, who is heartily sick of the whole business and would probably retire if a way out could be found. A disaster is none the less serious

99 Ibid., 390.
because it is personally delightful, nor is a catastrophe mitigated by its charm. If the Leader of the Opposition could hypnotise the country into sweeping away the Government, we should not have a word to say, but as he only hypnotises the Party into forgetting the duties of an Opposition, we cannot remain silent on a subject which is eagerly canvassed whenever two or three Unionists are gathered together.100

Maxse's disgust with Balfour reached ever greater depth as the Bill passed the next stage of its Parliamentary journey and entered the House of Lords largely unscathed due to "the perfunctory sham fight of Mr. Balfour and his colleagues in the House of Commons." "Has Mr. Balfour meant business?" Maxse demanded.

Is it fair to a great Party, which has followed him with the most servile adulation ever accorded to any man, to ostensibly occupy the leadership, to refuse to lead and apparently to restrain other men from seriously fighting a Bill which will destroy the nation and the Empire unless it is itself destroyed.101

If Maxse's voice was becoming more powerful than formerly, the natural turn of events was convincing many former Maxse critics that though politics meant compromise, at times it likewise meant strict adherence to principle. The party press came down hard on his side. Years of Balfour-watching had taught Maxse that this man could never be trusted to prefer principle to expediency. Three election losses merely confirmed his long-held beliefs. But it took this triple defeat to open the editorial eyes of others who now expected the retreats to end. Maxse continued to ask:

Is Mr. Balfour acting altogether fairly by the Unionist Party and the nation in retaining a position in which he is not doing himself or anybody else justice? Would not the Constitutional Party do better under a man of inferior intellectual attainments, whose heart was in his work, and who was animated by an unconquerable zeal and determination to destroy the Demagogues?102

100Ibid., (June, 1911), 574. 101Ibid., (July, 1911), 733. 102Ibid.
In a word, Maxse insisted on an aggressive leadership despite overwhelming odds. The Parliament Bill was certain to pass into law one way or another. Still, a fight for principle had to be made and, as Maxse never tired of repeating, Joseph Chamberlain would have waged such a campaign. The Tory leadership in the Lords, which of course took its marching orders from Balfour, offered little solace to Maxse. Lord Lansdowne and his lieutenants had looked with horror upon Lord Newton's reform bill, the sole offense of which was to anticipate events, and had placed it on the shelf of the Rosebery Committee for four years. Now, when the Parliament Bill stood on the very doorstep of the Upper Chamber, Lord Lansdowne produced his own bill, the most ill-timed step imaginable, serving only to make confusion worse confounded. At this late date, united opposition to the Parliament Bill in the Lords was the only feasible means to save the desperate situation.\(^{103}\)

When Lansdowne's plan to reform the membership of the Lords met with a chilly reception even from the Unionist peers, he thereupon turned to the Parliament Bill and offered an amendment which knocked the bottom out of it. Maxse was heartened by this as well as by the selection at this time of Lord Balcarres\(^ {104}\) to replace Acland Hood as Chief Whip, a sop to rank and file opinion.\(^ {105}\) Lansdowne would not, however, retain Maxse's confidence for long.

In the meantime, Maxse pressed on with his 'no surrender' policy

\(^{103}\) *Ibid.*, 735-36.

\(^{104}\) *David Lindsay, Lord Balcarres, later 27th Earl of Crawford (1871-1940), Unionist MP for Chorley, Lancashire, 1895-1913; Chief Whip, 1911-13; Lord Privy Seal, 1916-18. D.N.B.*

\(^{105}\) *Nat. Rev., op. cit.*, 736.
which was supported by most of the Tory press. When Maxse took to task a certain peer seeming to waiver in the wrong direction, he received some stern advice from a new ally and former foe, Lord Robert Cecil.

Middleton [sic] will be "all right on the day." Don't be too violent to him—You will only frighten others back. After all a half-hearted opponent is better than a half-hearted supporter and I had much rather the coloured peers made no secret of their colour now than that they should pretend to be white and when the flood comes it should turn out that they had only been whitewashed.

Maxse harangued everyone within reach to push the leaders into unequivocal resistance. A missive to Henry Page Croft, an admired "Reveille" member, brought agreement and promises to do his best to persuade the leaders. Croft did tell Maxse that a stumbling block to recruitment was the three year legal delay which would affect Home Rule, plural voting abolition and Welsh Disestablishment if the Bill passed without the addition of hundreds of peers. Croft's answer to this argument was that Unionist prestige would fall precipitously following such a surrender and that the creation of five hundred peers would take a long time. And, once created, many of the new lords would doubtless see the financial impossibility of Home Rule and split their party before any further damage was inflicted.

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106 Standard, 5, 6 & 11 July 1911; Observer, 5 March, 2 & 9 July 1911; Morning Post, 5 & 18 July 1911; Pall Mall Gazette, 1 March, 9 & 19 May, 30 June, 8 July 1911; Outlook, 28 January & 20 May 1911; Daily Mail, 20 February, 11 & 21 July 1911; Daily Express, 16 & 27 February, 20 April, 9 May 1911. Only the Saturday Review refused to take a stand, urging instead a party meeting to let off steam (11 July 1911). The Daily Telegraph, plus royaliste que le roi, pushed for a sip of hemlock, just as Wellington had taken, even before Balfour indicated his long-awaited opinion (7 July 1911).

107 LMP, Robert Cecil to Maxse, 11 June 1911, 463/76.

108 Ibid., Croft to Maxse, 12 June 1911, 463/77.
Walter Long also received a Maxse missive. Long was the moderate tariff reform leader of the older men of the party. At this time he represented the Strand division of Middlesex and so Maxse was his constituent. Maxse wrote in part:

\[10^9\] ...I have very carefully thought over our interesting conversation yesterday, and I have come to the conclusion that the only policy for the Unionist Party to adopt towards the Government and the Parliament Bill is, "Create your peers if you can." ...I have also come to the conclusion that perse and quite apart from the Parliament Bill, a substantial addition of Radical peers to the present House of Lords would be a positive advantage to our side, because it would deprive the House of Lords of much of its unpopularity, it would rob the Radicals of one of their most effective grievances, namely the hopeless disparity in numbers in the Upper House, it would thus add to the authority of the House of Lords and ease our position as its defenders.

Further,

...I believe the atmosphere of the Upper House and the natural snobbishness of Radicals would be sufficient to render harmless the new creations, whoever they might be, and their Home Rule and other enthusiasms would rapidly evaporate, and their conduct would not be different from that of other Radical creations.\[110\]

In the hot July of 1911 Maxse wrote to Sandars:

(I)f it is decided by our two leaders next week to surrender under a threat to the Demagogues--the threat being a creation of peers--that it is they who will be challenging all that is manly in the Unionist Party. It is quite impossible for things to go on as they are (drifting, waiting for word from Olympus), with a total want of confidence between the Leaders and followers.

There was another point worth noting, Maxse added, namely the highly significant alarm of the Radical press over the action of the robustier Unionists in the House of Lords, which opens up possibilities of creating peers, which ex hypothesi would have made them masters of both Houses.

\[10^9\] Walter Long, 1st Viscount Long of Wraxall (1854-1921), Tory MP, 1880-1921; rival of Austen Chamberlain for party leadership, 1911. D.N.B.

In a bitter, pencilled postscript Maxse concluded, "suppose however the duty of an opposition is confined to helping the Government." 111

Jack Sandars found another urgent epistle from Maxse the next day, advising that Asquith was bluffing, that no real proof existed that King George had consented "to make 400 or 500 peers in order to pass" not only this particular bill, but also Home Rule, Plural Voting, etc. Another postscript, this one in ink, warned, "Mr. B. will produce a split if he listens to craven counsellors--that is perhaps a solution: Mandarins to the Left--Men to the Right." 112

Sandars replied two days later. Balfour's secretary's letter was filled with indirect but unmistakable criticism of his chief. Sandars said that Balfour and Lansdowne should have known Asquith never had the Crown's consent for an unlimited creation of peers. Further,

There is surely another point which you forget, namely that men who surrender over the Parliament Bill which as Asquith has himself told us involves Home Rule, are equally capable of surrendering on Home Rule, indeed I think they are bound to do so, and I am quite certain that they will.

After another slap at the party 'sheep', Balfour among them, and a ringing expression of abhorrence for the despicable part being played by Lord Curzon, who was organizing Tory peers actually to vote with the Ministry, Sandars added his hope that, "Anyway we can remain friends though politicians may make fools of themselves." 113

On the twenty-fifth of July, the news became public that Balfour

111 ABP, B. M. Add. Mss. 49861, 274, Maxse to Sandars, 21 July 1911.
112 Ibid., 49861, 275, Maxse to Sandars, 22 July 1911.
113 Ibid., 49861, 278, Sandars to Maxse, 24 July 1911.
had decided not to fight the inevitable. He advised the Unionist peers to permit the Parliament Bill to pass as it had come up from the Commons and not to insist on their amendments. Balfour promised them his next ministry would repeal the Act and substitute a reformed, effective Upper House to thwart single chamber domination. Maxse's prediction had come true. Recriminations flowed. Whether it was nobler to remain loyal to party leaders or party principle when defeat loomed certain in either case became the central question in those sultry last weeks before the vote in the House of Lords. The question was really one of tactics. But the agitated state of the party, as built up over several years, precluded any other than an emotional approach.

Debate centered around the activities of the Halsburyites. Lord Halsbury was the aged, scrappy ex-Lord Chancellor who became the leader of the diehards. The Halsburyites were immediately attacked by the Daily Telegraph which saw them as disloyal troublemakers anxious only to goad Balfour and to make Lansdowne's position untenable. The Standard came over to the "hedger" side, expressing unwillingness to add unnecessarily to the inherent difficulty of the situation by weighing it further with bitter internal division. What choice did Unionists have?, asked the editorial. The answer was: Precious little. The party could run the risk of breaking up on the question if it divided and thus fatally weakened the only force protecting the country from disruption. Or Tories could follow their leaders in a possibly erroneous move that would have the virtue of united support. Little could be gained by a Halsburyite demonstration which could prove nothing but the existence of Unionist

114 Standard, 26 July 1911.

115 22 & 31 July, 2 August 1911.
disunity. Such resistance was mischievous in its immediate objective as well as in its final effects.116

The Saturday Review still stood in the middle, endorsing neither Balfour nor Halsbury's policy. It found that the question was not one of loyalty to the party leaders or principles, but rather a single unemotional one of tactics.117 All of the other major journals held fast to the 'no surrender' scheme. The Morning Post summed up the diehard position by pointing out that if the Parliament Bill was a dreadful mistake, the party could not simply stand aside and then expect to go to the country to fight against it and still command the confidence of the voters.118 Moreover, the Halsburyites were manifesting the vitality and enthusiasm so long dormant in party counsels and which could be used in the future to good effect. The Daily Express and Daily Mail denounced any notion of disloyalty to Balfour.

Maxse went on as before, continuing his barrage of letters. Even before Balfour's 'infamous' act, he had written to R. D. Blumenfeld, editor of the Daily Express, to question what he imagined was an indication of wavering on that editor's part. Blumenfeld replied quickly to reassure Maxse that he believed in the gospel still.120 The new Chief Whip, Lord Balfour, dictated a reply to another Maxse missive. His Lordship offered a sympathetic ear to Maxse's argument but said he could not agree because he believed events over which Unionists had no control.

116 Standard, 26 & 28 July 1911.
117 29 July & 5 August 1911.
118 29 July 1911.
119 Daily Mail, 26 July 1911; Daily Express, 26 July 1911.
120 LMP, Blumenfeld to Maxse, 11 July 1911, 463/95.
rendered Maxse's degree of violent opposition ineffective. Maxse also wrote to congratulate the Pall Mall Gazette for its strong attitude. The editor sadly agreed with Maxse that the party leaders were ready to advise capitulation without exacting any terms.

Maxse was in almost daily contact with his friend Lord Willoughby de Broke who acted as a floor manager for the Halsburyites. Lord Willoughby filed frequent reports of numbers of supporters, the outright opposition and those still uncertain. Maxse also tried once more to get through to Balfour. He received this reply from Jack Sandars: "I have told Mr. Balfour of the general nature of your observations. No one is more tolerant of adverse criticism."

In these busy days, Maxse found time to write a congratulatory note to H. A. Gwynne, who had just begun his long reign as editor of the Morning Post after completing seven years at the soon-to-be-defunct Standard. Gwynne's thoughtful, friendly reply went beyond the polite words of appreciation, even beyond the furor surrounding the Parliament Bill. He laid a deft finger on the flaw in Maxse's approach to politics which, needless to say, Maxse politely ignored. But these straight-from-the-shoulder observations are important to an understanding of the passionate man who was Leo Maxse.

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121 Ibid., Balcarres to Maxse, 18 July 1911, marked "Private," 462/96.

122 Ibid., Fred J. Higginbottom to Maxse, 19 July 1911, 463/97.


124 Ibid., Sandars to Maxse, 23 July 1911, marked "Private," 463/112.
Now about leadership. I know your opinions too well and I have always been an admirer of you and the "National Review," which I consider the best magazine going....

But you and I, while agreeing perhaps on the main issue, do not see eye to eye on the question of expediency. I think that the position of the "Morning Post" should be one of entire independence, but that it should never take up what I should term a nagging attitude, for this simple reason: That when you consistently attack anything and there comes a moment when it is essential that a particular attack should succeed, you find that people pay no attention because they have been accustomed to a policy of pinpricks and regard this particular one as nothing else but an ordinary pinprick. Wherefore the effectiveness of one's criticism is altogether destroyed because of its frequency.

Thus Gwynne likened Maxse to that species of boys who cry wolf.

At the same time, you know that I do not agree with you on the question of tactics. Your point of view, I take it, is that by strenuous and frequent criticisms and attacks on Balfour you will at last force him to leave the Party. There I must confess I do not agree with you at all. He is, as you know, one of the most obstinate men in the world and a systemised attack would only have the effect of closing up the ranks of the sycophants and the orthodox supporters....

There is another point which I would like to put before you, and that is, that for good or evil, the only weapon we have with which to achieve our purpose...is the Unionist Party; and anything that tends to disorganize or to destroy the efficiency of that weapon seems to me to postpone the fulfillment of our desires still further; and for that reason I must say that I do not agree with you altogether.125

Gwynne had hit upon the key to Maxse's, and perhaps his party's, ineffectiveness—the inability to know or to recognize when to compromise and when to stand fast on principle. If every issue was considered a matter of principle, neither party nor journalist could operate with any constructive effect. Yet what influence could accrue to a party whose leaders always placed expediency above principle—as Maxse believed Balfour had done for years and as he and the Halsburyites now believed

125 Ibid., Gwynne to Maxse, 19 July 1911, marked "Private," 463/100-101A.
Balfour was doing again? Gwynne thought a via media was necessary, but ran up against the traditional stumbling block, the lack of any effective control over a Unionist leader.

If Maxse took Gwynne's observations to heart, it was not apparent. If anything, during the final stifling weeks before the fate of the Parliament Bill was determined his stridency mounted. He engaged in a childish squabble with The Times essentially because that pre-eminent independent journal had accepted Balfour's policy of "scuttle." The immediate issue was the publication by The Times on 31 July 1911, of a letter from a Liberal peer, Baron de Forest, who was a staunch supporter of the Bill. The Baron delivered a judgment on the claims of the Unionist disputants and came down firmly on the side of the diehards who, he ventured, had all the moral as well as the long-range political arguments on their side.

The surrender peers, he continued, remained too absorbed with the threat of degradation hanging over their ancient order. De Forest concluded his outsider's review with the assurance that, were he a Unionist, the diehards would claim his unswerving allegiance.

Maxse was infuriated that such a professed impartial newspaper would dare to print such a letter which clearly indicated The Times' sympathy with the cause of the hedgers. The best argument against a course of action was to see it endorsed by the enemy. Although all the documents are not before us, it is not difficult to reconstruct the chain of events which followed. Maxse immediately rang up the advertising department of The Times to cancel the advertisement for his National Review. He followed this up with an indignant letter of protest to the editor, G. E. Buckle. We know of the call and the letter by means of the immediate, equally indignant replies. From A. W. Drew, the
advertising manager, came a letter incorrectly addressed to "J. T. Maxse, Esq.," which surely did nothing to improve the situation. "Dear Sir," it began,

I am at a loss to understand a telephone message I received from you this morning wishing to cancel your advertisement.

It is hardly necessary to point out to a man of your attainments that there is no connection between the editorial and advertising departments on "The Times."

The editorial policy is absolutely impartial and the insertion of Baron de Forest's letter is only an instance of this well-known fact.

I have just been informed that you have not sent a review copy nor was one received last month. I am pointing this out to you lest you should think your review purposely omitted.

You did not give me the opportunity of mentioning this matter this morning, and I shall feel obliged if you will kindly ring me up and let me know if you still wish your advertisement cancelled.\(^{126}\)

G. E. Buckle was less restrained in his rebuke.

Sir,

As you explain that your letter was a personal protest not meant for publication, I shall abandon my intention of publishing it; but as it was set in type I enclose you a proof.

If however your letter was personal, I resent it as impertinent and unmannerly. As an Editor, I am greatly your Senior and should by this time know my business. But if you feel it your duty to admonish me in private, I suggest that you should employ language usual between gentlemen, and reserve phrases like 'journalistic infamy', 'cowardice' and 'unplumbed depths' for the notes of the National Review.\(^{127}\)

Apparently these letters were carried by hand, because on that same busy last day of July, Maxse coldly replied to Editor Buckle:

\(^{126}\) _Ibid._, Drew to Maxse, 31 July 1911, L63/120-21.

\(^{127}\) _Ibid._, Buckle to Maxse, 31 July 1911, L63/122.
Sir,

In reply to your inquiry I write to say that my letter was a personal protest from a life-long reader of *The Times* against the infamous tactics of *The Times* in publishing Baron de Forest's letter with a view to prejudicing unthinking people against those peers who are standing by their principles. It was no reflection on Baron de Forest, who as a newly elected Radical Member was but taking advantage of the opening offered him in trying to injure the Unionist Party. I have no objection to the publication of my first letter, provided this explanation be set forth in full.  

Two days later Maxse decided to expand upon his thoughts on the matter.

Sir,

I am obliged to you for sending me a proof of my letter of protest against the importation of Baron de Forest as a factor in the Constitutional controversy. Had I received it at the same time as your enquiry as to whether my letter was intended for publication I should have replied with an unqualified "Yes," but not having a copy by me I was reluctantly obliged to return a qualified affirmative which decided you not to publish it. As you are evidently in the dark as to how decent people regard the recent antics of *The Times* on the Constitutional crisis, the response to that letter would have helped to open your eyes. Everyone whom I have spoken to on the unsavoury action of *The Times* in putting forth Baron de Forest as an adviser of the Unionist Party, is at least as indignant as I am. Their language would not bear publication.

The personal part of your letter leaves me completely cold. One cannot be choice as regards epithets to stigmatise the present conduct of *The Times*, which is devoting itself under a great assumption of superiority to doing day by day the dirty work of a Government of Demagogues. Yesterday it was actually working up Radical peers to vote for this infamous Parliament Bill. To-day it goes one better by encouraging the Judas Iscariots of the Unionist Party to do ditto. I freely confess that my vocabulary is totally incapable of coping with such action in a so-called Unionist newspaper, which having sold us to-day over the Parliament Bill, is doubtless preparing to sell us tomorrow over the Home Rule Bill on the ground that the passing of the Parliament Bill makes serious opposition to Home Rule impossible, or on some other plausible pretext.

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The "Notes of the National Review" doubtless have their defects, but the National Review at any rate is not a snake in the grass.  

The argument was not quite over. After a note from the publishing department acknowledging receipt of Maxse's request dated 1 August 1911, to end his personal subscription to The Times, another letter arrived from A. W. Drew, this time correctly addressed, rebutting Maxse's accusation that impartiality had totally disappeared from The Times. Drew concluded his part of the correspondence with a telling blow. 

Will you permit me to say that I cannot understand your attitude in the matter of your advertisement. It seems to me from an advertising point of view that your announcement would have a far more telling effect on papers that do not take the same view as you do, rather than in media which are of the same way of thinking as yourself; their readers would probably buy the National Review to see what you had to say about it.

Finally, Buckle put an end to the entire absurd controversy.

Sir,

My letter was a personal reply to what you described as a personal protest, and was not meant for publication. The Times did not "import" or "put forward" Baron de Forest, unless these words fittingly describe its action with regard to all its correspondents of every party in this crisis. His letter reached this office, unsolicited, in the ordinary course, and was published, in the ordinary course, as any other letter on the situation, from a well-known M.P., couched in decent terms, would have been published. It is apparently your notion of fair and honest journalism that the letter should have been refused insertion; but I cannot conceive on what ground.

I shall not further prolong a correspondence in which you continue to use language which shows that you respect neither me nor yourself.

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130 Ibid., 2 August 1911, 463/131.
131 Ibid., Drew to Maxse, 2 August 1911, 463/132-33.
Buckle was sensible in deciding to end the barren controversy.
Maxse certainly knew that Buckle had no ulterior motive in publishing de Forest's letter; he was merely indulging his sense of outrage at the policy adopted by The Times and was letting off steam. But this was Maxse, always believing he possessed absolute truth and refusing to acknowledge that others might feel the same. If it was not the Baron's letter, another excuse would have been discovered to berate The Times for its stance. Maxse was so carried away that he found danger in the very impartiality of The Times.

Maxse always tried to bring questions of principle into situations where principle was not at issue. He was a professional, lifelong die-hard; the Parliament Bill simply affords a picture of his unique approach at the prime of his life. It was not an approach designed to win friends. More important, it was not likely to convince foes or those still wavering. Other men could never be motivated by principle if their policies conflicted with those of Leo Maxse. And he had to resort to name calling to illustrate his feelings. His attempt to convince Lord Derby to vote against surrender is another typical example of this approach, which would have been almost humorous had the stakes not been so high. Lord Derby started with the ditchers but like so many other ditchers, notably Lord Curzon, ended up reluctantly in the camp of the hedgers when it became clear that Asquith was not bluffing. Maxse wrote:

As a warm admirer of the great work you have been doing for Unionism in Lancashire during the last two or three years, may I be allowed to express my profound regret, which is shared by many other Unionists I have spoken to, that you contemplate throwing in your lot with that portion of the Peerage who have decided, for reasons which have never been divulged and never can be divulged because they are of so flimsy and contemptible a character, to allow this infamous Parliament Bill to go through
by default sooner than that a single peer should be created. It is surely not surprising that your Lancashire friends are utterly bewildered by the action of those who have decided to follow Lord Lansdowne in his base surrender to Messrs. Asquith, Redmond and Patrick Ford. There is really no other way of putting it, because, just as the Prime Minister has 'toed the line' amid the universal contempt and derision of all decent citizens to the Leader of the Molly Maguires, so the Unionist Leaders are deliberately 'toeing the line' to the Prime Minister. You are perturbed at Lancashire anxieties as to whether you are actually going into the Demagogues' Lobby; but what is the great moral difference between allowing a Bill to go by default in order to stop a creation of peers, and actually voting for that Bill with the same object, which seems to be the sole object of the Unionist Mandarins?

To me, as an onlooker and outsider deeply attached to Unionist principles and with some experience of Unionist sentiment, the House of Lords seems to be committing suicide. It has no friends in the Radical ranks, except a few plutocrats who anticipate the divine moment when they may be in a position to purchase a peerage. What friends can the House of Lords expect to retain in the Unionist ranks on the Lansdowne House policy? How can our candidates be fairly asked to defend its actions, if it convicts itself at this grave crisis of being governed by craven counsels or snobbish considerations--save in so far as its honour is vindicated by the action of Lord Halsbury and the Stalwarts, which provides the one bright spot in the present political situation? Should the scuttlers prevail in their policy of helping the Demagogues to avoid the odium of special creation of Radical peers in order than an outrageous measure may become the law of the land, how many years purchase do you give a House of Lords which in cold blood sacrifices great national and constitutional interests solely in order to save itself from an infusion of outsiders, who would from every point of view strengthen the Upper House and weaken its enemies by depriving the latter of their one solid grievance--the overwhelming one-sidedness of the present House of Lords?

A golden opportunity is offered for real reform, which would at once discredit the Government and strengthen the House of Lords not only by a more rational distribution of Parties, which would immensely increase the authority of our Second Chamber, but likewise provide valuable allies in recovering the powers lost under the Parliament Bill. All these and many other fruits of the policy of courage are to be wantonly thrown away at the bidding of a timid Whig (Lansdowne) and a cynical philosopher (Balfour). All we helpless onlookers can say is 'Heaven defend us from our friends. We can defend ourselves from our enemies'.

Lord Derby replied quickly. He noted the reasons for his
disagreement with Maxse and why he planned to abstain from the final
vote. He also indicated his resentment of Maxse's propensity to name
calling. 134

Maxse's friend Lord Ridley soon added his regrets at opposing Lord
Halsbury's course and acknowledged the pain he felt at differing from so
many close friends in the crisis. Ridley found that "in view of the
actions that have been taken in the last three or four years I don't see
how the House of Lords can do anything except take Lord Lansdowne's
advice." 135

Ridley's negativism was soon countered by the enthusiasm of Tory
MP Waldorf Astor, 136 who reported solid working man support in his
Plymouth constituency at recent public meetings. Astor added, "In fact,
so strong was the feeling that I should be myself quite prepared to fight
an election on a... 'no surrender' policy." 137

Maxse too remained enthusiastic right down to the wire. His August
Review plumped for his case, while professing disgust with the leaders'
attempts to organize surrender. He acclaimed the efforts of the Halsbury
people to reject the detestable, damnable doctrines of the Demagogues
and the capitulating leadership and replace them with principles. 138

On the sweltering night of 10 August 1911, the Parliament Bill

134 Lord Derby to Maxse, 31 July 1911, quoted in Ibid., 125-26.
135 LMP, Ridley to Maxse, 3 August 1911, 463/13b.
136 Waldorf Astor, 2nd Viscount Astor (1879-1952), public servant;
Tory MP for Plymouth, 1910-19; succeeded by wife Nancy in the seat;
de facto proprietor of the Observer after 1911; pro imperial unity. D.N.B.
137 LMP, Astor to Maxse, 8 August 1911, 463/139.
passed its third reading in the House of Lords by a vote of 131 to 111. The slim Liberal majority came from the abstention of the Lansdowne supporters and the actual votes of those who have been called "the bishops and the rats"—13 of 15 bishops and 37 Conservative peers. Tory backwoodsmen and militant tariff reformers followed Lord Halsbury into the Opposition lobby.
However inevitable its passage, the Parliament Act capped another defeat for the Tories. With Maxse's help, the imperturbable Balfour was soon forced to acknowledge this fact. Thereupon, he resigned his position as leader.

On the evening the Lords voted, Balfour was already in Paris en route to Bad Gastein, ostensibly for reasons of health. Here he remained until early September, when he returned to London. Once home, he learned from his party managers of the widespread dissatisfaction in the party with his leadership. Even one of his oldest, dearest friends, Walter Long, wrote him a severe letter of criticism.¹ In the Unionist press, some newspapers which had praised the enthusiastic efforts of the Halsburyites denied the need for any recriminations but, rather, urged the party to take the now clear issue of single chamber government to the country.² Others called for a purge of those thirty-seven peers who had voted with the Government.³ The Daily Express allowed that it could not plead for the party leaders with any enthusiasm.⁴ Only Garvin's Observer dared attack Balfour or Lansdowne by name and without restraint. The traitors, he cried, had to be expelled. The 'no surrender' group had

¹Mackenzie, op. cit., 80
²Morning Post, 11 August 1911; Pall Mall Gazette, 11 August 1911.
³Outlook, 12 August 1911; Daily Mail, 11 August 1911; Daily Express, 11 August 1911; Saturday Review, 12 August 1911.
⁴12 August 1911.
roused the party to take its own business in hand. "The Unionist Party is greater than any man," Garvin concluded. "It does not depend on any man. Henceforth it will not be fettered by any man."\(^5\)

The harshest epithets were, of course, left to Leo Maxse. Indeed, in his September Review Maxse secured his footnote in history. Asquith's Liberals received their due, but the bulk of the "Episodes" was reserved for a painfully detailed account of the machinations of the "Scutters" and "Iscariots" and the attempts of the "true loyalists" to uphold Conservative principles and honor. Maxse agreed with Lord Willoughby de Broke that loyalty to party leaders always needed to be subordinated to party principle, principle which was implanted deep down in the minds of the British people and of which official Unionism in Parliament must always be the correct expression. Maxse warned that

\[\text{as soon as the official heads of the Unionist Party are not prepared to take the means we consider to be the only means for securing the constitution, the Conservative and Constitutional Party will have to combine and work out its own salvation.}\(^6\)

This, Maxse intoned, was sound doctrine. Balfour had no more chances coming to him. The crucial test had found him wanting. Hence, "any attempt by whomsoever made to replace our heads under the Balfourian yoke is doomed to failure."\(^7\)

None of this was new. Maxse had been saying this for years. But now he added to his denunciation the single letters, "B.M.G." That these stood for "Balfour Must Go!" was apparent to all and became the rallying cry for all those who had had enough of Balfour. At the core

\(^5\) Observer, 13 August 1911.

\(^6\) Nat. Rev., LVIII (September, 1911), 16.

\(^7\) Ibid.
of the rebellion stood the tariff reformers who, Maxse pronounced, were more than certain that no serious measure of tariff reform would come from Balfour. But Maxse's slogan appealed to more than fiscal reformers. It described a general malaise in the party and attracted those disgusted by the tactics of August, the rank and file people who found in three successive election defeats a state of affairs whose only remedy was new party leadership. Maxse pressed the exasperated to capture the party, to prevent it from remaining "the happy hunting ground of timorous whigs and cynical philosophers with their attendant satellites of snobs, scuttlers, and renegades." 

In October, Maxse added an entire article on the subject of Balfour's "direct connivance" in passing the Parliament Act. Entitled "The Champion Scuttler," it was signed "B.M.G." Maxse also lobbied elsewhere. He complained to Garvin, who cared more for the issue of overall party unity, that

People will not get into their heads the elementary fact which really governs the whole situation, that Balfour does not want to turn out the present Government, as he would then have the disagreeable task of forming a Government of his own, of discarding old pals, quarrelling over Tariff Reform, etc., etc.

In mid-month, Maxse, still vice president of the National Union, gave notice of a motion he would submit to the annual conference at Leeds in November. The motion read:

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8Ibid., (October, 1911), 195.

9Ibid., (September, 1911), 35*.

10Ibid., (October, 1911), 214-19.

11Maxse to Garvin, 11 October 1911, quoted in Gollin, Garvin, 351.
That this conference of the rank-and-file of the Unionist Party places on record its warm and unstinted admiration for the conduct of 'No surrender' Peers, led by Lord Halsbury, who refused to be cajoled or coerced into swallowing the Parliament Bill, which violated every Unionist principle, and consequently called for the strenuous and uncompromising resistance of the entire Unionist Party.\textsuperscript{12}

Maxse beseeched Sir Archibald Salvidge to lend his not unsubstantial weight to the anti-Balfour movement. Salvidge, however, refused. He was the extremely formidable Liverpool Alderman and Chairman of that city's Conservative Working Men's Association.\textsuperscript{13} Maxse wrote:

I very much wish we could have a talk together about the present situation, which appears to me from some points of view to be as bad as any situation with which the Unionist Party has had to deal of late years and that is saying a great deal. Yet, I cannot help feeling that if we could only break through the uppercrust, which seems to paralyse our party, and meet the Unionist rank and file and the masses generally in a straightforward manner, laying before them the social and imperial ideas of the Unionist Party in language they could understand, and in a manner which impressed them by its sincerity, we should not have long to bow our heads to the yoke of the present Government. But I own to being simply appalled at the top of our party, and above all by their total failure to realise that a continuance of Balfourism means general ruin. However, it is no use discussing these things on paper.

Are you likely to be in London during the next fortnight or so?

I own to having been very much astonished at Mr. F. E. Smith leading off with an obeisance to Balfour when he first spoke in Liverpool after the No Surrender campaign, in which he so conspicuously shone and took a bold and attractive line. However, I suppose ordinary mortals cannot appreciate the considerations which govern the actions and inactions of Privy Councillors and Front Benchers generally. I believe if we go on as at present, without drastic changes at the top, that Unionism will gradually "peter out." Is there no chance of the rank and file being persuaded to make a big demonstration of their disgust at the Leeds Conference? I hear it is to be "rigged" in Balfour's interest;\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{12}\textit{Morning Post}, 19 October 1911. \textsuperscript{13}\textit{Petrie, Walter Long, 66.}

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{Maxse to Salvidge, 23 October 1911, marked "Private and Confidential," quoted in Stanley Salvidge, \textit{Salvidge of Liverpool} (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 193\textit{h}), 112-13.}
Salvidge replied cordially but brusquely that he saw no prospect of his being in London soon nor did he see that discussion would be valuable. Concern for the welfare of the party, he continued, was shared by all true Unionists, and as constant vigilance is the price of victory it is only right that we should constantly seek to improve and strengthen the position whenever possible. As for placing the social and imperial ideals of the Unionist Party before the masses in language they can understand, that is a work which has my entire sympathy, and one on which I have been engaged for the major portion of my life. But in actual practice I have never found that any of these vital objects can be furthered by attacks on revered leaders whom the masses honour and esteem.

I do not share your astonishment at the tribute paid by Mr. F. E. Smith to Mr. Balfour because that expression of loyalty was made not only after full consultation with myself, but actually on my suggestion that whilst such a declaration was not really called for it would serve to remove the smallest possibility of doubt. Referring to the Conference...next month, I feel it only right to tell you that so far as I, as a member of the Council of that body, am able to judge, any demonstration of disgust likely to be made there by the rank and file will not be against Mr. Balfour's leadership but against those who have attacked it.15

Undaunted, Maxse repeated his attacks in the November "Episodes" with frequent allusion to Balfour's fighting spirit when a member of the Fourth Party. Additional notes praised the formation of the Halsbury Club, "a rallying ground for Unionists who mean business as opposed to those who talk Unionism."16 The Halsbury Club, led by Lords Halsbury and Willoughby de Broke, had been formed early in October to keep the diehard movement a permanent force. If the organization's purpose was not overtly hostile to Balfour, as Professor Mackenzie points out, and merely aimed at keeping together opinion in and out of Parliament which sought a definite lead, it is equally fair to say that, if Balfour had

15Salvidge to Maxse, 26 October 1911, quoted in Ibid., 113-14.
given what the Halsburyites considered a "definite lead," the Club would have had no reason to exist. In any event, although Balfour expressed indignation at such a challenge, he knew he could not "be evicted" without his consent. And he did not lack support. Austen Chamberlain, who was not enamoured of the leader, refused to join any combination against him. He also thought Leo Maxse had "run amuck." Balfour continued to hypnotize The Times and the Daily Telegraph, and won more grudging support from the Outlook, Morning Post, Pall Mall Gazette, Daily Mail, Spectator, Daily Express and Standard.

Maxse was clearly up against his old bugaboo—the fear of attacking the party leader. Even at this late date the Balfour mystique held. With the exception of Garvin and also the Globe, Maxse remained in late October quite alone among London journalists in publicly urging Balfour's resignation. Why, therefore, Balfour chose now to resign remains a question. The activities of the Halsbury Club do not answer it. Maxse resolutely denied membership in the Club, though such membership would not have been out of character. Other members certainly caused Balfour more consternation—people like Lord Roberts, Lords Hugh and Robert Cecil.

17Sir Austen Chamberlain, Politics, 352, 372.
187 October 1911.
199, 13 & 19 October 1911. Although candid H. A Gwynne, at the same time, endorsed the enthusiastic vitality of the Halsbury forces.
201 September & 7 November 1911. 217 October 1911.
2221 October 1911.
239, 17 & 20 October 1911. Here again the Halsburyites were praised.
243 October 1911.
25Which quietly solicited a new leader, 9 & 17 October 1911.
26LMP, Maxse to Editor of Daily Chronicle, 19 October 1911, 163/152.
and Lord Milner. At the same time, though, the Halsbury Club did pass a vote of confidence in Balfour and Lansdowne. Such temporizing would not have endeared the Club to Maxse. But likewise it would not cause a man like Balfour to submit his resignation. We come back once more to Maxse. Was he finally to triumph after lonely years of stalking his prey? Had Balfour succumbed to the tireless efforts of this small, possessed man?

The evidence appears to the contrary. Balfour's biographers agree that his decision to resign was either contemplated or made in Bad Gastein, weeks before the "BMG" or the Halsbury forces could gather momentum. Bonar Law's biographer, Robert Blake, has discovered a vigorous agitation in the Conservative press, headed by Leo Maxse and his celebrated slogan. Blake implies that this agitation caused Balfour's thoughts to turn toward resignation. This is unlikely. As has been seen, no vigorous agitation, other than two Globe editorials and some watered-down words from the Observer supported that of the National Review.

27 Observer, 12 November 1911.

28 Young, Balfour, 313; Dugdale, Balfour, II, 57. Mrs. Dugdale further revealed her uncle's attitude towards attacks made upon him by that most gifted journalist, Leo Maxse, who remained all through it his personal friend. On the day his resignation was announced, "Balfour remarked with a chuckle of sincere amusement: 'I really think I must ask Leo Maxse to dinner tonight, for we are probably the two happiest men in London.'" Mrs. Dugdale fairly concluded from this that "if the National Review assaults had produced any real effect upon the political position, this remark might perhaps not have been made....'B.M.G.' is the kind of simple hammer-blow for which every good journalist strives. As a 'slogan' it has seldom been bettered...But it neither hastened nor retarded anything....The report of the party managers to Balfour upon his return from Germany merely confirmed his own feelings of widespread dissatisfaction." Dugdale, Balfour, II, 58.

29 Blake, op. cit., 71-2.
Leo Amery, Maxse's closest friend, casts further doubt on Maxse's influence and supports the formation of the Halsbury Club as a decisive factor.

'Balfour Must Go' had long been a watchword in diehard quarters and was the actual heading of a slashing attack by Maxse in the...National Review. But what really decided Balfour was the open disregard of his advice over the Parliament Act by members of his own Shadow Government, and by the obvious intention of maintaining pressure on him implied by the formation in October of the Halsbury Club.30

Two things seem clear. Given the structure of the National Union, Balfour could have retained the leadership almost indefinitely. We know he viewed the annual meeting of the National Union as merely a time for letting off steam. Second, Leo Maxse alone could never have convinced Balfour to give up. What was different this time was that Maxse's rabid raving came closer than ever before to expressing what Balfour knew was a widespread but unspoken feeling in the party. Balfour might not read the daily press, but the journals were still so timid about standing up to him that such reading would not have been instructive. Rather, he received private complaints from trusted sources and it seems likely that the formation of the Halsbury Club, which included members of his own family, simply confirmed a decision toward which he leaned before his return from Bad Gastein. Amery's reference to the August rebellion of some former Cabinet colleagues also must have stung. Balfour was surely tired after ten years as leader of his party, but he resigned because the unpleasant carping had managed to ruffle his usual imperturbability. His unquestionable personal magnetism no longer sufficed to silence the doubters.

30 Leo Amery, My Political Life, I, 385.
Most journals regretted Balfour's departure and took consolation in his continuing presence in the Commons. They praised his superiority in parliamentary debate and strategy, but alluded in varying degrees and with more openness than ever to his obvious defects. All were pleased that the two rivals for the succession, Walter Long and Austen Chamberlain, each representing one broad wing of the party, had stepped aside to prevent any further divisiveness and had allowed Bonar Law to succeed Balfour as a unanimous compromise candidate.  

The annual conference took place at Leeds a few days later and Bonar Law was received with enthusiasm. The only sour note in the entire affair involved Maxse. He had wasted no time writing to Law to congratulate him on his probable election and to tell him that he would withdraw his intended motion at Leeds. He also showered Law with advice which basically asked the new leader to haul down forever the white flag which had waved so long. Maxse foresaw an end to demoralizing sham unity and a new era of cooperation under the effective leadership of "the only man outside the Die-Hard ranks whom Die-Hards could possibly accept as leader...."  

At the conference, Maxse mounted the platform to withdraw the divisive motion as he had promised. But so identified had the spunky, wiry journalist become with movements of dissent and rebellion that he was shouted down before he was able to indicate his purpose. The conferees  

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31Daily Express, 9 November 1911; Spectator, 11 November 1911; Pall Mall Gazette, 9 & 13 November 1911; Observer, 12 November 1911; Outlook, 17 November 1911; Standard, 9 & 13 November 1911; Morning Post, 9 & 11 November 1911; Globe, 9 November 1911.  

wanted nothing to remind them of past animosities. Maxse glared at his hecklers, but was soon forced to step down unheard. Later the Chairman read what Maxse had intended to say:

When I first heard that Bonar Law was likely to become the leader of our party I wrote and told him that in that happy event I should withdraw this resolution, and I must ask your leave to fulfill that spontaneous undertaking. Independent members of the rank and file will not shrink from disagreeable duties, whenever real necessity arises, but they are the very last wantonly to excite dissension at the present time. The one thing we need is domestic peace, in order that we may wage effective war upon the enemy.

The regrettable incident was indicative of the new spirit of unity represented by a forceful man at the helm. Bonar Law wrote immediately to Maxse to apologize for the scene. Maxse took no umbrage; at least he never referred to it in the Review. Indeed, he was already pressing on the new leader his well-known obsession with the German threat.

So buoyed was he with the realization of his dreams that his next "Episodes," concerning Balfour's resignation, were decidedly restrained. He placed great emphasis on the official excuse—Balfour's health—and even phrased with exceptional kindness the July decision in which Lansdowne and Balfour had allowed themselves to be "rushed by impetuous and ill-judging colleagues," into a decision which made the burden of independent leadership practically impossible for them. Bonar Law's first

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33 The Times, Standard, Morning Post, Globe and Daily Express, 17 November 1911; Outlook, 18 November 1911.
34 Morning Post, 17 November 1911.
36 Ibid., Maxse to Law, 17 November 1911, marked "Private," 23/3/47.
37 Nat. Rev., LVI (December, 1911), 510.
speech as leader added to Maxse's euphoria; Law was eminently "sound on Home Rule, Welsh Disestablishment and, most important, tariff reform and imperial preference."38 In short, Maxse now faced the future of the Unionist party with great confidence.

38 Ibid., 530-34.
After the excitement of 1911, even hyperactive Maxse seemed to settle down. Of course his fervent warnings about the impending Irish and German troubles continued unabated but, if only for a while, a new note of satisfaction crept into his observations about the political world. Maxse felt secure with Bonar Law. The new leader seemed to possess all the qualities Maxse admired.

Where Balfour was intellectually pre-eminent and personally magnetic, Law was pedestrian and unattractive. Where Balfour could always see a large part of his opponent's case, Law could see only the more salient features of his own. As a result, where Balfour hesitated, Law struck, and that was precisely what the Unionist Party of the day wanted. After six years of Opposition and three electoral defeats, they were too bitter and frustrated for Balfourian urbanity, the essential basis of which was a calm and confident expectation of power. The Unionist Party, enraged rather than discouraged by their defeat over the Parliament Bill, began to move ever faster towards extreme courses and threats of violence.1

Tories viewed as unconstitutional Liberal preparations to reward the Irish for their loyalty in the Budget and Parliament Act battles with Home Rule. Bonar Law therefore felt justified in supporting the Orangemen of Ulster in their use of any means to prevent the rule of 'popery' in the North. Yet Bonar Law was not the messiah Maxse had awaited. The new leader committed heresy late in 1912 on the tariff issue, and Maxse was stunned by the shattering of the image.

Despite this diversion, Maxse's attention in the years before the Great War focussed mainly on the Liberal Ministry. He led in the demand

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1Roy Jenkins, Mr. Balfour's Poodle (London: Collins, 1968), 271-72.
for a blue-ribbon committee to investigate the Marconi Affair (see below) and attacked unmercifully the Government's defense, foreign and Irish policies. Maxse concentrated on clarifying the divisions between the parties; his days of inciting or exacerbating division within his own party, if not over, were clearly less frequent.

Severe chills and other physical side effects of the strenuous autumn plagued Maxse in the winter of 1912. He was too ill to write the February "Episodes" or to attend the funeral of his father-in-law, Vernon Lushington. Letters of concern for his health came from people as far apart as Sir Edward Grey and Lord Willoughby de Broke. Maxse's interest in affairs remained constant. He wrote to Bonar Law complaining that the former British Ambassador to Germany, Sir Frank Lascelles, was actively engaged in intrigue against British foreign policy prompted by a personal vendetta against Grey for refusing to extend his service in Berlin. In a massive May missive he sent his further advice and comments on German intentions, national defense and War Minister Haldane. Another Maxse note helped convince Austen Chamberlain of the inadequacy of the new naval estimates.

Publicly, Maxse spoke out in 1912 against the merits of the impending coal miners' strike, one of many strikes in pre-war Britain. His jaundiced

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2 The Times, 29 January 1912.
3 IMP, Grey to Maxse, 6 March 1912, 466/49.
4 Ibid., de Broke to Maxse, 10 March 1912, 466/57.
5 BLP, Maxse to Law, 1 March 1912, marked "Private," 25/3/3.
6 Ibid., Maxse to Law, 20 May 1912, 26/3/32.
7 Austen Chamberlain to Mary Chamberlain, 2 March 1912, quoted in Chamberlain, Politics, 438.
eye saw everything in terms of tariff reform and the strike merely
illustrated, he explained, the failure of free trade to protect against
socialism and industrial anarchy. Maxse preferred the strike to continue
rather than the employers guarantee a minimum wage or the Government
nationalize the mines. Once the strike began he bewailed the loss of
work of those whose jobs depended upon the coal supply and berated the
Ministry for failure to protect people who wished to cross picket lines.
Maxse spent most of these years speaking out against one change or another.
To compensate the Labour party for the debilitating effects of the Osborne
Judgment, the Liberals passed a bill providing for payment of Members
of Parliament. This drew immediate fire from Maxse who opposed forcing
salaries indiscriminately on rich and poor alike, a waste of money with­
out any mandate from the country.

In September, 1912, Maxse began his famous inquiry into the Marconi
Affair. He was instrumental in bringing some of the facts to light.

12 Nat. Rev., LIX (March, 1912), 12*.

9 Ibid., (April, 1912), 202.

10 See above, p. 131.

11 Nat. Rev., LIX (June, 1912), 578.

12 Ibid., LX (September, 1912), 28, and almost every number of the
magazine for the next year. Early in 1912 the Government had given the
English Marconi Company a contract to build wireless stations for com­
munications round the Empire. Soon after, rumor were heard that ministers
had been making money for themselves by buying Marconi shares at a time
when they knew the company was going to benefit from the contract. The
anti-semitic Chestertons started the rumor, thinking that the Postmaster­
General, Herbert Samuel, had given the contract to Godfrey Issacs, mana­
ging director of Marconi and brother of Rufus Issacs, the Attorney-General,
as part of a Jewish conspiracy. The award of the contract was entirely
justified. However, Issacs had suggested to his brother Rufus that he
should take up shares in the American Marconi Company, and Rufus had not
only taken up the shares in the American Company but had passed some on
to Lloyd George and also to the Liberal Chief Whip. In any case the
contract to the English Marconi Company brought no benefit to American
H. A. Gwynne later wrote, "If it had not been for you I do not believe The Thing would have come out at all." Maxse sensed a big story and became almost entirely involved with the scandal. His expose lasted well over a year and, at one point, he was threatened with being brought to the bar of the House of Commons and imprisoned in the Clock Tower when he refused to reveal his sources. Maxse's sting was, of course, almost entirely reserved for the Cabinet ministers involved in trafficking in shares and so does not concern this thesis directly. That he did sting was evident when, in March, 1913, Lloyd George retained two Tory lawyers and MPs, Edward Carson and F. E. Smith, in an action against Maxse and the National Review.

Marconi. But when the issue came up in Parliament in October, Rufus Issacs and Lloyd George showed that they knew their behavior would be hard to justify. They denied buying English Marconi shares and they avoided mentioning American Marconi at all. A Select Committee of the House of Commons was set up to investigate the rumors. The purchases of American Marconi shares came out, and naturally the failure to mention them in October made the whole transaction look even worse than it was. In June, 1913, the Committee presented two reports. The Liberal majority said the purchasers had no stain on their honor, though the Liberal chairman had wanted to say the purchase was ill-advised. The Tory minority said the purchase was a grave indiscretion. The reports were debated, and the House divided on party lines.

13 IMP, Gwynne to Maxse, 2 April 1913, marked "Private," 166/298.

14 Morning Post, 14 February 1913.

With the passage of the Parliament Act, the Irish question returned to center stage. The House of Lords refused to pass a bill which in effect threw Protestant Ulster out of the Empire against her will. Thereupon the automatic provisions of the Act took effect. These provided for passage of a Home Rule Bill by the Commons in three succeeding sessions of Parliament, then signature by His Majesty and passage into law without their Lordships' acquiescence. By 1914, Home Rule for Ireland would be reality. Flaming Maxsian rhetoric accompanied the Bill through each of its three passages. The intensity of his language grew in direct proportion to the growth of the size and passion of Ulsterites banded together in opposition. Maxse was as extreme a diehard about Ireland as could be. He found absolutely no reason to justify any compromise or even to justify any discussion. The constitutional conference of 1910 had been a trap for Tories, he thought, and even Bonar Law was chided once or twice for daring to discuss the Irish impasse during social weekends with members of the Ministry. Since the Lords had taken hemlock in 1911 and the Commons always followed Asquith obediently, Maxse discovered in the King the only possible solution to the deadlock. The King had the power to request a general election so the country could determine whether or not civil war was desired. Maxse wanted a referendum on Irish independence. No other alternative was possible, given Ulster's staunch, proper stand, this Maxse endlessly repeated.

Maxse had nothing but praise for the forthright Unionist support for Ulster. He did find reason to criticize his party colleagues elsewhere. While Lloyd George had done well during the Agadir crisis by warning the Kaiser in his Mansion House speech that Britain would not
permit unbridled aggression to pass unchallenged, Maxse still faulted both parties for failure to warn Germany in like terms during the years before Agadir. Tories in particular needed to do more to educate the country to the German menace since the Liberal "Potsdam Press" obeyed a foreign master. Both parties were to blame, said Maxse, for the "hideous mismanagement of Anglo-German relations and the irresistible incentive given to the growth of German sea-power." The Radicals were hampered by traitors in their midst, but the Tories had no excuse since all Unionists professed the need for strong defense and aggressive foreign policy. Maxse attacked the Committee of Imperial Defense, created by Balfour's Ministry, as a fraud perpetrated by the collusion of the two Front Benches and not meeting the German army and naval threat. The two-power standard had vanished and the Mediterranean was unprotected. Haldane had robbed the army and, all the while Lord Roberts' popular national service proposals went unheeded by the powerful.

Basically Maxse saw Great Britain as a "Titanic," plunging full speed towards certain disaster. He praised the magnificent efforts expended on behalf of the victims of that tragedy of April, 1912; but hoped some energy could be spared for another enterprise, arousing the country to the more gigantic disaster toward which it was moving.

17 Ibid., LIX (June, 1912), 568.
18 Ibid., (August, 1912), 935, 944.
19 Ibid., LXI (May, 1913), 397.
20 Ibid., LIX (May, 1912), 375-76.
At the Unionist party annual conference in 1912, cheers greeted Maxse’s national defense resolution attacking Liberal malfeasance in this area, but nothing done to prepare Britain for war met with his satisfaction. Indeed, after the holocaust began he asserted that only good luck would pull Britain through since a management which brought the nation into a catastrophe unprepared, which danced to the tune of Potsdam for so long, could not be relied upon.

It is appropriate to end this analysis of Maxse in the years before 1914 with an episode which illustrates at once his strengths and weaknesses—passionate commitment to principle, to the disregard of political reality, and willingness to employ personal abuse as a stock weapon in his journalistic forays.

The incident began quietly enough. At the Albert Hall in November, 1912, Bonar Law endorsed the policy enunciated by Lord Lansdowne which held that Balfour’s offer to submit tariff reform to a referendum applied only to the election of December, 1910. Further, any new food taxation would be devoted exclusively to mitigating the cost of living to the working classes by removing other food taxation. Maxse trusted that this clarified the position and that free food intrigues against the policy of preference were ended. He did advise tariff reformers to remain ever on guard. The December Review was equally optimistic about Tory prospects now that the incubus of the referendum had been eliminated.

21 Morning Post, 15 November 1912.
22 Nat. Rev., LXIV (September, 1914), 1-4.
23 Ibid., LX (December, 1912), 559*. 
Parties have generally gained by sticking to their principles, but they have always lost, and deservedly, by deserting them for tactical reasons, and so long as Bonar Law is our Leader we may feel confident that the flag will remain flying.\textsuperscript{24}

Maxse never suspected how soon that flag would be hauled down. On 16 December 1912, Maxse, Leo Amery and other extreme tariff reformers were shocked to read of a speech Bonar Law made at Ashton-under-Lyme in which the leader not only limited all taxation on articles of food to wheat, meat and possibly dairy products, but shifted the entire onus onto the Dominions by saying the proposed duties would only be imposed after an imperial conference, and then only if the Dominions regarded them as essential. By New Year's Day a serious crisis existed. Bonar Law's pronouncement reflected growing concern that Lancashire and Yorkshire could only be wooed back to the Tory fold, and thus do much to insure a Conservative victory, if the obvious working class fear of food taxation was minimized.\textsuperscript{25} Bonar Law apparently did not realize what hue and cry would follow his speech. The \textit{Daily Mail}\textsuperscript{26} and \textit{Daily Telegraph}\textsuperscript{27} were adamant in believing he had committed the party to a policy of reality—that the next general election should be fought as a referendum on the Liberal Government and not as a referendum on food taxation. The \textit{Observer}\textsuperscript{28} and \textit{Morning Post}\textsuperscript{29} saw just as clearly a shameful surrender to the free fodderers of all for which reformers had fought. Bonar Law wondered whether he ought to resign. He was persuaded to remain only if

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{24} ibid., (January, 1913), 714.
\item \textsuperscript{25} Leo Amery, \textit{My Political Life}, \textit{op. cit.}, I, 416.
\item \textsuperscript{26} 30 December 1912.
\item \textsuperscript{27} 17 December 1912.
\item \textsuperscript{28} 13 January 1913.
\item \textsuperscript{29} 27 December 1912.
\end{itemize}
a memorial signed by Tory MPs early in January included the names of a few extreme tariff reformers. When Leo Amery read the memorial which, after asking Law to remain as leader and paying lip service to imperial preference, added that no duties required to make preference effective which might emerge from an imperial conference should be imposed until after yet another election, he and some of his colleagues refused to sign. A few tariff reformers, including Austen Chamberlain, did sign this memorial which, in effect, reinstated Balfour's referendum. Chamberlain's signature, according to Amery, represented his traditional fear that he might be thought to be disloyal or undermining party unity.  

Amery poured out his anguish to Leo Maxse. He was appalled at the "feebleness and disloyalty" of these men and feared for the future unless the party had a leader like the Boer Kruger who could "call the party together and dress them down." By mid-January the semblance of party unity returned as Law agreed to remain. The press battle subsided, mainly because Law was as solid on Home Rule as were the journals. But the scuttle had left a split and the wholehoggers, those who supported Chamberlain's policy of 1903 without reserve, carried on their campaign down to the outbreak of war. The Globe urged a policy of education to convert the masses to accept food taxes, while the Morning Post was left to hope that party unity could finally be achieved as a result of the unfortunate sacrifice, a sacrifice, noted the Daily Express, which demanded its equal from the free food side.  

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30 Leo Amery, op. cit., I, 415-16  
31 LAP, Amery to Maxse, 10 January 1913.  
32 7 & 15 January 1913.  
33 15 January 1913.  
34 7 & 15 January 1913.
Maxse's views on the situation were not known until the February Review appeared, and by then the issue was already resolved. He "terribly regretted the temporary setback" caused by the scuttle. He regretted still more Bonar Law's collapse into the hands of the "petrified rank and file" after the leader's clear definition of policy in November. But Maxse remained undaunted.

At any rate those who preach Preference because they believe in it as a condition precedent to effective Imperial consolidation will not abate one jot or tittle of their faith in that cause, and will fight for the whole policy. 35

Bonar Law's capitulation, continued Maxse,

was pure tactics, or rather panic, which no one attempted to defend on its merits....Unless the end justifies the means nothing justifies it. We are not yet in a position to form a final opinion upon the effect of this disastrous development, but recent utterances of prominent Unionists who have never displayed excessive enthusiasm for preference indicate some misgivings as to the practicality of dividing up Tariff Reform into water tight compartments labelled respectively "industrial" and "agricultural," one of which is to come into immediate operation in the event of a Unionist victory at the polls, while the other is to run the gauntlet of another General Election, to the detriment, as we believe, if not the destruction, of both branches of our party. 36

Maxse did not believe that the masses of Lancashire had panicked over the "dear food bogey" but that the scuttle originated among the party "bigwigs" in that area who persuaded themselves that their own anxieties were shared by the working men there. The bigwigs communicated their alarm to their MPs who "lost their heads and stampeded their party."

Of Bonar Law, Maxse only expressed regret that he did not adhere to his original intention of summoning a party meeting "and bidding adieu to

35 Nat. Rev., IX (February, 1913), 908-09.

36 Ibid., LXI (March, 1913), 14.
the Fainhearts. "37 Maxse resolved to continue to preach the whole policy and to convince the leaders that the imperial side of tariff reform was as irresistible to the men of Lancashire as to men anywhere.38

It is difficult to say what it was that restrained Maxse from making the kind of attack on Bonar Law which a similar pronouncement by Balfour would have provoked. Maxse was surely surprised that his friend had acted as had his predecessor. Since he viewed the setback as merely temporary, it seems likely that he regarded Bonar Law's aberration in the same light, correctable by exhortation by extreme supporters of tariff reform and imperial preference. He may have seen the capitulation as overwillingness of an inexperienced leader to subordinate himself to the will of a noisy special interest group. In any event, Maxse soon betook himself to the platform to get on with the education campaign on behalf of the "full policy." He submitted a resolution to the Tariff Reform League meeting in the Caxton Hall, Westminster, avowing that the rank and file of the League adhered to the full policy of tariff reform as advocated by their leaders since 1903, and that they would regard any departure from it as equally disastrous to the cause of tariff reform and to the interests of the Unionist party. Maxse added that he would give every consideration to their "weaker brethren," but he would not take his marching orders from them because he knew they would lead him to catastrophe. The editor was cheered by the audience and his resolution carried unanimously.39 Austen Chamberlain recorded the vote in his diary, adding that Maxse's resolution censured no one.40

37 Ibid., 16-17. 38 Ibid., 18.
39 The Times, 15 March 1913.
40 Chamberlain, Politics, op. cit., 538.
Maxse held firm to principle because he was not a politician whose main goal was to win elections. He refused to see the very real obstacles in the constituencies, particularly in the mass industrial districts. Perhaps because he was at the same time deeply fearful of any scuttle over Ireland, he chose not to enlarge the party division but confined his critical remarks to the "misguided," "misinformed" MPs. Whatever his reasons, it is to Maxse's credit that he acted responsibly at this time and chose to work quietly to regain his lost dream. That he could act so at this juncture raises the tantalizing question of what might have been had he acted in this way toward Balfour years before. Would Balfour's policy of purging the extremists and bolstering the middle, begun in 1903, have been allowed to bear fruit?

For once it seemed that Maxse had learned to accept defeat with a modicum of grace. But the sequel to this episode reveals that the tiger had not changed his stripes. Instead of working quietly toward his goal as he had pledged, he plunged into another of his petty, childish name-calling disputes with apparently unsubstantiated facts in an effort to vindicate his own policy and denigrate Bonar Law's compromise. The May, 1913, "Episodes" included a paragraph describing the efforts of the "Conservative Cobdenites" to intrigue further against the policy of the party. Maxse discovered that in South Kensington, a wholehog tariff reform constituency for years, a "nominal" tariff reformer, a supposed intriguer in the winter scuttle, and the sitting member for the safe seat at Maidstone, Lord Castlereagh, had been induced to stand for the seat about to be vacated by a retirement. A "half-hearted Tariff Reformer and an ardent Suffragist" was not, Maxse advised, quite the right man for South Kensington. Maxse saw in Castlereagh's candidacy
the seeds of a Manchester plot to drop the whole policy of tariff reform.¹¹

Soon after these insinuations appeared, Maxse received an urgent letter from Walter Long. Long defended his friend Castlereagh from Maxse's mistaken accusations. He claimed that the noble Lord was indeed a wholehearted tariff reformer, in favor of everything including food taxes. Long continued,

I would not write as I am doing if I could not speak from personal knowledge of the facts, which are as I have stated, and I cannot think, in these circumstances, that you would desire to do so grave an injustice to a very capable and most hard-working politician. I can't help thinking that you are also doing an injustice to the Unionist Party in South Kensington. I have seen the Chairman of the Division and he assures me that there was no pressure of any kind exercised—they have made their choice of a man they believe fit in every way to represent them in Parliament.

Long further defended his friend, though admittedly with second-hand evidence, from Maxse's charge implicating Castlereagh in the events of December and January. Finally, Long declared that his letter was spontaneous; he had not communicated with Castlereagh or any member of his family.¹²

Long did not convince Maxse. Castlereagh wrote a month later to say he felt neither disposed to convince Maxse of his political views nor to notice the remainder of his "ridiculous" insinuations.¹³ Maxse must have replied with a very cool note, informing Castlereagh that his letter would be printed in the next issue of the Review because Long soon added another letter of defense, revealing confidentially his own part in Castlereagh's decision to leave Maidstone for South Kensington.

¹¹ Nat. Rev., LXI (May, 1913), 63-64.
¹³ Ibid., Castlereagh to Maxse, 3 June 1913, 68/348-49.
decision based on poor health and the work load of the former constituency. In addition to reaffirming Castlereagh's loyalty to tariff reform, Long added that the Maidstone MP would vote against woman suffrage in any form.

In these circumstances, it does seem a little hard that he should have these attacks made on him....You and I have often discussed political matters and corresponded, and there is nobody in the country who feels greater admiration for your courageous and chivalrous line of action than I do, and I am perfectly confident that you are the last man in England to desire to attack a man on false grounds.\textsuperscript{144}

Castlereagh added his own view a few days later that Maxse's solution to publish his letter was best in light of the situation created by the original article.\textsuperscript{145} Castlereagh's letter appeared in the July Review, as it was sent to Maxse, with no evidence of second thoughts on the part of the editor.\textsuperscript{146} The controversy was in itself petty. Either Maxse had unrevealed sources to refute Long's claims or else he allowed his suspicious mind to blind him to the facts.

In the end, any appraisal of Maxse must answer some important questions: Beneath the pleasant exterior was Maxse really a spoiled juvenile who either sulked or lashed out with verbal violence when others did not worship at his own shrines? Were his pages and pages of accusation and insinuation and warning merely a buffer between him and a changing world which did not please him? Did his youthful quest for the ideal and the pure lead him in middle age to adopt unshakable views toward Germany, women, Ulster, fiscal reform, etc.? Can Maxse really have believed that,\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{144} Ibid., Long to Maxse, 6 June 1913, marked "Confidential,"
\textsuperscript{145} Ibid., Castlereagh to Maxse, 10 June 1913, 468/355.
\textsuperscript{146} Nat. Rev., LXI (July, 1913), 100h.}
"Next to a German invasion we should regard Woman Suffrage as the
greatest calamity which could befall this country? Did he seriously
accept the idea that payment of members threatened the parliamentary
system? Or that tariff reform alone would cure all of Britain's economic
and social ills?

Or, was Maxse as simple and straightforward as he seemed, a careful
student of history and economics and terribly perceptive in his predic-
tions? He did live to see Germany's aggressions pass over into war, in
part because of uncertainty as to England's intentions. Moreover, that
war might have been resolved more quickly and with fewer casualties if
Maxse's pleas for national service had found responsive ears. He lived
to see tariff reform pass into law. And Ulster is still fighting to
retain the Protestant ascendancy.

The real Maxse was somewhere in between. Fits of pique alternated
with sincere, well-thought-out arguments in support of his causes.
Indeed, natural frustration with setbacks to those causes led to the
outbursts. But, in Maxse's case, those tantrums lasted longer and with
greater, more childish tenacity than those of the average person. At
times Maxse became as devoted to the continuation of each petty dispute
as he was to the political cause which brought it about.

After years of Maxse's warnings about Germany or Ulster, was anybody
still listening? Was Leo Maxse so impressed with his initial views, with
what he called principle, that his opinions became the only sacred cows
he knew? Was Punch correct? Could the Kaiser ever do anything with which
Maxse would not find fault? Did Balfour always harbor secret misgivings

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47 Ibid., LXII (November, 1913), 399.
about tariff reform, as Maxse alleged? Could people never change their opinions? On rare occasions, Maxse did permit himself to compromise and favor tactics of expediency over principle, as in the Trade Disputes Bill of 1906 and his refusal to attack Bonar Law personally in the winter of 1913. But, for the most part, he was stalwart in his views; he believed he had the truth, the whole truth. His eye could take in the national interest in the broadest sense concerning foreign and defense policy. He was a patriot. Yet on fiscal reform he could not countenance any other policy as a viable alternative. He could be petty in defeat, as in the absurd quarrel with The Times in 1911, yet quite magnanimous in victory, as he was a few months later.

Maxse was a complex man who, though on the extreme edge of his affiliated party, well represented his complex era. He held on to what he felt was best from Victoria's years, but did not fear to change Britain's course in the days of her son and grandson. He was not a gad-fly, an unthinking stalwart or an opinion maker. He was at times each of these, at times all, at times none. His influence was beneficial when it got important people to question previous paths of policy. But his commentary lost him a larger role in the affairs of the day and in the footnotes of history primarily because of an unfortunate tendency to pass from prose of many colors to prose of purest purple, the language of personal abuse.

In the end Maxse was human. If at times he seemed too good (or bad) to be true, too consistent, too sure, perhaps it was because his virtues and vices, his devotions, his loves, his hatreds, like everything about him, were exaggerated. He relished living in an atmosphere of
crisis and imbued everything about which he wrote or spoke with the
language and character of crisis. That is why in the end he often
appears, as H. A. Gwynne so astutely perceived, the little boy who too
often cried wolf.
APPENDIX B

The following poem appeared in Punch on 6 May 1908, p. 339, and was reproduced in the National Review (LI, June, 1908, p. 537).

MAXSE

(The publication in the May issue of the National Review of Mr. Gladstone's vers de société on "Margot" must be our excuse for printing the subjoined translation of a spirited unpublished poem by an August Personage which has enjoyed considerable vogue in Court circles in Berlin.)

When the Reichstag is up, and poor BUELLOW is able
To win a brief respite from wrangling with BEBEL,
Though I steer for the Mediterranean or Black Sea,
I cannot escape the surveillance of MAXSE.

If I go to Corfu in the search of some rest,
He discovers a sinister aim in the quest;
And though other opponents their efforts relax, he
Allows me no quarter, does LEOPOLD MAXSE.

I've long wished to visit the home of HALL CAINE,
A man of stupendous, Shakespearean brain;
But were I to land near the village of Laxey, 'Twould poison the island, according to MAXSE.

If I wish SCHOPENHAUER or KANT to discuss
With HALDANE or TWEEDYOUTH, he kicks up a fuss;
And when AVEBURY begs him to bury the axe, he
Replies, "Go to Potsdam," does Editor MAXSE.

I'd love to run over to London incog,
And chat with Lord ESHER, that humorous dog;
I'd like to go whizzing about in a taxi,
If it weren't for the risk of detection by MAXSE.

I can speak in six languages, paint and compose;
I can scribble in verse just as fast as in prose;
I can eat mutton cold--when it isn't too braxy;
But I cannot allay the suspicions of MAXSE.
Do I favour the Junkers or yield to the mob,
Do I flatter the TSAR or with ABDUL hobnob,
Is my attitude prudish or Maréchal Saxe—
It's exactly the same to this truculent MAXSE.

How then shall I please this implacable foe
Whose censure pursues me wherever I go?
Shall I shave my moustache, so ferociously waxy,
In the hope of appeasing the anger of MAXSE?

Alas! such expedients are destined to fail
Against such resentments no arts can prevail.
And unless I retire to remote Cotopaxi,
I never shall win the approval of MAXSE.
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