

6-2017

Stronger for Scotland: The Rise of the Modern Scottish Nationalist Movement

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Stronger for Scotland: The Rise of the Modern Scottish Nationalist Movement

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Senior Project Submitted
In Partial fulfillment of the Requirements for
Honors in the Department of History

Department of History
Union College
June 2017

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Introduction

Scotland is a proud nation that can trace its roots back through history for thousands of years. Scotland's relationship with England through wars and treaties can also trace back just as far. In 1707 Scotland signed an act of Union with England to join the governing body of Great Britain. Scotland had been under a dual monarchy with England, but the Acts of Union signified Scotland's full merger into Great Britain and the end of the centuries of war between the two nations.¹ Since this union, Britain incorporated Scotland into their Westminster Parliament in London. The union brought peace between Scotland and England, but the Scottish people fought hard for independence from England before the union and continued to fight after the union was agreed upon. The early resistance after the Union was known as the Jacobite rising and represented people who wanted the Roman Catholic King James VII to return from exile and rule Scotland.² The wave of Scottish independence ebbs and flows throughout the centuries, but there has always been a population of Scots that seek independence; for its own sake and from a belief that it promises the best for the Scottish people.

The modern era of Scotland's fight for independence is through politics. Since the turn of the 20th century, nationalist groups formed to revitalize the independence movement and foster a belief in the Scottish people that independence offers Scotland its brightest future. The difference between the fight for Scottish independence today compared to the fight for independence in centuries past is that England, now Great Britain, is not a conqueror of Scotland, but bound with Scotland's in union. Scots who favor independence today must

¹ Anthony Cook, *Modern Scottish History: 1707 to the Present, The Transformation of Scotland, 1707-1850* (Dundee, Tuckwell P, 1998), p. 4, Vol 1.

² T.M. Devine, *The Scottish Nation* (New York, Penguin, 1999), p. 20.

first convince fellow Scots of the benefits offered by independence and fight for an independence bill to be passed in Westminster Parliament. The Scottish National Party (SNP) struggled to achieve independence for many years and continues to today.

To understand the current state of the SNP and the nationalist movement, it is important to analyze the diverse Scottish nationalist movements of the 20th century. The movement for independence started small. Nationalist groups organized with the belief that Scotland needed more power and representation, but these small parties had varying beliefs on if they wanted Scottish independence or more devolved powers from Westminster to Scotland. The political shift in Scotland in the late 19th century into the 20th century saw a series of suffrage laws passed to enfranchise more of the Scottish people. Scotland gained more members of Parliament in response to the larger voting pool. Rapid urbanization brought Scots together, which allowed for a strengthening of Scottish identity. Irish nationalists were highly active during this period and fought for Irish Home Rule, which meant devolving British powers over Ireland to the control of an Irish Parliament. Irish Home Rule stirred ideas in the political activists in the Scottish people.³

These changes in British politics birthed the nationalist movement. The movement started small and remained small for most of the 20th century until the late 1990s when the SNP and the Labour Party brought about a vote for a Scottish Parliament to which the Scottish people voted yes.⁴ The nationalist movement was most successful in the latter years of the 20th century, but the most important stages of the nationalist movement were its formative years in from the 1920s through the 1940s. During this time, nationalists worked to

³ Cook, p. 121, Vol 2.

⁴ Devine, p. 617.

determine their goals in terms of Scottish Home Rule and how the national movement would achieve their form of Home Rule.

Chapter one describes the political situation that encouraged the national movements. The fall of the century long Liberal party dominance occurred through Prime Minister William Gladstone's Irish Home Rule Bill in 1886.⁵ The bill divided the Liberal party between those who were in favor of Irish Home rule and those against. The division led to Liberal party disorganization and a vacuum in Scottish politics in the early 20th century. The Liberal party recovered many of their seats in Parliament leading up to World War I, but their period of low approval allowed for the Labour Party to rise and gain a presence. The Labour Party was a socialist organization that focused on the large Scottish working class. Ideas of Home Rule grew through Labour's rhetoric and small nonparty nationalist groups began to form, most notably the Scottish Home Rule Association. The chapter considers the changes in politics and industrialization in relation to the Scottish identity. The Scottish identity grew amongst the newly enfranchised voting population. The Scottish working class began to understand their importance and influence in Scotland through their large voting population. Working class influence could be seen in the form of political movements and unionization, which all contributed to the beginning of the national movement because the general population began to advocate for their personal interests.

The start of the national movement expands in the second chapter. The Scots National League (SNL) and the Scottish Home Rule Association (SHRA) were the first nationalist parties to campaign for Home Rule. The chapter traces the growth and merger of various nationalist parties from the 1920s throughout the 1930s. By tracing the paths of the various

⁵Devine, p. 301

national movements, the differing opinions of Home Rule and the best ways to achieve Home Rule are introduced. Despite their fragmentation and lack agreement on Home Rule and how to achieve it among the nationalist movement, the nationalists ultimately combined their efforts in the form of the Scottish National Party in 1934.⁶

The consolidation of the nationalist parties into the SNP forced the movement to determine its goals and political methods. John MacCormick led the SNP for a long period and preached for a gradual and inclusive Scottish movement for devolution in the hope that the SNP could achieve Home Rule in a faster route than building a competitive presence in Parliament. Other SNP leaders like Douglas Young and Robert McIntyre believed that Scotland should be independent and that the SNP would lead the movement for independence in Parliament. The SNP struggled through these conflicting ideas in the late 1930s and 1940s, but emerged as a unified party with independence as their main goal. The SNP that reorganized in the 1940s was the start of the modern version of the party today. The SNP wanted to achieve independence through gaining a majority in Parliament and passing an independence bill.

Chapter four reflects on the key ideas and methods during the formative years of the nationalist movement. The conflicting methods and ideas of Scottish Home Rule and independence impeded on party progress at times, but all contributed to the SNP's resilience and success. The growth of nationalist ideologies led to the SNP's influence in the passing of the 1998 Scotland Act through triggering a referendum, which granted Scotland a devolved Parliament. Reassessing the key changes and ideas in the nationalist movement reveals that

⁶ Aberdeen SNP "History of the SNP" Aberdeen City of Association of the SNP (2010) <http://aberdeensnp.org/node/9>

the nationalist movement is robust and successful because of the long years of determining goals and ways to achieve those goals. The SNP now have the attention of Scotland and Westminster and can bring the change they believe is best for Scotland because they emerged from the long and difficult formative years of the nationalist movement.

Chapter 1

Setting the Stage of 1930s politics in Scotland: 1880s to 1930s

As Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom transitioned from the Victorian Era into 20th century Britain, Scottish identity and nationality had opportunities to grow. People across Britain gained voting rights and more parliament seats to represent more specific interests. During the 19th century, the Liberal Party dominated Scotland's seats in Parliament. It appeared all of Scotland rallied behind the Liberal Party as the party that best spoke for the success of Scottish heavy industry and positive contributions to the British Empire. The Liberal Party stood as the party of progress, reform, and liberty in the mid 19th century. The Liberals were known for reform and liberty in comparison to the conservative Tories who wanted to maintain old connections of a non-secular Church and State.⁷ There was some division between the factions (Whigs, Peels, and Radicals) that made up the Liberal Party, but in Scotland, there was no significant opposition to compete for seats in Parliament. In 1880, The Liberal Party comfortably controlled the majority with fifty-two of the fifty-eight seats in Scotland, leaving the Conservatives with six.⁸ The Labour Party would rise during this transition into the 20th century and through their surge of support from the working class, they would revive the nationalist movement through their early belief in Home Rule.

In the non-political sphere in Scotland, the working-class industries were in a fragile state. Steel, mining, shipbuilding, and textiles brought jobs, wealth and identity to the Scottish people. The United Kingdom was an imperial nation that reached across the world and Scotland took pride in imperialism because of its large resources and weaponry it could

⁷ Devine, p. 282

⁸ John Simkin, "Political Parties and Election Results" ed. By Spartacus Educational (2016) <http://spartacus-educational.com/politics.htm>

produce. Scotland did, however, fail to diversify their industries, so in times of peace where military supplies were not needed in abundance, there was often a large unskilled labor population that were left unemployed.⁹ The working class struggled and needed an answer to the growing discontent

The Voting Reform Acts in the 1880s caused the Liberal party to change its campaign focus as twelve more seats were added to represent more populated cities and all male household owners gained the right to vote.¹⁰ Cities became the area of focus as Scotland slowly shifted to a more urbanized state. Public housing and social reform became key issues in campaigns. The new voting laws were in response to the growing working population in urban settings. By 1850, Scotland had the second most people living in urban settings in the world, only trailing behind England.¹¹ In the 1820s, the term “working class” began to be used throughout Scotland in connection to trade union legislation. Before the Liberal party reformed voting and secular rule laws, the Scottish working class showed small signs of gaining an identity, but besides sporadic protests about poor working conditions, there was yet to be a unified movement for rights and representation.¹²

One of Scotland’s main struggles in getting working class rights was the lack of organization surrounding working class issues. The low membership in trade unions played a major role in this lack of organization. Many Scots tried to rally support for trade unions to voice the concerns of safety conditions, wage issues and workday length in Scottish industries. In 1889, Scotland’s trade unions were sparse, and only unified in local areas.

⁹ Cook, p. 89, Vol 2.

¹⁰ Frederick Walter Scott Craig, *British Electoral Facts: 1832-1987* (Parliamentary Research Services, 1981).

¹¹ Cook, p. 155, Vol 1.

¹² Cook, p. 219, Vol 2.

Local trade unions succeeded in getting workers of different trades in the same city to come together, but these pockets of unions failed to form a coherent message within their trades across Scotland. Trade union supporters took to writing to bring attention to the benefits of trade unionism. The *Aberdare Times* posted statistics about how cooperative political atmospheres to trade unions were resulting in increased party funding.

The remainder report of a Membership of 335,000 [In England] with an annual income of 680,142 and accumulated funds amounting to 581,424. The Scotch Societies have 17,423 members with an annual income of 34,254 and accumulated funds of 21,025. The Irish societies have 3,953 members, an annual income of 8,416 and accumulated funds of 3,779. It is certainly astonishing that at a time when advantages of combination are generally recognized by politicians and journalists that the number of unionists are so low.¹³

In 1892, Scotland's trade union membership was just under four percent of the country's total population while Wales and England had union membership at five percent.¹⁴ Journalists looked to find different ways to encourage workers to join Unions. This 1889 article in the *Aberdare Times* focused on the monetary benefits of being part of a trade union. The news article explains that even with the small amount of money that union members can put together to have a union membership, the meager donations still amount to enough funds for trade unions to support their workers in times of need and bring a voice to their issues. The article goes on to encourage trade unions to recruit workers more aggressively, not just from their region but throughout Scotland. Trade

¹³ *Aberdare Times*, "Trades Unions" April 1889.

¹⁴ William Kenefick, *Red Scotland! The Rise and Fall of the Radical Left: 1872 to 1932* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh UP, 2007), p. 9.

unionism established itself as a part of the future or the new socialism that influenced Scottish politics, but support for trade unionism was still small and fragile.

For unions to grow amongst working class communities, the Scots needed a unifying trade union that could incorporate other trades through common issues. The Scottish miners rose to the occasion. For much of the 19th century, the miners remained fragmented because of ethnic and religious tension. Areas that were mainly Scottish natives and protestant managed to unionize at the local level, but in Lanarkshire and Lothian there was a significant Irish Catholic population in the 1860s and, from the 1890s a Lithuanian population. Rivalries between these groups were common and hindered any forms of unionism, but in the 1870s, the Association Federation of Miners began a campaign for the eight-hour workday.¹⁵ The movement transcended religion and ethnicity and was a simple proposition that workers of all trades could rally behind. Scottish miners were one of the earlier trades to grow in numbers, and their fight for the eight-hour workday was applicable to other trades, allowing for other trade unions to grow around this proposed working condition. The miners led a movement that increased trade union participation and showed Scotland that its political parties were failing to represent and meet the needs of the working class.¹⁶

The birth of the Trade Unions Congress and growing unionist powers faced backlash from conservative politicians and wealthy employers wanting to avoid profits due to new workplace regulations. The owners of Scotland's heavy industries foresaw the potential loss of control if trade unions grew and won legislation for shorter

¹⁵ Kenefick, p. 14.

¹⁶ Cook, p. 232, Vo. 2.

workdays and expensive safety regulations. In 1897, The Scottish Trade Unions Congress (STUC) formed to create coherency throughout Scottish trade unions and support for the working class, thus justifying the fears of owners and conservatives. At first, politicians and journalists encouraged union growth, but now that these unions had power and a voice, workers were taking advantage of their footholds and becoming more active. The enfranchisement of the Scottish people also added to the strength of the STUC because the congress could help whip the local trade unions into voting for certain candidates.¹⁷

Employers fought back most harshly against trade unionism to keep control over their trade. Glasgow was a hotspot for trade union conflict as the Seaman's Union and the National Union of Dock Labourers (NUDL) grew in numbers. Shipping Federations from throughout the UK joined to counteract the growth and freedoms of the trade unions. Shipping Federations refused to recognize the trade unions among their employees, so the Seaman's Union and the NUDL went on strike to combat their employers who wanted to keep a strong grasp on their workers. The dock-worker unions showed potential due to their ardent defense of their rights, but the Shipping Federations' combined wealth and power proved to be too much. The Seaman's Union and the NUDL survived and joined the STUC, but lost significant membership numbers by 1897.¹⁸ The conflict of dock workers and owners in Glasgow was an example of the difficulties unions had in combating the Scottish elite. Trade unions needed more work and support from a political party before they could have their needs met. Some trade

¹⁷ Kenefick, p. 37.

¹⁸ Kenefick, p. 39.

unionists had the support of the Liberal party and trade unionist leaders were occasionally elected as MPs, but there was a socialist population within trade unions that wanted a political party that centered around the working class. In the coming years, the Labour Party would grow to represent the working class, but the nationalist movement also grew in response to working class strife. Socialist entities were in place for the working-class to gain their identity and understand their needs, but there was still a sense of security in being represented by the Liberal Party.¹⁹

Socialism was a growing movement in Europe, gaining momentum in France and other surrounding countries starting in the 1860s.²⁰ Socialist support came to the UK later than the rest of Europe, but the working-class woes allowed for small socialist parties to appear in pockets across Scotland. The Independent Labour Party (ILP) sparked a sense of change in Scotland with its foundation in 1883, but the true belief in a new era of Socialism was born from the Scottish Labour Party in 1888. The ILP was the more radical of the two parties because they wanted an ethical socialist state. Ethical socialism focuses on the protection of the moral rights of craft and labor against capitalism and issues it brings with wages and working conditions.²¹ The Labour party was socialist because they were focused on working class rights and wanted more nationalization of industries, but the goal of the party did not share the ILPs goal to topple capitalism.²² In 1906, the ILP decided to merge with the Labour party because

¹⁹“Independent Labour Party” (Working Class Movement Library).

<http://www.wcml.org.uk/our-collections/protest-politics-and-campaigning-for-change/no-conscription-fellowship/>

²⁰ Kenefick, p. 57.

²¹ J. T. Murphy, “Trade Unions and Socialism” (London, Hereford Times, 1936).

²² Richard Finlay, *The Scottish Labour Party: History, Institutions and Ideas* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh UP, 2004), p. 22.

although ILP had strong radical supporters, they shared common ground on gaining the support of the working class and saw the benefit of a larger support base by being a part of the Labour party. This merging of parties showed promise for socialism and working class in Scotland, but by the beginning of World War I in 1914, there were still few Labour Members of Parliament (MPs) and the Liberal Party still held on to the support of its Victorian Era of dominance.²³

The Liberal Party held on to their 19th century dominance against the slow progress of the socialist opposition and took the majority from the Tories in Parliament in the General election of 1906 with half of the total vote.²⁴ Division within the Liberal party became its ultimate demise. Home Rule in Ireland and later Scotland, was a topic of discussion in parliament since Ireland's Union with the United Kingdom in 1801. Scottish and Irish nationalists fought for their freedom and independence for hundreds of years against the British Crown. The struggle ranged between diplomatic and military struggles and throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, some of the main battles surrounded Home Rule. Many Irish MPs fought tirelessly for the right to their own governing body, independent from Westminster Abbey and British Influence. British Parliament was divided between Home Rule supporters and anti-Home Rule supporters known as Unionists (people who respected the union between Ireland and the UK). These sides caused significant division in the Liberal Party. This division initially did not affect the hegemony that Liberal Party enjoyed, but when William Gladstone teamed up with Irish Liberals to propose the Irish Home Rule Bill in 1886, the warring factions within the Liberal Party were exposed. Irish Home Rule would

²³ Devine, P. 309.

²⁴ Simkin, Spartacus Educational.

not pass until its third attempt in 1912, but the damage that Gladstone caused with his drive to pass Home Rule, meant the slow demise of the Liberal Party and a new age of Socialist Government. The Liberal Party managed to recover from the Home Rule division leading up to WWI, but during Liberal's dip in support, Labour grew and slowly won Liberal supporters over time.²⁵

Debates over Home Rule also opened Scotland up into believing in the possibility of their own Home Rule. Before Gladstone's Irish Home Rule Bill in 1886, there was almost no movement for Home Rule in Scotland. Throughout the 19th century, local areas of Scotland gained ruling power as Scotland urbanized. Scots on the local level were gaining governing power and largely had control over their daily life after the Burgh Reform act of 1833 implemented the framework for municipal governments.²⁶ Gladstone was also involved in Scottish reform because he believed Scotland needed more representation to handle the working-class issues. Gladstone appointed Lord Rosebury to reform the Scottish administration in 1881 and ensure that Scotland got the attention it needed. The action of appointing someone to attend to Scottish structural issues excited Scottish politicians. In 1884 both liberal and conservative leaning politicians gathered in Edinburgh to work with Lord Rosebury on Scottish affairs.²⁷ The result of the conference was the creation of a Scottish secretary that would reside in London as a voice for the Scottish people. Gladstone also worked to bring more Parliament seats to Scotland to equate the proportional representation Scotland had with Ireland and Wales.²⁸

²⁵ Devine, p. 301.

²⁶ Ewen Cameron, *Impaled Upon a Thistle Scotland Since 1880* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh UP, 2010), p. 63.

²⁷ Cook, p. 3, Vol 4.

²⁸ Cameron, p. 61.

The increased political structure of Scotland in the late 19th century was the precursor to the Home Rule movement. Although Gladstone's Liberal government helped bring more structure to Scottish politics on the local level and the national level, the government was still weak and needed more attention. The Secretary of Scotland was a mere political symbol because the first Scottish Secretary Duke of Redmond did not deem the position necessary and did little to set up a Scottish office in London. County Councils began in 1889 on an election basis, but the establishment was slow moving. Gladstone's Irish Home Rule Bill sparked a change in thought regarding Scotland's relationship with the UK. Small organizations like the Scottish Rights Association were formed in 1886 to assess Scotland's involvement in the Union with Great Britain.²⁹ Politicians focused more on Scotland's role in the UK and wanted to fight for a reformed relationship with Westminster, but before the Labour party's rise, only a small population considered independence or even a Scottish Parliament.

The Labour Party, especially the ILP, grew through supporting the idea the Scotland could also have their own Parliament like Ireland. Sentiment for Home Rule was a mutual feeling for socialists, nationalists, and progressive liberals, which led to the foundation of the Scottish Home Rule Association (SHRA) in 1918. Roland Eugene Muirhead was the leader behind the founding of the party. Born into a family of socialists and fighters of woman's suffrage, Muirhead had early exposure to the socialist movement. In 1901, Muirhead joined the Young Scots' Society (YSS), and although the group had formal ties to the Liberal Party, Muirhead encouraged others to vote for the most progressive, or in his mind nationalist,

²⁹ Cameron, p. 63.

candidates regardless of political affiliation.³⁰ Muirhead had connections to the ILP and other small socialist parties, which allowed for him to organize the SHRA. In his first meeting, he stressed the goal of the SHRA was that, regardless of party affiliation, Scottish politicians needed to come together to pass Scottish Home Rule. Muirhead set the stage for reaching that goal of Home Rule, explaining “They were out to band together people of all political faiths, so that the widely-spread feeling of in favour of Scottish self-government might be focused.”³¹ Muirhead wanted to use the SHRA to reach out to the Scottish people and incite the feelings of nationalism and identity through an organization that fought for Scottish power and not personal political power.

Muirhead’s goal through the SHRA is an important point to focus on while analyzing the growing political identity of the working class and its links to the nationalist movement. Supporting or refuting Home Rule frequently shifted between political parties because they need to balance between deciding the long-term goals of the party with short-term goals to gain voter support. The Labour Party filled the Liberal Party’s void when they took up support for Home Rule, but since Labour always looked for the best ways to keep seats in parliament, the party’s loyalty to the possibility of Home Rule could be changed. If Scottish Labour put too much stake in supporting Home Rule, they could cause conflict with Labour in England, which could lead to party division like the Liberals in the 1880s.³² Labour’s rise is the theme of the turn of the 20th century into the 1920s, and the nationalist movement begins in this time as well. Labour’s early enthusiasm for Home Rule makes the nationalist

³⁰ Richard J. Finlay, ‘Muirhead, Roland Eugene (1868–1964)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2010 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/40350>, accessed 8 March 2017].

³¹ Richard J. Finlay, *Independent and Free* (Edinburgh, John Donald P, 1994), p. 2.

³² Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 3.

movement appear to gain momentum quickly, but Labour's lack of commitment to Home Rule foreshadowed the difficulty and struggle the nationalist movement needed to go through before it had consistent popularity. As Labour rose in power leading up to the 1920s, it appeared that Labour would take the nationalist movement with it, but this would prove to be false because Labour always held the working class above Home Rule.³³

For Scotland, the path was cleared for working class parties and Scotland's own discussion of Home Rule. Some Liberals retained power in Scotland after Gladstone's 1886 Home Rule Bill, holding on to the support of the middle to upper-class Lowlands conservative population that also opposed Home Rule. With the formation of trade unions, new voting laws, and the decline of Scotland's single party Parliament of Liberals, working-class identity had the potential to grow into a political force. The growth of Socialism and trade unions throughout the UK along with the fragmentation of the Liberal Hegemony made a quick overturn of Parliament to the Labour Party looked promising. Labour still considered a Home Rule bill and had high activity in promoting SHRA, which advanced the nationalist movement, but during the 1910s and early 1920s, it was dependent on Labour's success.

The start of the Great War initially helped to return support to the Liberal Party. The UK united to defeat the Germans and the working class took up arms to support the war effort.³⁴ Soon the horrors of war set in and changed the national optimism. Scots were dying in disproportionate numbers in the trenches of Europe, suffering casualties at higher rates than the rest of the UK. At home, the working-class systems were interrupted as all work shifted to supporting the war effort. Government intervention and workers were pushed into

³³ Jenny Wormald, *Scotland: A History* (Oxford, OUP, 2005), p. 202.

³⁴ Devine, p. 309.

the Glasgow shipyards and steel factories to support the war effort.³⁵ Morale in working class Scotland plummeted, which allowed for war protesters and Socialists radicals to gain traction.

Scotland took great pride in supporting the military might of the British empire and still does today. Through fearless fighters and armament production, the Scots felt a strong sense of Britishness when supporting military efforts. The Great War devastated Scotland's morale and support for the war quickly faded.³⁶ Socialist extremists took advantage of the disheartened Scots through their protest, offering a new political path and blaming the current government for causing this war. The extremism held its strongest support in Glasgow. Leaders John Maclean and James Maxton took to the streets to speak out against the war and the capitalist government. John Maclean formed the British Socialist Party (BSP) in 1911 and was a main figurehead of what was called the "Red Clydeside." James Maxton was a leader of the ILP within the Labour Party and a proponent of striking and conscription evasion. The two men along with others in the BSP, ILP, and other radical groups would rally a radical socialist identity in Glasgow, Scotland.³⁷

Maxton and the ILP first gained support and a following by championing the rent strikes in support of the munitions workers who were evicted. Housing was major issue in Glasgow because the government pushed munitions workers and shipbuilders into Glasgow to support the war effort, resulting in overcrowding. Landlords could raise their rent costs at an alarming rate in response to demand, and laws allowed the Landlords to evict and acquire

³⁵ Finlay, *The Scottish Labour Party*, 25.

³⁶ Devine, p. 312.

³⁷ Gordon Brown, *Maxton*, (Edinburgh, Mainstream, 1986), P. 14.

possessions without any legal process.³⁸ Maxton teamed up with women who were organizing tenants' strikes. Labour posted fliers that read, "Rent Strike Against Increases, We Are Not Removing," issuing public support for the munitions workers and families. ILP member David Kirkwood wrote to the Glasgow Town Clerk in October of 1915, explaining the housing issues before the war and the current exacerbation of the issue due to increased munitions work. Kirkwood firmly stated, "If the nation is to have adequate supply of the munitions of war, the workers must have adequate healthy housing accommodation,"³⁹ which reinforced the time sensitivity of resolving the housing issue to maintain war production.

The ILP made a major step in connecting a political party with the working class to form a civilized protest and create an identity that demanded rights. Strikes and protests were well known to the Scottish workers, but making a stand in a time of war showed that the Scottish workers in Glasgow recognized their importance in supporting the nation and wanted to be treated properly. In 1916, the Liberal government responded to the strikes and forced rent to return to a fixed rate at pre-war wages. The combined effort of the women in the housing communities, the ILP, and the munitions workers led to success and a growing form of Scottish identity. In hindsight, the Labour Party's work with the Glasgow rent strikers revealed two points: the party was on its way to replace the Liberal Party as representatives of the working class in Parliament and the ILP was a proven extreme radical wing of Labour. Maxton and the ILP would continue to rally support through speeches and documents in Glasgow, fighting for a socialist government where the Scottish people have their representation. Scottish independence was a topic among ILP, but improving the

³⁸ Glasgow Digital Library, "Clydeside Rent Strikes 1915-16" (Glasgow, U of Strathclyde). <http://gdl.cdlr.strath.ac.uk/redclyde/>.

³⁹ Glasgow Digital Library, Kirkwood, Rent Strikes.

conditions of the working class rose above all. Maxton believed independence was best for the working class in the long-term, but his message at the time was about getting workers what they needed. The ILP were the strongest proponents of Scotland's Home Rule and even independence, but their ultimate goal was still supporting the working class like the Labour party, which foreshadowed Labour's abandonment of Home Rule policies in the 1920s.⁴⁰

The fact that the Liberal Party held onto control of Parliament, despite the shift in political atmosphere speaks to the strength of the Liberal Party's legacy in the 19th century, but in 1918, the Liberals finally suffered their defeat in Parliament, only managing to keep eight seats and allowing for Labour to begin their influence in Parliament.⁴¹ The conservatives won the majority in the 1918 election with 332 seats, but Labour gained a notable presence with fifty-seven seats. In the next election in 1922, the UK saw its first Labour government, winning 124 seats in the general election, one of those seats included James Maxton of Glasgow.⁴² In Scotland, Labour won over thirty percent, more than any other candidate.⁴³ The Liberal Party in Scotland only returned six seats, and after their defeat, many Liberal Politicians joined Labour. The future looked positive for the working class, trade unions, and socialists, but navigating through the economic woes of the post Great War era posed a threat to Labour's stability and support for Home Rule.⁴⁴

Economic struggles dictated much of the political turmoil in the 1920s and 30s. Britain managed to have its first Labour government, but the economic struggles made keeping support difficult. Conservatives won back the majority in 1924, but had their own

⁴⁰ Brown, p. 65.

⁴¹ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 1.

⁴² Simkin, Spartacus Educational.

⁴³ Devine, p. 313.

⁴⁴ Devine, P. 323.

difficulties keeping office as Labour won their support back in 1929.⁴⁵ The back and forth battle for government majority was due to the negative effects of the post war depression. Scotland suffered from the depression worse than the rest of the UK. The heavy industries that represented a part of Scotland's identity and imperialism drastically lost its value as military arms were no longer needed. The massive layoffs of workers worked its way through Scottish society from the bottom up. Thousands of workers in shipyards, steel and coal industries were deemed as surplus since the end of the war. The lack of employed workers slowed money circulation, which affected skilled middle class jobs and even higher education teachers looking for posts in schools across Scotland. 40,000 Scots left the country in the 1920s to avoid a grim future on the streets and find employment.⁴⁶ The country suffered from lack of industrial diversification and economic woes were easy to pin on the government. Labour was supposed to be the political party of the working class and they were not protecting their people. Labour recognized they needed to make a major shift to recover their party support. Prime Minister Ramsey Macdonald looked to consolidate centralist power and support throughout Westminster, shifting Labour from a focus on working class Scotland to the support of England's resources and the greater UK, distancing itself from left wing radicals and ideas of Home Rule. The ILP was frustrated with Macdonald's decision, but had little power over the strength of Labour in England.⁴⁷

From the shifting of the political parties of the early 20th century came the birth of the nationalist movement. This movement is attributed to the Labour party's political emergence and the newly enfranchised voting population in Scotland. With the voting support of trade

⁴⁵ Wormald, p. 211.

⁴⁶ Devine, p. 318.

⁴⁷ Devine, p. 323.

unions and the Scottish working class, Labour had a strong surge of support. The ILP's focus on Home Rule led to the possibility of an independent Scotland or at least a Scottish Parliament. The efforts of the ILP in the Labour party for Home Rule would prove to be a false start in the nationalist movement, but the true nationalists began to grow and form political organizations with Home Rule as their main interest. Gladstone's involvement in supporting Irish Home Rule and increased representation in Scotland made the Scottish people reassess Scotland's involvement in the Union and set the stage for nationalist parties to focus on Home Rule. For Home Rule to become a possibility, organizations like the SHRA would have to grow in numbers and influence to make Home Rule a legitimate priority.

Chapter 2

Home Rule and the Growth of Nationalism during the Depression

The 1920s and 30s proved to be a challenging time for supporters of Home Rule. James Maxton and the Radical Left had difficulty progressing their Home Rule ideas as the divide between ILP goals and Labour Party goals grew. Macdonald's shift to support Labour in Westminster was not the first point of contention between the ILP and Labour and would not be the last. In 1921, the ILP supported a general strike led by the Scottish miners, dockworkers, and railwaymen. These groups were set to strike in defense of the miners who were in jeopardy of having wage reductions. The strike was set for Friday April 15th, but as the day was approaching, the railwaymen and dockworkers called off their support to protect their own workers, which left the miners with too small numbers to make an impact.⁴⁸ In 1926, the ILP and the Trade Union Council pushed for a general strike to again protect coal miners in Scotland and throughout the UK from wage reduction. Although this strike had more organized support from Trade Unions and the ILP, the central government was prepared in hiring middle class workers to cover the jobs and starve out the miners. The strike received no support from the Labour party and dissipated after nine days. The strike crippled the morale of the miners and they would not organize in such numbers again until the 1980s.⁴⁹

The ILP felt the Labour party was abandoning its creed to support the working class of Scotland. When Labour briefly won back power in Parliament in 1929, the ILP demanded that Labour called for massive intervention to deal with unemployment and housing. In 1917,

⁴⁸ Cameron, p. 134.

⁴⁹ Devine, p. 324.

the Royal Commission on housing estimated that Scotland needed to immediately build 226,000 houses to rid the urban areas of Scotland of overcrowding. Since then, the reforms and new houses built to cure overcrowding were feeble. The new houses were usually one or two rooms and were out of the price range of the working class who had little money due to wage reduction and unemployment.⁵⁰ Maxton believed that this housing and unemployment crisis was a time for direct intervention through strikes which called for immediate government support. Labour's silence during the 1921 and 1926 strike, told Maxton that Labour refused to adopt the socialist policies that the ILP sought.⁵¹ Labour's abandonment of Home Rule was arguably the biggest step in dividing Labour and ILP. One of the first Labour Government's bills in 1924 was Home Rule, and after seeing it lose decisively, Labour decided they needed to drop the idea for the foreseeable future to keep centralist support in the UK. Trade unions also dropped support for Home Rule to get support from British Trade unions in recovering from the depression. In 1932, the ILP officially split from the Labour party to compete for its own seats in Parliament.⁵²

For some members of the ILP, the separation felt liberating. Throughout the 1920s, some members had been in contact with communist parties in Britain and in Moscow, exchanging ideas about a socialist state and possible alliances. Much of the ILP wanted more radicalism and believed they could gain support in Scotland because most the Labour MPs in Scotland were originally ILP members. The reality of the ILPs power came crashing down on them in the 1931 general election. ILP members decided to defy the Labour party and stand alone in the election, but they won only five seats, and after their official disaffiliation

⁵⁰ Cameron, p. 129.

⁵¹ Brown, P. 188.

⁵² Devine, p. 322.

in 1932, failed to make a presence in Parliament.⁵³ The fall of the ILP represented the fall of the radical left and the Red Clydeside. In its heyday between 1910 and 1914, John Maclean and James Maxton had the power to rally the support of thousands outside the docks of Glasgow and fight for worker's rights. In the 1920s, the Labour Party had a strong enough base support from trade unions and former liberals, the working class felt like they had enough of a representation that they did not need to resort to revolutionary action to get the support they needed. The ILP originally looked like the party within Labour that would eventually encourage Labour to call for Home Rule bill, but as the ILP and Labour divided, it was clear that working class rights was more important than creating a devolved or independent state from Westminster. The ILPs legacy after their disaffiliation was involvement in education in the form of socialist Sunday Schools. The ILP would eventually rejoin Labour in the 70s in the form of propaganda support, but the ILP had lost its influence in parliament.⁵⁴

The internal struggles of the Labour Party allowed for Conservative Unionists to take hold of Scottish Politics for most of the 20s and 30s. Conservative parties consolidated against Labour and other socialist supporters by instilling fear of bolshevism and Russian influence in the Scottish people. Conservatives wanted Scots to believe that Labour's real reason for supporting Home Rule was because they wanted to create a communist state. Since the ILP did have ties with communist support, the Labour party looked to distance itself from any link to communism it could, which was the start of the divide between the ILP and Labour.⁵⁵ Unionists also gained support through the enfranchisement of women in

⁵³ Kenefick, p. 201.

⁵⁴ Kenefick, p. 203.

⁵⁵ Kenefick, p. 197.

Scotland in 1918. The law allowed for all women above thirty to vote, which catered to Unionists' older demographic. Unionists made a point to reach out the female voter and easily won the support of the affluent women.⁵⁶

As Labour worked to restructure and cater toward its English working-class, Unionists dominated parliament until 1945.⁵⁷ Unionists won support from voters who previously voted Liberal and Labour and had balanced support from urban and rural Scotland. The downside to having political dominance in the 1920s and 30s was that the Unionists had to handle the major crises of housing, unemployment and post war demobilization.⁵⁸ Corporatism was believed to be the solution to fix unemployment in Scotland. The trend already started with trade unions as they connected across the UK to consolidate resources and make more coherent solutions for their individual trades. Unionists passed the 'Special Acts' bill in 1934 and 1937 to bring in industrialization for the areas in Scotland that were suffering from the highest numbers of unemployment. The Unionists recognized the issues specifically in Scotland and worked to gain support from powers in London that were reluctant to spend any energy on salvaging Scottish issues. The 'Special Acts' bills did not make a significant difference in bringing Scotland out of the depression, but Unionists made a point to focus on the economic woes of the Scottish people.⁵⁹

Scottish Secretary Walter Elliot was particularly frustrated with Westminster's indifference with Scottish issues. Elliot served his two-year term as secretary for the Tories from 1936 to 1938. The frustrations of Westminster's lack of action in supporting Scottish

⁵⁶ Cameron, p. 165.

⁵⁷ Devine, p. 326.

⁵⁸ Cameron, p. 165.

⁵⁹ Cameron, p. 165-166.

issues pushed Elliot to increase support and focus on Scotland. The Secretary of Scotland's office was in London, but in 1937, Elliot transferred the office to Edinburgh so he could better focus on Scottish issues. With him came the many offices in Scotland, which were streamlined into the offices of health, education, home and agriculture. The move made these offices more coherent and boosted Scottish Nationalism. This devolution should not be mistaken for Elliot's support of Home Rule, which was rarely a talking point in politics, but it was one of the many small changes in the 1920s that encouraged Scottish pride and identity.⁶⁰

Other movements of Scottish Pride came from nationalists. Roland Muirhead, who was an early supporter of Home Rule through the SHRA, looked to maintain ties with the Labour party after it moved away from Home Rule after they lost their majority in 1924. Muirhead still believed that Labour, along with other existing political parties, was still the best way in getting support for Home Rule. Despite Muirhead's connection with Labour MPs, the SHRA struggled to get support from parties that had strength in Westminster.⁶¹ Just two years after the SHRA was formed, the Scottish National League (SNL) formed in 1920 from a group of nationalists from the Highland Land League and members of the national committee in London. Unlike the SHRA, the SNL believed that Home Rule would not be embraced by multiple parties in the name of Scotland but a party that was built for Home Rule. The SNL would not end up being the party that had control in Westminster to push for Home Rule, but the League worked toward creating a party that could compete with the Tories and with Labour.⁶²

⁶⁰ Devine, p. 327.

⁶¹ Cameron, p. 163.

⁶² Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 30.

Early actions of the SNL were pushed by leaders who wanted to bring back the old culture of Scotland that was independent from England's rule. John Maclean, a powerful leader of the Red Clydeside, participated in the early years of the SNL before his death in 1923. Maclean stood for 'Celtic Communism', which was an idea that the Celtic communities of Scotland and Ireland should become isolationist and live in publicly owned communities. Maclean's views were radical even within the nationalists and the Tories used this aspect of nationalism to deem the nationalist movement as unpatriotic. Celtic Communism was representative of the early nationalist culture because Maclean and other radicals had a strong reputation for their involvement in the Red Clydeside and for their writing about Scottish Culture.⁶³

Nationalists like John Maclean and Hugh Macdiarmid wanted to rally support by romanticizing the times when Scotland was an independent country with its own socialist government. Nationalists with a cultural focus loved the picture of Scotland that had control over its own industries, where people spoke Gaelic and took pride in their Scottish Clan lineage. Although these nationalists helped rally numbers in support of Scottish independence, their cultural ideals had racist undertones. A country that wanted to return to old Scottish ways also meant that they wanted to push out foreign interference. Radical nationalists wanted to get rid of political control from Westminster, but they also wanted to get rid of immigrants from Ireland, Poland and England. Pure Scotland was also a xenophobic Scotland for these extremists and if the SNL was going to grow into a competitive political party, they would have to decide whether they wanted to have the

⁶³ Wormald, p. 208.

support of ardent defenders of Scottish rights or sever ties with the extremists to reach a more moderate crowd.⁶⁴

The positive side to nationalist support of Scottish culture was the revitalization of Scottish culture through art and literature. Although Macdiarmid wanted to push non-Scots out of his country, he took time to appreciate Scottish heritage through his poetry. This period of nationalist support for Scottish culture was called the Scottish Renaissance and it encouraged Scots to write about the many aspects of Scottish culture. Macdiarmid's true name is Christopher Murray Grieve, but took on Macdiarmid for his literary career. Macdiarmid was an early member of the ILP and had interest in Scottish poetry and short stories. The true beginnings of Macdiarmid's nationalism began when he served in WWI. Macdiarmid experienced the horrors of war in France and Greece. His feelings were expressed through letters back to his mentor and English teacher in Scotland, writing about the cruelty of war incited by English imperialism. The war fueled Macdiarmid's ambitions to get involved in revitalizing Scottish heritage.⁶⁵

Macdiarmid inspired other writers in the 1920s through his 'chapbook program.' The program was a nickname to Macdiarmid's freelance journalism in the 1920s that looked to publish works on Scottish culture, evaluate Scottish literature with a true Scottish lens without English interference, and produce contemporary work that would catch the interest of writers throughout Europe. The SNL played a role in Macdiarmid's campaign to encourage Scottish literature when they started the *Scots Independent* Newspaper in 1926.

⁶⁴ Mary G.H. Pittock, *Scottish Nationality* (New York, Palgrave, 2001), p. 108.

⁶⁵ Roderick Watson, 'Grieve, Christopher Murray [Hugh MacDiarmid] (1892–1978)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31174>, accessed 8 March 2017].

The goal of the newspaper was to help put a voice to the SNL and purely Scottish news to combat the English influence in Scotland. Macdiarmid wrote articles in any pro-Scottish newspapers he could find like the *Glasgow Herald* and the *Northern Review*.⁶⁶ By the mid 1930s, The National Party of Scotland (NPS), which emerged from the SNL and SHRA, showed signs of supporting cultural identity despite being wary of Macdiarmid's xenophobic tendencies. The party encouraged the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) to air radio programs in Scots vernacular and pushed for a chair of Scottish Literature at the University of Edinburgh. The NPS did not support Macdiarmid's ethnocentricity, but their efforts to spread Scottish culture back to the common people was proof that the Scottish Renaissance set ideas of growing Scottish identity in motion.⁶⁷

The Scottish Renaissance brought competition along with its revival of Scottish literature. Many writers did not agree on the best way to write about the Scottish people. Macdiarmid wrote most of his Poetry in Scots, which was spoken frequently in rural Lowland Scotland. Edwin and Willa Muir, who were known poets for translating German authors into English also wrote about their personal experiences from rural Scotland. The Muir's were critical of using Scots in their literature because it was not as accessible as English in Scotland's modern era.⁶⁸ Sorley Maclean, a highlands poet from Rasaay grew up singing and writing in Gaelic, which he brought into the modern era in his love poems.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Oxford DNB, MacDiarmid.

⁶⁷ Pittock, p. 108.

⁶⁸ Aileen Christianson, 'Muir, Edwin (1887–1959)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2008 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35141, accessed 8 March 2017].

⁶⁹ Iain Crichton Smith and Donald E. Meek, 'MacLean, Sorley (1911–1996)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Oct 2009 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/40899, accessed 8 March 2017].

Although these writers disagreed on the appropriate way to write about Scotland, their efforts all supported the revitalization of Scottish culture and continued a legacy of Scottish heritage. Macdiarmid and other writers during the 20s and 30s did not make immediate impacts on the Scottish people, but it is important to note the efforts of these writers because when the surge of Scottish culture and identity returns in the 1980s, it can be traced back to the efforts of these writers in the 1920s and 1930s.

As the Scottish Renaissance went on throughout the 1920s and into the 1930s, the SNL and the SHRA worked to make a presence in parliament. Although Muirhead believed that the SNL was wrong in thinking that a Home Rule party would succeed, he opened talks with SNL leader Thomas Gibson to discuss a possible partnership. Gibson and Muirhead understood that the two groups needed to work together to expand national support and gain a voice in Westminster. By the mid 1920s, the SHRA was weak compared the SNL and did not have the detailed policies either, which gave Muirhead little weight in his negotiations with Gibson about forming an alliance.⁷⁰ The most difficult issue to agree on was the goal of a joint party. Home Rule means that Scotland would have its own Parliament, but Westminster Parliament is still Scottish Parliament's superior. This is still a vague term because if Scotland had its own parliament, it is still unclear how much power Scottish parliament had in relation to the UK government and what the relationship between the two parliaments would be. The two political groups struggled to agree upon what level of self-determination they wanted for Scotland.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 73.

⁷¹ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 73.

The passing of the Irish Home Rule Bill in 1918 was a poor reference to for Scottish Home Rule. The Irish parliamentary party, which helped pass the home rule bill in 1918, lost their majority to the Sinn Fein party the same year. Sinn Fein's main goal was to end all British presence in Ireland. The bill allowed for Ireland's own body of government while still having MPs in Westminster. Sinn Fein refused to send any politicians to Britain. The failure of negotiation between Britain and Ireland's new government resulted in war from 1919 to 1922. Although the war resulted in Ireland's free state, the casualties were significant and internally, the Northern Irish Catholics clashed with the Southern Protestants, resulting in a civil war. It is difficult to compare Scotland's relationship with the UK and Ireland's relationship with the UK, but it was clear that there was little to copy in Ireland's devolution to independence process to guide the Scots because neither Scottish nationalists nor Westminster MPs wanted another civil war.⁷²

The first sign of positive connection between the SHRA and SNL was their joint march in the Scotland's day parade in 1927 in Stirling. The march was a turning point because although it was only a simple procession to show Scottish pride, the public event of the SHRA and the SNL seen working together proved that the division between the two groups could be overcome and that the two groups were on their way to forming a national party. The other message the parade sent was that the SHRA was moving on from trying to support other parties. Muirhead worked hard to connect with Labour leaders, including soon to be Prime Minister, Ramsey Macdonald. Muirhead accepted that Labour could not commit

⁷² Hugh Kearney, *The British Isles: A History of Four Nations* (New York, Cambridge UP, 2006) p. 281.

to Home Rule and he now focused more of his time on improving the nationalist movement.⁷³

Gibson and Muirhead agreed upon forming a party, but the terms of the party took a long time to determine. Muirhead wanted a party that supported a devolved government and wanted to work with other MPs in Westminster to get enough support to pass a bill. Gibson had an opposite approach and wanted Scotland to be independent instead of a self-governing body under the UK. The SNL leader believed that if the new nationalist party had a full campaign plan, ranging from economics to social issues on why the Union between Scotland and the UK in 1707 had harmed Scotland combined with ways the new Scottish government would solve those problems, then the nationalist party would get elected into Parliament. If Gibson's new party were to win seats in Parliament, they would not leave Scotland until Westminster discussed terms of Scotland's Home Rule. Muirhead and Gibson would need a mediator to smooth out the details of the new party and allow for progress to be made.⁷⁴ Independence versus devolution within the UK and allied support versus promoting nationalist ideas would be the main topics of division among nationalists for decades before the party could settle on a unifying process to achieve Scottish Home Rule in the 1940s.⁷⁵

John McCormick made connecting the SHRA and the SNL his job to make sure Muirhead and Gibson could compromise on a deal that would be best for the new party. McCormick was a former member of the ILP, but left when the ILP broke from Labour. McCormick helped form the Glasgow University Scottish Nationalist Association. McCormick understood the importance of uniting home rule supporters regardless of how

⁷³ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 75.

⁷⁴ Cameron, p. 168.

⁷⁵ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 77.

they wanted Home Rule to exist.⁷⁶ Muirhead would have to concede on using his alliances with Labour to achieve Home Rule as Gibson had to concede to fight for Scottish independence in favor of devolution. The two men would continue to fight for their beliefs of Scottish Home Rule but wanted to work together in one party. They formed the National Party of Scotland (NPS) in 1928.⁷⁷

The groups that that merged to found the party were the SHRA, the SNL and the Scottish National Movement (SNM) along with other smaller groups. Official talks to form the NPS began in February of 1928 and reiterated much of what Muirhead and Gibson had already discussed. Gibson wanted full independence and a Sinn Fein technique in demanding independence from Britain. Most of the NPS shared McCormick and Muirhead's methods of achieving Home Rule, and Gibson was among a select few who wanted to adopt Ireland's Sinn Fein technique. McCormick and Muirhead's method was to connect with other parties and facilitate support for Home Rule in Parliament. The NPS would not have to gain a majority in Parliament to call for a Home Rule bill, but by allying with other parties, the combined support for Scottish Home Rule would be a majority. The party also supported devolution rather than complete independence because they believed it would be easier to convince both the Scottish people and Parliament, but also because even the mainstream political members of the party did not want to defect from Great Britain.⁷⁸ Gibson was content with conceding independence in favor of devolution because he believed once momentum began for Scottish self-determination that independence would be a natural next

⁷⁶ Richard J. Finlay, 'McCormick, John MacDonald (1904–1961)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2015 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38773>, accessed 8 March 2017].

⁷⁷ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 71.

⁷⁸ Cameron, p. 170.

step for the NPS. Nationalists officially had their own party, and although the NPS would not see much success, the supporters of Home Rule established a legitimate movement with Scotland's self-determination as their main purpose.⁷⁹

The NPS marked the beginning of what would become the influential Scottish National Party in the 1980s and 1990s, but in the political atmosphere of the 1920s and 1930s suggested that they hardly existed. Contesting elections proved to be difficult and revealed the disorganization within the party. The NPS was criticized for only highlighting the cause of Scotland's current issues without mapping out any policies or recovery plans of their own.⁸⁰ Now that Muirhead's SHRA and Gibson's SNL had merged, the ideologies of the two parties needed to conform into one. The NPS needed to determine its definition of Home Rule and how to reach it. The NPS confirmed their method would be to contest elections with the ideal goal being winning seats in Parliament, but at least generate attention to the nationalist movement by competing with Labour and Tory candidates.⁸¹

Aside from elections, the NPS had very little determined and struggled to figure out what information to campaign with besides Home Rule. The radicals in the party like MacDarmid pushed for an agenda that consisted of an independent and isolationist Scotland with fewer division of powers. Most of the party was divided somewhere in between a devolved government and independence, but MacDarmid's radical aggression was drowning out the voices of the more sensible candidates. Muirhead still wanted the NPS to be a broader umbrella program that reached out to other parties to influence MPs currently in Westminster. Muirhead conceded to contesting elections as the method of choice for the

⁷⁹ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 82.

⁸⁰ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 77.

⁸¹ Wormald, p. 214.

NPS, but was reluctant to contest elections where his Labour allies resided. The NPS was a positive start to the nationalist movement because it took first steps in contesting elections, but with the lack of organization in the party, it needed to determine its goals and quell party division if the nationalist movement wanted to survive.⁸²

MacCormick looked for opportunities for the party to unite. McCormick shared a similar mindset with Muirhead and the strength in rallying support with other parties. In the 1930s, Labour proved they would provide no support to the NPS. Even Maxton and the ILP turned away from Muirhead and MacCormick because although they saw the importance of Home Rule, they berated the NPS for ignoring the current issues with the Scottish people in the depression.⁸³ MacCormick decided to reach out to another nationalist organization called the Scottish Party (SP). The Scottish Party was led by the Duke of Montrose and had a much more moderate view of Home Rule compared to the NPS's division between a strong Scottish Parliament and an independent Scotland. The SP wanted devolved powers to Scotland that still worked with and answered to Westminster. Relations between the NPS and SP were initially hostile due to their differing views, but MacCormick saw an opportunity to forcing the two parties to work together.⁸⁴ The aggression of the radicals in the party and the lack of direction left the NPS helpless, so MacCormick believed that if the NPS could compromise on a merger with the SP then they could shed the party of its radical agitators and work to develop a more concrete method of achieving Home Rule.⁸⁵

⁸² Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 90.

⁸³ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 91.

⁸⁴ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 106.

⁸⁵ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 112.

Plans for a merger between the NPS and the SP worked as MacCormick had hoped. The pressure from the party members who were in favor of a merger with the SP exacerbated the problems of the radical members to the point where the NPS agreed on expelling those member like MacDarmid.⁸⁶ The NPS shed itself of the xenophobic aspects of its membership in 1933 for failing to conform to supporting the goals that the NPS agreed upon. The NPS moved on from expelling its radicals to talks of a merger with the SP. The merger was tested in a joint election campaign. Alexander MacEwan campaigned under the support of the SP and the NPS and polled at seventeen percent, which far exceeded any numbers of the two parties individually. The two parties were still yet to agree on a unified vision of the nationalist movement, but they understood the benefit of joining forces. MacCormick worked tirelessly to rally the support of the most reluctant members of, but ultimately got his wish in 1934. The NPS and the SP amalgamated into the Scottish National Party.⁸⁷ The SNP was not a solution to the problems of the two previous parties, but was an effort to move in the direction of forming a widespread and unified nationalist movement for Home Rule.

⁸⁶ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 118.

⁸⁷ Devine, p. 325.

Chapter 3

The Making of the Modern Scottish National Party

The early stages of the SNP were an exciting yet frustrating time for nationalists. An amalgamated party gave nationalists more energy and belief in progress, but the NPS and the SP now had to face the differences they bypassed when they decided to merge. Both parties became more moderate on their stances on Home Rule so a merge could happen, but now that the SNP was formed, the party needed to form a political platform they could both agree upon to solidify its identity. From the party's beginnings in 1934 to the beginning of the 1960s, the SNP went from focusing on maintaining a unified and functional political party that tried to gain small incremental support from other parties, to a party with a concrete and coherent stance that was willing to challenge elections and popular opinion. Although the SNP made little progress in terms of contesting seats in parliament, the years of molding party organization, determining long-term goals and how to achieve them created a robust and capable political party.⁸⁸

Alexander MacEwan was the first Chairman of the SNP and the first to try and form a direction that the whole party could rally around. MacEwan was a founder of the SP in 1930 and was a leader that could bring unity among the members who were previously opposed to one another. MacEwan was originally a member of the Liberal Party when he started his political career in 1908, but left to form the SP in 1930 to focus on Home Rule. MacEwan catered to both former SP and NPS members because he had background from both liberal and conservative sides of politics. The new Chairman played the role of peacemaker, which was a smart short term goal, but was hard to maintain. MacEwan decided

⁸⁸ Wormald, p. 214.

that the early SNP would not have a concrete form of a political manifesto so the party could avoid taking a stance as a left or right. MacEwan believed this was the best way to keep the fragile ties of the SP and NPS content for the short term.⁸⁹

Although this method helped maintain stability within the party for the short term, the party could only survive so long without a political platform or a plan of action. In the short term, opposition to the SNP like the Tories and Labour Unionists could compare the party to militant nationalists like the Hitler Youth and Clan Scotland, small fascist groups connected with violence and hate crimes.⁹⁰ In the long term, the party could stagnate because of a lack of direction, which would lose the momentum the party worked so hard to generate. John MacCormick looked to use a gradualist approach to gain interparty support and keep activity going in the SNP. Gradualism was a theme in MacCormick's strategizing, which meant to slowly coax other parties into favoring the Home Rule movement and creating a multiparty organization that could push for Home Rule.⁹¹

MacCormick's approach resonated with Muirhead and his efforts as part of the SHRA in the 1920s. The method was old, but MacCormick could generate some interest in Home Rule in members of the Labour and Liberal parties. The gradualist approach also hoped to get other smaller nationalist parties and organizations to join the SNP. MacCormack's goal was to get a Scottish National Convention where multiple parties attended and discussed Scottish interests and the possibility of its own government.⁹² MacCormick's early efforts saw some success in contesting elections as Dewar Gibb won fifteen percent of the vote from Scottish

⁸⁹ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 163.

⁹⁰ Pittock, p. 110.

⁹¹ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 165.

⁹² Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 179.

Universities. Contesting elections were a good way to measure the progress of the party and this small percentage showed that the early activity of MacCormick and the SNP had some effect.⁹³

MacCormick's Scottish National Convention almost materialized in Inverness in 1939. The Convention was scheduled for September of 1939, but when Great Britain declared war on Germany on 1 September, the event was cancelled. Representatives from Labour and Liberal parties showed interest in the event before it was cancelled, proving that the parties still had some interest in Home Rule policies. MacCormick tried to reschedule the first Scottish National Convention throughout the war, but neither the Labour nor the Liberal parties were willing. The Liberal Party was too small to afford to take a stance on Home Rule for fear of losing what little seats it had, and Labour was still heavily influenced by English Labour MPs who were anti-Home Rule. MacCormack's gradualist methods struggled to get anyone to commit to supporting self-government. Even the support from Scottish Universities only meant temporary support because polls showed that young voters had interest in the SNP, but as the years went on and the University students grew up, the SNP could not retain their vote.⁹⁴

Economic policies of the early SNP followed the visions of MacEwen and MacCormick of avoiding hard political stances and welcoming in any support possible. MacEwan looked to find a way to prove that the economics of a self-governing body under Great Britain could be successful without blaming England for Scotland's economic struggles of unemployment, housing, and a lack of diversified industries. The Duke of

⁹³ Pittock, p. 111.

⁹⁴ Pittock, p. 113.

Montrose traveled to Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man to observe the economies of these self-governing British territories. MacEwan used these territories as evidence of viable economies, but he could not take too strong a stance in referencing these territories for fear of being associated with the recently free state of Ireland. The Home Rule victory for Ireland quickly tumbled into a civil war, so MacEwan tried to strike a balance in explaining the economic benefits of being independent, like using money for Scottish specific issues and cutting austerity measures. MacEwan worked to explain these benefits while also promoting positive relations with England.⁹⁵

The economic and diplomatic policies promoted by MacEwan and MacCormick gave the SNP the appearance that the party was making progress, but members in the party felt like the party was trying to remain a legitimate political presence by avoiding conflict. The lack of aggression by party leaders began to frustrate local branches and lower level members. The beginning of World War II further stretched this issue as SNP goals were put on hold. MacCormack's Scottish National Conventions were put on hold during the war because Labour and Liberal parties did not want to be associated with anything that could be anti-war. The SNP had to decide its own stance on the war to keep stability within the party. A portion of the SNP vehemently opposed the war and supported anti-conscription actions. Although the majority saw the importance of publicly supporting the war to avoid political condemnation, members wanted to respect the SNP anti-conscriptionists. MacCormick once again mediated a balance through publicly supporting the war effort while providing moral support for the small part of the SNP that decided to fight and evade conscriptions.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 174.

⁹⁶ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 212.

The lockdown of the war in terms of politics left the SNP merely trying to survive as a functioning party. The pro-war parties like the Tories, Labour, and other smaller parties formed a wartime elections truce to keep stability. This meant that the parties who agreed on the truce would not contest the seats in parliament not previously held by them in by-elections.⁹⁷ Britain also did not see any general elections until the end of the war in 1945. The truce had positive and negative effects for the SNP because MPs of the main parties were easily reelected running unopposed, but areas where SNP had a local following were opportunities for the party to gauge its progress and possibly steal a seat. Secretary of Scotland Tom Johnston warned his fellow Tories that if there isn't some effort to appear to represent the Scottish people, the SNP will have a greater chance at gaining a following. Johnston wanted to appear to be the defender of the Scottish people despite being a Unionist, so in 1941 he called for more war contracts to be granted in Scotland to ease the unemployment rate during the war.⁹⁸

Contesting by-elections during the war had the risk of being unpatriotic because of the truce between other parties, but the opportunity to contest elections with fewer competitors was too great to disregard. The opportunity arose for the SNP in 1940 for a by-election in Argyll. The SNP chose William Power to contest the Tories that originally held the seat. Power was picked to contest the election because he was a strong anti-fascist and a pro-war representative. Power's stances balanced out the potential anti-war message the SNP sent by contesting an election during the wartime political truce. Power downplayed the anti-conscription portion of the SNP and reinforced in his campaign the idea that the SNP was a

⁹⁷ Cameron, p. 183.

⁹⁸ Cameron, p. 184.

supporter of the war effort.⁹⁹ The by-election was the SNP's greatest success to date. Powers won over 7,000 votes compared to the Tories' 12,000. The SNP still had work to do to win MPs, but the Argyll election showed that the party was close to winning seats in Westminster.¹⁰⁰

The 7,000 votes in Argyll was a positive boost to the SNP's wartime struggles, but the party needed to keep building on the by-election to keep its momentum going. In 1941, another by-election came about in Edinburgh, giving the SNP another chance at gaining support. With little resources and organization, the SNP failed to bring together a campaign for a member of the party to contest the Tory candidate, and left the by-election uncontested. The SNP was back to where it was with a small following, little money, and a lack of motivating leadership. The only progress the party held onto up to this point was MacCormick's progress with Labour and Liberal parties. In 1940, Labour Secretary John Taylor wrote an outline for a Home Rule proposals that could be set in place after the war. MacCormick saw this as a sign of success through his gradualist approach, but Taylor's outline never came into fruition. Taylor showed enthusiasm for Home Rule, but the outline for Home Rule never turned into action, which was a typical theme of Labour's treatment of Home Rule for much of the 20th century. Labour felt the need to be talking about Home Rule in case Scotland swung in support of Home Rule, but they did not want to be the party to try and make Home Rule a popular topic. MacCormick suggested that Scotland needed a united Scottish Front. Through this Front of Labour and Liberal party support, MacCormick wanted to look for ways to quickly instate a Scottish Parliament.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Cameron, p. 191.

¹⁰⁰ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 215.

¹⁰¹ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 217.

Although Labour and Liberal showed support for the Scottish Front and SNP policies in private conversations with MacCormick, these parties were not willing to go public with their support. By sticking with private support of SNP Home Rule policies, Labour and the Liberals stated that they could not make any promises or deals with the SNP. The 1940s saw no Scottish National Convention and no joint home rule proposals. The SNP was getting restless with its failure to convert Power's progress into a greater election performance or support from Labour. SNP frustrations came to a head in 1942 during elections for party chairman. William Power was the current party leader. Power was popular because of his successful campaign in Argyll, but he represented MacCormick's gradualist approach, which many party members were tired of. Some members wanted the SNP to take a harder stance on politics to create a stronger identity.

Douglas Young was the choice for the radical side of the SNP. Young was a well-spoken charismatic leader who openly opposed the war. Leading up to the SNP election, Young was found guilty for evading his conscription call, but his powerful speech in court, which continued to argue against the war and conscription, resonated with SNP members who were tired with MacCormick's pro-war and party alliance approach. The candidates of Young and Power highlighted a divide in the parties and neither candidate wanted to lessen their stance to harbor more support.¹⁰² The militant faction of the SNP prevailed as Young won the vote 33 to 29. MacCormick felt offended by the result, seeing Young's victory as a lack of appreciation for the effort MacCormick put into creating the party and gaining

¹⁰² Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 229.

support for the party. MacCormick and his followers split from the SNP after the election to form the Scottish convention, dividing the party down the middle.¹⁰³

MacCormack believed that Home Rule within the powers of the UK was the best path for Scottish Nationalists because it had more widespread appeal and could help unite the support of multiple parties. The former SNP secretary remained active in politics, and continued his gradualist appeals to encompass a wide support for Home Rule. The Scottish Plebiscite Society was formed in 1946 by MacCormick, working to call for a National Vote for a Scottish Parliament. The Society worked to create a National covenant in the early 1950s to show Westminster that the Scottish people wanted Home Rule to be discussed and put to a vote. A Similar document was presented by MacCormick to the UN in 1947, claiming that Scotland was of relevant international interest and that their plea should be recognized by the UN. Both documents were disregarded as illegitimate claims that looked to circumvent regular politics to gain Home Rule.¹⁰⁴ MacCormick's post SNP efforts marked the ending of his career and the end of gradualist politics in the SNP. The impact of MacCormick's legacy was finally seen in the 1980s as MacCormick's dream of a Scottish National Convention in favor of Home Rule finally came true after his death in 1961.¹⁰⁵ Although his efforts were monumental in shaping an established nationalist party, his gradualist approach could not turn Scotland into a self-governing nation.

Historians look at the split of the SNP from different perspectives. Some see the split as a devastating blow to a small party that could not afford anymore losses in a period where Labour and the Tories were dominating Parliament. The Schism brought the SNP's

¹⁰³ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 230.

¹⁰⁴ Pittock, p. 115.

¹⁰⁵ Oxford DNB, MacCormick.

membership down to about 1,000 with little resources to contest anything. The remaining members were viewed by outsiders as staunch pro-independence supporters that hardly resembled a political party. The political atmosphere even appeared to swing in favor of the SNP with a dropping Tory approval rating, but the lack of size and further division in the party left them unable to make any political progress.¹⁰⁶

A more positive perspective of the schism saw it as a defining moment for the SNP. With MacCormick out of the party, the remaining members could cultivate a clearer identity. Young changed the SNP's stance on the war. The SNP was still in favor of the war effort, but wanted to be in control of Scottish troops. Young stated that Scotland needed its own government and its own army that Scotland could manage. The SNP now openly supported anti-conscription and Scottish Independence, not devolution. The changes in the SNP caused Labour's support for Home Rule to wane again. Labour wanted to support the SNP in their post war reconstruction plans, but really wanted to appear to be a party with nationalist pride and had no real interest risking their presence in parliament by supporting a party that openly supported Scottish Independence. A MacCormick SNP would be discouraged by Labour's lack of consistency, but the new SNP knew they needed to lead the Scottish Independence movement by themselves. The SNP was smaller and had less of a presence in UK politics, but was also more defined.¹⁰⁷

Now that Young established the new SNP, he set out to campaign for the SNP's vision among the Scottish people. Dr. Robert McIntyre took charge of the SNP through his role as Secretary after MacCormick left. McIntyre is famous for being the first ever SNP MP.

¹⁰⁶ Devine, p. 566.

¹⁰⁷ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 233.

In April of 1945, McIntyre beat out Labour in the Motherwall by-election.¹⁰⁸ The term was short lived, however, because a general election was called in the same year and Labour won back their seat in August. McIntyre's impact on the SNP had more to do with his efforts to organize membership and create a professional face to the party. McIntyre first focused on party discipline. The early forms of the SNP were a result of different factions of nationalists coming together. The party had to cater to all factions of the party to remain united. McIntyre did away with these factions and pledged to no longer waver on long term goals to keep certain members of the party happy in the short term. The SNP began to turn into an official and stable political party, and although they were small, in hindsight, their new rhetoric and party discipline made the SNP resilient and capable of growing into a legitimate presence.¹⁰⁹

The SNP's party discipline and clear stance on independence was a positive for their long-term goals, but at the time, the post war political atmosphere proved to be a difficult time to gain support. When the SNP first formed in 1932 they had three principles: a clear political objective in fighting for Scottish Home Rule, contesting elections, and stand alone as a distinct political organization. John MacCormick believed that the party had to lessen these principles to get support quickly, but now that the SNP reorganized their party and reaffirmed these 3 principles with the change of focus on independence instead of Home Rule, the fewer, but more dedicated party members decided they would not waver on these principles just to gain support in the short term. The SNP would support Home Rule if a bill was brought to Parliament, but they would not see achieving Home Rule as their ultimate

¹⁰⁸ Cameron, p. 192.

¹⁰⁹ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 235.

goal.¹¹⁰ The SNP at the end of WWII resembles the party that is seen today and it is because of the discipline and the hard stances that were decided after its split in 1942.

In hindsight, the firm stances of the post war SNP was the right choice for slow and stable growth up to present day, but the party had to persevere through about two decades of little support before the party started seriously contesting elections. In 1945, the SNP presented eight candidates with their best showing in Aberdeen with only five percent of votes, ranking third in the election. Between the 1945 and 1950 general elections, the SNP were only able to campaign for five of the thirteen by-elections, with Dr. William Taylor having the most success in 1947 with ten percent of the vote in Glasgow and finishing in third place. John MacCormick almost won the MP seat in Paisley in 1948 with forty-three percent of the vote, but he was no longer associated with the SNP at that time. The 1951 general election was one of the SNPs lowest points. The party only contested three seats and won three-tenths percent of the total vote. The party had under 1,000 members and were far from any form of success.¹¹¹

The years of the SNPs marginal success in the 50s required serious perseverance for those 1,000 party members. In the aftermath of WWI, the ILP tried to push for Home Rule because the Scottish people were frustrated with wartime policies and the overcrowding that resulted from the war. The ILP tried to use that momentum to get the Labour Party to pass Home Rule policies in the 1920s. As Scotland emerged from the War in 1945, the country was not in a strong economic standing, but the people did not have the same widespread feeling of discontent as it did after WWI. The aid from the Marshall plan from the US along

¹¹⁰ Finlay, Independent and Free, p. 252.

¹¹¹ Aberdeen SNP.

with Britain's own stimulus plans, Scotland underwent a housing and agriculture boom. New housing went up at a staggering pace as over half a million houses were built over the course of two decades in Scotland's cities. In rural areas of Scotland, a combination of government subsidies and mechanized farming supplies increased productivity by 300% over twenty years.¹¹² Scotland's economy was far from perfect as it still relied on its heavy industries and struggled with unemployment, but the SNP did not have a superior alternative economic plan, aside from spending money on specific Scottish issues, they could use to convince the Scottish people for their support.

As the SNP struggled through the 1950s, some changes in Britain did cater toward the Scottish people looking to gain their own identity. As the world recovered from the economic woes of WWII, Scotland's economy began to fall back in its rut. The issue of lack of diversification that was an issue before WWI still caused the Scottish economy to be unstable. Scottish GDP grew after the war, but Britain's overall GDP was much higher (fifty-nine percent in Scotland to seventy percent in all of GB). The mining industry suffered greatly. The mines around Motherwell were starting to deplete and the demand for coal went down as modern technology ran more efficiently with electricity, oil, and gas. Steel and shipbuilding's demand also dropped as other countries created their own productions and depended less on British exports.¹¹³ The post war reconstruction was favorable enough that the Scottish people kept their faith in the existing Tory Parliament, but slowing economic growth opened the Tories up to criticism.

¹¹² Devine, p. 557.

¹¹³ Devine, p. 570-571.

The shrinking British Empire also added to the struggles of the Tory government. Besides Ireland's independence in the 1920s, Britain began withdrawing from their colonies in the Middle East and Asia. In the late 1940s Great Britain granted independence to India, Burma, Pakistan, and Ceylon (known today as Sri Lanka). In the 1950s, Great Britain also withdrew from the Suez Canal zone. In 1956, Great Britain backed Israel in the invasion of the Suez Canal area to control the valuable trade port and overthrow the disagreeable Egyptian leader. The UN pressured Great Britain, Israel, and France, the three parties involved in the invasion to pull their forces out. The event was humiliating to Great Britain because it signified the true end of the country's imperial era. Britain was still a powerful country, but was no longer one of the top players on the world stage compared to the US and the Soviet Union. The Scottish people prided themselves in playing a large role in Britain's imperial power through shipbuilding and military might, but that aspect of Great Britain was shrinking, which made that part of Scotland's UK identity less important.¹¹⁴

As Scotland's economy and identity was shifting during the 1950s and early 1960s, the SNP worked through its lack of support and resources. Despite being small, the party remained firm on its stances and well disciplined. Besides the expulsion of fifty-five members in 1955 who tried to start their own nationalist party, the progress of the party was stable.¹¹⁵ In 1956, the SNP backed a pirate radio station called Radio Free Scotland began to air illegally on BBC radio. The station was started by Gordon Wilson and SNP treasurer David Rollo in response to Westminster outlawing nationalist stations on BBC radio in

¹¹⁴ Kearney, p. 294.

¹¹⁵ Aberdeen SNP.

Scotland and Wales. The SNP was sticking to its three principles, but were finding new ways to reach the Scottish people.¹¹⁶

The efforts of the SNP began to pay off in the 1960s. Party membership was still between 1,000 and 2,000 during this decade, but MP candidates began to make a breakthrough. In 1962, William Wolfe ranked second in the West Lothian by-election with twenty three percent. Wolfe continued his work in West Lothian by conceiving a new SNP logo with the help of Julian Gibb. The party had 20 local branches in 1962 and were back to consistently contesting elections. The political landscape shifted left in the 1960s as the Tories lost ground to Labour party. The 1964 General Election saw Labour take government and hold it in the 1966 General election. The austerity measures prolonged by the Tories led the shift away from conservative politics and into the favor of Labour and the SNP who looked to support workers who suffered from funding cuts.¹¹⁷ The Liberal Party saw a small revival and pledged their support to the SNP. The General elections in 1964 and 1966 saw the SNP go from two and a half percent of the National vote to five percent, which was a significant increase from their one percent representation in 1945.¹¹⁸ The SNP reached a competitive level and just needed an opportunity to win a seat in Parliament. Winnie Ewing took the opportunity the SNP had with its growing popularity to win a seat in Parliament in 1967. Despite the growing power of Labour, Ewing beat out a Labour candidate in Hamilton, Glasgow, which had a history of strong Labour support. The SNP out campaigned Labour because the SNP supporters were young and energetic compared to Labour's outdated and

¹¹⁶ Pittock, p. 115.

¹¹⁷ Cameron, p. 281.

¹¹⁸ Pittock, p. 116.

uninspiring campaign methods. Ewing's victory was no outlier, as the SNP won thirty four percent of the vote in local elections in the following year.¹¹⁹

If the SNP's schism in 1942 marked the beginning of the modern SNP, Ewing's victory legitimized the party's new identity and party strength. The SNP was far from achieving real policies and even further from gaining independence, but its opponents could no longer brush the SNP aside as a sect or pressure group looking to get the Labour party to adopt its Home Rule policies. The SNP persevered through its early years of division and its years of subsistence after losing John MacCormick. The SNP managed to unite those in favor of Home Rule and mold that support into a coherent message that resonated with the Scottish people.

¹¹⁹ Devine, p. 574.

Chapter 4

The Ideologies of the Nationalist Movement

The SNP that exists in Scotland today is the culmination of generations of Scots who believe that Home Rule in some form is best for the Scottish. Scotland and England fought wars for centuries for the right to rule Scotland. The Acts of Union in 1606 ended the long series of wars between Scotland and England, but there has always been a population that fought for Scottish Independence. The modern battle for independence was sparked from Ireland's battle for independence in the mid 19th century, and since then, the fight for home rule went through many forms to become a viable political force. Through understanding that Home Rule needed its own political entity, finding the balance between creating alliances with other parties and creating a new path for Home Rule, and persevering through times of low popularity, the SNP became the product of the Scottish interest in Independence.

The possibility of Home Rule for Scotland began to be conceivable when William Gladstone pressed for Irish Home Rule in 1886. Gladstone ignited belief in Home Rule in Scotland because he thought self-government was the best way to handle frustrated states in the UK. From the 1850s to the 1880s, Gladstone's treatment of Irish nationalists suggested that the possibility of Home Rule was probable in Ireland and eventually Scotland. The first Home Rule Bill Gladstone put forward in 1886 encouraged nationalists and destabilized the current Liberal government.¹²⁰ The destabilizing of the Liberal party allowed for other left of center political groups to have a chance to break the Scotland Liberal hegemony of the 19th century and implement new ideas, like Scottish Home Rule, into Parliament.

¹²⁰ Oxford DNB, Gladstone.

The Labour Party initially looked like the party to bring Home Rule to Scotland after WWI. The ILP was a powerful sect of Labour and had Home Rule as one of their top priorities. Labour grew quickly compared to the SNPs long struggle in later years and incorporated Home Rule in their policies as they gained popularity around WWI. Despite the ILPs influence in Scottish Labour, the party could never make Scottish Home Rule a top priority because it was not an exclusively Scottish party and had to balance Scottish interests with English interests along with the rest of the UK because Labour's main strength was in England. Labour does play an important role in finally bringing devolution to Scotland in the 1980s and 1990s, but for Home Rule to be brought into Parliament with a legitimate chance of winning, the movement needed a Scottish party with mainly Scottish interests.¹²¹

Roland Muirhead made that key step in the formative years of the nationalist party through creating the SHRA. The SHRA drew heavily from the support of other parties that were not exclusively Scottish, but the idea of an organization that was based solely around Scottish Home Rule was a major step in creating a nationalist party and eventually the SNP. With the birth of the SHRA came one of two strategies that nationalist parties went back and forth between. Muirhead's SHRA focused on recruiting support for Scottish Home Rule from as many political parties as they could.¹²² The strategy would later be deemed the gradualist approach under John MacCormick's similar efforts to gain universal support for Scottish Home Rule under the NPs and SNP. Since the SHRA's only goal was to generate support for Home Rule in other parties, the organization was small, but creating a nationalist

¹²¹ Devine, p. 616.

¹²² Oxford DNB, Muirhead.

organization that was solely about Home Rule was a big first step in making people recognize the importance of a viable nationalist party.¹²³

The SNL followed the SHRA soon after in creating Scottish parties that did not have affiliations with politics in other UK states. The founders of the SNL resided in London, but they were more radical than the SHRA and wanted to make Scottish Independence a priority. The SNL played an important role in continuing the idea that Scotland needed its own party to make Home Rule a reality. Although the SNL never reached over 1,000 members in their 8 years of existence, they created the *Scots Independent* newspaper to promote Scottish Independence. The Newspaper still publishes articles today as the longest standing political newspaper in Scotland.¹²⁴ The SNL brought attention to the importance of a Home Rule party like the SHRA, and introduced the other nationalist stand-alone method of fighting for Scottish Independence without the support of other political parties. The SNL leaders chafed with Muirhead, but the formation of two nationalist parties with the idea of Scottish Home Rule in some form as a top priority was an important beginning for what would eventually be the SNP.

As the SNL and SHRA progressed and eventually amalgamated into the NPS, the issue of gradualism vs. stand-alone methods would cause division among nationalists. The SNP ultimately decided to be a party that wanted to contest elections on their own, but the dichotomy of the two political methods helped mold the nationalists into a viable party. Muirhead was a strong supporter of transcending party lines for home rule, but he understood the difficulty the SHRA had in balancing the power between the different parties involved.

¹²³ Pittock, p. 103.

¹²⁴ "Our Story So Far" *Scots Independent* ed. By Grant Thoms.

The Labour party dominated the membership and leadership of the SHRA in the 1920s, especially during the Labour government in 1924.¹²⁵ This overflow of Labour members in the SHRA made it difficult for the party to be a separate entity from the Labour movement because although Muirhead's vision for the SHRA was to unite multiple parties, the association needed to be separate from other party movements. Muirhead left the SHRA in 1928 to continue his vision of uniting other parties around Home Rule in the NPS.¹²⁶

The differing missions of the inclusive gradualist approach versus the stand-alone method came to a head as the SHRA and the SNL amalgamated into the National Party of Scotland. The SNL and SHRA understood the importance of combining forces to centralized and enlarge support for Home Rule. John MacCormick burst onto the nationalist scene to make sure the leaders of the SHRA and SNL, Muirhead and Gibbs respectively, could merge and compromise on nationalist goals to make the NPS. This amalgamation into the NPS forced the nationalist movement to begin to determine the overarching goals of the party. The NPS needed to determine the meaning behind Home Rule and how they would generate support for it.¹²⁷

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, the NPS and the SNP struggled back and forth between the gradualist approach and the stand-alone approach for Home Rule. The fluctuation between these two methods frequently changed the nationalists' definition of Home Rule. Under Muirhead and MacCormick, Home Rule meant greater powers for Scotland under the UK. At the low points of the NPS's and the SNP's popularity, gradualists were more moderate, defining Home Rule as having Scottish officials with the final word on

¹²⁵ Oxford DNB, Muirhead.

¹²⁶ Oxford DNB, Muirhead.

¹²⁷ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 75.

Scottish policies that are passed to them from Westminster. These moderate goals for Home Rule competed with the nationalists who fought for independence. Tom Gibson represented the separatist radicals in the early stages of the SNP, while Douglas Young and Robert McIntyre took the independence stance to form the modern and competitive party the SNP is today.¹²⁸ In the early formations of the NPS and the SNP radicals settled with moderate versions of home rule if the party contested elections instead of rallied support from other parties. Radicals believed once the momentum started with Scottish devolution, the Scottish people will continue to push for independence.

These two views of Home Rule competed to be the official views of the nationalist parties. The conflicting methods threatened to destroy the nationalist movement because leading members seceded from the nationalist movement over the topic. The conflicting methods also created urgency for the party to progress and achieve new goals because the party had to determine which method was best. The NPS never found a balance that the moderate and radical members could agree upon, so when the NPS merged with the SP to make the SNP, these issues carried over. The weaknesses of the moderate gradualist approach were an inability to take controversial stances on topics and the inability to get other parties to commit to Home Rule. The radical's weaknesses were that the goal of independence was much harder to achieve than devolution and that they did not know which steps to take to achieve independence. The more radical the party's stances on independence

¹²⁸ Derick S. Thomson, 'Young, Douglas Cuthbert Colquhoun (1913–1973)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Sept 2012 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/40382>, accessed 8 March 2017].

were, the more Labour distanced itself from Home Rule and the more Unionists could tag the SNP as communists and unpatriotic to Great Britain.¹²⁹

In these formative years, the strengths of each method worked to cover the weaknesses of the other. When The moderates like MacCormick failed to get the support of every party, especially the Labour party, the radicals spoke out and keep the nationalist movement relevant when other parties wanted to ignore it. In 1927, the SNL criticized the Scottish Labour party for being dictated by the English sect of Labour, writing in the *Scots Independent*, “Your pledges have been cast aside; the English Government formed by your Party refused facilities for the introduction of a Scots Home Rule Bill.”¹³⁰ The SNL made a voice for themselves by calling out the lack of a stance from Labour while the gradualist SHRA had to remain silent or else the Labour members in the party would redact support.¹³¹ The gradualist method betrayed the moderates again in 1945. MacCormick worked throughout WWII with Labour and Liberal to create a Scottish convention and a unifying Scottish front between the SNP and other parties. Labour presented its Scottish manifesto, claiming that their support for Home Rule was second only behind supporting the war effort against Japan, but in the British manifesto for Labour, there was no reference to Scottish Home Rule. The SNP recognized that Labour would only commit to supporting Home Rule if it was not at the risk of losing support from English Labour. Doulgas Young was elected the leader of the SNP in part because the party knew that he would avoid falling victim to the inconsistent support of the Labour Party.¹³²

¹²⁹ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 85.

¹³⁰ *Scots Independent*, April 1927, p. 4.

¹³¹ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 55.

¹³² Pittock, p. 112.

Although the gradualist approach to Home Rule could not take the SNP to a competitive level in elections it was still crucial to the emergence of the SNP because of its ability to unite nationalists and keep the party afloat during times of limited prospects. Both the NPS and the SNP were products of amalgamations between two nationalist parties of different views. Gradualists like Muirhead and MacCormick understood the importance of bringing nationalists together under one party despite their differences. The early years of the SNP were especially divided because the Scottish Party had a strong conservative following that wanted moderate Home Rule while the NPS was dominated by its cultural radicals who wanted independence. MacCormick and Muirhead recognized if the SP the NPS could merge into one party, then determining the methods of the party and the definition of Home Rule would be easier. The gradualists unified the nationalist parties despite the hard stances of the radicals.

Gradualists played a crucial role in bringing the differing opinions of the nationalist parties together and recognizing when the radicals were too extreme in their stances. The NPS had a strong presence of radicals like Hugh Macdarmiad. Although these radicals had strong support for the nationalist movement, their belief in returning to a Celtic state had xenophobic and racist undertones. These radicals like Macdarmiad came from the SNL and although the SNL pushed the method of contesting elections to gain support, the party had little success. The moderates were wary of this extremism and distanced itself from these xenophobic radicals, which kept the party from losing all its support. In 1930, the NPS expelled Macdarmiad and his Celtic followers to ensure the party would not fall into a hate group.¹³³ Removing radicals to keep the party virtuous was an important lesson for the

¹³³ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 91.

nationalists, which they would remember. In 1955, radicals again threatened to destroy the progress of the party. The SNP was at one of its lowest points in history, but the party expelled 55 radicals, sacrificing the support of the members to keep the party from being taken over by racist and xenophobic rhetoric.¹³⁴

Gradualism and the stand-alone approach both played important roles in molding the party, but as the SNP emerged from WWII, party members recognized there was only room for one method for the party to progress. MacCormick's leadership in the late 1930s until he leaves in 1942 was representative of a long-standing compromise between gradualists and radicals who wanted to go alone. The SNP contested elections, but MacCormick and the rest of the leadership focused their time on gathering Home Rule supporters for a Scottish National Convention and strengthening the alliance of the Scottish front.¹³⁵ The balance of the two helped solidify the merger of the NPS and the SP, but now that the party was established they could no longer sit between two methods of gaining popularity. The SNP contested elections, Tory parties saw the SNP as a protest group that people only voted for when they were frustrated with the party they usually support. Tories also believed the SNP was not a legitimate political party because they contested few by-elections and spent more time organizing other parties to support Home Rule. The party knew that Home Rule could not be achieved by a protest group, but MacCormick believed the SNP was on the brink of forming a formidable alliance with Labour and other supporters that Westminster could not ignore. Despite MacComick's contributions to the nationalist movement, the party decided to

¹³⁴ Aberdeen SNP.

¹³⁵ Finlay, *Independent and Free*, p. 219.

go with the more radical approach to contest as many elections as they could to fight for Scottish Independence.¹³⁶

When the SNP committed to fighting for independence and contested elections on their own in 1942, they could take stances on topics with more conviction. Supporting men who avoided conscription was a risky stance for the SNP to take and was the type of stance the party avoided in the past. In the short term, the radical stances of the SNP made the party appear to be a protest group with the only reason for the party's existence being to gain independence. Despite the damage the radicalism of the SNP caused to its following in the short term, the consistency of the SNP's views on Scotland and the necessity for the country to be independent slowly built the structure of a legitimate party. This legitimacy was important because although the Scottish people may not support Scottish Independence, they began to see the SNP as a viable alternative if the parties they currently supported, like Labour, failed to deliver on the interests of the Scottish people.¹³⁷

The SNPs slow build of their party legitimacy payed off in the 1970s when the Scottish people began to be frustrated with Labour's handling of economic grievances. 1970s polls showed that only a third of the Scottish people were in favor of Scottish independence, but the SNPs popularity was on the rise due to a wealth of young and energetic campaigners that brought a new a refreshing view to left of center politics. The SNP saw varying success in the 1970s and early 80s. In the 1974 general election, the SNP won seven seats with two percent of the UK vote, but in 1984 the SNP was back down to two seats and one percent of the vote.¹³⁸ The SNP was far from achieving Scottish independence, but the results of the

¹³⁶ Cameron, p. 277.

¹³⁷ Wormald, p. 220.

¹³⁸ Simkin, Spartacus Educational.

1970s showed the party was established enough to consistently have some representation in Westminster and that the party emerged from its formative years as a legitimate party.¹³⁹

The legitimacy of the SNP was reinforced when the Labour party endorsed devolution in the late 1970s. The Labour party lost some of their support to the SNP in the 70s for the SNP had a more attractive leadership for the younger community than the Labour party's older and more traditional leadership. The Labour Party was divided over supporting Home Rule, but publicly supported it to keep from losing votes to the SNP. Many Labour members thought that Scotland needed its Union with the UK to solve its economic problems while others believed that devolution was necessary because it would stop the possibility of Scottish independence.¹⁴⁰ The two parties had different reasons to support devolution, but with the combined support, a referendum for Home Rule was called in 1977 to be conducted in 1979.¹⁴¹

The possibility for a devolved government in 1979 looked promising, but Labour and the SNP had their personal struggles. Leading up to the referendum, the Labour party had a majority, but only because of Liberal support, so the party had to adhere to its supporting parties to keep that majority. Anti-devolutionists took advantage of Labour being lenient by adding amendments to the Home Rule bill to make the referendum more difficult to achieve and reducing the amount of powers Scottish Parliament would have if the referendum resulted in favor of devolution. The SNP's issue leading up to the referendum was that they

¹³⁹ Cameron, p. 282.

¹⁴⁰ Devine, p. 586.

¹⁴¹ Devine, p. 587.

saw a dip in support, losing two crucial elections to Labour, which left them with half the approval rating of that of Labour and the Tories.¹⁴²

The 1979 referendum came at a time of low morale for Labour, the SNP, and Scotland. Fifty-one percent voted yes for Scottish devolution to forty-eight percent who voted no, but since an amendment was passed with the bill that required at least forty percent of the total eligible voter population to vote yes, devolution failed to pass. Only sixty-four percent of eligible voters in Scotland voted, which meant that only about thirty percent of the total voting population voted yes. The SNP was frustrated with the lack of voters in Scotland and with Labour's incapability of controlling Westminster. The SNP called for a vote of no confidence to remove the discredited Labour government. The vote of no confidence passed and Marget Thatcher's Tory government took power in 1979.¹⁴³

The failure of the referendum followed by the Tory takeover of Parliament was the worst-case scenario for the SNP. Despite the loss, the progress of the SNP up to that point and Labour's official endorsement of devolution showed the success that the SNP's formative years resulted in.¹⁴⁴ Nationalists had managed the balance between standing alone as a legitimate party and including support from potential competitors in their goal for Home Rule. By the beginning of the 1980s the SNP was an established party and had the support of Labour in backing Home Rule. The SNP had the political power to help bring a Home Rule bill to Parliament, and although they failed in 1979, the vote in favor of a devolved parliament legitimized their movement and made the idea of another referendum intriguing. The Tory party stood between the SNP and further progress toward Home Rule, but

¹⁴² Devine, p. 589.

¹⁴³ Devine, p. 588.

¹⁴⁴ Wormald, p. 221.

economic grievances in the 1980s ended up helping the SNP's movement. Margaret Thatcher brought unification to the Scottish people by alienating Scotland through her economic restructuring. Thatcher wanted to imprint a hardworking and self-sufficient Scotland by cutting government funding and privatization of industries. The cost of higher education in Scotland increased drastically and people in the public sector suffered from layoffs and wage cuts.¹⁴⁵ The Tories dominated Parliament in the 1980s and early 1990s under Thatcher and later John Major, but the mistreatment of Scottish interests led to a Labour party landslide victory in the 1997 General election.¹⁴⁶

Tony Blair was the Prime Minister of the 1997 Labour government that was still in favor of Home Rule. A Home Rule bill came quickly after the election, which spurred hard campaigning from the SNP, Liberal and Labour. The final test for seeing the SNP as a legitimate political party weighed on the devolution referendum. Many believed, including the Labour party, that the SNP was still just a protest group for Scottish independence and with the passing of Scottish Home Rule, the party would dissolve with its goal somewhat reached. The long hard years of the SNP's formation would not dissolve because the party solidified its goal for independence and organized a discipline party membership that could stand alone despite having a small following for long periods.¹⁴⁷ The referendum for Scottish devolution did pass with seventy-four percent in favor and since then, the SNP have maintained their presence in parliament and grown on it. The SNP understood that supporting Home Rule was important because it was the will of the people. Becoming a Home Rule party once again did not mean settling for something less than independence, but it meant

¹⁴⁵ Devine, p. 605.

¹⁴⁶ Devine, p. 613.

¹⁴⁷ Devine, p. 616.

working with the wants of the Scottish people and being an effective party in Scottish Parliament. Today, the SNP holds sixty-three of the 129 seats in Scottish Parliament with conservatives at thirty-one seats and Labour with twenty-three.¹⁴⁸ Since the SNP emerged from WWII and their formative, the party solidified its goals for independence and organized its members into a disciplined group that could persevere through times of low support. Independence is still the party's main goal, but the events surrounding devolution proved that the party could work with Labour to achieve Scottish goals and that the party was more than just a protest group.

¹⁴⁸ "Current State of the Parties" *Scottish Parliament*
<http://www.parliament.scot/msps/12450.aspx>.

Epilogue

Today, the SNP still fights for Scottish Independence. In 2014, the SNP had a majority in Scottish Parliament and called for a referendum for Scottish Independence. The century of work the nationalist movement came to a vote where the Scottish people decided whether they want to be independent of Great Britain. Unfortunately for the SNP, the Scottish people voted in favor of remaining a part of the UK with percentage of fifty-five in favor or remaining to forty- four in favor of independence. With eighty-five percent of eligible Scottish voters turning out for the referendum, it was clear that the Scottish people still saw remaining in the UK as beneficial.¹⁴⁹ The SNP were disheartened by the result of the referendum, but the Scottish people kept their faith in the party. In the 2016 election, the SNP won forty-seven percent of the total vote with just two seats short of a majority, signifying that the discussion for Scottish independence is still relevant. The SNP have the trust of a large population of the Scottish people and the SNP is telling them that independence is what is best for the Scotland. This is an old stance of the nationalist movement that Westminster and the world now must pay attention to.¹⁵⁰

To get to the point the SNP is at today took years of perseverance and the combined of the efforts of different nationalist groups. Although this thesis highlights the activity of the nationalist movement from the past century, in perspective, the movement had a small following for most of its history. The big moments in the nationalist movement, like Muirhead's founding of the SRHA, the amalgamation of the NPS and the SNP a few years

¹⁴⁹ Gov.UK "Scottish Independence Referendum"

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/scottish-independence-referendum/about>.

¹⁵⁰ BBC News "Scottish Election 2016"

<http://www.bbc.com/news/election/2016/scotland/results>.

after, but one of the most remarkable parts of the movement was the daily work the nationalists put in without seeing results. Most of the key figures in Scottish nationalist history did not even get to see Winnie Ewing win a seat in Parliament. The place that the SNP is in today is because of the work the nationalists put in during the formative years. If John MacCormick, Roland Muirhead, and Alexander MacEwan could see the SNP dominating a Scottish Parliament, there would be no bigger reward for them.

The daily efforts of the nationalist members during the long period of subsistence were important because the movement was so small at times that if the efforts of the select few nationalists faltered for too long, the nationalist movement could have capsized. The movement needed to frequently stay active in gaining attention and probing for more support. The SHRA and the SNL never had large followings. The SHRA had a small representation, but the party was never an exclusive nationalist movement, more so a Labour movement in its latter years. The SNL's greatest party culmination reached around 1,000 members and was too radical to gain further support. The most crucial time to keep nationalist activity and survival was after the SNP schism of 1942. The party was stronger in terms of discipline and direction, but its numbers remained similar with the SNL's membership numbers for a decade. At that point, the nationalist movement was consolidated into the SNP, so all the efforts of nationalists at that point depended on the SNP. If the SNL or the SHRA failed to amalgamate and dissolved, another party was likely to start up because of the early stages of the movement. If the SNP dissolved in the 1940s or 1950s after the efforts of the past parties and after the failed connections with Labour, the nationalist movement would be challenging to generate support for again.

Now that the current state of the SNP is stronger than it has ever been, it is just steps away from achieving independence. The SNP's main obstacle for achieving independence is that all the other party leaders in Scottish Parliament oppose Scottish independence.¹⁵¹ For a long time, the nationalist movement could disregard this fact because all parties saw the nationalist movement as a protest. The early stages of nationalists contesting elections was to measure progress in gaining support and attention, but opposing parties saw the efforts as propaganda and protest. Even when the SNP broke through into Parliament, the political community believed that the SNP's voting base resulted in protest to the current political problems and not true support for the SNP. It would be easy for the SNP to continue to "standalone" and win independence for Scotland on their terms, but it is important to remember the nationalist movement gained progress from the support of outside parties. In 1924, the Labour Party brought Home Rule Bill to Parliament through their rapid growth and influence. Labour was involved in the SHRA and worked with Muirhead and McCormick despite their lack of commitment. The SNP may have pushed for Scottish devolution the hardest, but Tony Blair's Labour government was the Parliament that made devolution pass.

The SNP has needed McCormick's gradualist strategy to work with other parties to achieve their goals during key points in the nationalist movement. Although the SNP is now the biggest party in Scotland, the party will still need support from other parties to make independence a reality. In April of 2016, SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon stated that a second referendum for independence should be called if independence is "The preferred option of the majority of the people of Scotland" or if a certain circumstance of change like "Scotland

¹⁵¹ BBC News, "Holyrood Election 2016: Where the Parties Stand on Scottish Independence" April 2016
<http://www.bbc.com/news/election-2016-scotland-35963899>.

being taken out of the EU against our will” occurs.¹⁵² Since then, Great Britain voted to leave the European Union. Scotland voted to remain in the EU with a margin of 62 percent to 38 percent, which was the most decisive result compared to the other nations in the UK.¹⁵³ First Minister Sturgeon has the statistics of the Scottish people in her favor and now looks to use the result of the Brexit to call for a second referendum. The formative years of the nationalist movement prepared the SNP for the position they are currently, now the SNP needs to continue to build on their support and progress to finally achieve their goal of independence.

¹⁵² BBC News, “Holyrood Election 2016.”

¹⁵³ BBC News, “Brexit: All you need to know about the UK Leaving the EU”, March 2017. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-32810887>.

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ABSTRACT

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Stronger for Scotland:
The Rise of the Modern Scottish Nationalist Movement

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This research analyzes the growth of the Scottish Nationalist Party, currently Scotland's main party in Scottish Parliament. The growth of the nationalist movement began in the 1920s and took a long period of formative years before the movement grew into the Scottish Nationalist party seen today. The nationalist movement was most successful in the latter years of the 20th century, but the most important stages of the nationalist movement were its formative years in from the 1920s through the 1940s. This thesis analyzes the nationalist's developmental process of determining the goal of the nationalist movement and the methods the movement would take to achieve that goal. This project uses original newspapers and critical articles and monographs to chart the formative years of the nationalist movement in early 20th century and their impact on the modern political dynamics of the Scottish National Party. The success of the Scottish National Party as a modern nationalist movement rests on this earlier period of organization, joined with its determination that independence offers the best future for the Scottish people.

Chapter one describes the political situation that encouraged the nationalist movements. The fall of the century long Liberal party dominance occurred through Prime Minister William Gladstone's Irish Home Rule Bill in 1886.¹⁵⁴ The bill divided the Liberal party between those who were in favor of Irish Home rule and those against. The division led

¹⁵⁴T.M. Devine, *The Scottish Nation* (New York, Penguin, 1999), p. 301

to Liberal party disorganization and a vacuum in Scottish politics in the early 20th century, which allowed for the Labour Party to rise and gain a presence. The Labour Party was a socialist organization that focused on the large Scottish working class. Ideas of Home Rule grew through Labour's rhetoric and small nonparty nationalist groups began to form, most notably the Scottish Home Rule Association. The chapter considers the changes in politics and industrialization in relation to the Scottish identity. The Scottish identity grew amongst the newly enfranchised voting population. The Scottish working class began to understand their importance and influence in Scotland through their large voting population. Working class influence could be seen in the form of political movements and unionization, which all contributed to the beginning of the nationalist movement because the general population began to advocate for their personal interests.

The start of the nationalist movement expands in the second chapter. The Scots National League (SNL) and the Scottish Home Rule Association (SHRA) were the first nationalist parties to campaign for Home Rule. The chapter traces the growth and merger of various nationalist parties from the 1920s throughout the 1930s. By tracing the paths of the various national movements, the differing opinions of Home Rule and the best ways to achieve Home Rule are introduced. Despite their fragmentation and lack agreement on Home Rule and how to achieve it among the nationalist movement, the nationalists ultimately combined their efforts in the form of the Scottish National Party in 1934.

The consolidation of the nationalist parties into the SNP forced the movement to determine its goals and political methods. John MacCormick led the SNP for a long period and preached for a gradual and inclusive Scottish movement for devolution in the hope that the SNP could achieve Home Rule in a faster route than building a competitive presence in

Parliament. Other SNP leaders like Douglas Young and Robert McIntyre believed that Scotland should be independent and that the SNP would lead the movement for independence in Parliament. The SNP struggled through these conflicting ideas in the late 1930s and 1940s, but emerged as a unified party with independence as their main goal. The SNP that reorganized in the 1940s was the start of the modern version of the party today. The SNP wanted to achieve independence through gaining a majority in Parliament and passing an independence bill.

Chapter four reflects on the key ideas and methods during the formative years of the nationalist movement. The conflicting methods and ideas of Scottish Home Rule and independence impeded on party progress at times, but all contributed to the SNP's resilience and success. The growth of nationalist ideologies led to the SNP's influence in the passing of the 1998 Scotland Act through triggering a referendum, which granted Scotland a devolved Parliament. Reassessing the key changes and ideas in the nationalist movement reveals that the nationalist movement is robust and successful because of the long years of determining goals and ways to achieve those goals. The SNP now have the attention of Scotland and Westminster and can bring the change they believe is best for Scotland because they emerged from the long and difficult formative years of the nationalist movement.