**The Great Leap Forward**

**By Tyler White**

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**Chapter One: Introduction**

**Since becoming leader of the National Distributist Party in November of 2021, I have observed the development of a monumental political project; from a small band of ten people packed into the back room of a Birmingham pub toying with ideas and thoughts regarding the modern political landscape to a party of action that has now fought its first ever election in 2023. Although it doesn’t seem like much on the surface, it is monumental achievement to reach at this stage in a party’s development. From this point forward we now carry with us an air of legitimacy that we did not previously possess.**

**This manual lays out a path forward for the National Distributist Party to follow. We, as a party, are developed enough to run in elections, but perhaps not big enough to win them. From this, it is easy to get dismayed and demoralised, however, through perseverance and the will to power on through struggle, we will, in time, navigate through these rough times into Major Party Politics.**

**To all those reading this, the methods listed in this text are not radical or anti-establishment in any shape or form. Instead, it serves as a plan on how to work within the system in order to achieve our ends. Furthermore, it will go into detail on how to do this in your specific region of the UK, as a “one size fits all” model simply will not always work.**

**Moreover, there will be a lot of talk about local politics, which may seem boring and unimportant on the surface, however, I can assure you that it is quite the contrary. We cannot ignore local politics in any way, shape, or form. Local politics serves as one of many steppingstones into the big leagues of politics.**

**Before starting, I would also like to thank all the activists who have helped shape the NDP into what it is today, as without you, the dedicated individuals who put in the man hours doing tedious leafleting, spreading the word, donating, and designing, the party would not be what it is today.**

**Chapter Two: The Situation at Present**

**As of writing, the National Distributist Party is made up of two “active” areas, around five or six “dormant” areas, and plenty of barren areas where we have no activity at all. The most active area for the NDP is Manchester, for the simple reason that it’s where most of the members are in terms of density. The second area is the Cotswold area as it possesses a small but dedicated team engaging in consistent activist activity.**

**The dormant zones are made up of Essex, Kent, South Wales, Bristol, Newcastle and Birmingham. In these areas we have dedicated activists, however, due to insufficient funding, are not able to receive the materials needed to begin consistent operation. Many of these areas have members close together, however, due to party funding, they have not had a real chance to effectively organise.**

**In order to improve this situation, it is imperative that those regions with party officers are offered a monthly budget for operations. This prevents Party Officers footing the bill for leaflets and materials.**
**I propose a starting budget of £25 a month per officer/region. This doesn’t seem like a lot, however, a small sum of £25 can, with frugality, purchase one thousand leaflets made of quality materials. It will then be left to the prerogative of the officer on how they wish to allocate these funds.**

**Officers will also be able to top up this budget with personal funds, should they wish to achieve a larger war chest. This would enable them to consistently organise and grow their local branch of the party.**

**Regarding funding, branches will also be incentivised to encourage suitable candidates to stand in elections, as results will guarantee them a greater degree of funding to fight their elections.** **Activists who are not directly overseen by a party appointed officer can either contact head office for leaflets or stickers. Alternatively, they could volunteer as a local officer in order to obtain a small kitty.**

**Chapter Three: Advice for Local Branches**

**If you are a member volunteering with your local branch, or perhaps someone looking to create their own, here is some advice.**

**The best way to get your message across is to speak to people; plain and simple. This can be done in various ways; however, the best method is to knock on doors during any election season, regardless of whether or not your specific branch is running any candidates. During an election cycle, the general public will be more open to discussing politics, therefore your conversations are less likely to fall on completely deaf ears. The second best method is to set up a stall on your local high street (materials can be requested from head office). Street stalls are great as the public will come up to you in order to engage in a subject they already care about, therefore, you don’t have to seek out their top policy priorities. On top of this, always remember to be honest when answering queries. You are representing the party so ensure that you are always presentable when out volunteering. This said, dress appropriately for the area, as I'm sure a three piece tweed suit does not fit in certain areas.**

**Consistency is also a key area to focus on as your job is to make the people familiar with the policies and the branding of the National Distributist Party. Useful tools for achieving this could be a rota that details which areas you are targeting and when you last leafleted or campaigned in them. This can be a good idea as it allows you to keep track of which areas have been completed and when it is due for another load of leaflets.** **A rota will also ensure you don’t overprioritise one specific area, as too many leaflets in a short space of time can have a negative effect. When knocking on doors it is also a good idea to take with you a pen and a clipboard, in order to make notes on the tenants in each address and whether to avoid them in the future or prioritise them if they hold similar views to ours, this is called canvassing.**

**Finally, do not be afraid to split up into groups when campaigning. Going in a pair is best for all sorts of campaigning. For leafleting in particular, working in a pair is great as you can create a good rhythm and speed, whereas trios can have an adverse effect and hinder progress. Splitting up can also make the pub trip at the end of the day all the more rewarding.**

**Chapter Four: Parish Council Policy**

**As a local activist, you are most likely to engage in a parish council election at some point in time. Parish council elections are the lowest level of devolution, alongside town councils and police & crime commissioners. Parish/Town Councils oversee the following domain:**

* **Maintenance of bus shelters**
* **Small planning permission issues**
* **Maintenance of playgrounds**
* **Organisation of community events**
* **Bookings of public venues**
* **Allotments**

**Parish council policy is important as through the parish councils a lot of restoration and beatification can be achieved by working with local groups or using your allotted councilor expenditure. It would be wise for anyone seeking to run for the National Distributist Party in either National, County or District elections to run in a Parish election beforehand. This is in order to gain campaigning skills and to have an open forum to discuss local issues pertaining to their immediate vicinity.**

**Running for Parish Council also has other benefits for first time candidates. The biggest positive is that it is free to run, which won’t set you back £150-500 needed to run in higher levels of governments. Another financial benefit is that due to Parish Councils being very low key with a smaller electorate, the only costs to you will be leaflets and transportation.**

**Depending on the size of your electorate, it is realistic to get a good result in the election, even with a small team or even as an individual. Elections of this size are also easier to win if you are engrained in the local community prior to the election through volunteer work or philanthropy.

Rural parish seats are also more likely to be uncontested, meaning you could automatically win the seat despite not campaigning. This is the easiest way to build a profile in your local area as you don’t have the hassle of running in an election but reap the benefits of an official title. If you fear your parish is too urban, you are able to run in an election that is up to 2.4km from your address or if you have worked in a particular area for over a year.

In the event you decide to run for parish election here are some general tips to help you:**

* **Campaign as early as possible -
 Most of the votes cast will be postal votes and these are sent out a week after confirmation of an election.**
* **Knock on every door. It is quicker than you think, especially in smaller parishes. If people aren’t in, then put a leaflet through the door and plan to revisit their address at a later date.**
* **Try and form a small team, as previously mentioned in the book.**
* **Only bring up national policies if asked.**
* **If you wish, contact head office and we can send out a press release to local papers.**
* **If you’re nervous about running for the Party, you can still run as an independent and we’ll still endorse/support you.**
* **Record all finances and expenditures.**
* **Have leaflets checked by head office before printing to avoid monetary fines, as these can be up to £5,000.**
* **Finally, be civil towards any opponent and gracefully take defeat on the chin if you lose. Due to low turnouts, it is likely the result can go in any direction and these elections cannot be predicted.**

**Chapter Five: What I Have Learnt from My Election**

**In April 2023, I ran for Parish council in the ward of Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, near to where I lived at the time. The election proved to be the perfect testing ground for electoral strategy as there was only two candidates - myself and an independent. If you are interested in running for low level government, I would highly recommend keeping tabs on your local district councils elections page for by-elections as usually they happen so fast that the traditional parties cannot field a candidate in time, giving you an advantage.**

**The most important lesson I learnt was that being engaged in the community via volunteering, or a community-oriented job is the key to winning these sorts of elections. From experience, as I wasn’t really from Stonehouse, and the writing was already on the wall once I had seen my opponents impressive volunteering resume. It was clear she cared about the community, not via talking, but instead via action and this was her strongest piece of campaign material.
The second most important thing I learnt from my election is not to get punch drunk when thinking about success as this hinders you more than it helps.
Although people on the doorstep may sing your praises and say they will vote for you, at the end of the day only 10% of those actually will. Do not let this get to you, instead, plough ahead and reach as many people as possible on doorsteps, at the village green, down the local pub or in the town square to maximise your campaign visibility. Believing you have the divine right to victory will only hinder your campaign. During an election the only important thing is the result at the end, however, don’t waste your breath trying to predict them.

Finally, have fun with your team or as an individual.**

**Chapter Six: Leaflets, Pamphlets and Newspapers**

**If you’ve made it this far into the pamphlet, you may be excited to hear that there will be little talk of local elections in this next half of the text. We must now turn our focus onto high level governance. In order to do that, we must first weigh up the positives and negatives of different campaign materials, as these will be the most useful tools in the coming years, with each playing a part in the development of the National Distributist Party.

By far the most popular method of physical propagation has been the simple leaflet, and in the past year alone I estimate that we have posted over 10,000 of these across the UK.
The leaflets are great for mass propagation, but they aren’t entirely effective as there is a severe lack of space to explain what distributism actually is. For the next year we will still use leaflets in reserve for when we are out of other materials, to keep up consistent campaigning, however, I hope to begin phasing them out and instead start issuing Party Political Pamphlets.

Pamphlets are, in my view, the supreme way to propagate distributist thought in a mass way. Pamphleteering has its roots in early 19th century politics, as it was common amongst the chartist movement and the great grandfather of Distributism, William Cobbett.
A pamphlet comes into around £0.05 pence per pamphlet, which seems pricey, but they can fit enough information inside to give the reader a very basic insight into distributism and our overall project aims. Pamphlets would be best utilised by handing them out in town centres and using them as a vector for discussion. Although it’s not their prime role, pamphlets can also be put through letterboxes.

The Hound is the official party newspaper of the National Distributist Party. For the paper to run it has to be sold to the general public at no less than £1.50 a copy. The paper is a good opportunity for the party to gain some extra funding while still providing a brilliant product. In order to sell the paper, local officers shall be fitted with a table, chair, and a stack of papers.
It is imperative that local branches set up their own Hound Teams and use their local knowledge to decide where it is best to set up shop. Funds collected from The Hound can be used to further propagate distributism and could be a stable source of income for the party.

Local branch leaders looking to set up a Hound sales team will be provided with materials, as previously mentioned, as well as a handbook on how to present yourself when under party employ, which will also cover simple do’s and don’ts in relation to the law surrounding street selling.

The Hound has great potential and with enough collective effort we can have a really great piece of material in our hands but only through determination will it reach its full potential.**

**Chapter Seven: Different Region, Different Approach**

**In order to compete in General Elections, I believe that we must boost our membership to a level where the war chest is sufficient and local branches have teams of at least five volunteers per locality. This is a lofty aim as a lot of resources will have to be gathered and a larger degree of manpower will be required** i**n order to make the man hours go further. I propose a dual strategy in regards to how campaigning is executed, which is rooted in the fundamental societal differences between the North and the South. I have observed these fundamental differences while campaigning with NDP activists but also through mass media of other political groups progress.**

**The realisation is that in the Northern provinces, demonstrations, protests, political stunts and the likes are met with a very cordial response, whereas, similar activities are view as unruly in the Southern provinces.**
**Due to these differing outlooks, I propose that Northern Branches should focus their efforts on demonstrations surrounding contentious issues, although precaution should be taken into account so the party does not come across as a group of conspiracy theorists or as a wholly anti-immigration party.** **Demonstrations would be a good mode to use in order to increase the parties visibility and gain the interest of the local populations.**
**Key areas for Norther Demonstrations should be Liverpool, Newcastle, Manchester, Carlisle, Leeds, and Sheffield. In smaller towns, suburbs and villages, Northern members should focus on spreading party literature so as not to cause a disruption to the quiet life of rurality. This doctrine will provide the North with a good boost in engagement from demonstrations, while providing an intact electoral platform which will be appealing to the disenfranchised populations as they will see action in the form of protest and will be able to root for said action either in person or more anonymously at the ballot box or via our membership.**

**The South, in my calculations, will be a harder nut to crack, as discontent with government is not rife like it is in the North. Many in the South dislike anything deemed “radical” unless it is for an environmental cause, hence the popularity of the Liberal Democrats and Green Party. For the South we can only pursue traditional electoral politics. My hope is that the Northern groups can sow the seeds of change and gain the foothold needed electorally to convince the South that we are indeed worthy of their precious time.**
**Southern groups should focus on small towns and villages, especially those with strong agricultural ties. Southern Groups must have a higher sense of presentability. What this means is, all activists must sport Hound pin badges and all candidates will be required to wear rosettes. This shall increase our brand visibility in a subtle way, as opposed to the Northern way of having large banners and much more. It is a good cop, bad cop mentality towards activism.**

**Cities will likely be a waste of breath, unless they are still manufacturing hubs, as they are merely pockets of nonsensical materialism drowned further by the vast swathes of gormless university students. Online efforts will weed out the sensible few that reside in these Gomorrah like population centres. Explicit places for further activism are as follows: Essex, Somerset, Worcester, Poole, and Leicester.** **As stated, large population centres like London and Birmingham should be avoided.**

**In villages, the most effective tactic will be knocking on doors and pamphleteering - this goes for both North and South.**

**Chapter Eight: Devolved Power Doctrine**

**To forward our goals, we must turn our attention to the devolved powers that make up the United Kingdom and their specific electoral features.**

**We’ll begin with Wales as this region has the most in common with England.** **Elections in Wales are as follows:**

**Parliamentary elections are still decided using the First Past the Post Method, however, for the Welsh Parliament/Senydd elections are decided via Proportional Representation in the form of an Additional Members System, which is a hybrid of First Past the Post and a Proportional Representative system.** **The Welsh Parliament is concerned with issues such as housing, health, infrastructure, and aspects of the Welsh NHS, amongst other things. Therefore, it would be beneficial for the NDP to begin laying the framework of the official Cymru detachment in order to gain a small foothold in Wales via the Proportional system. Although our membership in Wales is few and far between, it would be worth the effort to have small and active cells alongside campaigning deep on the Welsh valleys where the population is still very much agrarian and Nationalist, albeit Welsh Nationalism.**
**While campaigning, we can also use old connections between early Plaid Cymru and Distributism, as a handful of the original Plaid Cymru members were Medievalists and Distributists. The Welsh coast could also be a good area to gain traction as much of it, like Pembrokeshire, is rural and agricultural; The cities on the coast are also prime demographics as they are small, like Aberystwyth, and have a healthy mix of old Labour values but also a healthy proportion of more open minded and inherently conservative University students making them good places to present our message.**

**Growth of the Cymru detachment will be similar to that of local branches in England, however, funding will depend directly on density and size of the local population as settlements are more spread out, so activism would be more isolated and, to my knowledge, discontent with the Welsh government isn’t as fierce compared to the UK, Irish and Scottish governments.**

**Next on the agenda is Northern Ireland.**
**As of present, I do not believe we have any members who reside in Northern Ireland, so for the time being any planning is purely hypothetical. Ironically, in my mind, Ireland proposes a good opportunity, as Stormont (Northern Irish Parliament) uses a very unique voting system called Single Transferable Vote. To inadequately simplify it, Single Transferable Vote consists of ranking all the candidates in terms of preference and the least favourable candidate is eliminated, with the votes being reallocated instead of wasted. The Single Transferable Vote (STV) is a multi-winner electoral system in which each voter casts a single vote in the form of a ranked-choice ballot. Voters have the option to rank candidates, and their vote may be transferred according to alternate preferences if their preferred candidate is eliminated or elected with surplus votes, so that their vote is used to elect someone they prefer over others in the running. STV aims to approach Proportional Representation based on votes cast in the district where it is used, so that each vote is worth about the same as another.”[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**Therefore, through Single Transferable Vote, the NDP, or an Irish equivalent, would be able to draw votes from all people. With these credentials, it is unlikely we would ever hold Stormont ourselves, however, I do reckon we can have a small following and use it to influence politics in Ireland, where coalitions are common. We must first wait until those across the Irish Sea take notice of us and it should be put to an internal committee on whether we wish to get involved in the messy and often dangerous nature of Northern Irish politics in spite of the opportunity it presents.**

**Finally, we move onto the topic of Scotland, which is a very cut and dry situation. For the past year I have been in conversation with one Ethan Scott, Leader of the Scottish Alternative (an aspiring political party). Although he isn’t an outspoken distributist, I firmly believe he would be more beneficial to Scotland in the short-term future than we will be. The NDP and SA are also on very friendly terms as Ethan himself has written for The Hound and we have an informal agreement to not stand against one another should the NDP wish to make inroads into Scotland.** **I’m sure that when Ethan and Scottish Alternative run in Scottish or Parliamentary elections the NDP will offer support, as well as an official endorsement. This is, however, still far in the future and depends on the state of the NDP.**
**It will be interesting to see how they fair in Scottish Holyrood elections as I'm sure Proportional Representation will give them a good boost.**

**Chapter Nine:**  **Going Into the 2024 General Election**

**For the NDP, a general election will be our first major political battle which will be the proving grounds for our movement, and no matter the result of the election, it will provide the notoriety needed to begin attracting larger amounts of funding needed for sustained campaigning, alongside a surge in membership numbers.** **I forecast that the largest growth in membership will be directly after the election and from this new pool of talent, the NDP will be a lot more competitive going forward.**

**For the 2024 election, members and supporters will have to help in the fundraising and financial side of things as each candidate fielded will have a price tag of £500 attached before materials are even acquired. All candidates should come forward by March 2024, as paperwork will be labourious and lengthy, unlike the quick process of Parish paperwork. Head office will be required to screen any and all parliamentary candidates.**

**Nearer the time I will publish instructions on how to fill out paperwork and the best campaigning strategies. Local branches will have the authority to put forward candidates for parliamentary election if they so wish, however, if they have no available candidates for parliamentary election, it would still be wise to run candidates in lower level council seats to make inroads in the local community.**

**Today we struggle, tomorrow we strive.**

1. Taken from the Wikipedia page for Single Transferable Vote. This system is confusing however Wikipedia does put it in simpler terms using images and graphics displaying the STV process. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)