

## COs Post-War

Some COs had to endure years of hostility and job discrimination after the war ended. Local councils and government bodies along with other employers often refused to re-employ them. As you will see from the CO biographies, some Bristol COs suffered after the war.

However, public opinion as indicated by elections suggests a shift. Bristol CO Walter Ayles was elected back on to the Bristol City Council immediately after his release from prison in 1919 and five years later won the Bristol North parliamentary seat for Labour.

In fact, in the 1923 election fourteen of the MPs elected were former conscientious objectors, by the 1929 election 22 of their number were elected – some of these, including Bristol's Walter Ayles, had even been absolutists. Some of their number campaigned against the punitive conditions imposed on Germany which subsequently contributed to the circumstances leading to the Second World War. You can see a picture of a remarkable [1924 House of Commons Dining Room party](#) which included former war resisters, COs and suffragettes on Parliament's website.

Some former objectors, including absolutists, went on to achieve national recognition. For example, [Clifford Allen](#), who was brought up in Bristol and studied at what is now the University of Bristol, was a socialist journalist. During the war he was chair of the No-Conscription Fellowship (the main organisation for and supporting COs). He was an absolutist objector and became very ill in prison.

His health never fully recovered from his wartime experiences. However, he became a key player in the Independent Labour Party and was to become Lord Allen of Hurtwood.

See also the pdf on this website relating to *Walter Ayles*.