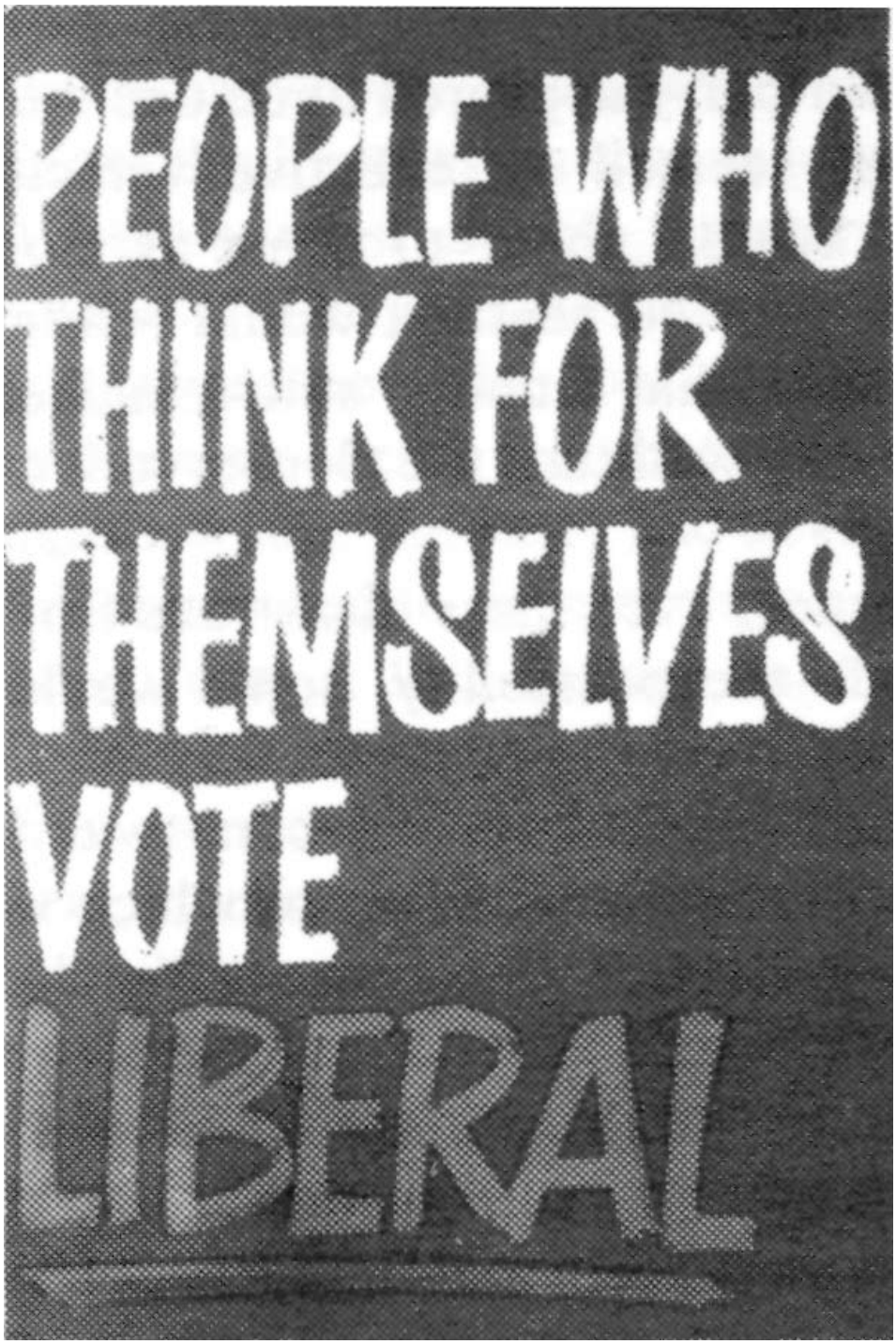
THE LIBERAL PREDI

For most of the twenty years from 1945 to 1964, it looked as if the Liberals were finished. They were reduced to a handful of MPs, most of whom held their seats precariously,. They were desperately short of money and organisation, and were confronted by two great parties, both seeking to look as 'liberal' as possible. For the ambitious would-be Liberal politician, there was practically no prospect of a seat in Parliament, or even on the local council. **Roy Douglas** examines why, despite the desperate state of their party, many Liberals kept the faith going, and not only carried on campaigning, but also laid the foundations for long-term revival.



Liberal election poster, 1964

CAMENT, 1945 – 64

The great Liberal victory of 1906 had been won, more than anything else, by the party's devotion to free trade and its resistance both to the protectionist campaign of renegade Joseph Chamberlain and to the temporising of Tory Prime Minister Arthur Balfour. In that election the Labour Representation Committee (the incipient Labour Party) showed as much concern for free trade as did the Liberals themselves. This was not surprising. In the great battles of the nineteenth century, free trade had been perceived to be at least as much in the interest of working people as of any other class in society – more so, perhaps, because the poorer people were the more important it was that they should be able to buy things as cheaply as possible.

The new government which was triumphantly confirmed in office in 1906 set a pattern which would dominate Liberal thinking for a great many years to come, and is not without influence to this day. In the next few years it was proved that a free trade economy was wholly consistent with a vigorous programme of social reform which laid the foundations of the welfare state, with major constitutional changes in the direction of democracy and with radical economic reform pivoting on the taxation of land values.

When war was declared in 1914, there was a universal sentiment among Liberals that the government's work was unfinished. It wasn't at all like 1874, when a Liberal government had more or less worked itself out of a job, or 1886, when a Liberal government was divided on a major issue of policy, or 1895, when a Liberal government collapsed in chaos. Wisely or (to the author's mind) unwisely, the controversial elements in the immediate Liberal programme were thrust aside in the interests of 'national unity'. Irish home rule was put in cold storage, while the land valuation which was to be the foundation of land value taxation was suspended and other social reforms were set aside.

By the end of the war, Liberals were profoundly split by issues which had little to do either with the radical programme on which they had been engaged in 1914 or with the long-term aims of liberalism. Most crucial of those issues was whether Liberal aims could best be attained through complete independence or by cooperation with others, and specifically the Conservatives, in a coalition. This dispute among Liberals opened up a great opportunity for the Labour Party to seize leadership of the forces of reform. After the general election of 1924 there was little doubt in most people's minds that the immediate future lay between the Conservative and Labour Parties. There followed a serious, but foredoomed, attempt by Liberals to recapture their party's historic role as the mainspring of political change, but by the middle of 1929 it was plain that the attempt had failed. At the general election of that year, the Liberal Party won a little under 5.3 million votes, against well over 8 million each for the other two parties; but they only obtained fifty-nine MPs, one of whom promptly defected to Labour. Liberals were conscious that they had scraped the bottom of the barrel of their resources, and there was no prospect of them mounting a comparable campaign in the foreseeable future.

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So what were Liberals to do? In the 1920s and 1930s, many decided that the logic of the situation prescribed that they should shift either to Labour or to the Conservatives, perhaps via the 'Liberal Nationals'. Others refused to do so. They continued to preach pre-1914 Liberalism, with adjustments for changed conditions. These included some significant additions wholly consistent with the pre-1914 tradition, notably an active programme to conquer unemployment, policies designed to spread the ownership of property much more widely, and support for electoral reform through proportional representation. In the closing years of the 1930s, however, international questions subsumed all others.

1945 and after

When the Second World War came to an end in 1945, the familiar inter-war policies remained the objective of active Liberals, with important wartime additions bearing the stamp of Sir William Beveridge – notably

further policies to eradicate unemployment and a greatly extended programme of social welfare. No important Liberal saw any inconsistency between these various policies. The Liberal programme, as presented to the electorate in anticipation of the 1945 general election, looks like a document which would have received the eager approval of Campbell-Bannerman, Asquith and Lloyd George in the early years of the twentieth century.[1] Liberals believed that this programme also corresponded much more closely with the needs and wishes of the British people than did the programme of any other party, and they were probably right.

The Liberal election manifesto of 1945 was designed for a Liberal government. Unfortunately, a Liberal government was not a serious possibility at that election. The party still had an impressive list of leaders. Lord Samuel and Sir Archibald Sinclair had served in cabinets – Sinclair very recently as Secretary of State for Air. Sir William Beveridge was universally known as the author of famous and popular reports on social policy. Dingle Foot, Graham White and Gwilym Lloyd-George had held ministerial office. It is likely that Clement Davies had been of crucial importance in the chain of events which led to Winston Churchill becoming Prime Minister in 1940.[2] Lady Violet Bonham Carter was undeniably of ministerial calibre, and was a well-known public figure.

The Liberal Party had recently received a large influx of eager and able young supporters. Yet its organisation and financial underpinning were vastly inferior to those of the other parties. Liberals took the field in rather less than half the constituencies, not because suitable candidates were unavailable, but because the organisation did not exist to support them.[3] A great many constituencies had no Liberal Association at all, and in most of the others it was little more than nominal. In the event, Labour won a great majority, while Liberal representation in the House of Commons crashed to twelve, the lowest figure ever. The major Liberal personalities were defeated: the leader Sir Archibald Sinclair, the chief whip and sole London MP Sir Percy Harris, even Sir William Beveridge. So were long-serving MPs like Graham White, Sir Geoffrey Mander and Dingle Foot. Not a single Liberal seat was held in or near any large town. The Liberal MPs who had somehow survived the maelstrom were largely unknown, even to each other, and the choice of Clement Davies as their chairman in the aftermath of the election was by no means a foregone conclusion.[4]

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For Liberals, the natural response was to reform the party machinery. In the later 1940s, under the inspiration of very active, relatively young and hitherto unknown men like Frank Byers, Philip Fothergill and Edward Martell, they devised a programme for improving the organisation and finances of the party at all levels. Martell's later peregrinations should not blind Liberals to the immensely valuable services he rendered to the party at this stage. To a considerable extent they succeeded. Liberal Associations were set up almost everywhere, and most of them acquired some idea of the sort of organisation that was necessary to get their message over to the electorate. When the general election of 1950 came, 475 candidates were fielded, a far greater number than at any time since 1929. During the heady period around 1946, when the Tories had not yet recovered from the blow they had sustained in 1945, the Liberals appeared to be making a real revival. In London the Liberal Nationals rejoined the Liberal Party and there was, briefly, some sign that the same thing might happen on a national scale.[5] The party rank and file was encouraged to believe in the possibility of a Liberal government in the near future.

By 1950, however, this prospect seemed excessively unlikely to most objective observers, but the leadership could not be seen to resile from its optimism. Certainly there were shades of opinion visible in the Liberal Party at this time, as in any other democratic party, but the whole *raison d'etre* of the party was to present a distinctively Liberal point of view, and most of the Liberal notables avoided meticulously any sign of leaning towards one or other of their opponents. This impartiality did not satisfy all Liberals, not even the MPs. Long before 1950 Tom Horabin (who had briefly been chief whip) defected to Labour, and Gwilym Lloyd-George was regularly voting with the Conservatives. The general election manifesto of 1950 nevertheless began with the words, 'The Liberal Party offers the electorate the opportunity of returning a Liberal Government to office'.[6] Like that of 1945, it was a programme designed for a Liberal government to follow, and traditional policies like free trade featured prominently.

But the Liberal organisation of 1950, though considerably better than in 1945, was vastly inferior to that of the other two parties in nearly all constituencies, and hardly anybody took the prospect of an immediate Liberal government seriously. At the same time, most people, however they voted, perceived the gap between the two larger parties to be enormous. Many Conservative voters feared that the return of another Labour government would result in wholesale nationalisation; many Labour voters feared that return of the Conservatives would restore the massive unemployment and social deprivation which had blighted the inter-war period. Thus perceptions were such that every Liberal supporter who could possibly be bumped into voting for one of the other parties probably would be. Liberal canvassers were constantly reporting large numbers of voters who declared that their sympathies lay with the Liberals, but

proposed to vote for somebody else. The Conservatives in particular argued strenuously that a Liberal vote was 'wasted', and urged Liberals to believe that the Conservative Party had been 'liberalised'. In the upshot, Liberal representation was reduced to nine seats, and a large majority of Liberal candidates forfeited their deposits. This was not quite as bad as it sounds, for the threshold for keeping the deposit was then 12½ per cent of the votes cast, not 5 per cent as at present, but it was bad enough. The Labour government was returned, but with only a tiny majority, and it was evident that a new general election was likely in the near future.

Adjusting to disaster

After this ghastly result, there was no more talk of a Liberal government coming to office in the foreseeable future. Most of the rank-and-file activists remained in the party, but there were huge tensions among the parliamentarians. What was tearing them apart was not disagreement about what a Liberal government should do, but whether they preferred Labour or the Conservatives. To give but one example, in a critical division on housing in November 1950, three Liberal MPs supported the government, four voted with the opposition and two did not vote.

These arguments over which other party they preferred were not the only difficulties Liberals faced. They had more or less exhausted their financial resources and in most places could not afford to guarantee a candidate's very vulnerable deposit, still less to mount a serious campaign. Around eighteen months were allowed for the Liberals to lick their wounds, and when a new general election was called only 109 candidates took the field. In the election manifesto of 1951, Liberals did not even pretend that a Liberal government was a possibility, and the thrust of their argument turned on the more modest and realistic contention that a substantial contingent of Liberal MPs could exert a significant and beneficial influence on a government of a different political colour.[7] Liberal policies which were sure to be unacceptable to both of the other parties were soft-pedalled in the official manifesto, even though some individual Liberal candidates continued to emphasise them. Thus, free trade, which had been an important feature in the 1950 manifesto, was not mentioned explicitly in 1951, though 35 per cent of Liberal candidates referred to it in their addresses.[8] This was not because either the writers of the manifesto or the party as a whole had changed their minds on the subject, but because there was no immediate prospect of bringing that policy into effect.

Results were even worse than in 1950. This time it was the Conservatives and not Labour who won a tiny majority. Only six Liberal MPs were elected. The three who had been leaning towards Labour, Lady Megan Lloyd-George, Edgar Granville and Emrys Roberts, were all defeated. At this level the Liberals stuck for most of the remainder of the decade, dropping to five when they lost Carmarthen in 1957, but recovering to six after their Torrington victory in the following year.

Siren voices were heard. Asquith's daughter Lady Violet Bonham Carter, who had played a large part in keeping the party together in the wartime period, received the active support of Churchill in her 1951 campaign in Colne Valley, and later made it plain that if she had been elected, and had been offered a place in Churchill's government, she would have accepted.[9] Clement Davies was offered the post of Minister of Education, with a seat in the cabinet, but rejected it on the advice of colleagues.[10] Gwilym Lloyd-George, who had been moving in the Conservative direction for several years, did accept a job in the new cabinet. Others looked in a different direction. In the late 1940s and the 1950s, a number of recent Liberal MPs joined the Labour Party. In addition to Tom Horabin, they included Sir Geoffrey Mander, Dingle Foot, Edgar Granville, Wilfrid Roberts and Gwilym's sister Lady Megan Lloyd George.

The various defectors to Labour contended that the Liberal Party as a whole was moving strongly in the direction of the Conservatives in the 1950s.

Party performance 1945–66

Year	Liberal	Cons.*	Labour	Others	Total	LIBERALS			
						No. of candidates	*Votes (1000s)*	*% poll*	*Lost deposits*
1945	12	210	393	25	640	306	2252	9.0	76
1950	9	295	315	3	625	475	2621	9.1	319
1951	6	321	295	3	625	109	731	2.6	66
1955	6	345	277	2	630	110	722	2.7	60
1959	6	365	258	1	630	216	1641	5.9	55
1964	9	304	317	0	630	365	3099	11.2	52
1966	12	253	364	1	630	311	2327	8.6	104

* Including Liberal Nationals and others taking the same whip as Conservatives.

This view was wrong, but there was some superficial evidence for it. The cabinet offer to Clement Davies, and the likelihood that Lady Violet would have received ministerial office if she had been elected, provide support for the argument, and there is other evidence pointing in the same direction. Five of the six Liberal MPs returned in 1951 had no Conservative opponents. In Huddersfield there was a nod-and-a-wink understanding as early as 1950, by which the Conservative had no Liberal opponent in the East seat, while the Liberal had no Conservative against him in the West. In Bolton there was a formal pact in 1951 to a similar effect. Many Liberals, including the present author, were shocked by this, fearing that the Liberalism of the two MPs would be compromised. We were wrong: both Donald Wade and Arthur Holt were absolutely staunch in their devotion to Liberalism, as were all their parliamentary colleagues.

There is even something to be said for the view that Churchill's cabinet offer, and the Conservative abstention in a few Liberal constituencies, were prompted not only by the Prime Minister's wish to win Liberal support for a Conservative government, but also because he hoped to 'liberalise' that government. Gwilym Lloyd-George once told the author that, when Churchill offered him a job in the government, he replied that he could only join as a Liberal. 'And what the hell else can you be?' was the robust reply. It may also be significant that a number of leading Liberals had a personal regard for Churchill which they would not transfer to any other Conservative. Sinclair and Lady Violet were his personal friends, and Clement Davies had played a major part in bringing him to power in 1940. In Churchill's Tory moments there was always a streak of Liberalism, just as there was always a streak of Toryism in his Liberal moments.

What ideas kept the remaining Liberals faithful to the party in the 1950s? There was no more disposition to lean towards the Conservatives than towards Labour. A glance at the resolutions carried at Liberal Assemblies suggests that the rank and file of the party still believed in more or less the same things that they had supported for many years.

The 'Radical Programme' adopted at Hastings in 1952 declared for free trade in terms which would have warmed the heart of Cobden, supported the essentially twentieth-century policies of 'ownership for all' and social welfare, and rounded off by calling for constitutional changes such as a Liberty of the Subject Bill, reform of the electoral system and devolution for Scotland and Wales. There was not much in all that which would have disturbed Asquith, and a lot of it would have been welcomed by Gladstone. As the decade advanced, subsequent Assemblies continued to pronounce in similar terms.

Meanwhile, election manifestos continued to be pitched at immediate problems on which they might reasonably hope to exert influence, although in 1959 there was a glimmer of the old optimism, and the hope was expressed that Liberals would be able 'to consolidate and improve (their) position as a first step to the eventual formation of a Liberal government.[11] Worryingly, a Gallup poll of March 1959 disclosed that 59 per cent of the voters did not know what Liberals stood for, and almost half of those who proposed to vote Liberal came in the same category.[12] Despite this, there were also some signs of a slight improvement in the Liberals' position. In 1951 their 109 candidates secured 2.5 per cent of the total vote; in 1955 they put up 110 candidates and secured 2.7 per cent; in 1959 they stood 216 and won 5.9 per cent. This could not be called rapid progress, but at least it confuted the view, widespread at the beginning of the decade, that the Liberal Party was about to disappear altogether.

When Clement Davies retired from the Liberal leadership in 1956 and was succeeded by Jo Grimond, there was a change in personality and emphasis but no immediate change in policy. As in the past, different Liberals laid different stress on the policies which seemed important to them. Some argued that a combination of free trade, the taxation of land values and related economic policies would strike at the roots of poverty and social injustice, while others were disposed to favour a mixture of more or less interventionist policies. Many Liberals, probably the large majority, would have seen no incompatibility between these approaches. The dichotomy, insofar as it existed at all, did not exhibit any perceptible correlation with age; some of the most enthusiastic advocates of the traditional free trade–land taxing view were in their twenties or early thirties.

Towards the end of the decade, some difficulty arose in connection with agriculture. Most of the existing Liberal seats, and a substantial proportion of those which appeared winnable, were largely rural. Farmers were receiving large government subsidies, which were anathema to staunch free traders, and some candidates were worried about the likely effect which declaring against those subsidies would have on their own electoral chances. Liberals who understood the free-trade case were able to point out that subsidies were just one side of the coin, for the price of goods which the farmer needed were forced up by import duties which would also abate under free trade, and the farmer would benefit on balance by losing that burden, even if he lost his crutch as well. There was a confused discussion on the subject at the Torquay Assembly in 1958. Proceedings on this and other matters appear to have been chaotic, with little or no guidance from the platform, but, in the upshot, the more staunch free traders appear to have been satisfied with the substantive policies decided.[13]

(Opposite page) Clement Davies, Leader of the Liberal Party 1945–56; Jo Grimond, Leader of the Liberal Party 1956–67; Orpington by-election, March 1962.

Europe

The proposed Liberal Assembly of 1959 was cancelled because of the general election, and by the time a new Assembly could be held in 1960, attitudes to policy questions had been transformed radically. This change is partly attributable to a general feeling that the shambles of 1958 must not be repeated, but it is due even more to changing views of 'Europe'. The root of this matter calls for consideration, because it is highly relevant to Liberal policies both in the period covered in the present study and for long afterwards.

As far back as 1950, Liberal election manifestos made reference to the need for Britain to participate actively in European affairs,[14] and that view was repeatedly reaffirmed in Liberal literature thereafter. This in no way implied a weakening of support for free trade in relation to non-European nations, any more than Cobden's commercial treaty with France in 1860 impeded Britain in pursuing a free-trade policy towards other countries. Unfortunately neither Labour nor Conservative governments in the 1940s and 1950s showed a similar interest in Europe, and when the negotiations were inaugurated which eventually led to the establishment of the European Economic Community – the 'Common Market' – in 1957–58, Britain played no active part. She did, however, take the lead in the establishment of the European Free Trade Area, EFTA. The EEC – 'the six' – included France, West Germany, Italy and the Benelux countries, and was roughly coterminous with Charlemagne's empire at the time of his death in 814. EFTA – 'the outer seven' – comprised Britain, Austria, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Portugal. Both European bodies sought the establishment of free trade between their own members. The essential difference was that the EEC required common trading policies towards outsiders, while EFTA allowed members to

By-elections affecting Liberal representation

Constituency	Date	Result	Liberal MP	
Carmarthen	28 February 1957	Labour gain from Liberal		(caused by death of Sir Rhys Hopkin Morris)
Torrington	27 March 1958	Liberal gain from NL + Con.	Mark Bonham Carter	
Orpington	14 March 1962	Liberal gain from Con.	Eric Lubbock	
Montgomery	15 May 1962	Liberal held	Emlyn Hooson	(caused by death of Clement Davies)
Roxburgh, Selkirk & Peebles	24 March 1965	Liberal gain from Con.	David Steel	

pursue what trading policies they wished towards outsiders. The initial Liberal response to these developments was declared in an article published in *Liberal News* on 1 February 1957, stated to have been 'prepared after discussion among those chiefly responsible for guiding Party opinion and … with the endorsement of … Mr Jo Grimond'. It declared that:

> Liberals support the proposals that the United Kingdom should join THE FREE TRADE AREA – NOT THE CUSTOMS UNION. The more countries are committed to lowering tariffs while still free to fix the level of their tariffs against countries outside the Common Market, the more likely it is that tariffs all round will be low, so that trade will be increased.

This, of course, was wholly consistent with traditional Liberal free trade policy. Neither Liberals nor any other party appear to have said much about future British relations with the Common Market, one way or the other, in the 1959 general election.[15]

But in July 1960, profoundly different signals were sent to the Liberal Party. An all-party group of MPs, including Jo Grimond, Clement Davies, Arthur Holt and Jeremy Thorpe, signed a statement in favour of Britain initiating negotiations to join the EEC. On the same day a pamphlet entitled *New Directions* was issued by a committee working under Jo Grimond, and expressed the same view. What had happened to change people's minds? This is by no means clear, but a possible answer is that Britain was at the time in the economic doldrums, while early reports suggested that the EEC was surging ahead. Not surprisingly, one might say – the EEC countries were knocking down trade barriers against each other, while they had not greatly altered barriers against outsiders.

At the Eastbourne Liberal Assembly in the early autumn of 1960, the party upheld the view already expressed by its notables. The case for approaching the EEC was presented by Mark Bonham Carter, son of Lady Violet, who had been victorious at the 1958 by-election in Torrington (though he lost the seat at the general election of the following year).[16] His argument for membership was expressed in terms designed to win support from convinced free traders: 'the whole point of Britain going into a wider free trade area in Europe was that she would be better able to persuade other nations on greater free trade liberalisation for the benefit of all countries.' A few critics – old newspaper files remind me that I was one of them – pointed out that while membership of the EEC would mean free trade with six countries of western Europe it would also imply the obligation to impose tariffs against the rest of the world. What worried free traders about the EEC was not the barriers it would knock down, but the new barriers it would erect.

People who recall the atmosphere of Liberal Assemblies of the period (the position is probably not wildly different in party conferences today) will probably agree that when a controversial question arises, there are usually relatively small groups of informed enthusiasts on both sides, while most delegates swing to the view which is entertained by the recognised leadership. Exactly that happened in 1960, and the Assembly gave a large majority to those who sought EEC membership negotiations. There is little reason to doubt that if the leadership had stuck with the view expressed in 1957, most of the delegates at Eastbourne would have given them similar support.

What were critics to do? Some, like Oliver Smedley, a Vice-President of the Party, dropped out of party politics entirely. As far as the author is aware, not one of the free traders joined any other party. As Smedley put it in a somewhat different context: 'Where else can we go?' Other free traders, like the present author, remained in place. I vividly recall what happened in Gainsborough, where I was candidate. Some of the active Liberals agreed with me. Others were rather shocked: not because they considered my view wrong, but because I was disagreeing with the 'official' view of the party. If the 1960 Assembly had voted the other way, they would have been perfectly happy to go with my anti-EEC opinions. A carload of Gainsbronians went over to Yorkshire to meet Donald Wade, who

was then chief whip. He personally supported the 'official' view, but he saw no reason why my different view should disentitle me to continue as a Liberal candidate. So I stayed put, and eventually contested the 1964 general election. In my election address I stated my own views, but also pointed out that the Liberal Party, like all others, was not unanimous on the subject. I don't think that the stand I took significantly affected the votes I received one way or the other.

To return to the general story, the following year, 1961, saw the first British application to join the EEC, at the instance of Harold Macmillan's Conservative government. After more than a year of negotiations the attempt failed, because President de Gaulle of France interposed his country's veto. There was an atmosphere of anticlimax. Both pro- and anti-Marketeers had to think of something else, at least for the time being.

Signs of recovery

While all this was happening, there was a succession of by-elections which showed the tide running strongly in the Liberals' favour. For many years, Liberals had regarded a saved deposit as something of a victory, but between the 1959 general election and the late winter of 1962 they did much better than that, and climbed to second position in eight places. Then, in March 1962, came three astonishing results. At Blackpool North the Liberal came within a thousand votes of victory, and at Middlesbrough East there was another commendable second place, with the Conservative barely saving his deposit. Most impressive was Orpington, a seat which seemed about as rock-solid Conservative as any in the country. Eric Lubbock, the Liberal, won the seat with a convincing majority, and Labour lost its deposit. Less than a fortnight later Clement Davies died, and Liberals were required to defend what at one time had looked very much like a personal seat. Emlyn Hooson (who was a Euro-sceptic) held Montgomeryshire with an overall majority in a four-cornered contest.

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My judgement in such matters may be biased, but my recollection is that official Liberal support for entry to the EEC appeared to play little, if any, part in producing these spectacular advances. What appears to have happened was that the Conservative government was rapidly losing popularity, for a variety of reasons. Until not long before the next general election Labour was experiencing troubles of its own, and the Liberals were the natural beneficiaries. When a general election came in October 1964 the Liberals boosted their representation to nine – no great advance, indeed, but something. A year and a half later they reached twelve. At last they were back in double figures!

Conclusions

So what conclusions may be drawn from Liberal experiences in the two decades after 1945? In the first half of the period the Liberal Party sank to such a low position that it was touch and go whether it would survive at all. This was not the result of what Liberals did, or failed to do, after 1945, but the legacy of many years of factions and folly, and an almost complete neglect of organisation. After 1945 they made a serious attempt to rebuild organisation and to provide an extensive list of candidates. Many people consider that the broad front of 1950 was a mistake. I don't agree. Without the post-war reorganisation, and the promise of a broad front which was a necessary corollary, the party would have disintegrated.

After the 1950 general election, the tensions between two closely matched great parties could easily have torn the Liberals to pieces. By refusing to jump to one side or the other, Clement Davies and his colleagues again averted destruction, though it was a close call. The pay-off began to appear in the late 1950s and early 1960s. It had little or nothing to do with the new policies which appeared in that period, but everything to do with the courage, tenacity and sheer obstinacy of a small group of people who stuck to the Liberal Party in its darkest days because they felt that there was nothing else they could honourably do.

Roy Douglas was a Liberal parliamentary candidate five times. Long ago, he was Chairman of the National League of Young Liberals, of which his wife Jean was Hon. Secretary. He is the author of History of the Liberal Party 1895–1970 *(1971),* Liberals: The History of the Liberal and Liberal Democrat Parties *(2005) (reviewed in this issue of the* Journal*),* Land, People and Politics *(1976), plus several books on political cartoons and on aspects of political and diplomatic history. He is active in the land value taxation movement.*

1 See Iain Dale (ed.), *Liberal Party General Election Manifestos 1900–1997* (London, 2000), pp. 61–68.
2 Lord Boothby, *Boothby: Recollections of a Rebel* (London, 1978), pp. 136, 142–45.
3 Sir Percy Harris, *Forty Years in and out of Parliament* (London, 1949), p. 184.
4 Hopkin Morris once told the present author that the MPs met together to consider the matter. Each one left the room while the others discussed his suitability. Hopkin, whose claims on the Chairmanship were better than most, refused to let his name be considered.
5 See discussion in Roy Douglas, *Liberals* (London, 2005), p. 253.
6 Dale (ed.), op. cit., p. 71.
7 Ibid., pp. 81–85.
8 D. E. Butler, *British General Election of 1951* (London, 1952), p. 58.
9 Violet Bonham Carter to Gilbert Murray 20 December 1951, cited in Mark Pottle (ed.), *Daring to Hope: The diaries and letters of Violet Bonham Carter 1946–1969* (London, 2000), p. 105.
10 Douglas, op. cit., p. 259.
11 Dale (ed.), op. cit., p. 97.
12 D. E. Butler and Richard Rose, *British General Election of 1959* (London, 1960), p. 33.
13 *The Times*, 20 September 1958.
14 Dale (ed.), op. cit., p. 77.
15 Butler and Rose, op. cit., p. 72.
16 *The Guardian*, 30 September 1960; *The Times*, 30 September 1960.