INTERPRETING EUROPE: THE CHALLENGE TO CONSERVATIVE AND LABOUR BELIEFS, 1945-1975

by

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Abstract

This thesis undertakes an interpretative analysis of belief change in respect of the European policy of the British Conservative and Labour parties over the period from 1945 to 1975. It applies an anti-foundational model to the study of belief change and by applying this model over a significant period of time, it seeks to provide a more detailed and nuanced understanding of how traditions of belief have developed in post-war British European policy. Having considered theoretical and methodological issues associated with an interpretative study, the thesis then examines explicitly the belief change of a sequence of key elite figures in each party. This is achieved by contextualising the élites within the broader changes of international relations and domestic politics. The approach reveals the extent to which élites have reacted in complex ways to situations which challenge long held beliefs, in turn impacting on traditions of belief. The investigation also shows that élite beliefs about foreign policy have not only been influenced by particular views of the world but by confidence in policy proposals. Once this confidence has been challenged, élite beliefs have shown rapid states of change. Underlying this change is the desire of élites to present a convincing and coherent narrative on foreign policy. This study also finds that while the foreign policy approaches of the Conservative and Labour Parties may have appeared similar, very different rationales and beliefs motivated policy initiatives. On the basis of these findings, it is concluded that the changes in belief over time are significantly accounted for by the theoretical model used in this thesis.

Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other institute of learning.

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Firstly, I should like to acknowledge the receipt of an ESRC Postgraduate Training Award (R42200034139). Without this financial assistance this thesis would never have been possible.

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Thirdly, I am indebted to my partner Ian Hamilton and father Dr. Peter Lawrence who both offered to proof-read the thesis and without whom there would be many more mistakes. Any remaining mistakes are my responsibility.

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My final thanks go to my parents, Peter and Catherine, without whom this undertaking would certainly never have happened.

Dedication

To Ian

With Love

The difficulties in princes' business are many and great, but the greatest difficulty is often in their own minds which tend to will contradictions.

Francis Bacon

Chapter One

Interpreting Europe: Conservative and Labour Beliefs 1945-1975

No man can wholly escape from the kind of culture he acquired from his early environment.

T.S. Eliot

Character is not cut in marble – it is not something solid and unalterable. It is something living and changing

G. Eliot.[1]

1.1 Introduction

Britain's membership of the EU has been described as "perhaps the most profound revolution in British foreign policy in the twentieth century".[2] Others seek to downplay the significance of membership arguing that "Britain was pursuing its consistent view of how Europe ought to relate to the rest of the world. There was no conversion to the ideal of European union".[3] It is, above all, "a record not of triumph, but rather of bewilderment...in which Britain struggled to reconcile the past she could not forget with the future she could not avoid".[4] What is clear is that the definition of Britain's relationship with Europe is contested by political practitioners and academics alike. As a consequence, the field of study of this relationship is heavily subscribed, more so since the end of the Cold War.[5]

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[1] Eliot, T.S. (1948) *Notes Towards a Definition of Culture*, London: Faber and Faber, p43; G. Eliot (1900) *Middlemarch: A Study of Provincial Life*, New York: H.M. Caldwell, vol.2, book VIII, chapter LXXII, p322 Mr Farebrother to Mrs Casuabon; for the quotation at the beginning of the thesis, Francis Bacon, (2005) *Of Empire* (1607), London: Penguin, p73

[2] Reynolds, D (1991) *Britannia Overruled* London: Longman, p238

[3] George, S (1999) *An Awkward Partner: Britain in the European Community*, 3rd edition, Oxford: OUP, p40

[4] Young, H (1998) *This Blessed Plot: Europe From Churchill to Blair*, Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, p1

[5] Marsh, D et al, (1999) *Post War British Politics in Perspective*, Cambridge: Polity Press, p2

The original contribution of this thesis is to examine how élite ideas have been significant in the development of European policy during the period 1945-1975. It does so by studying both the Conservative Party and the Labour Party, as the parties in power during this period, throughout their time in and out of office. It uses the concept of traditions of thought to determine how Europe has been conceived of by élite actors and the trajectory of this perception over time. Underpinning the aim of the thesis are four objectives.

First, much of the literature on Britain's relationship with Europe centres on the period after entry.[6] By covering the period 1945-1975, this thesis offers a counter-weight to the current literature by raising the profile of the pre-entry era as significant to the final reasons for and the approach to entry. It is by examining this period that dynamics in Britain's post-entry relationship can be understood more clearly.

Secondly, where texts cover the period of 1945-1975, these can be classified into two groups: 'thin' histories as a prelude to a more thorough examination of post-entry dynamics and episodic studies dealing only with shorter periods of time or particular events within the era.[7] The impact of

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[6] The list is lengthy, covering various policy areas concerning member states examples including the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) or the European Foreign and Security Policy (EFSP) and the treaties since Britain's accession. Broader studies include: Wallace, W (ed.) (1980) *Britain in Europe*, London: Heinemann; Northcott, J (1995) *The Future of Britain and Europe*, London: Policy Studies Institute; Aspinwall, M (2004) *Rethinking Britain and Europe: Plurality Elections, Party Management and British Policy on European Management*, Manchester: MUP; Forster, A (2002) *Euroscepticism in British Politics*, London: Routledge; Baker, D., A. Gamble, and S. Ludlam, (1993a) '1846...1906...1996? Conservative Splits and European Integration', *Political Quarterly*, vol. 64.4, pp420-434

[7] By no means complete these include: Geddes, A (2004) *The European Union and British Politics*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan; George, *Awkward Partner*; Greenwood, S (1992) *Britain and European Co-operation Since 1945*, Cambridge: Blackwell; May, A (1998) *Britain and Europe Since 1945*, London: Longman; Young, J (2000) *Britain and European Unity, 1945-1999*, 2nd edition,

Europe on political parties is an area which has received little attention and is limited to episodic studies.[8] A further original contribution of this thesis is in presenting a longitudinal study of how Europe has impacted on both leading political parties throughout the period.

Third, literature specific to Britain's European policy frequently excludes the wider context. This thesis argues that the development of ideas towards Europe was contingent upon ideas held about other interests, and that these must form the context in which European policy was developed.

Finally, this thesis focuses on élite actors but differs from other agency-centred texts by arguing that the provenance of ideas held by élites and their subsequent development was crucial to the way in which they engaged with 'Europe'.[9]

Basingstoke: Macmillan are all good examples of thin pre-entry histories. Periodic studies include: Brivati, B and H. Jones (eds.), (1993) *From Reconstruction to Integration: Britain and Europe Since 1945* Leicester: Leicester University Press; Daddow, O (2002) *Harold Wilson and European Integration: Britain's Second Application to Join the EEC*, London: Frank Cass; Ellison, J (2000) *Threatening Europe: Britain and the Creation of the European Community, 1955-1958*, Basingstoke: Macmillan; Kaiser, W (1996) *Using Europe, Abusing the Europeans: Britain and European Integration, 1945-1963*, Basingstoke: Macmillan; Kitzinger, U (1969) *The Second Try: Labour and the EEC*, Oxford: Pergamon Press; Staerck, G and W. Kaiser (eds.) (1999) *British Foreign Policy, 1955-64: Contracting Options* London: Macmillan; Woodhouse, R (1995) *British Policy Towards France, 1945-51*, Basingstoke: Macmillan; Young, J (1990) *Britain, France and the Unity of Europe, 1945-1951*, Leicester: LUP

[8] Ball S. and A. Seldon (1994) Conservative Century Oxford: OUP, 'biblio'; Crowson, N. J. (2007) The Conservative Party and European Integration Since 1945, London: Routledge; for an example see: Onslow, S (1997) *Backbench Debate within the Conservative Party and its Influence on British Foreign Policy, 1948-1957*, London: Macmillan

[9] Otte, T and N. Ashton (eds.) (2001) *The Makers of British Foreign Policy From Pitt to Thatcher*, Basingstoke: Macmillan; Shlaim, A., P. Jones, K. Sainsbury (1977) *British Foreign Secretaries Since 1945*, Newton Abbot: David and Charles

In pursuing these aims the thesis adopts a method of analysis drawn from the work of Mark Bevir in *The Logic of the History of Ideas*.[10] Bevir's theory is based on an anti-foundational approach in which the role of ideas held by individuals is central. It is particularly suited to this thesis in its efforts to chart the development and transition of ideas held by élites over the period studied. The methodological framework developed from Bevir's theory will be the subject of chapter two.

1.2 The Historiography of Britain's European Policy

Outlining the contours of Britain's foreign policy in the post-war era forms the stock approach of general histories.[11] The three areas of interest - the Empire and Commonwealth, the United States and the Cold War, and Europe then become specialisations.[12]

Literature covering the specific dynamics of Britain's European policy begins with three themes: the 'missed opportunities' thesis[13], the 'awkward

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[10] Bevir, M (1999) *The Logic of the History of Ideas*, Cambridge: CUP

[11] Bartlett, C. J. (1989) *British Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century*, Basingstoke: Macmillan; Curtis, M (1995) *The Ambiguities of Power: British Foreign Policy Since 1945*, London: Zed Press; Frankel, J (1975) *British Foreign Policy, 1945-1973*, London: OUP for the Royal Institute of International Affairs; Northedge, F. S. (1962) *British Foreign Policy: The Process of Readjustment*, London: Allen and Unwin; Reynolds, *Britannia Overruled*; Sanders, D. (1990) *Losing an Empire, Finding a Role*, London: Macmillan; Smith, S., M. Smith and B. White, (eds.) (1988) *British Foreign Policy: Tradition, Change and Transformation*, London: Unwin Hyman; Young, J and M. Dockrill (eds.), (1989) *British Foreign Policy, 1945-1956*, Basingstoke: Macmillan

[12] Examples include: Douglas, R (2002) *Liquidation of Empire: The Decline of the British Empire*, Basingstoke: Macmillan; Heinlein, F. (2002) *British Government Policy and Decolonisation, 1945-1963*, London: Frank Cass; Greenwood, S (2001) *Britain and the Cold War, 1945-1991*, Basingstoke: Macmillan; Hopkins, F. G. Staerck and M. Kandiah (eds.), (2003) *Cold War Britain, 1945-1964*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

[13] Dell, E (1995) *The Schuman Plan and the British Abdication of the Leadership of Europe*, Oxford: Cassell; Denman, R (1996) *Missed Chances: Britain and Europe in the Twentieth Century*, London: Orion Press; Lord, C (1996) *Absent at the Creation: Britain and the Formation of the European Community, 1950-2*, Aldershot: Dartmouth Press; Young, *This Blessed Plot*

partner' thesis[14] and the 'uniqueness' thesis.[15] While there is a wealth of literature dealing with Britain and Europe up to 1963, the period after that is less thoroughly documented.[16] Periodisation has resulted in small, focused studies so the categorisation of literature on Britain's European policy in terms of specific areas of interests or particular arguments conveys a fragmented picture of the relationship and the ideas inherent in that relationship.[17]

A more systematic analysis is proposed by Oliver Daddow[18] in which the changing nature of Britain's relationship with Europe, and the consequent literature emanating from this, is conveyed in terms of 'schools' defined by time. Daddow uses the 'schools' approach to understand the historiography of Britain and Europe. Reflective of the categorisation in Cold War studies[19], these schools are: orthodox, revisionist and post-revisionist. The notion of distinct schools is defended on the grounds that although there may be differences between authors, there are enough common features to identify a familial resemblance. In other words, adherents to a school may 'see' the world in the same way even if they reach different conclusions. He argues "[t]hese schools...are socially constructed, that is, driven by different communities of

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[14] George, *Awkward Partner*
[15] Kaiser, *Using Europe, p3*; Young, *This Blessed Plot,* p7
[16] Young, *Britain and European Unity*, pvii
[17] By no means exhaustive, these include: Dell, *The Schuman Plan*; Ovendale, R (ed.), (1984) *The Foreign Policy of the British Labour Governments, 1945-1951*, Leicester: LUP; Zametica, J (ed.), (1990) *British Officials and British Foreign Policy, 1945-1950*, Leicester: LUP; Burgess, S. and G. Edwards (1988) 'The Six Plus One: British Policy Making and the Question of European Economic Integration, 1955' *International Affairs* vol. 64, pp393-413; Daddow, *Harold Wilson and European Integration*; Bange, O (1999) *The EEC Crisis of 1963: Kennedy, Macmillan and Adenauer in Conflict*, New York: St. Martin's Press; Ellison, *Threatening Europe*; Brivati and Jones *From Reconstruction to Integration*
[18] Daddow, O.J. (2000) *Rhetoric and Reality: The Historiography of British European Policy 1945-1973*, PhD thesis, University of Nottingham; Daddow, O (2004) *Britain and Europe Since 1945: Historiographical Perspectives on Integration*, Manchester: MUP
[19] Gaddis, J. L. (1983) 'The Emerging Post-Revisionist Synthesis on the Origins of the Cold War' *Diplomatic History* vol. 7.3, pp171-204

individuals who look at the world in different ways, who have opposing agendas and who cite different sources in support of their respective cases".[20] When we look at these three schools, we examine their social composition, the time in which their views became dominant, the genre with which they are associated and the themes of their arguments.

The orthodox school is composed predominantly of members of the interested international élite and a section of the British intelligentsia; their views gathering momentum from the early 1950s and waning only during the 1980s. The genres with which they are associated are political memoir, autobiography and biographies as well as journalistic accounts and 'instant' histories. These advance themes about Britain of separateness, backwardness, introspectiveness and the weight of historical constraints.[21]

In contrast, the revisionist school is composed mainly of academics, their challenge dating from the 1970s and peaking during the 1990s. The genre with which the revisionists are associated is academic literature based on the extensive use of primary sources in which is articulated a different history of Britain's European policy, highlighting assumptions in the themes of the orthodox school and confronting several of their key arguments.[22]

Finally, the post-revisionist school is composed of an emerging group of young academics and can be traced to the mid-1990s. Like the revisionists,

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[20] Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, p36
[21] Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, p49-50; see authors such as Dell, Camps, and Denham
[22] Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, p59, 67, 90, 104; examples are John Young, Ovendale and Deighton Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, p114, 117-8, 122, 133-7; emergent authors are Liz Kane, James Ellison, Wolfram Kaiser and Helen Parr.

this group relies on the extensive use of primary sources and their arguments are presented in academic texts. The post-revisionists are distinct from the revisionists in their focus on different dimensions of Britain's European policy, and their subsequent challenging of key assumptions held by both the orthodox and revisionist schools.[23]

When we examine the literature on Britain's European policy, we therefore begin with the dominant theme, that of 'missed opportunities'; analysing how this thesis was initially presented then challenged by the revisionist literature, and subsequently how both of these arguments have been further contested by the post-revisionist school.

1.2.1 Missed Opportunities

The central theme of orthodox and revisionist literature has been the politics of blame and later exoneration. Orthodox writers began the missed opportunities thesis which has subsequently generated its own momentum and inevitably influenced all later material. As Daddow argues, "the very phrase 'missed opportunities' has, by dint of repetition, become one of *the* most common critiques of British European policy among euroenthusiasts."[24] We might consider this thesis as having two parts; the initial political argument whose aim was to force a redirection of British foreign policy and a subsequent focus on the economic argument as 'The Six' were able to demonstrate the success of their course.

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[23] Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, p114, 117-8, 122, 133-7; emergent authors are Liz Kane, James Ellison, Wolfram Kaiser and Helen Parr.
[24] Author's italics, Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, p61

The early political members of the orthodox school consisted of the founding fathers of Europe: Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman and Paul-Henri Spaak and key Americans such as Dean Acheson, George Ball and the Dulles brothers.[25] Thus the literature, in Milward's view, has been dominated by the 'legends of great men'[26]; a small group of individuals with a shared view. In its European context, this meant a push to reorganise the political and economic structure of the participant states while in the American context, it had both an idealist and realist interpretation. The idealists viewed European federalism as a mirroring of the American system and one which would stop future conflicts while the realists viewed European integration as an important adjunct to the U.S. policy of containment.[27]

Important to the political dimension was the propagation of certain myths and images to instil the idea of European unity as natural and to capture the field of articulated ideas. Hence Europe was presented as dynamic, on the move, contrasting with a drifting Britain on the sidelines.[28] Monnet's memoirs, for instance, demonstrate the author's own beliefs in the need to seize historic moments of opportunity, coupled with his conviction dating to at least 1940 of the need for economic, political and military union. Defining this as a need for Europe, the "discourse about grasping the opportunity to build a new Europe,

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[25] Jean Monnet, (1888-1979), Robert Schuman (1886-1963), Paul-Henri Spaak (1899-1972), Dean Acheson (1893-1971), George Ball (1909-94), John Foster Dulles (1888-1959) Allen Welsh Dulles (1893-1969)

[26] Milward, A (2000) *The European Rescue of the Nation State*, London: Routledge, p318

[27] Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, p70, 76

[28] Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, pp62-6

free from conflict, [became the] federalist discourse".[29] Alternatives were increasingly marginalized.

In creating a simple image of the natural and successful path to unity in contrast to the unnatural and ultimately unsuccessful path of British foreign policy, these decisions were invested with moral meaning. Furthermore, Daddow claims that frequently written out of integrationist history is how Britain's own discourse faced a formidable force of opposition in Europe and America by key members of the ruling intelligentsia.[30]

A number of key groups facilitated the wide appeal of the orthodox position, disseminating their arguments widely to establish the federalist discourse as received wisdom. The British Federal Union established in 1938 could count among its members such later significant players as Eric Roll, Michael Palliser, John Pinder and Richard Mayne.[31] Links between the Federal Union and *The Economist* provided a platform for these ideas to spread, the chief exponents being Miriam Camps and Christopher Layton.[32] Elsewhere, political enthusiasts such as Anthony Nutting, Roy Denman, Edmund Dell,

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[29] Monnet, J (1976) *Mémoires*, Paris: Fayard, p432; Monnet also cited in Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, p73

[30] Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, p79

[31] Sir Eric Roll, (1907-2005), Sir Michael Palliser (b. 1922), John Pinder, (b. 1924), Richard Mayne, (b. 1926) were all civil servants of significance involved in British European policy; Roll, E (1995) *Where Did We Go Wrong? From the Gold Standard to Europe*, London: Faber and Faber; Pinder, J and R. Pryce (1969) *Europe After de Gaulle: Towards the United States of Europe*, London: Harmondsworth; Mayne, R. (1993) 'Jean Monnet, Europe and the British: A Witness Account', in Brivati, and Jones, *From Reconstruction to Integration*

[32] Camps was also on the payroll of the Ford Foundation who influenced the emphasis on British attitudes in her studies. Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, p87-95; Camps, M (1964) *Britain and the European Community, 1955-1963*, Oxford: OUP; Layton, C (1960) *Britain's European Dilemma*, London: European Youth Campaign

Edward Heath and Roy Jenkins continued to reinforce the discourse of missed opportunities.[33]

1.2.2. Awkward Partner?

The revisionist challenge began by questioning certain key assumptions of the orthodox argument. By challenging the received wisdom, it does not seek to locate where Britain went 'wrong', but rather to explain what impelled foreign-policy decision-makers to arrive at particular assessments. Britain cannot be said to have missed opportunities if there were none perceived to be missed.[34]

Two assumptions within the missed opportunities thesis highlighted by revisionists are first, that Britain was in some way willing to join Europe and secondly that even if it had been, it could assume a leadership role. An examination of Whitehall beliefs demonstrated low levels of enthusiasm. Not that British decision-makers were anti-European instead, revisionists argue British Prime Ministers and Foreign Secretaries were part of a "broad consensus within Whitehall which recognised the growing importance of Europe to Britain but which were not prepared to narrow the horizon to Europe alone".[35] This provides evidence for the first argument. For the second Young

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[33] Dell, *The Schuman Plan*; Denman, *Missed Chances*; Heath, E (1962) *The New Europe*, London: Conservative Political Centre; Nutting, A (1960) *Europe Will Not Wait*, London: Hollis and Carter; Those using Europe to fulfil personal agendas include: Boothby, R (1962) *My Yesterday, Your Tomorrow* London: Hutchinson Press; Fyfe, D.M. (1964) *Political Adventure: The Memoirs of the Earl of Kilmuir*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson; Macmillan, H (1972) *Pointing the Way*, London: Macmillan

[34] Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, p116

[35] Barnes, T (1987) 'From Eden to MacMillan, 1955-59' in P. Hennessy and A. Seldon, *Ruling Performance: British Governments From Attlee to Thatcher*, Oxford: Blackwell, pp98-149, p131; For the same view, Burgess and Edwards, 'The Six Plus One', p413; Dutton, D (1997) *Anthony Eden: A*

argues, for instance, that even had Britain wanted to join, the ability to dominate the European agenda would have been difficult.[36] Examples can be cited where British attempts to shift the European project from its federal aspirations have been rebuffed, while in Europe, there was in no sense a consensus on waiting for Britain to take the lead, the Six being active in shaping their own future.[37] Elsewhere, some revisionists argue that the European project was being actively steered away from Britain as an attempt to exclude it.[38]

Some literature during the 1960s began to contest the dominance of the orthodox argument, but it was not until the 1970s, when access to the Public Record's Office (PRO) documents for the early post-war period became available, that a plethora of texts began to analyse the Labour Governments of 1945-51. Inevitably these included an examination of Labour's foreign policy.[39] Research queried the presumed Atlanticism of Bevin and Attlee, with conclusions ranging from: Labour's lack of interest in Europe; the need for an American presence in European defence; and the desire to create an alternative 'third force' grouping, ultimately foiled by economic limitations.[40]

Life and Reputation, London: Arnold, p307; Kaiser, *Using Europe*, p43-4; Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, p118

[36] Young, *Britain and European Unity*, p53-4

[37] Tratt, J (1996) *The Macmillan Government and Europe: A Study in the Process of Policy Development*, London: Macmillan

[38] Hitchcock, W (1997) 'France, the Western Alliance and the Origins of the Schuman Plan, 1948-1950', *Diplomatic History* vol. 24.4, pp603-30, p628

[39] Beloff, N (1963) *The General Says No: Britain's Exclusion Form Europe*, Harmdonsworth: Penguin; Ovendale, *Foreign Policy of the British Labour Governments, 1945-1951*, Morgan, K.O. (1984) *Labour in Power, 1945-1951*, Oxford: Clarendon; Pelling, H (1984) *The Labour Governments, 1945-1951*, London: Macmillan

[40] Newton, S (1985) 'The 1949 Sterling Crisis and British Politics Towards Integration', *Review of International Studies*, Vol.11, pp169-182

In summary, the revisionists contend that Britain did not reject Europe between 1945 and 1960; the relationship was far more subtle. By analysing moments of non-conflict between Britain and the Six, they argue the picture is far more complex though concede that because the presentation of British policy was clumsy it was seized upon for the arsenal of the orthodox school.

1.2.3. Unique Britain

While the orthodox school contains an identity which is relatively easy to discern, the revisionist's principal identity formation was one of contrast with the orthodox arguments. However, as the previous section illustrated, the conclusions reached by revisionists have varied widely. Although they may share a similar world view, the overall coherence of their position is questionable. Daddow identifies a nascent third grouping in the literature concerning Britain's European policy, although he concedes that to call this a school in its own right may be premature. Rather, "it signals a step-change in the evolution of revisionist historiography".[41] Despite not explaining the change in revisionism Daddow does identify two new interests in the research of post-revisionists, namely the economic dimension and the international setting. One might conclude then, that in the era of the Cold War it was the political struggle that gained pre-eminence in studies of Britain's European policy. Now in the era of globalisation, it is towards the economic struggle that historians are drawn.

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[41] Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, p163

A difference of technique is noted between post-revisionists and revisionists. The emergent post-revisionist grouping has focused on the negotiations for the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) and the first and second applications to join the EEC, again reflecting the release of these documents at the PRO under the thirty year rule.[42] In so doing, it argues that the division of departments within Whitehall has produced differing accounts depending on whether they were based on economic departments such as the Treasury or Board of Trade, or political departments such as the Prime Minister's office or the Foreign Office. An economic analysis of the dispute over Bevin's intentions in foreign policy shows that the economic crises Labour faced in the late 1940s defined their political approach to foreign policy; the Washington Loan Agreement of 1945, the Sterling Crisis of 1947 and the devaluation of the pound in 1949 punctuated attempts to drive a policy based on socialist ideals.[43]

While shifting the focus to economic considerations the post-revisionists have also re-contextualised Britain's European policy. Rather than place the focus entirely on what was happening in Britain, the emphasis shifts to examining European institutions or other member states and developments beyond the EEC. This has resulted in two differences in their interpretations: a reticence to pass judgement on the rights and wrongs of Britain's European policy and a tendency to see Britain as a weaker international power. To pass judgements on the rights and wrongs of Britain's past European policy seems

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[42] Kaiser, *Using Europe*; Kaiser, W. (1993) 'To Join or Not to Join? The 'Appeasement' Policy of Britain's First EEC Application' in Brivati and Jones, *From Reconstruction to Integration*; Ellison, *Threatening Europe*; Daddow, *Harold Wilson and European Integration*; Ruane, K (2000) *The Rise and Fall of the European Defence Community: Anglo-American Relations and the Crisis of European Defence*, London: Macmillan

[43] Newton, 'The 1949 Sterling Crisis'; Rooth, T (2000) 'Economic Tensions and Conflict in the Commonwealth, 1945-c.1951' *Twentieth Century British History* vol. 13.2, pp121-143

now, to post-revisionists, to be largely irrelevant. "Seeing Britain as one of a number of second-ranking actors behind the United States" argues Daddow, "has made it easier for historians to reinterpret Britain's past policy as subject to the comings and goings of international diplomacy".[44] This view ultimately challenges any concept of British uniqueness.

Differences of technique also distinguish post-revisionists from revisionists. The post-modernist influence on some interpretations is reflected in a destabilizing effect on narrative structure, with post-revisionists, like revisionists, contesting the simplification of events by the orthodox school. However, post-revisionists contest further the imposition of a second narrative on the past by revisionists.[45]

Another feature of post-revisionist technique is the shift of episodic studies from times of conflict to times either preceding or immediately subsequent to the conflict. This, it is argued, does more than simply describe the conflict[46] and further challenges the institutional approach by claiming that such moments in history contain collections of individuals and so are highly pluralized. This makes the idea of an over-arching narrative not only unstable, but largely irrelevant for it neglects the complexities of varying departmental pressures, personal agendas and the interplay between them. "By demanding closer attention to agency-driven explanations of Britain's European policy, post-revisionist historiography reminds us that the definition one ascribes to a

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[44] Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, p172
[45] Ellison, *Threatening Europe*
[46] Ruane, *The Rise and Fall of the EDC*; Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, p176

given thing or event has a great leverage over how historical events are interpreted."[47]

In this section, we have used Daddow's 'schools' approach to identify three strands of thought and perspective in the literature concerning Britain's European policy: orthodox, revisionist and post-revisionist. It was shown that these three schools are historically situated and are constitutive of particular communities, each with their own agendas. In the next section, the most appropriate school for the aim of this thesis will be selected followed by an analysis of the various methods available for the study of élite ideas.

1.3 Interpreting Europe

This thesis places itself within the third school identified by Daddow, namely post-revisionism. Daddow's uncertain conclusion about the direction of post-revisionist literature means that it is ripe for definition. Returning to the thesis objectives, four were earlier outlined: first, to provide an account of the pre-entry era as a counter-weight to the dominant post-entry literature; secondly, through this account, to provide some perspective on the episodic studies current in post-revisionist approaches; thirdly, to ensure the account places British European policy within a broader context of interests and pressures; and fourth, to show that that the ideational dynamics underpinning Britain's European policy can be best understood by a study of élite actors rather than of institutions.

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[47] Daddow, *Britain and Europe*, p184

Four features characterising Daddow's definition of post-revisionism apply in this thesis. First, a greater distance from the period of time being studied affords greater objectivity than the more emotive texts from the period. Secondly, although there are many more sources from which to draw information, the focus on the individual allows for a targeted use of such sources. Thirdly, this thesis recognises the validity of some orthodox arguments and some revisionist arguments. Finally, it also recognises, like the disparate works of the post-revisionist school, that the economic dimension and international setting require greater focus.

Despite these characteristic similarities, the post-revisionist school requires an organising and theoretical perspective which is provided by an interpretative approach. While Daddow identifies the application of post-modernist techniques such as deconstructionism in the post-revisionist school this section examines this and other methodologies to discern which is most suitable for the realisation of the objectives stated above and for the overall aim of the thesis.

Marsh argues that much of the literature on post-war British politics is superficial and ahistorical, with narrative accounts lacking a location in a theoretical framework. He concludes that "the interpretation of the past is often shaped by present political concerns which are not always explicit".[48] For example, an approach defined by rational choice theory assumes an equilibrium leaving little ability to explain change and imbalance. Where change is

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[48] Marsh et al. *Postwar British Politics*, p1-2

recognised, it is viewed in simplistic terms such that 1945 provides a watershed, as does 1979. This overlooks arguments about the definition of change, for instance that a lack of overt transformation does not mean that change fails to occur, or how change is conceptualised, either based on policy, idea or governmental change.[49]

Some explicit challenges have been made to such assumptions, not least over the validity of the 'consensus thesis'.[50] First questioned by Pimlott in the late 1980s, the following decade saw a proliferation of texts questioning the credibility of the post-war political consensus. Marlow concluded that the validity of the concept of consensus has been sustained through intertextuality; the assumption of its existence and the sustaining of the assumption by large numbers of authors rather than the use of in-depth empirical analysis.[51] When closely examined, the concept of consensus proves illusory.[52] Our analysis of literature concerning Britain's post-war foreign policy indicates this may also be true here.

Furthermore, an analysis that focuses exclusively on post-war Britain, Hay adds, will fail to acknowledge the considerable impact of the war, arguably the most significant factor in accounting for change in the years that

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[49] Marsh et al. *Postwar British Politics*, p5, 9-10
[50] Pimlott, B (1988) 'Myth of Consensus' in L.M. Smith (ed), *The Making of Great Britain: Echoes of Greatness*, London: Macmillan; Jones, H and M. Kandiah (1996) *The Myth of Consensus: New Views on British History, 1945-1964*, Basingstoke: Macmillan; Marlow, J.D. (1995) *Questioning the Post-war Consensus Thesis: Towards an Alternative Account*, Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing; Seldon, A (1994) 'Consensus: A Debate too Long?', *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol.47.4, pp501-514; Kavanagh, D (1997) *The Reordering of British Politics: Politics After Thatcher*, Oxford: OUP; Kerr, P (1999) 'The Postwar Consensus: A Woozle that Wasn't?', in Marsh et al. *Postwar British Politics*, p66-86
[51] Marlow, *Questioning the Post-war Consensus Thesis*,
[52] Pimlott, 'The Myth of Consensus'

followed.[53] This raises the twin problems of the extent of context and of structure versus agency. For example, using 1945 as a cut-off point in academic study is of limited use since although it reflects the distinction of a state at war and at peace, it is an artificial break in terms of the continuity of ideas.

Accounts which prioritise the actions of agents, or 'insider' accounts, will prioritise the immediate actors, factors, motives and intentions with a reliance on first-hand data. Structure-centred accounts, or 'outsider' accounts, contextualise the actors, limiting their action. To illustrate the point, Hay highlights debates over British exceptionalism as peculiarities of the British state which largely exonerates individuals of responsibility. Rose asserts that "the tradition of writing about British…politics is to assert uniqueness through *false particularisation*. Every institution, individual and event is described with nominal differences implying the absence of generic qualities".[54] Geddes tailors this criticism to the study of Britain and Europe arguing "It would be absurd to claim that Britain alone has been influenced by a distinct sense of its own history and an idea of its place in Europe and the World. Historical exceptionalism is actually the European norm, not a peculiarly British trait".[55]

What Hay, Rose and Geddes refer to is the tendency of academics in the 'British School' to opt for historical institutionalism.[56] Descriptively thick but theoretically thin, the institutional approach is criticised precisely for its

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[53] Hay, C (1999) 'Continuity and Discontinuity in British Political Development' in Marsh et al, *Postwar British Politics*, pp23-42, p30

[54] Rose, R (1991) 'Comparing Forms of Comparative Analysis', *Political Studies*, vol.39.3, pp446-462, p450

[55] Geddes, *The European Union and British Politics*, p28

[56] Geddes, *The European Union and British Politics*, p22; Rhodes, R.A.W. (1995) 'The Institutional Approach' in D. Marsh and G. Stoker, *Theories and Methods in Political Science*, pp42-57, p47

historical focus and its consequent bias towards the unique rather than its ability to make generalisations. Institutionalism is also criticised for its prescriptive, perspective-based and idealised concept of the virtues of liberal democratic government.[57] In the study of international relations, it also suffers from a dependence on structural explanations that are limited in their ability to explain change. Institutionalism has been forced to account for its methods and theoretical content by the rise of theoretically specific approaches including behavourism, rational choice theory, and variants of post-modernism, including deconstructionism.

Both behaviourism and rational choice theory are defined by their positivist heritage. Positivism is modelled on the natural sciences and claims that through inductive and deductive reasoning, a predictive science of politics is possible. The core assumption of positivist methods in the social sciences is that political systems are closed, and as such they can be observed objectively. Behaviourism examines aggregates of particular phenomena to draw causal inference based on probabilities while rational choice theory assumes the rules of the game and the actor's role in the game are sufficient to predict an actor's behaviour.

However, problems arise for both these approaches when it is postulated that two actors in a similar context and similar situation in respect to the 'role' played in any given game may behave differently. If they conceive of their context differently and conceive of their relationship to others as different,

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[57] Marsh, D. and G. Stoker, *Theories and Methods in Political Science*, p8

predictions become difficult if not impossible. Furthermore, we could postulate then that ideas held about our environment are capable of influencing the game so that rules we hold about X are different before and after X is employed, invoked, engaged with and so on. This makes the concept of closed systems redundant.[58]

Deconstructionism rejects the positivist assumptions about observable facts and instead analyses sedimented rules and meanings which condition the political construction of social, political and cultural meanings and identities. Discourses are constructed through hegemonic struggles which aim to take political and moral leadership through a specific articulation of meaning and identity. Social systems become unstable as everything becomes invested with political currency and so is open to hegemonic capture. In foreign policy the focus is on the fracturing and forging of state functions such as maintaining the physical security of the state, ensuring international economic competitiveness and domestic electoral survival. Criticism of deconstructionist analysis rests on its relativism in textual analysis, questioning its relevance if there is no priority afforded to any one textual interpretation. The deconstruction of concepts only takes us so far with the normative implication that such newly acquired knowledge requires a concomitant commitment to restructuring our understandings to make such knowledge meaningful in practice.[59]

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[58] Hay, C (2004) 'Taking Ideas Seriously in Explanatory Political Analysis', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, vol.6.2, pp142-149, p143

[59] Deconstructionism's critics include Rorty, R (1991) 'Two Meaning of Logocentrism' *Essays on Heidegger and Others*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

What emerges is a picture of territorial defence between different theoretical approaches. This thesis examines the role of ideas and beliefs held by particular key individuals and the ways in which these were articulated about Britain's European policy. It posits that ideas and beliefs are subject to change so we can dismiss various theoretical approaches as inappropriate to this study.

Behaviourism and rational choice theory are rejected as this study does not seek to make predictions about actors' behaviour, neither does it assume that ideas are fixed. Institutionalism implies a structural determinism that this thesis, in its focus on ideational change, seeks to question. Finally, deconstructionism seems to offer an appropriate approach but is rejected for its focus on hegemonic practices when this thesis contests the assumption that all behaviour can be accounted by such an approach.

Whereas deconstructionism focuses on the historical conditions of the possibility of meaning and action, this thesis adopts a hermeneutic approach.[60] A hermeneutic approach is one in which for example, in examining a text, we do not evaluate the coherence or prescriptive element of the text or even its historical conditions of possibility, but rather the meaning the text has when located in its social context. Furthermore, it claims this is only possible by an analysis of the hermeneutic meanings ascribed by individuals at any given time

[60] There is a well established tradition of hermeneutics from Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Rocoeur among others. Heidegger, M (1962) *Being and Time*, translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, 7th Edition, Oxford: Blackwell; Gamaer, H-G (1976) *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, translated by David E. Linge, Berkeley: University of California Press; Ricoeur, P. (1981) *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, translated by John B. Thompson, Cambridge: CUP

and about any given object. Therefore, this thesis concerns itself with the interpretation of the hermeneutic meanings that key individuals held about Britain's relationship with Europe. In so doing, it adopts an anti-foundational position and an approach which relates the beliefs individuals hold to the cultural and intellectual traditions in which they were socialised, thus providing a platform for ideational change. It is by adopting such an approach that it is possible to identify how élite ideas have been significant to the development of Britain's European policy during the pre-membership period.

Studies of ideational change share similarities to methodologies based on psychology. Perception-based theories have been used by both orthodox and revisionist academics to show that foreign policy behaviour will vary according to whether politicians use one of three types of belief system: a policy based on a model or paradigm of international relations; one which bases decisions on expectations and probabilities; and one focusing only on a small number of key features so as to manage international relations and their world view on the feedback received.[61] The idea of image and perception has been currency in foreign policy analysis since the 1950s, informing its own niche of behaviourism. It is an approach which makes the distinction between the psychological and operational environments of the decision-maker: the ways in which an individual defines choices and takes decisions and the results of implementing those decisions and choices. In this decision-making, it is not

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[61] Lord, C (1993) *British Entry to the European Community under the Heath Government of 1970-1974*, Aldershot: Dartmouth, p3; Lord can be cast as a revisionist, while an orthodox account which uses perception theory is Shlaim, A et al (1977) *British Foreign Secretaries Since 1945*, London: David and Charles; and to a lesser extent, Frankel, J (1975) *British Foreign policy, 1945-1973*, Oxford: OUP

how the environment or *milieu* is, but how the decision-maker imagines it to be.[62]

Identifying the importance of perception is one aspect but to be able to analyse the images of decision-makers, accounting for the way in which they are formed and modified, is another. We might ask in the first instance, what is an image and what informs the perception an individual held? Developments on this approach include George's work on 'operational codes', a misleading term for the deductive approach which seeks to lay bare the philosophical and instrumental architecture of an individual's belief system.[63] An inductive approach includes Axelrod's cognitive mapping as a guide to the internal logic processes of decision-makers.[64] Both of these approaches are highly descriptive and lack either an explanatory or predictive capacity. However, the issue of perception has been used in approaches which seek to illuminate with explanatory power. Consistency theory is one adopted by Jervis who argues that decision-makers respond positively to information consistent with existing images and counter dissonance by selective perception and highly biased interpretation.[65]

Theories which deal with perception and misperception have challenged rationalist assumptions governing foreign policy studies. They question the

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[62] Sprout, H and M Sprout, (1957) 'Environmental Factors in the Study of International Politics', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol.1.4, pp309-328, p314

[63] George, A. L (1969) 'The "Operational Code": A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making', *International Studies Quarterly*, vol13.2, pp190-222

[64] Axelrod, R (1976) *Structure of Decision: The Cognitive Maps of Political Elites*, Princeton: Princeton University Press; Clarke and White, *Understanding Foreign Policy*, p139-142

[65] Jervis, R (1976) *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, Princeton: Princeton University Press; Clarke and White, *Understanding Foreign Policy*, p146

capacity of individuals to live up to rationalist models which have hitherto been ascribed to their behaviour. The main criticism of these approaches derives from the focus on the individual and his or her 'mental state' in the construction and execution of foreign policy. A more informative function would trace the formative influences of social and ideational factors in the perceptions or beliefs of individuals. While there is descriptive consensus emerging on how the decision-making process looks, there is little theoretical consensus about why it looks as it does.[66]

Jervis proposes a four-stage pattern of perceptions and misperceptions. First, discrepant information is regarded as a one-off, a misperception in itself prompting no attitude change. Second, discrepant information is recognised but its validity is rejected, or if it cannot be explained and therefore invalidated, it is accepted as an anomaly without any impact on the individual's framework of interpretation. Third, if the discrepant information is accepted and cannot be invalidated or ignored as an anomaly, the individual may undertake efforts to shore up their existing beliefs by searching for new information. Finally, when discrepant information is either so strong or frequent as to lead to a conflict of attitudes, aspects of an individual's belief system may be sloughed off in favour of coherence and consistency.[67]

While this shows a conservative tendency in attitude change, Jervis points to key areas where beliefs held by individuals are more inflexible, such as events occurring in early adult life, especially those in which the individual was

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[66] Kinder, D.R. and Weiss, J.A. (1978) 'In Lieu of Rationality: Psychological Perspectives on Foreign Policy Decision-Making', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol.22.4, pp707-35

[67] Jervis, *Perception*, p288-298

personally involved or his or her nation was, such as a war.[68] As these events and 'learning' occasions are largely experienced within the domestic environment, this is where most basic ideas about politics are learned and these ideas colour the individual's views of international relations. "Often without realising it, most decision-makers draw on their own knowledge of their domestic political systems in their efforts to understand others'...domestic politics has supplied both his [sic] basic political concepts and the more detailed lessons about what strategies and tactics are appropriate to reach desired goals".[69] Furthermore, the effect of time is taken into consideration by Jervis who points out that early adult experiences have little chance of being enacted until a generation later, once the individual has achieved a position of power within the political community.[70]

Jervis's consistency theory provides a useful guide to what we might expect to find when we examine ideational change but lacks the theoretical depth to explain why this is the case. In Chapter Two it will be demonstrated that an interpretative approach is theoretically complementary to the insights provided by consistency theory.

1.4 Conclusion

This study examines how élite ideas have been significant to the development of Britain's European policy, 1945-1975. This chapter has outlined three types of interpretation of this policy: orthodox, revisionist and post-revisionist. It found that the orthodox school consisted mainly of

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[68] Jervis, *Perception,* p239, 249-55
[69] Jervis, *Perception*, p283
[70] Jervis, *Perception*, p260

contemporary practitioners with a specific political agenda while the revisionist challenge was spearheaded mainly by academics. Finally, it was argued that post-revisionism benefited by a distancing from events and the debate between orthodox and revisionist beliefs.

This chapter also outlined four objectives: first, to raise the profile of Britain's pre-entry era as significant to the study of current relations with the EU and as a means of providing perspective on the current periodisation of the post-revisionist literature; secondly, to do this by providing a detailed examination of the whole period that Britain was 'outside' of the European Community and of when parties are in and out of office; thirdly to examine the role of context, both economic and international; and finally to posit that how individuals gained and developed their ideas is crucial to an examination of the way in which they engaged with Europe.

To achieve these objectives it was argued that a specific methodological approach was necessary, rejecting many standard theories in favour of an interpretative approach rooted in hermeneutics. Consistency theory was shown to provide a guide to inform our interpretative approach. In Chapter Two we examine the interpretative approach proposed by Bevir and how this can provide a methodological framework for analysing the significance of élite ideas in the development of Britain's European policy.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Approach and Methodology Issues

Human reason is a tincture almost equally infused into all our opinions and manners, of what form 'soever they are; infinite in matter, infinite in diversity
Michel de Montaigne[1]

2.1 Introduction

This study employs the theoretical approach developed by Mark Bevir in *The Logic of the History of Ideas*.[2] In this, Bevir argues for an anti-foundational[3] approach for the interpretation of how ideas emerge and develop over time. In this chapter we first outline the content and criticisms of Bevir's theory. Secondly, we identify any potential problems in applying Bevir's theory to a study of British political élite ideas. Thirdly, we offer a framework for the application of Bevir's theory. The chapter concludes by offering a preliminary account of Conservative and Labour foreign policy traditions.

2.2 The Logic of the History of Ideas

The core of Bevir's argument is how to locate, and justify the location of, the means through which individuals in the present may recover the intentions of individuals from the past. Bevir claims distinction from the relativism inherent in postmodernist thought. While deconstructionists may treat direct statements from authors in the past as merely an act of self-interpretation and so equal to any other text,[4] Bevir actively embraces these statements as the means through which we can retrieve meaning. He tackles head-on the role of structure and

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[1] Montaigne, M. de (1978) *The Complete Works: Essays, Travel Journal, Letters*, translated by Donald M. Frame, 3rd edition, Stanford: Stanford University Press
[2] Bevir, M (1999) *The Logic of the History of Ideas*, Cambridge: CUP. Henceforth called the *Logic*
[3] In Bevir's earlier works he labels this anti-foundational, reflective of Rorty's work, while later arguments presented by Bevir use the label post-foundational. Rorty, R (1979) *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, Princeton: PUP
[4] See deconstructionists such as Derrida; Derrida, J (1973) *Speech and Phenomena*, Illinois: Northwest University Press

agency, proposing instead examining the recovery of intentions from agents in the past by using concepts such as narrative, tradition, belief and dilemma. He argues that it is possible to construct a methodological framework through which one can identify the historical meaning of the ideas held by individuals and their transmission and modification over time. It is to these operational concepts that we now turn.

2.2.1 Narrative

In human sciences, the role of the narrative is to perform as a story, relating people and events to make intelligible relationships between narrative structures and our agreed understandings of what constitutes objective knowledge of the world.[5] Bevir points to the use of narratives by historians as explanations for actions through causes, but adds "every form of explanation works by postulating pertinent connections between entities or events. Narrative explanations relate actions to the beliefs and pro-attitudes that produced them".[6] This is done by focusing on two types of connection, conditional and volitional, so that human action is explained by relating the two to create an intelligible narrative of the past.[7]

Conditional connections reflect the themes that "are immanent within and given immediately by the beliefs they connect" while volitional connections are "what a will creates whenever it first decides to act upon a pro-attitude and

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[5] Bevir, M and R.A.W. Rhodes (1998) 'Narratives of "Thatcherism"', *Western European Politics*, vol. 21.1, pp97-119, p98-9

[6] Where a pro-attitude is a motive rather than a belief and a motive is prompted by a reason, desire or need. See Bevir, *Logic*, p286-298; Bevir, M (2000) 'Narrative as a Form of Explanation', *Disputatio*, vol. 9.1, pp10-18, p13

[7] Where the conditional connection is the relation of beliefs, actions and pro-attitudes in a way which makes them intelligible to each other, volitional connections involves the use of will, the intention to act upon those beliefs and pro-attitudes. Bevir, 'Narrative as a Form of Explanation', p15, 16

then does so".[8] Bevir's approach prioritises the role of volitional connections, as these are the ones that lead to a change in one's stance towards the content of a proposition, not a change in the content of the proposition.[9]

At the crux of such an approach is the attempt to decentre the traditional role of the narrative. Bevir argues "[t]he past does not present itself to historians as a set of isolated facts upon which they impose a narrative so as to bring the facts to order. Rather, the past, like all experience, presents itself as an already structured set of facts".[10] From this, Bevir claims "it is possible to judge competing narratives by [the] agreed standards of objectivity" of accuracy, comprehensiveness, consistency and so forth.[11]

Narratives, or the "webs of interpretation" we hold as individuals, provide a map, questions, a language and a historical story of any particular event or subject in time.[12] Yet, they do not operate in isolation, they are a 'structured set of facts', which leads us to the second of Bevir's concepts: beliefs.

2.2.2. Beliefs

The concept of 'weak intentionalism', or individual viewpoints, consists of thoughts or beliefs; "we take individual viewpoints to be the beliefs authors express in their utterances", where a belief is defined as "the psychological state

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[8] Bevir, *Logic*, p222, 298
[9] Bevir, *Logic*, p30
[10] Bevir, 'Narrative as a Form of Explanation', p18
[11] Bevir and Rhodes 'Narratives of "Thatcherism"', p99
[12] Bevir and Rhodes 'Narratives of "Thatcherism"', p99

in which one holds a proposition true".[13] Hence beliefs are linked to meaning in that we cannot identify a belief independently of a meaning relevant for the particular individual. This allows us to place individuals as being central to understandings of belief and ideas.

Further, we may identify beliefs in our attempt to recover meaning by assuming them to be sincere, conscious and rational. We should assume, Bevir claims, that beliefs are normally sincere as we do not inhabit a world in which our beliefs are normally deceptions.[14] In other words, our definitions of insincere, irrational and unconscious beliefs derive from our original definitions of rational, sincere and conscious beliefs.

These beliefs operate in relation to each other, largely in a consistent manner to form what Bevir labels a 'web of beliefs', refuting the possibility of any independent beliefs.[15] Thus, all our understandings are filtered through our beliefs, where our beliefs are structured equally to one another and where no priority or hierarchy is attached to any particular belief. This approach rejects claims to foundational knowledge or beliefs to which one can refer all other, in a sense, secondary beliefs. It further rejects the atomistic individualism of logical empiricism on the one hand, and structuralism on the other. Where the former dismisses social factors, focussing only on how an individual comes to their beliefs by a process of pure reasoning and observation, the latter claims social factors are the only determinants of individuals' beliefs. In these diametrically opposed positions, logical empiricism will view only those beliefs reflective of

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[13] Bevir, *Logic*, p129
[14] Bevir, *Logic*, p128
[15] Bevir, *Logic*, p165

pure reasoning as significant, not those which might demonstrate how one's beliefs may be informed by inherited traditions which operate within a society. Structuralists, or 'irrationalists' demonstrate an individual's beliefs with reference only to the inherited traditions, leaving no scope for human agency. Bevir's presentation of his argument has been criticised for establishing a straw man.[16] A more accurate presentation of these two opposing approaches would concede some middle ground, but Bevir can be forgiven for exaggerating these alternative arguments as a method of explaining his own which occupies the area in between.

For Bevir, the concept of the belief invests individuals with agency. Although it is inherited from the intellectual traditions which operate in the social setting, these traditions are not enough of an explanatory tool. Rather, the individual is able to adjust the inherited intellectual tradition by accepting a new understanding, modifying it, or indeed, rejecting it. In this way, Bevir contends, the content of any intellectual tradition is changed over time. The method Bevir uses to justify this approach is semantic holism, a concept which implies that the objectivity of a belief depends on its relationship to other beliefs; there are no self-supporting beliefs.[17] He does concede that structuralists would argue any latitude an individual believes they have over whether to decide on accepting, rejecting or modifying a new understanding is still circumscribed by the intellectual traditions in which the individual operates.[18]

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[16] Brooks, T (2002) 'Review of *The Logic of the History of Ideas*, by Mark Bevir', *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, vol.10.4, pp505-6; Stern, R (2002) 'History, Meaning, and Interpretation: a Critical Response to Bevir', *History of European Ideas*, vol.28.1, pp1-12

[17] Bevir, *Logic*, p190-1

[18] Bevir, *Logic*, p197

Bevir's theory has attracted both admiration and criticism.[19] On beliefs, criticism has focused on two points: the collapsing of meaning and intention, and the assumption that beliefs are sincere, conscious and rational. Ankersmit, for example, questions the use of intentionalism on two grounds. Theoretically, he rejects Bevir's attempt to equate logically intention and meaning without an adequate argument for doing so. To say 'S intends to say p' Ankersmit argues, is not the logical equivalent to statements about the meaning of p. One details the intention while the other has the meaning at stake.[20] Methodologically, Ankersmit continues, Bevir's argument for weak intentionalism is epistemologically redundant in the practice of historical writing. For example, two historians using the same text may come to different conclusions as to the intentions of the author.[21] Even using Bevir's criteria of objectivity does not help us here since comparisons of the relative merits of each conclusion are circumscribed by the text as the object.

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[19] Ankersmit, F (2000) 'Comments on Bevir's *The Logic of the History of Ideas*', *Rethinking History*, vol.4.3, pp321-331; Bevir, M and Frank Ankersmit, (2000) 'Exchanging Ideas', *Rethinking History*, vol.4.3, pp351-372; Brooks, 'Review'; Brooks, T (2003) 'Does Bevir's *Logic* Improve our Understanding of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*?', Paper presented to the PSA Conference, Leicester; Burns, R.M. (2002) 'Language, Tradition, and the Self in the Generation of Meaning', *History of European Ideas*, vol.28.1, pp51-75; Frohnen, B (2000) 'Tradition, Habit, and Social Interaction: A Response to Mark Bevir', *Humanitas*, vol.14.1, pp108-116; Garnett, J (2002) 'Whose Logic? Reflections on Gender in the History of Ideas', *History of European Ideas*, vol.28.1, pp77-82; Lane, M (2002) 'Why History of Ideas at all?', *History of European Ideas*, vol.28.1, pp33-41; Martin, J (2002) 'The Political Logic of Discourse: a Neo-Gramscian View', *History of European Ideas*, vol.28.1, pp21-31; Megill, A (2000) 'Imagining the History of Ideas', *Rethinking History*, vol.4.3, pp333-340; Munslow, A (2001) 'Book Review: The Logic of the History of Ideas', History in Focus, Institute of Historical Research website http://www.history.ac.uk/ihr/Focus/Whatishistory/munslow2.html accessed 20/06/03; Munslow, A (2002) 'Objectivity and the Writing of History', *History of European Ideas*, vol.28.1, pp43-50; Palonen, K (2000) 'Logic or Rhetoric in the History of Political Thought? Comments on Mark Bevir', *Rethinking History*, vol.4.3, pp301-310; Pippin, R (2001) 'Mark Bevir and *The Logic of the History of Ideas*', *Mind*, vol.110, issue 437, pp163-168; Rayment-Pickard, H (2002) 'Derrida and Fidelity to History', *History of European Ideas*, vol.28.1, pp13-20; Stern, 'History, Meaning, and Interpretation'; Stuurman, S (2000) 'On Intellectual Innovation and the Methodology of the History of Ideas', *Rethinking History*, vol.4.3, pp311-319; Young, B (2002) 'The Tyranny of the Definite Article: Some Thoughts on the Art of Intellectual History', *Rethinking History*, vol.4.3, pp101-117

[20] Ankersmit, 'Comments on Bevir's *The Logic of the History of Ideas*', p324

[21] Ankersmit, 'Comments on Bevir's *The Logic of the History of Ideas*', p325

This argument is supported by Lane who, amongst others, questions the ability of a text to generate just one meaning and goes on to contest the priority of the audience over the author in locating the meaning of a text.[22] If this is the case, she argues, a contemporary reading of an historical text would accept its meaning at face value for the individual themselves rather than attempting to grasp the meaning of the text.[23] This is a point with which Stern concurs. Fixing the meaning of an utterance with reference to the understanding reached by its audience does not result in it being fixed by intentions, certainly if the author intended one thing in the utterance only for the audience to understand something else.[24] As Munslow argues, if intention equates with the meaning of a text, then why not just concentrate on the text?[25]

The second criticism is based on Bevir's assumed use of rational action theory. Bevir contends that an individual's beliefs, we must presume, are sincere, rational and conscious. Stern argues Bevir's use of 'presumption' is ambiguous so as to remain confusing since Bevir appears to unpack his presumptions unevenly, depending on the presumption to which he is referring.[26] It is a point Bevir concedes by stating that his priority of presumption rests on rationality.[27] Pippin argues further that the difference between presumption and expectation as pursued by Bevir is neither interesting nor decisive.[28]

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[22] Lane, 'Why the History of Ideas at all?' p34; Munslow, 'Objectivity and the Writing of History', p3; Munslow, 'Book Review: The Logic of the History of Ideas'; Pippin, 'Mark Bevir and *The Logic of the History of Ideas*', p166
[23] Lane, 'Why the History of Ideas at all?' p35
[24] Stern, 'History, Meaning and Interpretation', p3,4
[25] Munslow, 'Objectivity and the Writing of History', p3
[26] Stern, 'History, Meaning and Interpretation', p11-12
[27] Bevir, M (2002) 'Clarifications', *History of European Ideas*, vol.28.1, pp83-100, p89
[28] Pippin, 'Mark Bevir and *The Logic of the History of Ideas*', p168

Stuurman points out that Bevir's emphasis upon rational individuals and his search for consistency and coherence indicate he is a rationalist, a view supported by his lack of attention to the role of power either as the idea as mode of power, or the interplay of power and dominance in the field of ideational exchange.[29] This rationalist bias coupled with his individualism means Bevir's 'presumption' approach is flawed on a number of counts. For example, the use and phrasing of ideas is tempered by power so as to soften or avoid completely some concepts and ideas while a search for consistency and coherence overlooks those areas of inconsistency, incoherence and evasive language which can be equally telling. Moreover, consistency and coherence is unconvincing since at any one time an individual may indeed reflect consciously on certain concepts, but will accept without reflection a larger part of their conceptual vocabulary which is taken for granted. While this rationalist approach highlights the importance of argumentation and consistency, it overlooks the role played by rhetoric, hyperbole and irony.[30]

Thus, Bevir's adherence to a rationalist strategy, it is implied, acts as a constraint, one buttressed by his individualism. The author of a text, Stuurman argues, writes for an intended audience which, due to the role of power, will censor the individual immediately in terms of the content of the text. This lack of attention to the social within the discursive practice of the individual thus overlooks how we might limit what we say depending on where we are and with whom we are talking, be it verbally or textually. Furthermore, the act of transmitting ideas frequently occurs within a social group of, what Stuurman

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[29] Stuurman, 'On Intellectual Innovation', p311

[30] Stuurman, 'On Intellectual Innovation', p312; see also, Burns, Pippin, Lane, Martin and Young who also make similar points.

terms, "intellectually significant others".[31] So whereas the ideas transmitted have a political content, they are also significantly placed within a politically pre-structured lexical field.

2.2.3 Tradition

Bevir argues that "all people at all times set out from an inherited set of shared understandings they acquired during the process of socialisation. We necessarily acquire a way of seeing the world along with the values, concerns, and assumptions others impart to us".[32] A tradition is communicated from teacher to pupil and so provides the theories with which people construct their understanding of the world. The teacher-pupil dynamic is at first one-way only, but is later a metaphor for the way in which we relate to other individuals; at any one time we might be teacher or pupil to a new understanding.

The tradition is the starting point of the individual's web of beliefs, but there is scope for human agency through the ability to accept, modify, or reject the tradition or aspects of the tradition. So, tradition is unavoidable as the starting point, but not the final destination of the web of beliefs held by individuals.

In using the concept of tradition, Bevir rejects essentialism or the immutable core of a tradition, since the role of agency makes unpredictable the changes one might identify with a tradition. We may adopt a belief transmitted by a teacher without taking the other ideas associated with it. Further, Bevir

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[31] Stuurman, 'On Intellectual Innovation', p313
[32] Bevir, *Logic*, p201

warns against hypostatising traditions; applying an underlying substance independent of the individual's beliefs. "Traditions are not fixed entities people happen to discover. They are contingent entities people produce by their own activities", he claims.[33] Although individuals may conceive of traditions as unified and containing a core, they are incorrect as they respond selectively to different parts of the web they inherit.

Bevir's procedural individualism means individuals may not exist beyond the beliefs held by the specific individuals; agency implies that traditions do not determine the beliefs of the specific individual. So the continuation of a tradition only exists by reference to "shared understandings and temporal links that allow us to associate its exponents with one another."[34] Hence we learn from an individual teacher, not society; we may read a book written by an individual, not society. Bevir outlines an 'appropriate' temporal link as one where the beliefs must have started for each successive component, described as the teacher to pupil, pupil's pupil, and so on. He presents it this way to show the historical journey of a belief, when the teacher to pupil relationship is assumed at every transmission, with the modifications and extensions added by the pupil before the pupil assumes the role of teacher.[35] Such a tracing will reveal that beliefs held by current exponents may differ utterly from earlier exponents of the same tradition. "A tradition must consist of a series of instances that resemble one another precisely because they exercised a formative influence on one another in a definite historical chain".[36]

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[33] Bevir, *Logic*, p203
[34] Bevir, *Logic*, p204
[35] Bevir, *Logic*, p204
[36] Bevir, *Logic*, p205

As well as temporal connections, traditions must exhibit suitable conceptual connections. By necessity the provision of an individual's web of beliefs by a tradition, defined as a consistent world view, means it is also relatively consistent and coherent. Without the conceptual connection, they offer no explanatory value in the history of ideas, and further, cannot exist without reference to a web of beliefs. So Bevir concludes that a tradition must consist of webs of belief which are linked to one another both temporally and conceptually but concedes that beyond this conclusion it is impossible to define any clear limits to what counts as a tradition.[37]

As traditions act as a starting point for an individual's web of beliefs from which traditions they are free to modify, extend or even reject, it follows that traditions are the product of beliefs. If an individual modifies, extends or rejects a tradition, they can only do so with reference to another tradition which thus raises the prospect of multiple traditions rather than one monolithic tradition defining an era. However, the danger is that the wider a tradition is defined, the less explanatory power the concept holds. The crucial question lies in defining the limits of analysis. Bevir and Rhodes identify four traditions in their study of Thatcherism: Tory, Whig, Liberal and Socialist.[38] While O'Brien identifies four within Socialism alone: ethical, democratic socialist, liberal and Marxist.[39]

We cannot claim that an individual within a political party holds beliefs we associate with labels used to define the traditions of the party. Hence we

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[37] Bevir, *Logic*, p206
[38] Bevir and Rhodes, "Narratives of Thatcherism", p100
[39] O'Brien, D (2003) *Interpreting New Labour: Beliefs, Traditions and Dilemmas*, unpublished thesis: Newcastle University, p63

cannot say that a Labour Party member's beliefs can be traced to a tradition of ethical socialism, social democracy, liberalism or Marxism simply by virtue of their being perceived as participating in a tradition of Socialism. If the "majority political parties are in themselves coalitions of diverse elements", we may only assume the broader, parent, traditions of Tory, Whig, Liberal, or Socialist although our expectations may be that a portion of the Labour Party member's beliefs will correspond with the broad tradition of Socialism.[40]

Bevir is taken to task over his use of tradition as an explanatory tool in the quest to answer the individualist question of 'how do I develop my beliefs in relation to the beliefs other people already hold?' This, according to Frohnen, fails to appreciate three points: that traditions are worthy of examination in their own right as concrete, social realities. Secondly, traditions are composed of intellectual and practical habits and go beyond any background understanding offered by Bevir. Finally, traditions combine social groups and practices, adding purpose and inner logic that over time coheres so shaping human character and conduct.[41]

Bevir's rejection of Oakeshott's conception of traditions as privileging a set of beliefs or experiences fails to consider his appreciation that whatever we might deem a tradition will rest, at least tacitly, on understandings and habits that individuals accept most of the time without subjecting them to rational analysis.[42] In this sense, Frohnen deploys the same argument employed by Stuurman and Burns in relation to beliefs. Similarly, he claims further that

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[40] Guttsman, W (1968) *The British Political Élite*, London: MacGibbon and Kee, p87
[41] Frohnen, 'Tradition', p108-9
[42] Frohnen, 'Tradition', p109

Oakeshott's concept of 'modes of conduct' allows us to know how to behave, respond, or articulate an idea appropriately. This requires us to act "according to pre-existing standards of excellence and perceiving oneself to be a constituent part of one's tradition".[43] So while ideas have a social role overlooked in belief, so too have sets of understandings.

Hence Frohnen's biggest problem with Bevir's approach is the emphasis Bevir places on the tradition as a starting point. According to Frohnen, a tradition must be seen instead as a process of habitualisation, not pedagogically, as suggested by Bevir. Such habitualisation means traditions cannot be seen as malleable, as Bevir claims, because they do not depend directly on the actions and beliefs of individuals. Collective action still allows for agency and change but does point to their limits, in contrast to Bevir's elevation of the individual. "Individuals do not radically alter traditions, least of all through a redefinition on the basis of abstract principles. Traditions undergo modifications in the course of events", although Frohnen's example cites the prospect of "higher order traditions".[44]

Like Frohnen, Burns rejects Bevir's argument that traditions merely perform as the starting point of any individual's socialisation, rather he claims it is "crucial to acknowledge that the individual must be said to remain fundamentally dependent on beliefs received by others throughout his or her life". This is because most of us, throughout our lives, are incapable of checking

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[43] Frohnen, 'Tradition', p111
[44] Frohnen, 'Tradition', p113

the truth of a vast number of beliefs, attitudes and values imparted to us and so are accepted uncritically, whether child or adult.[45]

This has implications for Bevir's concept of the spherical 'web of beliefs' in which one changed belief will have a ripple effect on all other beliefs as they are modified accordingly. On the contrary, Burns claims that changing one belief requires us to keep all other beliefs unchanged for the purposes of changing that specific belief. This he links with Bevir's claim that traditions are somehow limitless, contesting the proposition that necessary limits are a conceptual confusion and claiming it to be a non-sequitur to suggest that a series of limited states of consciousness can succeed each other in the mind so as to make the human mind free from all limits.[46]

The ability to explain change within a tradition requires further clarification. Bevir has thus far alluded to the ability of the individual to respond to beliefs, and so traditions, by reference to modification, extension, and rejection. The process by which this is achieved is through the operational concept of the dilemma to which we turn next.

2.2.4 Dilemmas

Bevir employs two methods of explanation; synchronic and diachronic. Traditions have a synchronic explanatory value in that they are able to explain the content of an individual's web of beliefs at any one time, while changes in belief over time use diachronic explanation. Bevir uses the concept of the

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[45] Burns, 'Language, Tradition and the Self', p56
[46] Burns, 'Language, Tradition and the Self', p60

dilemma as the means by which to explain why people adjust and transform traditions. Dilemmas are defined as "authoritative understandings that put into question their existing webs of belief".[47] They prompt changes of belief as they are a new belief raising a question within the individual's web of beliefs. Thus we can understand changes of belief by reference to dilemmas; that a web of beliefs is "the product of a series of modifications made to an inherited tradition in response to a series of dilemmas."[48]

If we accept Bevir's semantic holism, we cannot ascribe to any particular belief a foundationalism which would structure our beliefs in a hierarchical form. We therefore cannot reduce a dilemma to one basic type; a dilemma might affect any area of our beliefs be they philosophical, moral, religious and so on. As experiences are theory laden, no one experience or dilemma can require an individual to change a belief in any one way.[49] So the historian might draw on a dilemma to explain why an individual changed a belief in the way that he or she did.

The impact of the dilemma is to change a belief and thus change a tradition, so Bevir reverses the structuralists' argument by shifting from understanding how a tradition impacts upon an individual to how an individual impacts upon a tradition.[50] The form of explanation appropriate to a change of belief begins with the task of providing a rational reconstruction of the reasons that the people concerned had for changing their beliefs in the way they did. This

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[47] Bevir, *Logic*, p221-2
[48] Bevir, *Logic*, p222
[49] Bevir, *Logic*, p222
[50] Bevir, *Logic*, p223

cannot be explained solely by an alleged experience or observation by the historian, for neither of these is pure, but only by exploring the multiple ways in which a new understanding interacts with a web of beliefs.[51]

Bevir urges the historian to treat the dilemma as a belief for there is no logic of discovery to be certain that the recovery of the dilemma is correct. It must be assessed by criticising and comparing rival accounts of the past. From this they can show how a new understanding posed the questions it did by exhibiting its relationship to the other beliefs in the relevant web of beliefs.[52] He uses the metaphor of a stone dropped in water creating ripples that weaken further away from the point of contact.[53] This is based on the premise that an individual will need to modify all related beliefs to that one which is under threat from a new understanding to regain a coherent web of beliefs. Moreover, this does not allow the historian to explain dilemmas by reference to traditions as one might with beliefs since "dilemmas are beliefs that people reach by exercising their reason to make sense of their experiences against a background of a tradition they inherited".[54]

Bevir's concept of the dilemma echoes other philosophers such as Kuhn, Popper, Laudan and Toulmin in their attempt to conceptualise the way individuals reason against an inherited body of knowledge so as to develop that body of knowledge.[55] However, Bevir differs for his concept is specific to the

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[51] Bevir, *Logic*, p226
[52] Bevir, *Logic*, p233
[53] Bevir, *Logic*, p237
[54] Bevir, *Logic*, p234
[55] Kuhn, T (1970) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Chicago: UCP; K. Popper (1972) *Objective Knowledge: An Evolutionary Approach*, Oxford: Clarendon Press; L. Laudan (1977)

process undertaken by the individual, and so dismisses their arguments as attempts to theorise change in ways that characterise the scientific community, namely empirically, since not everyone reasons in this way.[56] However, Bevir does allow for multiple individuals to change their belief as long as they hold in common the belief under threat. Thus a common dilemma results from a common belief, while what results may indeed be a multiple of new beliefs depending on how any specific individual interacted with the dilemma.

Much of the criticism levelled at Bevir's conception of beliefs is applicable to his conception of dilemmas, particularly so since Bevir urges the historian of ideas to treat a dilemma in the same way as a belief.[57] However, Stuurman offers a critique of the deployment of the dilemma by Bevir claiming it is ambiguous. If all experience is theory-laden, he proposes, then there are two possible interpretations, one which is that the theory in question is conscious and rational, which supports Bevir's point, but one which is tacit and a-rational which does not. In this latter case, we cannot assume an individual can theorise the process of intellectual change even if the individual attempts a rational overhaul of his or her entire web of beliefs. We cannot even assume that the rational overhaul will be either complete or even fully rational.[58]

Hence, we return to the second criticism of Bevir's theory on beliefs; that beliefs cannot be presumed to be sincere, conscious or rational. Moreover, if ideas can have a political content, operate within a political context thus limiting

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Progress and Its Problems, Berkeley: University of California Press; S. Toulmin (1972) *Human Understanding: The Collective Use and Evolution of Concepts*, Princeton: PUP

[56] Bevir, *Logic*, p228

[57] Bevir, *Logic*, p233

[58] Stuurman, 'On Intellectual Innovation', p314

our options of expression, there must be scope too for the role of emotional responses. Stuurman points to the neglect of moral ideals, citing an example that we might gain a strong feeling for freedom if we have personal experience of persecution.[59] Yet the abstract point remains irrespective of the moral content. We need only have a strong reaction as a consequence of a direct experience. Bevir can explain this with reference to his approach, but his rationalist commitment, Stuurman would contend, disallows an essentially moral or emotional dimension.

Again, this has implications for the conception of the web of beliefs. Even if a new idea enters our system of belief, there remains the ambiguous distinction between whether the idea is simply placed in the web or if it is integrated into a coherent network; the former not requiring the same rational approach as the latter. Furthermore, if we conceive of emotional or emotionally-inspired responses, it is unclear why these should be treated as necessarily unconscious or irrational, but rather as present within the new idea or understanding being ushered in.[60]

Martin backs this point by illustrating the contrast of Bevir's method of internally based change via a dilemma with the transformations of discourse deployed by Laclau. Here rationality itself is the object in a hegemonic struggle to (re)define the limits of, and the modes of thinking about, the social world. This process of rearticulating aspects of our social world is the product of a

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[59] Stuurman, 'On Intellectual Innovation', p314
[60] Stuurman, 'On Intellectual Innovation', p315

challenge to meanings, and thus impacts on our meaning of rationality too.[61] The individual cannot be divorced from such a process, and in Bevir's terms, may even be influenced by it.

The dilemma is regarded as a straitjacket elsewhere since its function is to explain a new belief only in relation to other beliefs held by the individual, rather than, at least in part, in relation to the beliefs of others.[62] By using Bevir's argument, what would it matter that an individual came to change his or her beliefs if there was no reference point through which to make such a change relevant? Furthermore, how is the historian of ideas to understand the meaning of such a change of belief unless there is some reference beyond the web of beliefs held by the individual. An individual is just as likely to make a change of belief by recognising conceptual change as he or she is by accepting a new understanding.

Finally, the weight accorded to the dilemma and the ultimate search for coherence and logic undermines the power of the dilemma as an act in itself. Moments of paradox, ambiguity, dilemma and internal conflict, Palonen suggests, are marginalised by Bevir when instead their exploration alone can be a fruitful endeavour.[63]

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[61] Martin, 'The Political Logic of Discourse', p29-30
[62] Lane, 'Why the History of Ideas at all?', p38; Palonen, 'Logic or Rhetoric', p307
[63] Palonen, 'Logic or Rhetoric', p307

2.2.5 Summary

Bevir proposes an approach which has implications for historians in the ways in which they locate and justify the location of intentions and meanings of individuals in the past. This approach contains four key operational features: narrative, belief, tradition and dilemma. The narrative is the individual's web of interpretation, containing a structured set of facts. Belief is the medium through which we may recover meaning. Semantic holism is the concept through which we understand that no belief is foundational, so all beliefs are open to revision equally. Traditions function as the starting point of any individual's web of beliefs and later operate as an influence on all subsequent developments of beliefs. The dilemma challenges an existing belief to which the individual can respond by accepting, modifying or rejecting it.

These operational features allow the historian to provide an explanation both synchronically through the tradition and diachronically through the dilemma providing a coherent chronological account. The use of weak intentionalism, or the individual viewpoint, locates meanings only in terms of those understood by the individual receiving or delivering them. Coupled with procedural individualism which claims beliefs exist only when they are given meaning by an individual and not independently of the individual, these two concepts raise the role of agency in the evolution of ideas.

Critics of Bevir's theory have responded to his three main operational concepts. On belief they have challenged his collapse of meaning and intention as problematic if different individuals analysing the same text came to different

conclusions when ascribing meaning to the text. Bevir's attribution of greater significance to the meaning reached by an audience rather than that of the author is also challenged as confusing. Presuming rationality, Bevir's critics claim, divorces from analysis the role of irrationality and ignores the function of power in our use of language.

On traditions, Bevir is criticised for his failure to acknowledge the role of habitualisation and the social role of ideas. Furthermore, questions are posed about the apparent flexibility Bevir accords to the individual in relation to traditions, with critics agreeing that traditions do not act either as simply a starting point or operating as the distant influence Bevir proposes.

On dilemmas, critics return to the question of the rational individual, equating the problems of the dilemma to those raised about belief. Further, critics query the rational implications of Bevir's 'web of belief', claiming that a new idea may simply be added rather than considered and ordered in the belief structure with all its implications considered and ordered with equal measure.

2.3 Methodological Concerns

Bevir's *Logic* has generated a wide range of responses, yet few scholars have been concerned with the actual application of his approach to test its credentials.[64] While this study seeks to test Bevir's approach it recognises the possible difficulties as highlighted in the critique. Bevir has attempted to address

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[64] Brooks, 'Does Bevir's *Logic* Improve our Understanding of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*?'; O'Brien, *Interpreting New Labour* are the exceptions

some of these[65] and these shall be considered in this section when outlining the concerns facing this thesis.

When seeking to apply this theory, we may pose some questions such as: to whom should such a study be applied? Does Bevir's emphasis on the individual exclude the role of social contexts? Does Bevir's adoption of rationalism in his treatment of beliefs help the historian to recover meaning? How can we address the problem of meaning and intention outlined by Bevir's critics? And finally, how can we arrive at a more fruitful definition of a tradition? These questions and difficulties will now be addressed.

2.3.1 The Subject

The first question is: to whom should such a study as proposed by Bevir be applied? Bevir presents a 'logic' for the history of ideas which, by its very title, implies the universality of its application. It should, in theory, be possible to recover the meaning any utterance had for the individual in question as long as there are relics available to the historian. The implicit assumption that one should seek to locate the meaning of utterances of intellectual ideas distorts the possibility that ideas may serve other functions. Bevir argues that historians will be prepared to ascribe unexpressed beliefs of greater complexity to philosophers more readily than to popularisers on the basis that "we hold theories such as that philosophers tend to be more concerned than popularisers with the consistency

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[65] Bevir, M (2000) 'Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Power: A Response to Critics', *Rethinking History*, vol.4.3, pp341-350; Mark Bevir, 'Clarifications', *History of European Ideas*, vol.28.1, pp83-100; Mark Bevir, (2001) 'On Practices', *Humanitas*, XIV, no. 1, pp117-119

of their work".[66] The application of Bevir's theory elsewhere would generally hold that this is an accurate assessment.[67]

Bevir's theory should be applicable to any individual the historian wishes to examine. Bevir goes some way to accommodating the short-fall in consistent output by non-philosophers by using 'presumptions'. "Presumptions tell us what properties we can legitimately predicate of objects when we consider the dominant form of reasoning to them" so that "a presumption in favour of rational belief plays the same role in a study of Besant [populariser] as in one of Hobbes [philosopher]."[68]

This thesis undertakes an examination of 'popularisers'. We hold theories that popularisers are individuals who disseminate ideas and beliefs to a wider audience than that normally available to a philosopher. The 'popularisers' in this study are the leading members of the political élite. This thesis focuses on the Prime Minister and one other leading member of the élite, be it the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Foreign Secretary. In an examination of the British political élite, we must assume that all ideas and new understandings that form part of the party's policies or approach will usually have the support of the party leader.

However, there are implications for a study based on popularisers. Returning to Bevir's claim about the theories we hold about philosophers, the implicit assumption is that first, popularisers do not necessarily seek to present a

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[66] Bevir, *Logic*, p172-3
[67] Brooks, 'Does Bevir's *Logic* Improve our Understanding of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*?'; O'Brien, *Interpreting New Labour*
[68] Bevir, *Logic*, p173

consistent and reasoned body of thought on the argument they wish to present. Second, they do not necessarily seek to express their thoughts, however consistent or reasoned, in lengthy or multiple tracts. Both of these points would indicate some difficulty in obtaining a consistent understanding of the beliefs a populariser may hold, or indeed to locate them faithfully within a tradition of thought. This is not to say that the value of examining the role of popularisers is any less significant.

There is merit in undertaking an analysis of popularisers. This is based on the effect the role of popularisers has. There is always an implied audience when we consider an utterance made, otherwise such beliefs would never be aired. However, with a populariser, the audience is explicit and part of the individual's consciousness when making an utterance. The populariser is integral in articulating and disseminating an idea or their understanding of the content of a tradition of thought to a wider audience than that normally available to a philosopher. Thus, they are also a means of articulating modifications of traditions to a wider audience. This makes the role of the populariser powerful in a different way to that of the philosopher.

In taking the role of disseminator, the populariser is able to transmit new understandings to a greater number of people than those traditionally available to a philosopher (unless the philosopher also adopts a specific role as populariser). Yet, in this role, the populariser is expressing their own beliefs, if we assume Bevir's claim that their beliefs are sincere, conscious and rational. The populariser is not merely the mouthpiece of the ideas and beliefs of a

philosopher, but they appropriate ideas expressed by philosophers and incorporate them into their own web of belief without necessarily adopting the entire web of beliefs expressed by the philosopher. To illustrate the point, we might consider Keynesian theory in literature as different from Keynesian theory in practice.

Although we might recognise that a philosopher will seek to present a body of consistent and reasoned thought, there is too a premium placed on popularisers to present a new understanding in a consistent manner. We might agree with critics of Bevir who claim that an individual is likely to tailor the language of an utterance to suit the audience to whom the utterance is made, but for the populariser to alter the content would raise issues of consistency which would make the populariser's role untenable. For instance, if Churchill's Fulton Speech, in which he uttered the term 'Iron Curtain', was at odds with the speeches he made to his Party either in the Commons or at the Party Conference, there would be issues of consistency over how Churchill was presenting his beliefs about the future of international affairs which in turn might lead to speculation over the consistency of Churchill's beliefs in themselves.

Again, although a populariser may not write a coherent and reasoned body of arguments in support of their ideas and beliefs, we can select certain popularisers who do commit pen to paper in a defence of their ideas and actions. When we examine politicians, we will search for their autobiographies or we may examine speeches and articles written by them for clues of their beliefs. We

may expect a politician as a populariser to seek to present a relatively consistent and reasoned body of work, be it through speeches, articles or their life story.

2.3.2 The Social Context

It is thus possible to defend the examination of the beliefs of popularisers but such an examination needs to be mindful of the role of popularisers in the social context. This leads us to our second question: does Bevir's emphasis on the individual exclude the role of social contexts? The role of the populariser has two facets: to whom is the populariser disseminating new understandings and how successful are they in doing so? According to Bevir's use of weak intentionalism and pro-attitudes, we might recover the meaning of the first facet, but would have difficulties locating the success of the second if we rely only on the individual under examination.

When we examine the ideas and beliefs of élite politicians, we assume the audience to whom they are disseminating this new understanding to be either their political party, other political parties, the electorate as a whole, including interested parties to the particular understanding, and, in the case of understandings revolving around issues of foreign policy, the political élites of foreign states. As stated before, the utterance need not be inconsistent, and must arguably be very consistent, if the populariser is to be successful in transmitting this new understanding, irrespective of the type of language that is used to tailor any such utterance for a particular audience.

For the role of the populariser to have meaning their success in transmitting new understandings needs some form of measure. The ability to

transmit new understandings means an audience receives new understandings which they may accept, modify, or reject. Critics of Bevir question the explanatory value of his elevation of the audience over the author in the recovery of meaning. This is indeed problematic if we consider that what an author intended for his or her audience to understand from a new idea is at odds with the demonstrable understanding the audience reaches. There needs to be some form of measure by which we can identify the meaning an author, as a historian of ideas, intended on the one hand, and to treat as separate, the meanings attributed to that author reached by any given audience. In order to achieve this with Bevir's theory, we would need to inspect the beliefs of the entire audience available to the populariser. This is a difficult and monumental task to achieve. This study concerns itself only with the beliefs of the popularisers and not the audience *per se,* so a suitable alternative is required.

The ability to provide some indication of the success of the populariser in articulating new understandings is useful in that it shows that the modification of traditions is not only relevant to the individual concerned. As it stands, Bevir's theory can be used to demonstrate how traditions can be modified by individuals in a way which is meaningful for them. To demonstrate how traditions of thought which have been modified by an individual may be meaningful for other individuals, we would need to inspect all their beliefs. If our primary aim is to examine the changes of belief undergone by leading members of the British political élite, to examine all beliefs for their success would cloud the primary aim.

In the study of Britain's relationship with Europe, as expressed by key populariser, we may not link the meaningfulness of the modification of the popularisers, we may not link the meaningfulness of the modification of the populariser's beliefs with that of an interested group of individuals. However, we may discover that the language used and meaning conveyed by an individual, a 'populariser' in this study, has an impact on the language and meaning conveyed by interested groups; that in short, the meaning of the individual's modification has been accepted, or indeed rejected by a larger group. This may be seen as an interaction with the new understanding presented by the individual.

Therefore, some method of identifying the impact of a new understanding is of use since otherwise we may identify the modification of a tradition by an individual, but question whether this is relevant in terms of the groups to which an individual may wish to express this modification. We may ask, if a tradition has changed for an individual, does this have meaning beyond the scope of the individual, and if it does not, how relevant is the modification for the state of the tradition? Concomitantly, we may ask, if a tradition has changed for an individual, and if it has scope beyond the individual, how can we demonstrate or identify the relevance of the modification for the state of the tradition?

2.3.3 Adapting Statecraft

Bulpitt offers a macro approach to understanding the British polity; it is a 'top-down' approach which is concerned with explaining the 'system' as a whole. Yet, he concedes immediately the problem of such an approach is that it promises more than it can deliver. "It promises a total picture of party politics. What it delivers is merely a macro perspective prioritising some particular

aspect(s) of the polity's operations".[69] Instead, Bulpitt breaks down his macro approach to an 'in-time' analysis suggesting a snapshot of macro polity with, in his case, a focus on governing.

The method Bulpitt employs for such an analysis is the concept of statecraft. As he adopts a top-down approach, his concern is with high politics and thus defends his adoption of 'the Court', defined as the "formal Chief Executive, plus his/her political friends and advisers".[70] This is justified on the grounds that "only 'the Court' will adopt a macro or general perspective when it comes to developing policy" with a view to how any development impacts on policy elsewhere.[71]

Bulpitt evokes five operational features: party management, a winning electoral strategy, political argument hegemony, governing competence and another winning electoral strategy. The operational features of Bulpitt's statecraft concept which are of interest here are those of party management and political argument hegemony. Party management is the ability of a leader to balance the demands and pressures of the different components of the party, be they back-benchers or the constituencies, and varies whether the party is in or out of power. Political argument hegemony is described as "a party achieving an easy predominance in the élite debate regarding political problems, policies and the general stance of government...it refers to a winning rhetoric in a variety of

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[69] Bulpitt, J (1995) 'Historical Politics: Macro, In-Time, Governing Regime Analysis', Paper presented to the PSA Conference, University of York

[70] Bulpitt, 'Historical Politics: Macro, In-Time, Governing Regime Analysis'

[71] Buller, J (2000) 'The Statecraft Interpretation: Present Problems and Future Prospects for a Macro Analysis of UK Politics", Paper presented to the Narratives Group, Department of Politics, University of Newcastle, p2

locations, winning because either the framework of the party's arguments becomes generally acceptable, or because its solutions to a particularly important problem seem more plausible than its opponents'".[72]

Using these two features of the statecraft concept requires some justification. Bulpitt argues that ideas and policies are downgraded by the approach which would seem inimical to this study. Yet Bulpitt's application of statecraft is concerned solely with the subsistence level of government; the gaining and maintaining of office. It is also presented as a cycle in which the operational features must be met in order for the party to be successful. However, as this thesis is not measuring the overall success of a party in achieving statecraft, it is not necessary to use all of Bulpitt's operational features. Instead, it is possible to use parts of his operational features as a means of measuring the effect utterances and new understandings presented by popularisers within a party may have on the party itself. So whereas he concedes "some policies assume importance as part of the governing code...ideas, as commonly defined, will always be part of the political support mechanisms"[73], it is precisely these aspects which are important in the analysis of ideational change in this thesis.

The idea of argument, continues Bulpitt, is cruder than ideology or theory, but is a more comprehensive concept. Because it is based on a winning rhetoric which is appealing in its ability to transcend policy areas, it is suitable to

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[72] Bulpitt, J (1986) 'Mrs Thatcher's Domestic Statecraft', *Political Studies*, vol.34, pp19-39, p21-2

[73] Bulpitt, 'Historical Politics'; Bulpitt defines the governing code as a set of coherent principles underlying policies or policy related behaviours whereas the political support mechanism acts to assist the governing code.

the study of Europe which would come to represent an area of high politics and grand strategy. This is why it is a suitable measure of the effectiveness of popularisers in the successful transmission of their beliefs. For instance, we might consider that the concept of the 'three circles' in post-war British foreign policy was a successful transmission of a new understanding by Churchill as a populariser, as it was accepted beyond his period as leader of the Conservatives. We can tell it was accepted by the use of language associated with the three circles concept by later politicians. Such an understanding was constitutive of a set of beliefs about Britain's role in the world that appealed and which were accepted by many to whom Churchill expressed this concept.

Although Bevir and Bulpitt offer different theoretical approaches, neither is antithetical to the other, precisely because they seek to discover different things. They offer no points of conflict and can therefore be seen to be complementary to each other. If the historian wishes to examine whether a new understanding uttered by an individual has had an impact upon other individuals, examining the success of political argument hegemony in corollary with party management is a clue to its acceptance or rejection without applying a detailed Bevirian analysis to each of those individuals. There is little in Bevir's theory which allows the historian to understand the change in traditions over time, without some form of benchmark.

This study, therefore, includes an analysis of the social context. This social context is defined by those groups of individuals to whom the utterer, the politician, is directing his or her understandings of the world. These groups of

individuals include, primarily the politician's party, opposing political parties and particular interest groups such as trade unions and sectoral business groups. This analysis is necessary to highlight possible environmental factors that influence the politician's aim of articulating new understandings.

Given the thesis topic charts the rise of Europe in the understandings of politicians, it is also necessary to outline the international context. Europe is initially regarded as a facet of foreign policy, therefore, in the understandings of politicians it is placed within the spectrum of foreign policy concerns. These concerns may highlight areas of constraint or difficulty which a study based entirely on the individual may overlook. Therefore, this thesis offers a brief sketch of the international situation to search for environmental constraints that impact upon a politician's ability to articulate new understandings.

2.3.4 Rationalism

One key concern of Bevir's critics is the role he ascribes to rationality. Bevir assumes the individual to be rational, conscious and sincere in the beliefs he or she adopts. This has been questioned on two counts: that it minimises the role of insincere, irrational and unconscious beliefs, and prioritises rationality as a concept that somehow, unlike all our other beliefs, is not submitted to the same degree of revision.

Martin used Laclau's argument that meaning is contested in a battle of political hegemony to demonstrate that concepts such as rationality are hijacked in the process of redefining the social world. Without subscribing to this approach we can appreciate the point that what makes beliefs and actions

rational at one point in time may seem absurd at another. Such an argument corresponds with Bevir's approach, however. Bevir argues that an individual's beliefs will favour rationality and consistency, but that these are governed by how our beliefs relate to shared facts and theories about the world.

He rejects the implicit sociological assumption made about him by his critics that individuals are wholly rational or conscious. Rather, he uses consistency over the assumption that individuals are wholly rational or conscious. This allows, he argues, for insincere, unconscious and irrational beliefs, just as much as those we hold without question.[74] Furthermore, his use of rational, conscious and sincere as the concepts by which we measure beliefs is based on the argument that our definitions of insincere, irrational and unconscious beliefs derive from these concepts in the first place.

If we accept Bevir's point that the beliefs individuals hold need some form of consistency, we can accept the point that consistency collapses into rationality, rather than using an exterior form of rationality by which to measure an individual's beliefs. Rationality here is accepting that something makes sense, so consistency is the picture of things we accept that makes sense to us. So in a study of individuals, rationality is what makes sense to the individual and consistency is the scope of rationality.

As stated earlier, we can hypothesise that it may be in the self-interest of a populariser to be consistent in his or her utterances. Bevir argues that an

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[74] Bevir, 'Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Power', p346

individual, as the product of their social context, will include the influences of that context in their beliefs. This allows for a conception of power in Bevir's individualist account which critics believe to be lacking. Traditions, he claims, offer the conceptualisation of power as a form of social influence that operates through the individual. Hence, in the consistency we can hypothesise an individual might adopt in the expression of their beliefs, we can include also a need to be consistent in relation to social power. This thesis therefore adopts Bevir's conception of rationality and the individual when we understand rationality to mean the consistency with which one understands the social world in which the individual operates.

2.3.5 Meaning and Intention

The main problem encountered by Bevir's critics was the apparent collapse of intention into meaning. Bevir's defence of such criticism has been to identify weak intentions as the objects to which historians should tie meanings, where the objects are specific individuals not the texts themselves. The point Bevir is making is that objects in themselves have no intrinsic meanings, only the meanings that individuals place upon them. For example, one text may result in different meanings arrived at by different individuals. The relevance of such a result, according to Bevir, is to demonstrate for whom these different readings are significant, rather than to claim a text had such a meaning in itself.

To follow a route where a text seemingly has intrinsic meaning is to reify the text, something which an anti-foundational approach does not allow. Therefore, a suitable analysis of intentionality locates the meaning utterances have specific to the individual expressing those beliefs. This stands, Bevir

contends, irrespective of whether the individual uses rhetorical devices. When rhetorical devices such as irony, tongue-in-cheek or mock innocence are used, they are deployed to promote specific responses to ideas that an individual wishes to highlight. An examination of the relevant beliefs and pro-attitudes of the individual concerned would reveal this.[75] When we examine a politician, we should not seek to identify fixed meanings in their works, but rather the meanings the individual's ascribed to their work. For example, when we consider the utterances made about Europe by Churchill, we should not seek to find any fixed meanings, but rather we should attempt to recover the meanings Churchill himself ascribes to his utterances.

One problem emerges when we consider the utterances made by a politician, that of authorial ownership. For instance, when a politician delivers a speech, we can assume that the authorship is not entirely his or hers. There are writers and aides that assist in the preparation of a speech. This has implications for where we attribute the meanings and beliefs of an individual; should this only be to the individual delivering the speech or should there be an explicit acknowledgement of the role of co-authors? When we examine historical narratives the issue of authorial ownership does not exist. It is presumed that the beliefs expressed in a speech belong to the individual delivering the speech. But in an analysis of the distinctive beliefs held by individuals, this issue becomes more important. How can we relate the content of a speech which may have numerous authors to the beliefs and intentions of one individual?

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[75] Bevir, 'Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Power', p348-9

The presumption which exists in general historical narratives rests on the claim that if the individual under scrutiny is prepared to put his or her name to a speech, then we can locate ownership of that speech to him or her. Using Bevir's approach, we might then ascribe the speech as an expression of the individual's beliefs. Furthermore, if we adopt Bevir's weak intentionalism and procedural individualism, we study the meanings a work has for the particular individual, not the prior purposes of its author.

When we apply Bevir's theory, conceptual priority is given to sincere, rational and conscious beliefs with the implication being that we should interpret works in terms of the sincere, rational and conscious beliefs of their authors unless we have good reasons not to.[76] In this case, we might presume the beliefs expressed to be a reflection of the sincere, rational and conscious beliefs of their deliverer unless we had grounds not to do so. If the speech contains co-authors, we might still locate the beliefs of the individual concerned expressed within it when we compare this to other instances of the expressed beliefs of the individual. But the grounds upon which we might reject this conclusion are when we discover other expressions of belief which are at odds with the speech in question.

We can accept Bevir's position on meaning and intention when we consider that Bevir offers a method of interpreting the beliefs of individuals, just as other areas of academic discipline may offer alternative methods. Furthermore, we can prescribe the grounds upon which to locate the meaning

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[76] Bevir, *Logic*, p142-171

and intention of authors when this is unclear. The process of historical writing is not just the chronological narration of events and motives. It includes also the interpretations of subjective historians. By using Bevir's criteria of objectivity, we may evaluate the competing interpretations, but this is not to render them invalid.

2.3.6 Defining Traditions

The last of the questions raised by Bevir's theory is how can we arrive at a more fruitful definition of a tradition? If we recall, a tradition was defined by Bevir as a way of seeing the world in which is incorporated values, concerns and assumptions. It is communicated by teacher to pupil as it forms the starting point of our socialisation. As we develop so too does our ability to question our values, concerns and assumptions challenged by ideas and information originating from different traditions. The tradition forms the backdrop from which we will begin our process of inquiry allowing the agency of the individual to accept, modify, or reject aspects of the tradition. Furthermore, traditions have no essential core; they are contingent entities people produce by their own activities, not fixed entities that people happen to discover.[77] Finally a tradition consists of temporal and conceptual links; temporal links are demonstrated by historically similar instances that have an influence on each other, conceptual links refer to the similarity of content. Beyond this relatively abstract definition of a tradition Bevir conceded it was impossible to define any clear limits on what could be counted as a tradition.[78]

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[77] Bevir, *Logic*, p203
[78] Bevir, *Logic*, p206

If we seek to apply Bevir's theory, such a definition is inadequate. It offers no indication as to what can or should be included as a temporal link and how often we should seek such links. The argument that a tradition has temporal resonance seems self-explanatory. Yet his presentation of such temporal links suggests a linearity which is at odds with the flexibility Bevir seeks to evoke. Further, Bevir highlights that a tradition requires conceptual connections which again seems self-explanatory, if not tautologous. Again, Bevir offers no definition of a conceptual connection, or the number of different conceptual connections that are required to define a tradition. If we can locate just one conceptual connection, does this constitute a tradition? Bevir's apparent vagueness is a necessary result of his weight on individual agency. This identifies that the role of agency makes unpredictable the changes one might identify with a tradition and so it identifies that a tradition has no immutable core. If a tradition has no immutable core, it then follows that its limits are uncharted.

However, we can use what little Bevir provides to build a more adequate definition of a tradition. Frohnen's chief objections to Bevir's theory of traditions, we will recall, is that he failed to address the possibility that traditions are worthy of examination in their own right as concrete and social realities, that they are composed of intellectual and practical habits, and combine social groups and practices to form a coherent logic.

These need not be objections. Bevir is so vague that it is perfectly plausible to conclude that traditions are indeed concrete social realities, but that

our definition of a concrete social reality is not independent of the individual, and so is a reflection of a series of shared understandings that we have about the world. They may have the appearance of being concrete and real only because we accept without question a number of understandings which make this possible. Furthermore, our concrete and social reality is not fixed. There will be points in time where particular understandings that form part of these shared understandings become questioned and possibly altered. If we accept this first point, then the points Frohnen adds about their composition and coherence all fall under Bevir's theoretical umbrella so the differences appear to be a question of terminology than of theoretical difference.

Frohnen's objections raise some interesting possibilities about the limits we might place on traditions. For example, we might recognise that within any given society, there are areas of life which have some organisational limits. Thus, we might recognise that within Western society there is a set of shared understandings about the role of intellectual inquiry which we might term academia. Furthermore, we might recognise that academia is not one intellectual inquiry or a monolithic set of understandings, but rather splits into smaller groups of shared understandings which we might term disciplines. Finally, we might recognise that within each discipline there are sets of shared understandings about the pursuit of intellectual inquiry which might highlight different ways in which to succeed in such inquiries. This is not to say that any of these sets of shared understandings are mutually exclusive or cannot be inter-changed, but merely to recognise that we arrange our sets of shared understandings. Furthermore, this is not to ascribe to these sets of shared

understandings a fixed meaning, only to highlight an organisational tendency which the individual uses to help him or her make sense of the world.

If we accept Bevir's claim that a tradition is a way of seeing the world in which is incorporated values, concerns and assumptions, this does not preclude accepting that as part of our assumptions we make seeing the world as more intelligible by organising our shared understandings. Such a conclusion is implicit in Bevir's theory and has been demonstrated by application of his theory. For example, Bevir and Rhodes define traditions as a set of shared theories, narratives and associated practices before then outlining the traditions which narrate Thatcherism.[79] We can see that Bevir uses traditions as a means of demonstrating how we organise our way of seeing the world. Here lies an apparent conflation between organisational tendencies and ideational tendencies. However, we can imply from Bevir that ideational tendencies might, as a consequence of being a set of shared understandings, form an organisational tendency.

However, Bevir does not demonstrate the temporal and conceptual linkages he advocates in defining the traditions which narrate Thatcherism. Rather, he uses a short-hand assumption of their existence. If we adopt the concept that individuals adopt organisational tendencies in which their shared theories of the world might be located, we can go further in defining traditions than Bevir demonstrates.

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[79] Bevir and Rhodes, 'Narratives of Thatcherism', p98

2.3.7 Summary

In assessing the difficulties highlighted by Bevir's critics and Bevir's responses to these criticisms, this section has identified that certain popularisers may demonstrate an equal ability to record their beliefs to those of philosophers. Furthermore, it identified that popularisers perform a particular function, that of disseminating ideas and new information and that such a function required consistency on the one hand and some form of measure on the other. Thus it was argued that a complementary method was the political argument hegemony and party management concepts in the statecraft approach which would provide an indication of how successful an idea has been transmitted. Bevir's defence of his use of rationality as the consistency of beliefs an individual holds was accepted as was his method of identifying meaning and intention. Finally, in searching for a more defined conception of traditions, we used Frohnen's objections to demonstrate that traditions may be concrete social realities, but that these need have no essentialist core. Moreover this led to an analysis of Bevir's own application of traditions to identify that individuals make the world intelligible by adopting organisational tendencies. We demonstrated the possibilities for our organisation of shared understandings in the pursuit of intellectual inquiry. We now turn to examine how this might manifest itself within our shared understandings of what constitutes another organisational tendency, British politics.

2.4 Traditions of British Politics

Greenleaf defines libertarianism and collectivism as the boundaries of British politics.[80] By questioning the nature of man, his relationship to society and the location of political authority in any given society, these limits have produced three distinct strands of thought: Liberal, Conservative and Socialist. In this section we briefly outline the themes of libertarianism and collectivism and the salient points of the Liberal, Conservative and Socialist strands of thought.

Libertarianism contains four main themes: the rights and freedoms of the individual, ensuring political and civil liberties; a limited government which does not violate the first principle of individualism; the separation of powers and the diffusion of authority within the state; the rule of law to safeguard the rights of the individual. In contrast, collectivism contains four opposing themes: a stress on the public good which elevates the rights of the community; the creation of the conditions of both equality and social justice; a public authority to create social harmony through state regulation which would not exist naturally; the rule of law is required to safeguard the rights of the individual *and* the community.[81]

Although this study does not concern itself with the evolution of ideas from Liberal Party élites, both the Conservative and Labour Party have been indebted to ideas emanating from the Liberal strand of thought so it is worth recapping their key features here. The Liberals have five defining points: an

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[80] Greenleaf, W. H. (1975) 'The Character of Modern British Politics', *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol.28.4, pp368-85, p374

[81] Greenleaf, 'The Character of Modern British Politics', p375-8

emphasis on individualism and rationality; scepticism towards traditions and established centres of authority; a belief in freedom; a conviction of egalitarianism; and a stress on the importance of private property.

The Liberal tradition embodies the dialectic to which Greenleaf refers, encompassing both old or classical liberalism with its adherence to *laissez faire* economics, and new or social liberalism with its adherence to forms of state intervention to promote greater social justice. The classical liberal tradition emerged as the dominant economic doctrine during the nineteenth century and became influential in the conduct of foreign affairs. Influenced by the ideas of Adam Smith,[82] classical liberalism emphasised the self-interest and self-sufficient nature of humans, developing a theory of meritocracy "in which rewards are distributed according to individual talent and hard work".[83] A *laissez-faire* approach ensured minimal state involvement based on Smith's principle that individual welfare rather than national power was the correct goal of economics. Bentham's utilitarianism developed this line of individualism in terms of the principle of happiness while J. S. Mill provided a modified synthesis.[84] It is the formulation of this strand that we examine when we consider liberal beliefs about foreign policy.

The Conservative tradition is also defined by five themes: pessimism about the power of man's reason; support for authority and hierarchy; belief in an organic and evolutionary society; the principle of private property; and a

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[82] Adam Smith (1723-1790)
[83] Heywood, A (1994) *Political Ideas and Concepts*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, p9
[84] Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), John Stuart Mill (1806-1873); Mill, J.S. (1994) *Principles of Political Economy*, edited by Jonathan Riley, Oxford: OUP

commitment to national unity. The tradition is aligned with libertarianism and stresses the overriding importance of national unity. Conservatism and nationalism were linked by Burke, but it was Disraeli who popularised the idea of One Nation and added a social dimension which was lacking from the Liberals.[85] It meant a paternalist approach to social reform while championing unity over national identities. It was an attitude that trumpeted themes that unify rather than differentiate society, while the Liberals were identified in Conservative demonology as the anti-national party.[86]

Nationhood was linked to duty and duty was linked to class. Disraeli formulated a particular brand of nationhood in which class-bound institutions were invested with the responsibility to uphold the civil rights of all and elevate the condition of the people. Political success came with an extended franchise, party organisation and subscriptions. "Disraeli profoundly believed that England should be one nation, not two. He thought this aim could only be achieved if the Tory Party were true to its traditions…Such a party should not be egalitarian, or classless." Rejecting the exclusivity of *laissez faire* "the Tory Party could properly defend the national institutions and enlist in their support the bulk of the nation. The nation would then support the national party, and the national party would represent and protect the nation".[87]

The Labour Party is an amalgam of different groups which coalesced at the turn of the twentieth century: labourism, Marxism, Fabianism and ethical

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[85] Burke, E (1969) *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, London: Penguin; Disraeli, B (1998) *Sybil, or the Two Nations*, Oxford: Oxford World Classics

[86] Norton; Lynch, P (2000) 'The Conservative Party and Nationhood', *The Political Quarterly*, vol.71.1, pp5-67, p59; Gilmour, I (1977) *Inside Right*, London: Hutchinson and Co., p77

[87] Gilmour, *Inside Right*, p86

socialism. As successors of the radical tradition, their "theorists were not tied [to the current political system] for they were advocating an ideal system which might be created but which did not yet exist".[88] Five themes define this approach: an optimistic view of human nature; equality in the economic and social sphere; unions to ensure this equality; the state as a tool, not as belonging to one class; and nationalism born from defending domestic workers. "Socialism involved from the beginning a critique of existing inequality under capitalism and a programme for redistribution and equalization of income".[89] We can locate the origins of the Labour Party tradition within the communitarian strand outlined by Greenleaf.

Labourism worked with the system and rejected revolutionary solutions. This limited the effects of Marxism, whose enduring legacy has been a refutation of class collaboration in syndicalism and a nascent but marginalized revolutionary element. The Fabians' approach was underpinned by Jevons's economic theory of utility and the doctrine of positivism. Ethical Socialism provided moral depth with its "utopian vision of a New Jerusalem". The Independent Labour Party (ILP) embodied this strain of socialism and was committed to one objective: "the collective ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange – interpreted through the light of Christian nonconformity rather than Marxism or Fabian elitism".[90]

As these traditions evolved, they informed two dominant strands of belief in the 1930s: democratic socialism and corporate socialism. Democratic

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[88] Birch, *Responsible and Representative Government*, p32
[89] Leach, *Political Ideology in Britain*, p69
[90] Foote, *The Labour Party's Political Thought*, p34

socialism incorporated the idealism of ethical socialism with the gradualism of fabianism. Based on Keynesianism, it focused on full employment and economic planning. The Corporate socialist tradition was a further change, adopting the ideas of Keynesian liberalism and the administrative elitism from the right and the functional government ideas of revolutionary syndicalism and guild socialism from the left.[91] In foreign policy it was dominated by the right which had successfully won the debate over anti-militarism in 1935 one marked by Attlee's eclipse of the Labour leader and pacifist George Lansbury.

Both political parties developed beliefs about the content and conduct of foreign policy. Hill describes foreign policy as "the sum of official external relations conducted by an independent actor (usually a state) in international relations".[92] It is the set of goals that outline how a particular state will interact with other states and which are designed to protect national interests, national security, ideological goals and economic prosperity. The British foreign policy tradition assumed certain 'givens': the geopolitics of an island nation, its global reach, its commercial basis and its military influence through the navy.[93] It was an approach defined by Palmerston's distinction between interests and alliances; while interests were perpetual, alliances were temporary.[94] It was echoed by Disraeli who argued British interests were material interests.[95]

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[91] Foote, *The Labour Party's Political Thought*, p175, 182
[92] Hill, C (2003) *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p3
[93] Hill, 'Past and Present', p28-9; [93] Rothstein, A (1969) *British Foreign Policy and its Critics, 1830-1950*, London: Lawrence and Wisehart, p14
[94] Attributed to Palmerston, in Hill, C (1988) 'Past and Present in British Foreign Policy', in Smith, Smith and White, *British Foreign Policy*, pp24-49, p28
[95] Rothstein, *British Foreign Policy and its Critics*, p13

The liberal legacy in foreign policy is free trade, an umbrella term for limited government involvement, economic freedom and competition, drawing from the works of Adam Smith, David Ricardo and John Stuart Mill.[96] Increasing the possibilities of wealth creation through unhindered competition, private enterprise and free access to markets combined the objectives of personal freedom and laissez-faire economics is the means through which to guarantee prosperity and individual liberty. This argument propelled Liberal opposition to the Corn Laws, favouring instead the free trade of their cotton manufactures to wheat exporting countries to lower domestic wages inflated by tariffs. As economic conditions became less favourable this increased with the collapse of domestic agriculture and a reliance on staples such as coal, heavy engineering and manufacturing. Cobden provided a moral dimension to this by consistently advocating the principles of peace, non-interference, and free trade.[97] Critical of the balance of power system in Europe, he advanced ideas of international arbitration and mutual disarmament. This provided a crucial national security dimension to foreign policy.

Free trade was argued to be more patriotic as it treated the nation as a whole allowing for the enrichment of all individuals, rather than preferring one group. In reality it sought to extend this to only two producing groups: landowners and manufacturers. Later developments included Home Rule, the idea of self-government to the Empire, but it was the First World War and

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[96] Smith, A (1970) *The Wealth of Nations*, London: Penguin; Ricardo, D. *On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation*; Mill, J.S. (1965) *Principles of Political Economy*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul

[97] Richard Cobden and John Bright were part of the 'Manchester Liberals'

economic depression which fatally undermined the free trade ideal of "peace, prosperity and social progress".[98]

Conservative foreign policy beliefs stress national unity and the strong state. Self-respect is only possible if respected internationally through a strong state and with the power to influence world affairs. Disraeli made the first explicit link of party and Empire in which the Empire became the projection of Britain's greatness on a global scale.[99] The nation state was regarded as the "highest form of human organisation that mankind has yet evolved".[100]

Patriotism achieves unity in foreign policy and was explicitly linked with a love of one's country. It did not reject internationalism but only through the lens of the nation so that "[i]n the Conservative tradition, internationalism is regarded not as the converse, but as the child of nationality".[101] It relies on notions of tradition, continuity and loyalty to sustain a sense of national pride. It requires the nation to be independent while it also places no ideal higher than that of the country.[102] Although "Conservatives claim no monopoly of patriotism" they "reflect most on the past and set most store by our national heritage [so] must be more conscious of our national greatness."[103]

Disraeli's Crystal Palace speech in 1872 linked patriotism to the Empire and cemented this with moral content by the idea of a 'mission' and

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[98] Green, *The Crisis of Conservatism*, p2
[99] Norton, *The Conservative Party*, p78
[100] White, R. J. (1950) *The Conservative Tradition*, London: Nicholas Kaye, p114
[101] White, *The Conservative Tradition*, p114
[102] White, *The Conservative Tradition*, p116, 121
[103] Clarke, D (1973) *The Conservative Party*, London: Conservative Central Office, p7; Norton, *The Conservative Party*, p79

organisation. A contemporary, Lord Hugh Cecil was able to remark "our vocation has been to undertake the government of vast areas of uncivilised populations and raise them gradually to a higher level of life...In carrying out this work of civilisation we are fulfilling what I believe to be our national mission".[104] Joseph Chamberlain articulated the creation of a 'single organism' Empire by the bonds of sentiment and better administrative machinery, envisaged political federation and protective tariffs.[105] Dropping federation but emphasising tariff reform formed the basis of a renewed Conservative identity.[106] Hints were even made about the possibility of revenues from tariffs being ploughed into domestic social reform, further enhancing Conservative stock within the working class.[107]

The Labour Party's thoughts on foreign policy were considered an extension of domestic policy ideas, forming "an organic whole, because our foreign policy is a function of our domestic policy and both spring from our faith that the future belongs to Socialism."[108] They embodied "basic beliefs about international politics and the forces at work within it, [with] moral values...and appropriate symbols calculated to arouse desired emotional responses."[109] Foreign policy focused on four themes: internationalism, international working class solidarity, anti-capitalism and anti-militarism.

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[104] White, *The Conservative Tradition*, p241
[105] Chamberlain in a speech to his Birmingham constituents, 1897, in White, *The Conservative Tradition*, p244
[106] Green, *The Crisis of Conservatism*, p20
[107] White, *The Conservative Tradition*, p244-248; Green, *The Crisis of Conservatism*, p21
[108] Arthur Henderson, (1863-1935), former Liberal who became Labour Party leader, 1908-10; 1914-17; 1931-2; LPCR, (1929) p156
[109] Gordon, M.R. (1969) *Conflict and Consensus in Labour's Foreign Policy, 1914-1965*, California: Stanford University Press, pviii

Labour's internationalism identified national sovereignty as the root of conflict and war, and proposed allegiance to a higher moral authority.[110] National identity would participate through a world government. Since the majority of issues arising out of national interests were played out between small groups of vested interests; states, capitalists and the propertyless within the state, world government would regulate the relations between these various groups ending the divisiveness of patriotism and nationalism.[111]

Working class solidarity reflected a general class consciousness and a specific support of the Soviet Union. It meant rallying co-operation across international borders and linking their aims. Recognising that workers across national boundaries shared the same interests, the *Memorandum on War Aims* called for the complete democratisation of all countries. It urged the end of imperialism and secret diplomacy, the public control of foreign policy as of domestic policy, and the establishment of a supra-national authority, such as the League of Nations.[112] Pro-Soviet sentiment was a far more radical and militant strand and generally disfavoured.

Anti-capitalism consisted of three beliefs: traditional foreign policy was the vehicle serving the interests of the capitalist ruling classes; a conviction that peace would be more secure once capitalist anarchy was overcome; and later, a growing unease with the rising dominance of American capitalism.[113]

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[110] Quelch, H (1912) 'Socialism and Foreign Affairs', *The British Socialist*, vol.1, no.12, pp530-538

[111] Leonard Woolf, 1880-1969; Woolf, L (1916) *International Government* London: Fabian Society, pp354-6

[112] Labour Party (1917) *Memorandum on War Aims*, London: no name, pp3-6

[113] Gordon, *Conflict and Consensus*, p32

Imperialism was seen as the by-product of an expanding capitalism which needed to distribute surplus goods but which had disintegrated into a conflict orchestrated by finance capitalists seeking to preserve themselves at the expense of the working classes.[114] Instead, financial gains should be distributed to avoid self-accumulating credit and disposing surplus through higher wages or greater dividends. It was the theory of rent applied to international relations.

World co-operation and justice was based on anti-militarism. This opposed a foreign policy backed by force, even if used defensively, as not only immoral but inexpedient. Justice should be based on disarmament, pacification and conciliation. Militarism was a discredited method of aggrandisement and aggression, echoing Hardie's point that socialism opposed all war in the abstract for an empire of free people could not be built by force.[115]

Labour's perception of Britain in the world rested on assumptions such as an assumed leadership role and national superiority, manifesting itself in 'Little Englandism' and the idea that "a Great Power, consciously or unconsciously, must govern in the interests of civilisation as a whole".[116] At the very least was the assumption to provide leadership until colonised states were able to govern themselves.[117] Perhaps the greatest assumption was that foreign policy could be made in the same way as domestic policy. Fielding states, "for

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[114] J.A. Hobson, 1858-1940; Hobson, J.A. (1948) *Imperialism*, London: Allen and Unwin; Pelling, H (1954) *The Challenge of Socialism*, London: Adam and Charles Black, p331

[115] Snowden in Hansard, (1916) *House of Commons Debates*, 5th Series, vol. 68, 23/02/1916, cols. 719-21; Hardie in Hansard, (1900) *Debates*, 3rd Series, vol.88, 7/12/1900, cols. 298-9; Bealey, F. (1970) *The Social and Political Thought of the Labour Party*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, p56-7, 79

[116] Gupta P.S. (1975) *Imperialism and the British Labour Movement, 1914-1964*, London: Macmillan, p8, 10; Porter, B (1968) *Critics of Empire*, London: Macmillan, p126; Shaw, G.B. (1900) *Fabianism and the Empire*, London: G. Richards, p41

[117] Gupta, *Imperialism*, p11-13

socialists the problem of squaring international facts with ideals derives in large measure from a misunderstanding of the nature of foreign policy", adding, "it is perhaps natural that a party attached to a set of *a priori* principles should find it difficult to accept limitations placed on a Labour government in its handling of inter-state relations".[118]

Responding to these assumptions created changes from the Party's inception to the outbreak of World War Two. The attempt to translate socialist principles into a realistic set of policies while the international situation deteriorated was undermined by the failure of the League of Nations, forcing a split in 1935. Radicals called for class warfare and linked themselves with the Soviet Union. Pacifists stuck to traditional foreign policy ideas but had no response to failed anti-militarism. An alternative group modified the party's position to defensive collective security on the grounds that European fascism had fatally weakened labour movements across the Continent so that rearmament was a small price to prevent this happening in Britain. It was coupled with a change of élite sympathetic to this programme and was underlined by the labourist tradition motivated by assessments of their own needs. The Party as a whole, however, regarded this as a temporary check to their outlook rather than a complete change of their fundamental beliefs and these new assumptions came into play in 1945.

[118] Fielding, R (1970) *A Socialist Foreign Policy?*, Fabian Tract 401, London: Fabian Society, p2

2.5 Conclusion

Bevir's theory provides a method for the recovery of ideas held by individuals in the past. It was found that in a study of élite British attitudes towards European integration this method was fruitful as few studies provide in-depth analyses of ideational change. Bevir's theory suffers from some criticisms such as lacking a measurement for the success of transmitting new ideas and an ambiguous definition of a tradition. Bulpitt's statecraft approach was used to buttress Bevir's theory through the use of two operational concepts: the political argument hegemony function and party management.

In seeking to define traditions more clearly it was demonstrated that as individuals we develop organisational tendencies with which to make the world more intelligible. Identifying two broad intellectual traditions, libertarianism and collectivism, we also identified three organisational tendencies: the Liberal, Conservative and Labour Parties. We have traced ideas influential to these groups as a backdrop to the ideas that emerge later in this study.

The following chapters of this study begin by tracing the background influences and experiences of the élites under examination. They then set out the context in which élite actors were operating by providing a brief summary of the domestic, international and economic environment. The foreign policy dilemma which faced these élites is then analysed to trace what ideas were being deployed, how they were defended and justified through conceptual connections. Finally, in assessing the effectiveness of the transmission of ideas, the

environmental constraints posed by the parliamentary party, the opposition and interested groups such as the trade unions are examined.

Chapter Three

The Labour Party, 1945-1955

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter we begin to apply Bevir's interpretative theory. We examine the beliefs held by the Labour leader, Clement Attlee and the Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin who have been selected as key players involved in the strategic direction of Britain's foreign policy, 1945-1951. It is argued that, respectively, their inherited beliefs stemmed from the traditions of democratic socialism and labourism. It is then proposed that Attlee and Bevin modified their beliefs about Britain's interests in response to the perceived dilemma of reduced capabilities.

This chapter begins by tracing the conceptual and temporal links that tie Attlee to the democratic socialist tradition and Bevin to the tradition of labourism. It then provides a historical summary of the period 1945-1955 covering both the domestic and international landscape. Finally, the content of the dilemma of reduced capabilities as articulated by Attlee and Bevin is examined before analysing the impact upon the traditions of social democracy and labourism of Attlee and Bevin's modified beliefs.

3.2 Elite Beliefs

In the previous chapter the groupings of thought constitutive of the labour movement were identified as labourism, democratic socialism, Fabianism, Marxism and ethical socialism. In foreign policy, these groupings shared beliefs in internationalism, working class solidarity, anti-capitalism and anti-militarism. To identify Attlee and Bevin's beliefs it is first necessary to trace the transmission of relevant ideas, identifying both the temporal and conceptual links in the webs of beliefs of the relevant individuals.

3.2.1 Clement Attlee[1]

Described as one of Britain's most successful Prime Ministers, Attlee's political career began in 1919 with his election as Mayor of Stepney, becoming MP for Limehouse, 1922-1950 and then West Walthamstow, 1950-55.[2] Appointed as Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) to Ramsay MacDonald, Attlee was Under-Secretary for War in 1924. In 1929 he was Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster then Postmaster General in 1930-1. With the Party's split in 1931, Attlee became deputy leader before being elected leader in 1935, a position he held for the next twenty years. During the War, Attlee joined the Coalition as Lord Privy Seal, 1940-42, then as Deputy Prime Minister, 1942-45. He also served as Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, 1942-3 and Lord President of the Council, 1943-5.

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[1] Attlee, Clement Richard (1883-1967)
[2] Cook, C and Stevenson, J (2000) *Britain Since 1945*, London: Longman, p222

Attlee's background was affluent and conservative middle class. He was educated at Haileybury and University College, Oxford. His family values reflected the predominant liberalism of the day while his education reinforced the notion of an established order and patriotism. Attlee was later to describe himself as "basically a Victorian".[3] He was "in a number of ways encapsulated within the language and traditions of his school days"[4] exhibiting "excessive respect for authority [and an] obsession with tradition."[5] With no interest in the Christian social reform groups at university,[6] Attlee's early politics found expression in strong resistance to tariff reform and idealistic imperialism with an admiration for "strong ruthless rulers".[7]

Attlee's moderate and pragmatic approach to politics, his belief in socialism, his early alignment with middle class moderate socialists, and nurturing of future identifiable democratic socialists would imply an affiliation to this tradition. The tradition of democratic socialism arose during the late nineteenth century but was relatively vague until Evan Durbin made clear the distinctions in 1940.[8] Until then it was distinguished from liberal and ethical socialist traditions by an implicit belief in egalitarianism and democratic institutions.[9] Its

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[3] Attlee quoted in the *News Chronicle*, 1953
[4] Saville, J (1993) *The Politics of Continuity* London: Verso Press, p112
[5] Burridge, T (1985) *Clement Attlee: A Political Biography* London: Jonathan Cape, p12-3; Harris, K (1982) *Attlee* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, p9; Saville, *The Politics of Continuity* p112; Williams F (1948) *The Triple Challenge* London: Heinemann, p56
[6] This had been a popular starting point for other social reformers of the twentieth century such as Beveridge and Tawney.
[7] Burridge, *Clement Attlee* p18
[8] Durbin, E (1940) *The Politics of Democratic Socialism*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul
[9] Desai, R (1995) *Intellectuals and Socialism: Social Democrats and the Labour Party*, London: Lawrence and Wishart, p35

characteristic themes are a broad ethical commitment and a belief in social justice. In practical terms democratic socialism was about modifying property relations and managing capitalism coupled with a pragmatic view of the need to connect with the electorate.[10] When we examine Attlee's beliefs we can identify four areas which tie him conceptually and temporally to this tradition.

Firstly, modifying his inherited liberal beliefs, Attlee accepted the need for a state role and social justice, departing from the paternalism and philanthropy of liberalism. Prompted by a visit to an economically deprived area of London's East End during his early career, Attlee rejected the belief that poverty was the result of moral delinquency. His shift towards egalitarianism was complemented by a continued belief in institutions. Burridge remarks,

> He turned to socialism precisely because he was so fundamentally – emotionally – conservative. Socialism would appear to him as the best method of preserving and extending the cultural values acquired from his family life and higher education, not as a device for replacing them by revolutionary ones.[11]

Secondly, he actively dismissed the progressive liberalism of the Fabians and Marxist socialism in his modification of beliefs; the Fabians for their lack of individualism, the Social Democratic Federation (SDF) for its doctrinal exclusivity.[12] He "attacked capitalism not as a Marxist but as a middle class

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[10] Brivati, B (1997) *Hugh Gaitskell*, London: Richard Cohen Books, p294-296
[11] Burridge *Clement Attlee*, p20
[12] Burridge, *Clement Attlee*, p30; Golant, W (1969) 'The Early Political Thought of C.R. Attlee', *The Political Quarterly*, vol.40.3, pp246-255, p248. It should also be noted that neither did Engels. He felt that Hyndman's interpretation of Marx's thought was far from a true representation of

Victorian who felt pangs of responsibility because he belonged to the class which had caused to flourish ugliness, poverty and human misery".[13] What distinguished Attlee from social liberals was his attraction to the ideal society as espoused in the works by Ruskin and Morris.[14] Attlee commented, "I was not a scientific person and was never attracted by Marxism...I have never had much faith in the inevitability of socialism".[15] Instead, Attlee's concern was to challenge social organisation for its complicity in perpetuating human misery.[16] His antipathy to revolutionary change coincided with the growth of empirical evidence about social conditions with solutions rooted in collective action and greater democratic participation giving the working class the chance to make their own demands.[17]

Thirdly, Attlee recognised that political shifts after World War One meant broadening the Party's appeal claiming, "I think there was a danger in our movement in pre-war days of taking too narrow a view – in that we conceived that what appeared the ideal life for us was the ideal life for everybody...we were too Webby". He went on, "[w]e shall have to allow for greater variety but our principles stand, and must stand, it is only the application that must be various."[18] Using the symbol of respectability meant, "Not only were members of the Labour

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Marxist belief and thus divorced himself from the only official organ of Marxist thinking in Britain at the time.

[13] Golant 'Early thought', p248

[14] John Ruskin (1819-1900); William Morris (1834-1896); See: Ruskin, J (1867) *The Political Economy of Art,* London: Smith, Elder and Co; Morris, W (1891) *News From Nowhere, or, An Epoch of Rest: Being Some Chapters from a Utopian Romance*, London: Longman; Vest, E.B. (1956) *The Socialism of Morris and Ruskin* Chicago: University of Illinois Press; Burridge, *Clement Attlee* p29

[15] Attlee, C (1952) 'Socialist Faith in the Past and the Future' in *Forward* 05/07/52

[16] Attlee, C.R. (1920) *The Social Worker* London: G. Bell and Sons, p14; Golant, 'Early thought', p248

[17] Golant, 'Early Thought', p249

Party fit to rule Britain because they represented the working class but also because the leaders of the party were not too dissimilar in manner and personality from the kind of person who led in the past".[19]

Attlee appealed to this notion of respectability directly in 1945.[20] Patriotism formed the second part of Labour's broadening appeal, based on Attlee's own inherited beliefs and the cohesive power he felt this provided during the First World War. "In time of war" he wrote, "there is one overwhelming issue which may affect a union of people who differ widely in their conceptions of the society to which they belong,"[21] a theme manifest in his maiden speech in 1922.[22]

Finally Attlee adopted Keynesian economic beliefs as the most effective in addressing the inequities of the capitalist system which, as it stood, did not provide the material basis of a good society.[23] Respectability was needed in domestic economic policy and in handling economic interests abroad to challenge the Conservative hold and perceptions of failure after the second Labour Government.[24] Attlee's understanding of this reflected its importance: "Foreign

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[18] Golant, 'Early Thought', p247

[19] Golant, 'Early Thought', p254; It was at Ramsay MacDonald's request that Attlee was first known as Major Attlee in Parliament.

[20] Attlee, C (1954) *As it Happened,* London: Heinemann, p142. Attlee's election broadcast included "The Labour Party is...the one party which most reflects in its representation and composition all the main streams which flow into the great river of our national life. Our appeal to you, therefore, is not narrow or sectional".

[21] Attlee, C (1937) *The Labour Party in Perspective,* London: Gollancz p122

[22] Burridge, *Clement Attlee,* p42

[23] Burridge, *Clement Attlee*, p52

[24] Weiler P (1993), *Ernest Bevin,* Manchester: MUP, p77; Attlee, *As it Happened,* p75. The onset of the Great Depression and the fall of the Second Labour Government caused tension as Labour Party leaders felt they were victims of a 'banker's ramp' and the National Government's election platform had been based on Labour's economic negligence.

and economic affairs are so much interwoven in these days and the relationship between home and foreign affairs so close".[25]

Attlee was central to the Party's modifications of its foreign policy traditions during the 1930s by rejecting anti-militarism. He also rejected the anti-capitalist tradition. Although his belief in internationalism included the ideal of an equitable world economy, his support for working class solidarity was qualified. The traditions of foreign policy were ideals; the process of translating them into workable policy continued into Labour's third government.

The Labour Party stood for "the constructive, positive, forward-looking idea of a Co-operative World Commonwealth...based on the Socialist faith in the Brotherhood of Man".[26] Written into the Party constitution, the objective was "...to assist in organising a Federation of Nations for the maintenance of peace and freedom".[27] In rejecting the anti-militarist tradition Attlee argued: "Socialist pacifism was a product of the optimistic Victorian era when the British Navy ruled the seas and when the idea of a world war seemed remote".[28] However, the First World War "was a forcing house of change. The old world passed away and a new one was born".[29] Support for the League of Nations reflected the tradition of internationalism now backed by economic sanctions and rearmament. For Attlee, defence of the League was inextricably bound with the notion of social

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[25] Attlee, *As it Happened,* p169
[26] LPCR, (1934), p110
[27] Bealey, F (1970) *The Social and Political Thought of the British Labour Party,* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, p140

justice; an extension of domestic aspirations.[30] Neutrality was not an option,[31] the power and legitimacy of the League rested in its moral force and in the rule of law.[32]

Appeasement affirmed this modification while war ushered Labour into power. Attlee defended the Coalition: "Our decision is another pledge of our faith in international socialism. Our partnership in governmental power is an act intended to translate that faith into deeds from which there can be no retreat".[33] Those deeds required a New World Order based on collective security in which a collective authority would control military and economic power and be secured on the foundations of socialism and democracy.[34]

Attlee's belief in working class solidarity was qualified on two counts: it did not extend to varieties of socialism which were unconstitutional; and it contained the normative assumption of the superiority of British socialism. Despite his claim that "the socialist idea has to be worked out in every country in accordance with the native genius of the people of that country"[35] he perceived all other powers to be flawed, while Britain was a "first class power".[36] He added,

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[28] Attlee, C (1954) *As It Happened,* London: Heinemann, p96
[29] Attlee, *As it Happened,* p83
[30] Attlee, *As it Happened,* p103
[31] Attlee, *As it Happened,* p99
[32] Burridge, *Clement Attlee,* p110-111; Labour Party Conference Report (1935) *On League of Nations Sanctions,* in Bealey, *British Labour Party Thought,* p 144-149
[33] LPCR (1940), p122
[34] Labour Party (1940) *Labour's Peace Aims,* London: Transport House; LPCR (1940),
[35] Attlee, C (c. 1940-1) *Notes on Socialism,* ATLE 1/19, Churchill College, Cambridge
[36] Attlee, C (1944-6) *Notes on post-war problems,* ATLE 1/24, Churchill College, Cambridge

"We do not seek to thrust our views upon other nations we are seeking to set an example".[37]

Spurred by egalitarianism, a belief in democratic institutions and a vision of the 'good society', Attlee transposed these into foreign affairs. The dilemma of pacifism was modified to a belief in the morality of internationalism and the legitimacy of the rule of law. This modification left unchallenged the conception of the international economy, the ideal of redistributive measures remaining as a mirror of domestic policy. It was a vision of a good and essentially socialist and democratic inspired commonwealth of sovereign states, hence Attlee did not modify his beliefs about the emphasis on the international and not regional, in which Britain's role was superior and imbued with responsibilities of leadership.

3.2.2 Ernest Bevin[38]

Bevin's political career began in 1911 when he became a full time official in the Docker's union. By 1918, he was a leading figure in the National Transport Workers' Federation, achieving prominence for his defence of workers during the Shaw Committee in 1920. In 1922 he formed the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), soon to be the biggest single union, acting as its General Secretary until 1940. The failed General Strike in 1926 prompted Bevin to reinforce the links between the unions and the Labour Party, gaining increased influence through the TUC General Council in the 1930s. During the Second

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[37] Attlee, C and Bevin, E (1946) *Britain's Foreign Policy*, London: Transport House, p32
[38] Bevin, Ernest (1881-1951)

World War he was Minister of Labour and Foreign Secretary during the Attlee Governments. He resigned due to ill health in 1951 and died shortly after.

According to Bullock, Bevin "did not fit easily into any of the accepted divisions of labour opinion, left-wing, right-wing, or middle of the road".[39] However, as the "greatest trade unionist leader of the twentieth century"[40], one might expect Bevin's beliefs to reflect the labourist tradition and in his early life we can trace certain events and experiences which tie him temporally and conceptually to this tradition. The themes characteristic of labourism are working class political organisation to redress the imbalance of wealth creation, a moral critique of capitalists rather than capitalism, the protection of indigenous workers from imported labour and an emphasis on the self-reliance and independence of individuals. When we examine Bevin, we can identify events and beliefs which mirror the themes of labourism.

First, his personal circumstances influenced his beliefs greatly. At the other end of the spectrum from Attlee, Bevin was an illegitimate child and orphaned, aged eight.[41] Unskilled, his early employment was irregular. Having gravitated from a rurally depressed area, he moved to Bristol, a city of deep class conflict which left its mark and deepened his "hostility to the economic and social

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[39] Bullock, A (1960) *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin: Volume One, Trade Union Leader, 1881-1940*, London: Heinemann, p143

[40] Ramsden, J (ed), (2002) *The Oxford Companion to Twentieth Century British Politics*, Oxford: OUP, p54

[41] For biographies of Bevin see: Bullock, *Ernest Bevin*; Stephens, M (1981) *Ernest Bevin: Unskilled Labourer and World Statesman* London: TGWU, Transport House; Weiler, *Ernest*

system under which he lived: he hated its exploitation, its injustice and its inequality".[42] Bullock adds that "poverty and need coloured [Bevin's] experience from his earliest days" resulting in a permanent sense of insecurity.[43] He identified the weakness of collective action so we can identify Bevin's belief in the need for strong organisation; "the cast of his mind was practical rather than revolutionary or utopian. Instinctively he turned to organisation rather than agitation"[44] resulting in the formation of the TGWU.[45] Thus, Bevin's early experiences created a belief in a politically strong working class defending its own interests.

Second, Bevin combined this with a critique of capitalists, initially by his involvement in work disputes and expanding this into a call for an adequate social system for unemployment rather than reliance on piecemeal charity.[46] Bevin's belief in social justice was again demonstrated at the Shaw Committee in 1920 in which he argued that the working class had a right to full membership of British society. Moral credibility for this claim came from the First World War so that "[i]mplicitly, Bevin was arguing that the state had failed to recognise a corresponding obligation to the men who had accepted its claim over their lives".[47] Bevin's beliefs were underpinned by an economic understanding derived

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Bevin; Evans, T (1946) *Bevin* London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd; Williams, F (1952) *Ernest Bevin* London: Gollancz

[42] Bullock, *Ernest Bevin*, p37

[43] Bullock, *Ernest Bevin*, p2, p6

[44] Bullock, *Ernest Bevin*, p37

[45] Weiler, *Ernest Bevin* p12

[46] Weiler, *Ernest Bevin* p6

[47] Weiler, *Ernest Bevin* p29

from reading Chiozza Money's *Riches and Poverty*.[48] Echoing Hodgskin's arguments, Money identified the disproportionate distribution of national wealth between a rich minority and the rest of society.[49] "In [Bevin's] eyes, an economic and social system which produced such results stood self condemned. It could and should be changed".[50] Bevin's critique of capitalism thus contained a deeply moral timbre.

Third, Bevin's morality was the product of his nonconformist background. Weiler remarks, "as with so many in his generation of Labour leaders, chapel going clearly exerted a formative influence...nonconformism taught the equal dignity of all men, and the worthiness of the humble".[51] Bullock adds that nonconformism fostered "in men with little or no education...a strong sense of duty and conscience, self-respect, a passion for justice and a conviction of righteousness". It also gave him "a religious faith and moral principles".[52] But his early "evangelical fervour",[53] was replaced by interest in the Bristol Socialist Society (BSS) where "the roots of their socialism were as much moral as economic, and they were more influenced by the generous love of humanity preached by William Morris, Edward Carpenter and Bruce Glasier than by the Marxist doctrines of class hatred and economic determinism".[54] At that time it presented to Bevin a secular equivalent to the spiritual transformation promised

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[48] Money was a liberal MP. Money, L C (1910) *Riches and Poverty*, 11th ed 1914, London: Methuen and Co.
[49] For Hodgskin, see Chapter 2
[50] Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin*, p13
[51] Weiler, *Ernest Bevin*, p4
[52] Bullock, *Ernest Bevin*, p8-9
[53] Bullock, *Ernest Bevin*, p8

by his nonconformist religion.[55] Thus we can identify as an influence in Bevin's labourism the tradition of ethical socialism's religious zeal and visionary appeal.

Finally, Bevin's beliefs in foreign affairs were defined by his first aim: to secure the protection of indigenous workers. In the Party cleavage between pacifists and realists, Bevin campaigned for rearmament and sanctions while his support of non-intervention over the Spanish Civil War was justified as a defence of "labour movement institutions...over broader political objectives".[56] Criticised for jettisoning Labour internationalism, Bevin's main concern was to achieve the standard at home first, not for gains to be diluted by obeisance to foreign policy ideals in uncertain times. Arguably, this outlook provides a guide to Bevin's post-war approach. His belief in the power of union strength militated against any erosion of it from overseas, and given his success at home, there was a distinct possibility of expanding the success abroad. He looked at international affairs through the lens of domestic worker needs first then international worker needs second.[57]

Such beliefs are criticised for being a return to the support of British nationalism and imperialism[58] but this would presuppose a departure in the first place. Instead, we can consider that Bevin's experiences had been entirely formed

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[54] Bullock, *Ernest Bevin*, p14
[55] Weiler, *Ernest Bevin* p6
[56] Bevin quoted in Weiler, *Ernest Bevin,* p95. The lack of arms also curtailed the option of a strong response.
[57] Bevin Papers, BEVN 1/4 : TUC Papers, 1932-3; BEVN 3/2 Bevin and Eden Correspondence, Bevin to Eden, 8/12/42, Churchill College Archive, Cambridge
[58] Weiler, *Ernest Bevin,* p96

by his domestic experiences and therefore his views on foreign policy were circumscribed by these beliefs. As noted in chapter two, the belief in superiority was a cultural norm rather than a specific attribute of labour thinking. Further, Bevin developed his belief into a strategy in which imperial groupings could provide the foundations of an international trading bloc based on pooling raw materials, thus reducing competitions for goods and providing the basis for wider worker equality. In short, Bevin sought the extension of worker gains in Britain elsewhere, but only at no cost or threat to those gains of the domestic worker.

To summarise, Attlee's beliefs were linked to the tradition of democratic socialism in four ways: the need for a state role and social justice; challenging social organisation through democratic means; establishing patriotism and respectability as key features of a maturing Labour Party; and adopting Keynesianism as the method through which to engineer just socio-economic change. His belief in social justice was extended to foreign policy as well as nurturing a belief in collective security backed by the rule of law and a continued faith in the superiority of British socialism. Bevin's beliefs were similarly linked to Labourism in four ways: the need for strong and unified collective action to achieve pragmatic goals; a critique of socio-economic imbalances; a moral vision of social justice inspired by nonconformist roots; and the continued search for worker equality at home and abroad.

3.3 Historical Setting

To understand the circumstances under which Attlee and Bevin identified the dilemma of reduced capabilities and the context which defined their subsequent modifications of belief, it is necessary to first summarise the domestic and international situation.

3.3.1 The Domestic Situation

The Labour Government was swept into power in 1945 with a majority of 146 seats after fighting a campaign based almost entirely on its planned domestic politics. Couched in terms of 'the people's peace', the programme established the National Insurance Act in 1946 providing comprehensive social provision with benefits for unemployment, sickness and maternity.[59] In 1948, the National Health Service Act provided free medical, dental and opticians' services. The National Assistance Act of 1948 abolished all poor laws and provided help for those without income.[60] Nationalisation of various key industries and interests began in 1946 with the Bank of England then the coal industry, electricity, inland transport in 1947 and iron and steel in late 1949. Labour's electoral success is attributed in part to the promise nationalisation held of preventing a return to the economic sclerosis of the interwar years.

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[59] Labour Party Manifesto (1945) *Let Us Face The Future*, London: Labour Party, http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/lab45.htm accessed 07/01/2003

[60] Cook and Stevenson, *Britain Since 1945*, p132

The damaged and fractured nature of the British economy in 1945 has been documented in detail elsewhere.[61] The Government faced three key events concerning the economy. The end of lend-lease[62] prompted the negotiation of the Washington Loan Agreements in December 1945. From this stemmed the convertibility crisis of 1947 and finally the devaluation of sterling in 1949. The end of lend-lease overturned the belief in Government and Whitehall that this could continue, after hostilities, to rebuild the British economy.[63] Negotiations were crucial to maintain living standards and enable Labour's programme.[64] The Loan consisted of $3.75 billion at two percent interest to be repaid over fifty years beginning in December 1951. It also required ratifying the agreement reached at Bretton Woods[65] in 1944, the disbanding of the Sterling Bloc and convertibility, the free exchange of Sterling for Dollars.[66] Convertibility was due to take effect from mid 1947. Signs of economic recovery began in 1946[67] but a bad winter and coal shortages cut industrial output by a quarter and contributed to the balance of payments problems leading to the summer crisis. Massive capital outflows created a run on the Bank of England's reserves amounting to $4.1 billion during 1947

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[61] Twenty-five percent of pre-war wealth was lost, along with 50 percent of invisible income and 60% of the export market. Weiler, *Ernest Bevin* p148

[62] Lend-lease was the American system of supplying military hardware and raw materials to the allies, mainly Britain.

[63] Ovendale, R (1984) *The Foreign Policy of the British Labour Governments 1945-1951* Leicester: LUP p4

[64] Jefferys, K (1993) *The Labour Party Since 1945* London: Routledge, p14

[65] The Bretton Woods agreement was signed by 44 countries in July 1944, establishing an international monetary and payments system based on experiences during the 1930s and the failure of the Gold Standard. The stability afforded by this system was seen as essential to underpinning a liberal international trade regime. Institutions of Bretton Woods included the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (later the World Bank) and the International Trade Organisation, (later General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade – GATT).

[66] The British had hoped for an interest free and condition free loan of $5 billion. Kochavi, A (2001) *Post Holocaust Politics*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, p2

compared with $900 million in 1946. Economic crisis led to political crisis with an attempt by Cripps to depose Attlee as leader. Convertibility was not reinstated until December 1958.[68] Finally, Sterling was devalued in September 1949 by thirty percent.[69] This followed a summer of balance of payments deficits and further speculative pressures on the Bank of England. Devaluation was widely anticipated although the Labour government failed to warn their French counterparts in advance, leading to acrimony and further disillusionment over Britain's foreign policy direction.[70]

Significant pressure on the Government came from within its own ranks, the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP), over foreign and defence policy.[71] Dissent mobilized behind the concept of the 'Third Force' and peaked by mid 1947. The 'third force' idea was most cogently expressed by the *Keep Left* group who wished to avoid a Cold War politics in which Europe and the Middle East would suffer. Their motivating beliefs were the redundancy of national sovereignty in preventing wars and the focus on what the war had been fought for rather than against. "The task of British socialism must be," they argued, "to save the smaller nations from this futile ideological warfare [the Cold War] and to heal the breach between the U.S.A and U.S.S.R...It would be a betrayal of British and European

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[67] Jefferys, *The Attlee Governments*, p25
[68] Ramsden, *Twentieth Century British Politics*, p164
[69] Newton, 'The 1949 Sterling Crisis', p176
[70] Newton, 'The 1949 Sterling Crisis'; Rooth, T. (2000) 'Economic Tensions and Conflict in the Commonwealth', *Twentieth Century British History*, vol.13.2, pp121-143; Toye, R (2000) 'The Labour Party's External Economic Policy in the 1940s', *The Historical Journal*, vol. 43.1, pp189-215
[71] Alderman, R K (1964/5) 'Discipline in the Parliamentary Labour Party, 1945-51', *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol. 18, pp293-305, p294

socialism if we meekly accepted Communist leadership. But it would be equally fatal to accept American leadership in exchange for dollars".[72] Instead they urged partnership with France to "form the keystone of the arch of world peace".[73] From this it was claimed the UN would become a real entity, Britain would gain real economic benefits and establishing collective imperial markets would create an economically and politically strong and independent Europe.[74] The movement was adversely affected by the declaration of Marshall Aid and was eventually subsumed within the broader 'Bevanite' group where they continued to argue that Europe was the focus of potential conflict between the superpowers.[75]

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[72] Crossman, RHS et al (1947) *Keep Left: By a Group of Members of Parliament*, London: New Statesman and Nation, p35

[73] Crossman et al., *Keep Left*, p38

[74] Crossman et al., *Keep Left*, p40-1; Jefferys describes *Keep Left* as 'radicalists' although their arguments were more in tune with the prevailing feeling in Europe with key members such as RWG MacKay integral to the wartime federalist movement in Britain. Parts of the broader labour movement had also been supportive of European unity during the war; the ILP, Tribune and GDH Cole expressing formulations towards this end. See Jefferys, *The Labour Party Since 1945*, p12; Newman, M (1980) 'British Socialists and the Question of European Unity, 1939-45', *European Studies Review*, vol. 10.2, pp75-100

[75] Bevan, A (1952) *In Place of Fear*, London: William Heinemann, p124; MacKay went on to establish the PLP Europe Group with Christopher Shawcross in the late 1940s became vice-president of European Parliamentary Union (EPU) and along with twenty-five other Labour MPs, attended the Hague Congress in May 1948. MacKay, unlike the wider Keep Left Group, held particular views about Britain and Europe's future making him distinctly Europeanist. The government's response to the Schuman Plan provoked Mackay to deliver a withering attack on Labour's official policy. See Mackay, RWG (1949) *Western Union in Crisis: Economic Anarchy or Political Union?* Oxford: Blackwell; Mackay, RWG (1950) *Heads in the Sand: A Criticism of the Official Labour Attitude to European Unity*, Oxford: Blackwell; Mackay, RWG (1951) *European Unity*, Oxford: Blackwell; Mackay, RWG (1953) *Whither Britain?* Oxford: Blackwell; in particular Mackay, *Heads in the Sand.* See also: Minion, M (2000) 'Left, Right or European? Labour and Europe in the 1940s: The Case of the Socialist Vanguard Group', *European Review of History*, vol. 7.2, pp229-248, p234; Minion, M (2000) 'The Fabian Society and Europe During the 1940s: The Search for a Socialist Foreign Policy', *European Historical Quarterly*, vol. 30.2, pp237-70; Wilford, R.A. (1980) 'The Federal Union Campaign', *European Studies Review*, vol.10, pp101-114

3.3.2 The International Situation

The international dimension to the Labour government included consideration of Britain's defence needs and the emergent Cold War, the changes to the Empire and Anglo-American relations. The first pressing need was for a defence strategy Britain could afford, "the dominant theme of the Attlee governments [being] to reduce the resources allocated to defence as rapidly as possible".[76]

By 1947, the 'three pillar strategy' of Britain, the Middle East and sea communications between them evolved. The needs claimed by the Chiefs of Staff (COS) and the limits placed by Cabinet on expenditure maintained tensions. The result was the ping-pong of defence estimates in order to meet the three pillar strategy on the one hand, and secure a long-term defence investment strategy on the other. The need for European defence was exacerbated by the onset of the Cold War in which initially Britain was being frozen out by the US and USSR.

A shift in relations meant the withdrawal of the British military presence in Greece and Turkey, prompting the Truman Doctrine in March 1947 as an explicit measure of counter-communism.[77] The announcement of Marshall Aid in June 1947 provided the economic backing to that political move and engaging

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[76] Gorst, A (1992) 'Facing the Facts? The Labour Governments and Defence Policy 1945-50', in N. Tiratsoo (ed) *The Attlee Years*, London: Pinter, pp190-209, p190-2

[77] The Truman Doctrine was a formal declaration by the United States to aid those free countries resisting attempted subjugation by outside pressures. It was the beginning of the policy of containment.

America in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation[78] (NATO) in 1949 sealed the shift with defensive capacity.

While the domestic policy achievements of the Labour Governments of 1945-51 are well documented[79], Jefferys claims, "[i]n overseas policy, the legacy of these years was equally far reaching", marking the transition from Empire to Commonwealth.[80] This view has been disputed.[81] The transition from Empire to Commonwealth was a necessity borne from the multilateral condition of post-war trading relations and growing pressures for self-determination. Independence was granted to Transjordan in 1946, India and Pakistan in 1947, with Ceylon and Burma[82] becoming independent in 1948. In the same year, the British Nationality Act conferred to all Commonwealth citizens the status of 'British subject' leading to the first wave of Jamaican immigrants. Less successfully the State of Israel was formed in 1948 after guerrilla warfare over the British mandate forced retreat, a

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[78] NATO originally had twelve member states: the US, UK, France, Italy, Benelux, Portugal, Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Canada. The Treaty's remit was to treat an attack on any one of the members as an attack on all and by taking the necessary action to maintain and restore the security of the North Atlantic area, including the use of armed force. Disputes within NATO were to be settled by co-operation and collaboration.

[79] Morgan, K.O. (1984) *Labour in Power 1945-1951*, Oxford: Clarendon Press; Jefferys, K (1993) *The Labour Party Since 1945* London: MacMillan; Pelling, *Labour Governments 1945-51*; Hennessy, P (1992) *Never Again: Britain 1945-51*, London: Cape; Cairncross, A (1985) *Years of Recovery: British Economic policy 1945-51*, London: Methuen; Francis, M. (1997) *Ideas and Policies under Labour 1945-51*, Manchester: MUP; Tiratsoo, *The Attlee Years*; Tomlinson, J (1997) *Democratic Socialism and Economic Policy: The Attlee Years*, Cambridge: CUP

[80] Jefferys, *The Labour Party Since 1945*, p8; for a similar argument see Pearce, R (1994) *Attlee's Labour Governments, 1945-51*, London: Routledge, p70

[81] Left wing critics such as Ralph Miliband, John Saville, Tom Nairn, Perry Anderson and Leonard Seabrook have cultivated a betrayal thesis, arguing that the policies pursued represented a wasted opportunity given the changes wrought by war. See Saville, J (1993) *The Politics of Continuity* London: Verso; Other historians of the left such as Henry Pelling, Kenneth Morgan, Keith Laybourne and Peter Hennessy have argued the policies reflected what was true of democratic socialism. See Morgan, *Labour in Power*; Johnstone, J. (1999) 'Questions of Change and Continuity in Attlee's Britain' in Marsh et al, *Postwar British Politics in Perspective* and Jefferys, *The Labour Party Since 1945*.

state of emergency was declared in Malaya in an attempt to suppress communist insurgency and in 1951, British oil assets in Iran were nationalised. By then, of the 457 million people under British rule in 1945, seventy million remained in a less cohesive Commonwealth which had changed to accept the monarch as the head of the Commonwealth, not necessarily the head of state.[83]

Initial relations between Britain and the United States were strained dating from the Potsdam Conference where American policy required Soviet assistance to end the war with Japan while making clear they had no territorial ambitions in Europe. The Truman Administration initially assumed the role of mediator between Britain and the Soviet Union, wary of Britain's claims to restoring her Empire.[84] Clashes with the Soviet Union produced a rapprochement in Anglo-American relations by mid-1946, Kennan's *Long Telegram* indicative of the change in attitude.[85] The Truman Doctrine of March 1947 sealed the change, replacing Britain in support of anti-Communist royalists in Greece and assistance to the Turkish Government in protecting the Black Sea Straits from Soviet control. The following summer, Marshall Aid provided financial assistance to European states worth $17 billion over four years in a bid to boost economic recovery and American exports while diminishing Soviet influence over the west of Europe.[86]

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[82] Ceylon is now Sri Lanka, Burma now Myanmar
[83] Pearce, *Attlee's Labour Governments*, p70
[84] Kochavi, *Post Holocaust Politics,* p7
[85] 'X' (1947) 'The Sources of Soviet Conduct', *Foreign Affairs*, vol.25.4, pp566-583
[86] Hogan, M (1987) *The Marshall Plan*, Cambridge: CUP

Labour's approach to Europe was defined by defensive, economic and political considerations. Defence concerns were motivated by resolving the German question and establishing European security. The 1946 Dunkirk Treaty united Britain and France against German attack and was expanded in 1948 to include the Benelux countries with the Brussels Treaty Organisation (BTO) as a precursor to a US presence in NATO, 1949. Economic dislocation across Europe, housing loss, refugees, malnutrition and damaged infrastructure hampered the prospect of recovery.[87] Coal supplies were co-ordinated through the European Coal Organisation later replaced by the administrative arm of Marshall Aid, the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) whose remit included evaluating methods of economic integration.[88] Political instability posed a further threat in France, Greece and Italy. The BTO contained clauses on political and cultural co-operation by eliminating areas of conflict through a Consultative Council.[89]

The Schuman Plan was announced by French Foreign Minister, Robert Schuman, on the 9th May 1950. Declaring that "world peace cannot be safeguarded without the making of constructive efforts proportionate to the

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[87] Hearl, D (1994) 'Britain and Europe Since 1945', *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol.47.4, pp515-531, p516; Monnet, J (1978) *Memoirs*, translated by Richard Mayne, London: Collins, p225, 233; Young, J (1990) *Britain, France and the Unity of Europe, 1945-51* Leicester: LUP, p35

[88] OECD website: http://www.oecd.org/document/48/0,2340,en_2649_201185_1876912_1_1_1_1,00.html accessed 02/02/2003

[89] Text of the 'Treaty of Economic, Social and Cultural Collaboration and Collective Self Defence', 17/03/48 from http://www.ena.lu/mce.cfm accessed 21/07/05

dangers which threaten it"[90] he outlined a plan to pool French and German coal and steel production. This was to "provide for the setting-up of common bases of economic development as a first step in the federation of Europe" where war would become materially impossible.[91] A high authority would rapidly secure the modernisation of production and the raising of living standards achieved through transitional measures.[92] The purpose of the proposed organisation was to "ensure the fusion of the markets and the expansion of production".[93] The High Authority would be composed of an equal number of representatives from member states and whose institutions "will in no way prejudice the methods of ownership of enterprises".[94]

3.4 Élite Beliefs and Tradition Change

In this section we examine the content of the dilemma of reduced capabilities before analysing what aspects of belief were modified. It is argued that the modifications gained coherence by the late 1940s forcing a re-conceptualisation of Labour Party foreign policy traditions. The remaining period demonstrated the popularising of this modified set of beliefs. Finally, we can see

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[90] 'Declaration on behalf of the French Government by Mr. Robert Schuman, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, 9th May 1950' in Archives of the European Communities (AEC) (1983) *Opening of the Historical Archives of the European Communities to the Public*, Luxembourg: Office of the Official Publications of the European Communities, p89; Also see Monnet, *Memoirs*, pp298-305 where much of the original press conference document is reprinted; European Communities Press and Information (1972) *Uniting Europe: The European Community Since 1950* Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities; European Commission (2002) *Fifty Years of the ECSC Treaty: Coal and Steel Statistics*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Community. See Bullock, A (1985) *Ernest Bevin: Foreign Secretary* Vol.3, Oxford: OUP, chapter 21 for an account of the Schuman Plan

[91] AEC, *Archives*, p89

[92] Such as a production and investment plan, compensatory mechanisms and a fund to rationalise production

[93] AEC, *Archives*, p90

how this re-conceptualisation did not allow for the further challenge presented by the Schuman Plan.

3.4.1 Identifying the Dilemma

The perceived dilemma of reduced capabilities was accepted by Attlee and Bevin, prompting a modification of beliefs about the Labour Party's foreign policy ideals. This in turn prompted modifications of the traditions of democratic socialism and labourism. When Attlee and Bevin referred to reduced capabilities in international politics, they refer to several facets of the emerging post-war settlements of power relations and resources. We can identify these as: first, an apprehension of the unilateral power wielded by America; secondly, the consequent fear that this might impact upon Britain's ability to establish a defensive balance of power in Europe; thirdly, that reliance on the symbol of power, the Empire, was in jeopardy; and finally, the recognition that capitalist states, namely the United States, might not co-operate with Labour's socialist plans.

3.4.1.1 American Dominance

American dominance took two forms: economic hegemony and political and strategic pre-eminence. Apprehensions about the new economic power wielded by the United States took three forms: the British economy would become subject to American economic direction; the British trading capacity was being sustained by American assistance; and Marshall Aid allowing the US to

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[94] AEC, *Archives,* p90

exercise meaningful influence in Europe. Of American political and strategic pre-eminence, one fear in particular dominated: the atom bomb.

In the autumn of 1945, Bevin outlined the fear of economic dominance by the United States when discussing the Washington Loan Agreement, being uneasy about accepting terms that "would leave us subject to economic direction from the United States".[95] Although the Government expressed shock and dismay, the warnings had been clear for at least six months.[96] Attlee too recognised the problems associated with this absolute shift in international power, stating "We had to have the loan. We knew how much we risked when we accepted convertibility, but Keynes urged us to take the risk."[97] Within Cabinet there was a split by those on the left who argued against accepting the conditions of the loan as an attempt to "discard our power to enforce a discriminatory commercial policy".[98] Advice from Keynes that this was a good offer, and from Sir Edward Bridges,[99] that if Congress knew the "planned economist element in the British Cabinet [was] materially influencing the present negotiations there [was] hardly any hope of Congress approving our agreement"[100] prompted the marginalizing of Party dissent by, among others, Attlee and Bevin.

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[95] PRO CAB 128/4 CM 50 (45) Confidential Annex, 6/11/45

[96] Bernard Baruch, 'Letter to President Truman, April 20th 1945, on his visit to London and meetings with Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill and others', Baruch Papers, Princeton University, Seeley Mudd Library. http://www.fpp.co.uk/History/Churchill/Baruch/to_Truman_200445.html accessed 20/07/05

[97] Harris, *Attlee*, p180

[98] Emanuel Shinwell, PRO CAB 128/4 CM 50 (45) Confidential Annex, 6/11/45

[99] Sir Edward Bridges, Head of the Home Civil Service, 1945-1956; Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, 1945-1946; Secretary to the Cabinet, 1938-1947

[100] PRO CAB 128/2 CM 58 (45) no date, no reference

During the autumn of 1946 Bevin reflected in Cabinet that the American loan formed the basis of Britain's economic revival, acting as a 'prop' to her traditional trading status.[101] It contained the continued belief in Britain's international trading role and need to assert this role given the history of hostility between the United States and Soviet Union, "both of whom sought to strengthen its own position without regard to our point of view".[102] The linking of Britain's international trading recovery to American economic assistance had been made during the war, early signals from the American administration being that it expected Britain to make full use of her Empire rather than depend on US financial help. It was noted in private by the Americans that the British economy would take possibly up to seven years before it could operate properly.[103] However, the message had been mixed with trade liberalisation measures inherent in ratifying the Bretton Woods Agreement, and the continued sense that the United States was keen to further infiltrate traditional British markets. It was not lost on Bevin who in June 1949 urged against American pressure for Britain to pursue deflationary measures as these constituted "a major threat to the economic stability of the rest of the world". Feeling the Americans did not appreciate fully the political situation, Bevin continued, "persistence in their existing policies might well destroy the foundation of European reconstruction which had been so laboriously created in recent years; it might fatally weaken the capacity of Western Europe to resist communist aggression; and it might have disastrous

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[101] PRO CAB 129/13 CP (46) 386 18/10/46
[102] Ernest Bevin, PRO CAB 128/3 CM 35 (45) Minute 1 Confidential Annex, 25/09/45
[103] Baruch, 'Letter to President Truman, April 20th 1945', From: http://www.fpp.co.uk/History/Churchill/Baruch/to_Truman_200445.html accessed 20/07/05

consequences in South East Asia".[104] Bevin's change of belief was in part supported by the increased polarisation of the United States and Soviet Union and the dispute over Iran; both meaning the increased strategic value in retaining parts of the British Empire.

At the turn of 1948, Bevin said he sought to achieve economic consolidation in the west of Europe with a paralleled political dimension reflecting the British way of life and founded on a military defence against communism. Reflecting the impotence he felt in being able to provide Western European security, Bevin added "We are not yet in a position to give firm assurances as to the role we intend to play in operations on the continent of Europe. We shall sooner or later be forced into admitting our situation or refusing to discuss it. Either course is likely to land us into trouble".[105] Such was Bevin's concern that he planned to discuss the matter candidly with General Marshall.[106] An appraisal of possible solutions towards European Economic integration took place during the summer of 1948. It left Bevin to reiterate the link between Britain being financially powerless to support the European economy and concrete efforts at unity until Marshall Aid.[107]

Intimately linked with this particular assessment of American economic hegemony was the strategic significance of the development of nuclear weaponry.

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[104] PRO CAB 134/220 Economic Policy Committee Meetings 1949, EPC (49) 22, 24/06/49
[105] Bevin to Inverchapel, PRO FO 800/460 26/1/48
[106] Bevin to Inverchapel, PRO FO 800/460 26/1/48
[107] PRO CAB 129/28 CP(48) 162 24/6/1948

Attlee's position regarding American dominance differed slightly from Bevin's, though they remained complementary in their outlook. Charged with the overall strategic direction of British foreign policy, Attlee was concerned with the development of the British atomic bomb; the degree of secrecy pursued in doing so being questioned by some academics.[108] The motivation was simple: to secure British interests. This was in part driven by feelings of patriotism and fear of an American return to isolationism. Attlee was to state, "we could not agree that only America should have atomic energy".[109] By far, the greatest reason to develop the bomb was as a diplomatic tool to be used against the United States; the motivations being that if Britain ever needed to deploy the threat of an attack or an actual attack the US might not support her and the bomb would enhance Britain's international status, especially as her role as an ally of the US.[110] Underpinning Attlee's approach was a belief that the sheer destructiveness of atomic weapons should imply their international control, pressing Truman to make a public acknowledgement to this effect during the late summer of 1945 resulting in the Washington Declaration in November 1945.[111]

3.4.1.2 Weakness in Europe

The dilemma of reduced capabilities resulted in an absolute sense of weakness in European affairs, largely over the future of Germany and the potential threat of Russia in the ensuing power-vacuum. Bevin appreciated this

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[108] Burridge, *Attlee*, p235
[109] Williams, F (1961) *A Prime Minister Remembers*, London: Heinemann, p118-9
[110] Burridge, *Attlee*, p237; Gowing, M (1974) *Independence and Deterrence: Britain and Atomic Energy, 1945-52*, London: Macmillan, p400-500 cited in Burridge, *Attlee*, p367

weakness in three ways: the small, but incremental steps towards Western European security resulting in NATO; the desire to achieve security through entrenched economic relations; and the balancing of such economic relations with Britain's traditional trading role.

Bevin recognised that the impact of such power shifts was possibly to "rule out a gradual deepening of Anglo-European economic co-operation" because of the multilateralist conditions of the Loan.[112] In contrast, when Bevin was appointed Foreign Secretary, he had been anxious to establish a framework for future close co-operation at the European level, a belief he considered necessary.[113] In this he saw the relations of Europe develop from a close link between Britain and France and from which could stem political, economic and military co-operation as the ultimate objective. Bevin desired a link between Britain and European powers along the Dunkirk model. Although this was rejected early on by the Americans,[114] Bevin continued to believe in its effectiveness.[115] It continued to be an objective, leading to the cultural, economic and social clauses of the otherwise military alliance of the BTO although these remained institutionally weak.

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[111] Washington Declaration, signed 15/11/45. Signatories were the President of the United States, Truman, and the British and Canadian Prime Ministers, Attlee and MacKenzie-King.
[112] PRO CAB 129/13 CP (46) 386, 18/10/46 Proposal of Study for Close Economic Co-operation with Our Western European Neighbours.
[113] PRO FO 371/49069, Z.9595, 13/08/45; Woodhouse, *British Policy Towards France*, p1; Young, *Britain, France and the Unity of Europe*, p14
[114] Inverchapel to Bevin, PRO FO800/460, 19/1/48
[115] PRO CAB 129/24 CP (48) 46, 10/2/48

Bevin had modified the traditional foreign policy concept of the European balance of power during the war. In discussions with Eden, he had stated "the achievement of collective security is not solely or even primarily a political problem, and any plan which sets itself merely to secure a balance of political forces will not last".[116] For Bevin, it was necessary that any future settlement of European relations was founded on an economic system to which all could recognise they had a stake in maintaining. Later, Bevin reiterated this belief, while adding that there would be an inevitable coalescence of powers in Europe: the west towards Britain, the East towards Russia. With this shift, Bevin regarded the maintenance of a stable economy, and a lead in both social reform and military power as the attractions around which Britain could forge a balance of like-minded interests.[117] Reflecting on the American political system, Bevin remarked that its success rested on "[knitting] together...the development of interstate commerce and of those common services which no state can afford to do without". Seeing this as significant to the developments in Europe, he argued "no permanent settlement will be secured by any system of purely political groupings that run counter to the economic facts".[118]

Bevin was concerned that an inability to influence directly the developments in Europe would pose the threat of compromising Britain's remaining power and economic cohesion. "If we are to strengthen our ties in

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[116] Bevin to Eden, BEVN 3/2 Ernest Bevin and Anthony Eden Correspondence, 8/12/42, Churchill College Archives, Cambridge.
[117] Bevin to Cranbourne, BEVN 3/1 Letters and Correspondence, 1/2/44, Churchill College Archives, Cambridge

Western Europe" he argued, "we may be faced...with the necessity of taking a single plunge into a full customs union". Bevin's understanding reflected the changes brought about by the trade liberalisation agenda of the United States and the consequent loss of most favoured nation status. Although economic gains were possible, the potential political advantages would have to be weighed against consideration for the colonies and Commonwealth.[119] The caution resulted in a preference for the complementarity of economies rather than integration.[120] Underlying this caution was a belief that Europe was politically unstable and economically weak and therefore not an attractive option in rebuilding an economy as the "world's principal trading nation".[121]

3.4.1.3 Imperial Jeopardy

The Labour Government presided over the independence of India and the transition of the Empire into the Commonwealth. The process undertaken by the Government was a necessary response to both internal and external pressures and can be seen as the slide towards arrangements defined by informal economic preferences. The dilemma of reduced capabilities provided the most stark example of Attlee and Bevin's attempts at both retaining those aspects of Empire necessary for Britain's economic and strategic interests and international standing while reducing to a minimum the costs involved. Air power and nuclear weapons had made redundant the concept of Empire by land possession. The role of Empire in

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[118] Bevin to Eden, BEVN 3/2 Ernest Bevin and Anthony Eden Correspondence, 8/12/42, Churchill College Archives, Cambridge.
[119] PRO CAB 129/13 CP (46) 386, 18/10/46
[120] Woodhouse, *British Policy Towards France* p10-11

Attlee and Bevin's beliefs was largely strategic. There were at least two examples of the Empire being used to buttress Britain's international standing; first against the Americans and then, later, with the Americans against the Soviet Union. Finally, the notion of Empire was reconceptualised, translating it into the more politically acceptable, but ultimately weaker, notion of the Commonwealth.

The ratification of Bretton Woods was an American precondition to the Washington loan and was widely perceived as breaking up the Sterling Group. Left wing Cabinet members like Shinwell complained that in return for vague promises of co-operation Britain was being asked to dismantle a distinct commercial policy. Other Cabinet members such as Cripps and Dalton were more circumspect, recognising that members of the Sterling Group were trying to break out, with or without American assistance, while maintaining the Sterling Group was against the Labour policy of multilateralism.[122] However, while postwar negotiations were still ongoing, Bevin was aware that of the three powers, Britain's weaker status was a hindrance and aimed to use both the UN and the Dominions to boost its position and off-set American dominance by making sure the British voice was heard.[123]

A year later, Bevin's emphasis on Britain's status as the world's principal trading nation caused concern and uncertainty towards plans for a European customs union. Instead, he recognised that the American loan formed the basis of

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[121] PRO CAB 129/13 CP (46) 386, 18/10/46
[122] PRO CAB 128/4 CM 50 (45) Confidential Annex, 6/11/45

Britain's economic revival, acting as a 'prop' to her traditional status.[124] Bevin clearly believed this had both strategic and political benefits. "By associating ourselves generally with the United States", he argued, "we have subscribed to a policy designed to bring upon high and sustained levels of employment and consumption in every country. This policy, if it can be achieved, is in the best interests of the United Kingdom as the world's principal trading nation, and further would promote political stability in all parts of the world."[125] By early 1948 Bevin was able to summarise the first aim of British foreign policy as being the mobilisation of political forces in Western Europe against the perceived Soviet threat with American and Dominion backing,[126] a policy which shared Attlee's absolute support.[127]

The significance of identifying the dilemma of reduced capabilities was that it left relatively intact the symbolic issues of identity, nationalism and sovereignty. Britain's identity in foreign policy was based on the Empire. Though it was recognised that the Empire was no longer the force it once was, and that American pressure to dismantle it in favour of multilateral trade existed, these were both embraced as positive developments in terms of traditions of Labour foreign policy belief. Instead, we can see that Attlee and Bevin pursued a policy of 'shoring-up' as much as was possible both in terms of international opinion and indigenous pressures, converting demonstrable losses into positive democratic

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[123] PRO CAB 128/3 CM 35 (45) Minute 1 Confidential Annex, 25/09/45
[124] PRO CAB 129/13 CP (46) 386, 18/10/46
[125] PRO CAB 129/16 CP (47) 35, 18/1/47
[126] PRO CAB 129/23 CP (48) 6, The First Aim of British Foreign Policy, 4/1/48

developments. Although this applied to particular countries, such as India, the shift within the whole empire to a more informal Commonwealth signalled this reconceptualisation.

The effect of creating a Commonwealth out of a fragile Empire was a corresponding change in nationalism. The Commonwealth allowed the free movement of British subjects within it, but its members were not equal. Canada was the first to break with the traditional and largely feudal relationship of British subjecthood, using citizenship as the mediating factor. The British Nationality Act of 1949 was the response, described as "reactive" with no appraisal of interests except to retain as much of the pre-1949 system as possible. It favoured an 'open door' policy, but one which was selective; preferring the free and permanent movement of Dominion citizens and encouraging only the temporary movement of colonial subjects.[128] Again, in terms of domestic nationalism, there is evidence that changes within Empire were shored up, conceding only the margins and in those areas no longer tenable.

3.4.1.4 The Threat of Capitalism

There persisted a fear that capitalist states would not cooperate with a socialist Labour Government. This was a continued belief stemming from the collapse of the Second Labour government in 1931. Attlee's beliefs reflected a

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[127] PRO CAB 127/341 Personal Files of Sir Norman Brook, 7/5/48
[128] Hansen, R (1999) 'The Politics of Citizenship in 1940s Britain: The British Nationality Act', *Twentieth Century British History*, vol.10.1, pp67-95, p73, 82, 89

fear of American capitalists while Bevin's recognised the potential threat from European capitalism.

Attlee had already outlined the potential sclerosis of socialism and the labour movement if their approach was reduced to a class struggle. If a socialist government were to come to power, he argued, the capitalists would not co-operate, and vice versa, if the relations between them remained fixed on narrow interests.[129] Such was Attlee's concern that the Truman Administration would reject Labour's domestic plans that he went to Congress to present the case for the Government during negotiations for the Washington Loan Agreement. He made three vital points.[130]

First, he established his democratic credentials by stating: "I come before you as the Prime Minister of Great Britain, but in accordance with our constitutional practice, I am also a party leader, the leader of a majority recently returned to power in the House of Commons."

Second, he extended this common point by linking the Party to the tradition of freedom:

> I wonder how much you know about the British Labour Party?...I think that some people over here imagine that Socialists are out to destroy freedom, freedom of the individual, freedom of speech, freedom of religion and freedom of the press. They are wrong. The Labour party is

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[129] Attlee, C (1937), 'The Labour Party in Perspective' in Bealey, *British Labour Party Thought,* p153

[130] *The Guardian*, 14/11/1945

in the tradition of freedom-loving movements which have always existed in our country...We in the Labour party declare that we are in line with those who fought for Magna Carta and Habeas Corpus, with the Pilgrim Fathers and with the signatories of the Declaration of Independence.

Finally, Attlee outlined a visionary but practical foreign policy which relied on sustaining capitalist forms of exchange:

> We believe that we cannot make a heaven in our own country and leave a hell outside. We believe this not only from the moral basis of our movement, which is based on the brotherhood of man without distinction of race or creed, but also from an entirely practical standpoint. We seek to raise the standard of life of our people. We can only do so by trading with the rest of the world, and as good traders we wish to have prosperous customers.[131]

Bevin was also wary of capitalists; however his eyes were fixed on developments in Europe. His appraisal of foreign policy in 1945 concluded that Europe may become the 'hunting ground' of bad capitalists, "with a low wage standard that would be a great danger to everybody else in Western industry".[132] After the announcement of the Schuman Plan, his beliefs showed little change, fearing it would develop towards the pre-war arrangement of cartelisation: restricting production to favour producer interests rather than those of workers.[133] The deterioration in relations between Britain and France also worried Bevin who sought to make the French authorities understand his idea of the "wider global

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[131] 'Prime Minister's Address before Congress' 13/11/45, from http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/policy/post-war/451113a.html accessed 05/05/03

[132] LPCR (1945), p116-8

potential of production and expanding markets rather than a protective intra-European affair which might look like a producers' cartel of regular production with falling demand".[134] In his last meeting as Foreign Secretary, Bevin reiterated the problems of pre-war European capitalism: "Pre-war experiences of German iron and steel cartels was bound to cause uneasiness about the ultimate effects of the arrangements now proposed".[135] It was a fear fed by reports from the British Ambassador in Paris, Oliver Harvey, that the French envisaged a 'Charlemagne's Europe' with the implication that it would lead to Catholic control rather than unity.[136] The supranational dimension clearly affected Bevin's belief in the need for defensive security, raising the question that, had the Schuman plan existed in 1930, what would have happened to British coal in 1940?[137]

3.5 Modifications

The dilemma Attlee and Bevin faced operated at two levels. First, in an absolute sense, Britain faced a dramatic reduction in available resources which awaited any incoming government in 1945. Second, this prompted modifications to the beliefs of both Attlee and Bevin, impacting upon their interpretations of democratic socialism and labourism respectively. In this section, we examine the ways in which the dilemma of reduced capabilities prompted Attlee and Bevin to modify their beliefs about Britain's interests. These changes are then contrasted with the ways in which other beliefs were buttressed. Finally, this section then

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[133] PRO CAB 128/17, 22/06/50
[134] PRO CAB 128/18, 4/7/50
[135] PRO CAB 128/19, 22/3/51
[136] PRO FO 371/89189, Oliver Harvey to Ernest Bevin, 16/11/50

deploys Bulpitt's measurements: the success of establishing political argument hegemony and the effectiveness of party management.

The dilemma of reduced capabilities undermined ideas about Britain's international status. Attlee and Bevin modified their beliefs when identifying discrepant information and applying counter-strategies. They identified unparalleled American dominance, countering this threat to great power status with strategies such as linking Britain's international trading recovery to American financial assistance and the development of an independent atomic bomb. The weakness felt in Europe was identified as being unable to provide a decisive security solution. The strategy to counter this was to draw in American involvement, ultimately using the weight of the US and dominion power through Canada as the anchor of a powerful security buffer in NATO. In terms of Empire, both American pressure and internal nationalism provided the discrepant information; the strategies used to counter these were by granting independence to non-strategic or indefensible states while transforming the nature of relations into a politically weaker but still coherent Commonwealth. Finally the threat of capitalism was a fear as much related to Britain's weakened economic state as to the historical baggage of the Labour Party and was met by a direct appeal by Attlee to Congress.

Reduced capabilities challenged the notion of Britain's great power status, forcing a re-conceptualisation rather than a rejection of its component parts. Great

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[137] PRO FO 371/96343, 23/8/51

power status can be broken into three constituent parts; economic, political and military, where the state in question has either superiority or parity. During the latter stages of the war, the attempt to re-establish Britain's great power status was defined by the idea of the 'Big Three'; Britain's place at both Yalta and Potsdam, accepting new responsibilities such as the administration of one of the German zones, and a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. By 1945, Britain could claim to have ended the war with her Empire intact and thus, symbolically at least, emerged not only victorious in military terms, but also politically and with the foundations of economic recovery in place.

The period of 1945-51 forced a redefinition of these constituent parts. For instance, while Attlee was apprehensive about the American possession of the atomic bomb, his decision to develop a British atomic bomb was couched in terms consistent with his belief that after Hiroshima atomic secrets had only a limited existence. Proliferation and the arbitrary use of nuclear weapons were his main fears. To this effect, he wrote to Truman in the summer of 1945 arguing the case that atomic bombs were to be used in securing peace alone. After months of seeking an answer, the non-committal response from Washington prompted the new belief that it was essential for Britain to develop its own bomb during the interim period until the UN could take control. Attlee's beliefs regarding nuclear weapons were therefore a modification of his long-held belief in internationalism. Inherent in this belief in internationalism was a leadership role for Britain, again supporting the concept of great power status and the ability to provide direction to

the future of an international organisation. To do this, Britain required a bomb, while in the interim period, it served to defend British interests as separate from America.

Modifications of belief occurred over military power. The 'three pillar strategy' identified that access to the Middle East and its resources was of enough strategic importance to focus short to medium term defence policy. This reflected the wholesale application of cost-cutting to British foreign policy in both absolute financial terms and in associated potential risks that the government was prepared to accept. Cabinet debates focused on defence policy preceding the strategy and continuing after it; the level at which defence policy should be pitched, the range of time it should cover and its associated costs. It meant jettisoning non-strategic defence roles and politically problematic areas such as Palestine. This was the area of greatest difference between Bevin and Attlee; the former concerned with being able to demonstrate Britain's continued great power status while the latter fearful of the impact upon the domestic economy. Eventually, Bevin's position tipped the balance, while the Korean War sealed the Labour position on defence.

The withdrawal of defensive troops in Greece and Turkey, the amalgamation of the British and American zones in Germany and referral of the Palestine question to the UN modified foreign policy by engaging American involvement in the direct security needs of Europe and to a lesser extent, the Middle East. In short, the more costly dimensions of international security in

which Britain was involved were transferred as much as possible to the US. Despite initially cool relations, the US presented an economic threat to Britain, while the Soviet Union was both an economic threat and a potential security threat. It proved a successful strategy in Europe as clear efforts were made to achieve defensive security with the Dunkirk Treaty and the Brussels Treaty. This was helped by the contraction of the British military presence in Europe and its supplanting by an American one, first with the Truman Doctrine and then with the establishment of NATO. Where this was less successful, for instance with the lack of a clear American policy towards the Middle East, certainly with regards to Palestine, left Attlee frustrated.[138]

These modifications were complicated by the Labour Party's ambitious domestic agenda. Drawing in an American presence presupposed an adherence to the traditional British approach to the international economy. Here the government was at its most defensive on the one hand resisting any encroachment of its economic plans and traditional economic trading while on the other seeking to secure as safely as possible the domestic changes upon which it had been elected. While resistant to the idea of accepting the American loan for fear it would leave Britain subject to economic direction by the United States, Bevin modified this belief into accepting a relationship in which American help acted as a 'prop' to Britain's traditional trading patterns. American dominance in international relations remained a cause for concern in terms of domestic policy as indicated by Attlee's speech to congress in November 1945. When Parliament

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rridge, *Attlee*, pp249-267

voted on the issue in December 1945, Attlee allowed a free vote: both as a measure to express government resentment by abstentions and no votes and to demonstrate the full democratic process that the Labour Government was willing to allow.

These examples show that Attlee and Bevin both sought only to modify their beliefs about strategies in order to maintain the wider belief in Britain's great power status. They may have engaged with a process of modifying the content of Britain as a great power, but did not challenge it as a concept. There were several reasons for this, both in terms of political ideology and practicality. Attlee's democratic socialist beliefs contained a pragmatic assessment of the future of the Labour Party's appeal, resting upon the twin concepts of patriotism and respectability. These were shared with Bevin who stated his intention to pursue a traditional foreign policy. Undoubtedly Attlee's avowed Victorianism did not envisage Britain without the Empire, it being a defining feature of Britain's international status throughout his life.

There were also practical considerations in pursuing a respectable foreign policy such as reviving the British economy through re-establishing traditional commercial links with Dominion and colonial states. It also served to rebuff, if not fully pre-empt, criticism from the Conservative opposition. The idea of ending the defining characteristic of great power status was not only anathema to Attlee and Bevin, but to so-called 'radicalists' such as the Keep Left group. Although

Keep Left urged an independent foreign policy, independent from both American and Soviet influence, they never made it an exclusively euro-centric policy. The 'Third Force' idea always envisaged the use of Empire and its extension to include remaining outposts of Continental empires both as the source of economic independence and for the social and economic improvement of colonial states. It was a vision framed in the belief of great power status. Finally, the idea of jettisoning the basis of economic recovery would not be entertained, being regarded as political suicide not only in its revolutionary implications, but in its unpatriotic symbolism.

Finally, we turn to measurements of the success of Attlee and Bevin in securing support for their interpretations of foreign policy, beginning with party management. The main areas of conflict within the PLP arose over foreign and defence policy, with a consistent stream of dissent registered in voting practices of backbench MPs.[139] In meeting this criticism, Labour leaders had taken a step away from the experiences of the Second Labour Government in which MacDonald had denounced criticism as disloyalty. Instead, Alderman argues, "the Party leaders took a major step forward by according formal recognition to the respectability of criticism, acknowledging it to be their duty to meet it in good time rather than merely to suppress it".[140] The main priority, it was asserted, was the manner in which dissent was articulated: that it should be respectable and

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[139] Alderman, 'Discipline in the PLP', p294
[140] Alderman, 'Discipline in the PLP', p295

follow the rules of debate rather than descend into the realms of personal mud-slinging.

Change to accommodate this expression of individual opinion was formalised during the 1946 Labour Party Conference and consisted of two main reforms of the party machinery – one being a liaison committee and the other being the establishment of informal links between the party leaders and backbenchers over particular policy areas. The spur for change had been prompted by the heated debates over the Washington Loan agreement the previous December during which backbenchers were told no action would be taken against those voting against the government. In these early stages, the leaders resorted to calls of loyalty rather than discipline but by 1950, the slim majority implied a curtailment of this freedom of expression although Alderman notes that most MPs were happy to toe the Party line.[141] This was despite changes to the composition of the PLP. While trade union sponsored MPs constituted just over a quarter of the PLP in 1945, this had almost halved from its pre-war number in contrast to constituency sponsored professional MPs whose figures more than doubled in the same period to represent a third of the PLP.[142] Berrington argues that it was professional and university educated MPs who provided Bevin with the most criticism in contrast to the loyalty derived from union sponsored MPs.[143]

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[141] Alderman, 'Discipline in the PLP', p301
[142] Berrington, H (1973) *Backbench Opinion in the House of Commons, 1945-55*, Oxford: Pergamon Press, p31-2
[143] Berrington, *Backbench Opinion in the House of Commons*, p35

Party management was clearly made easier by the size of the majority, and diffusing potential threats to the Party message. It also married the manifestation of dissent to the concept of respectability allowing Attlee and Bevin to demonstrate the wider appeal of the party to the electorate and its democratic credentials overseas while removing the sting of Tory criticism. In terms of political argument hegemony, the most important success needed was, within the Party, to maintain cohesiveness and support. With the emergence of Keep Left into an organised group, Bevin's first reaction at the Party Conference in May 1947 was to accuse critics of his approach to foreign policy as stabbing him in the back, and challenged such disloyalty when in his years in the unions he was accustomed to the loyalty of the leaders and the rank and file. Arguably, this was the greatest conduit for political argument hegemony: the election and maintenance of a Labour Government had been an end in itself for many union leaders, thus support of foreign policy was happily left to the leaders. While this accounted for the labourist section of the PLP, the more intellectual members of Keep Left could only argue their case until the point of American involvement. Once Marshall Aid was announced, their dissent largely petered out.

In maintaining the government's voice on foreign policy, the Party's national executive proved useful. Consisting of twenty-seven members, only two were from the left until 1948, which grew to four by 1950. While it was noted that from 1948 the party had shifted slightly to the right, the left wing members of the

NEC were useful in corralling any remaining dissent from the left.[144] Party management proved the more influential, with a shift towards the right by mainstream opinion, itself establishing hegemony within the Party over the political argument.

The significance of these modifications of belief undertaken by Attlee and Bevin and the effects of this on the PLP were that by 1948, the nascent battle over the direction of foreign policy had been won. Attlee and Bevin had adopted the traditional approach to foreign policy, adding only changes of detail both in socialist content, and in terms of modifying their own beliefs. These changes had been accepted in large part by the party through methods of management rather than an overall argument hegemony. When the Schuman Plan was announced, this became important as it was left to Bevin and Attlee to determine the outcome of the political argument about engagement in the process.

In terms of the concept of great power status, the Schuman Plan presented a dilemma in itself: the proposed loss of sovereignty, despite the assurances in the declaration that forms of ownership of production were not under threat, did not correspond to the definition acceptable to Attlee and Bevin. Keeping sovereignty intact was not a principle to which either Attlee or Bevin adhered; both were supportive of membership of the UN and NATO. However, the loss of sovereignty was to be traded for a benefit commensurate with great power status;

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[144] Rubinstein, D 'Socialism and the Labour Party: the Labour Left and Domestic Policy, 1945-50, from http://www.whatnextjournal.co.uk/Pages/History/Lableft.html accessed 3/7/05

a pre-eminent position within the UN or NATO satisfied this. While the UN was a truly international organisation, NATO was a regional grouping, the significant difference between NATO and the budding ECSC being the membership of the United States. Trading sovereignty in Europe over a goal that was imprecise over its future direction, proposed by a state which had witnessed repeated changes of government, and involving the future of a previously aggressive state, did not provide a convincing argument for its ability to provide commensurate benefits. The preference by Bevin at least for a free trade system rather than a customs union was due in part to the economic pressures facing Britain and the fear that engagement in such a proposal might further weaken the economy. Furthermore, despite American support for the idea, the very lack of a distinctive American presence stood in contrast to the policy pursued by Attlee and Bevin for the past four years.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has applied Bevir's interpretive theory to the Labour Government of 1945-51 and particularly its foreign policy. This was done by tracing the conceptual and temporal links that tied Clement Attlee's beliefs to the tradition of democratic socialism and Ernest Bevin's beliefs to the tradition of Labourism. The dilemma of reduced capabilities was identified, showing that the economic impact of war outstripped the range of traditional geopolitical responses, forcing Attlee and Bevin to modify their beliefs. This process of modification was short-lived and retained within it several beliefs relating to great power status. Finally, it was argued that the modifications of belief that Attlee and

Bevin made were relatively successful so that by the time of the Schuman Declaration, the Party's beliefs were more stable and support for the declaration was more muted.

Chapter Four

The Conservatives, 1945-1956

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we continue to apply Bevir's interpretative theory. Winston Churchill and Anthony Eden are selected as the key players involved in the strategic direction of Britain's foreign policy. It is argued that Churchill and Eden held beliefs expressive of the tradition of the conservative patriotic right. The dilemma Churchill and Eden faced was how to re-establish the traditional British foreign policy approach which existed before 1939.

This chapter begins by tracing the links that tie Churchill and Eden to the tradition of the patriotic right. It then provides a historical summary of the period, 1945-1956. Churchill was the main determinant of Conservative foreign policy, articulating the 'three circles' concept while Eden implemented that vision. We examine the dilemma of re-establishing a traditional foreign policy and the impact of this upon their beliefs through modification. Finally we examine the effect of Churchill and Eden's articulations on party management and the political argument.

4.2 Elite Beliefs

In Chapter two, we identified the traditional patriotic right, economic liberalism, paternalistic Whigs and the progressives as traditions constitutive of the Conservative Party. In foreign policy beliefs, these were expressive of: the continued need to maintain historic and imperial links, buttressed, on the part of

the patriotic right, by a robust defence of sovereignty; the limited role of the state on the part of economic liberalism; for the paternalistic Whigs some state role at home and abroad without the corrosiveness to sovereignty of integration; and finally, the progressive tradition which believed in social and economic benefits from some degree of pooled sovereignty.

4.2.1 Winston Spencer Churchill[1]

The son of Randolph Churchill and grandson of the seventh Duke of Marlborough, Winston Churchill was educated at Harrow and Sandhurst, joining the army in 1895. Active in the Boer War, he was also a journalist. He was elected Conservative MP for Oldham 1895-1906, then Liberal MP for Manchester North West until 1908, then for Dundee until 1922, in Epping as a Constitutionalist from 1924-1931, then as a Conservative until 1945. From 1945-1964, Churchill was the Conservative MP for Woodford. His career in Parliament began as Permanent Under Secretary (PUS) for the Colonies 1905-7, President of the Board of Trade 1908-1910, Home Secretary in 1911, First Lord of the Admiralty from 1911-1915, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in 1915, Minister of Munitions from 1917-1919 and Secretary for War 1918-1921. In the interwar period, he was Secretary of State for the Colonies from 1921-1922, then Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1924-1929. After a period out of office, Churchill was made First Lord of the Admiralty at the outbreak of war, before becoming Prime Minister and Minister of Defence from 1940-1945.

[1] Winston Leonard Spencer-Churchill, 1874-1965

Leader of the Opposition from 1945-1951, he became Prime Minister again from 1951 until his retirement in 1955.[2]

When we trace Churchill's beliefs, we can identify four conceptual and temporal links to the tradition of the patriotic right: the role of Churchill's father, the value of history to the making of Churchill, early beliefs in domestic affairs and early foreign policy beliefs.

First, the influence of Churchill's father came through in his personality and the impact of his early death. Described as brash in his personality, Randolph was also a political opportunist with a career embodying dramatic shifts over the franchise and Home Rule.[3] A member of the 'Fourth Party', a ginger group vociferously critical of the Liberal government and of the Conservative front bench, Randolph was a powerful orator. He demonstrated an independent conservatism which Churchill would echo later in his career. The founder of Tory Democracy,[4] Randolph's values were traditional, rather than entirely progressive, seeking to increase and entrench Conservative support. Jenkins claims that Randolph's early death meant Winston's "desire to cut a figure" was motivated by a fear he too would die young.[5]

Secondly, Churchill undertook four points of personal development: devouring the works of Gibbon and Macaulay, arch-imperialist historians;

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[2] Eccleshall and Walker, *Biographical Dictionary of British Prime Ministers*, p295
[3] Jenkins, R (2001) *Churchill*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, p11
[4] Tory Democracy was a response to the 1867 Reform Bill doubling the size of the electorate and was a means of appealing to new voters without needing to commit to social reforms. Its effect was minimal.
[5] Jenkins, *Churchill*, p18

analysing Parliamentary facts; military training and journalism; and nurturing his link with America. The influence of Gibbon and Macaulay is clear in Churchill's style of oratory and writing.[6] With a view to political office, he also read the *Annual Register*, digesting political facts from the time of his birth. What Jenkins describes as 'cutting a figure' before death, Churchill called achieving 'personal distinction', with the House of Commons as the platform for his public speaking. Indeed, for Churchill, it was less what Gibbon had to say than the manner in which he said it that mattered.[7] Establishing his personal charisma and political style were clear markers for Churchill, reminiscent of his father's success. Further early influences on Churchill were combining his nascent writing skills with his military training to explore troubled parts of the Empire during which he met Bourke Cockran. An American Democrat turned Republican, Cockran's influence was at least twofold: he introduced the young Churchill to the excitement of New York, and he provided a further template for Churchill's own oratorical desires.[8]

Third, Churchill's early domestic policy beliefs coalesced around three related points: Rowntree's study on poverty; the *nouveau riche* industrialists of the Edwardian era as a malign influence; and protectionism.[9] Churchill's early association with the Liberals was with the 'little Englander' section, in part the legacy of his father's progressivism and a reaction to the contemporary domestic

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[6] Jenkins, *Churchill*, p25
[7] Moran, Lord (1966) *Winston Churchill: The Struggle For Survival, 1940-1965*, London: Heron Books, p123, 779
[8] Jenkins, *Churchill*, p29; Churchill even made reference to Cockran in his Fulton Speech. See http://www.ena.lu?lang=2&doc=13720 accessed 05/11/2004
[9] Jenkins, *Churchill*, p85

situation.[10] The social reform agenda and the emergence of the Labour Party prompted Churchill to define his beliefs. "Socialism" he argued "seeks to pull down wealth" while "Liberalism seeks to raise up poverty". While "Socialism would destroy private interests, Liberalism would preserve private interests...by reconciling them with the public right". Finally, "Socialism would kill enterprise" whereas "Liberalism would rescue enterprise from the trammels of privilege and preference."[11] Simplified as these points were, his critics portrayed Churchill as naïve, Beatrice Webb commenting "such ideas as he has are a good jumble of old-fashioned Radicalism and mere Toryism; at present wishing to be advanced, old-fashioned Radicalism is in the ascendant".[12] He developed some supply-side economic beliefs, but his social reforms remained ultimately driven by a patrician style.[13] Radicalism was present in political beliefs, calling for abolition of the House of Lords and desiring equality while retaining absolute deference for the institution of the monarchy.[14]

Fourth, Churchill's foreign policy beliefs became more muscular as the threat of war increased. His shift to the Liberal Party in 1904 stemmed from his frustration at the Conservative failure to appreciate this danger.[15] His early statements contained two beliefs: in case of war, Britain should ally with France against Germany and not opt for neutrality, but equally that Britain should not seek a war either.[16] Once at war, Churchill's "big-navy policy...became central

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[10] Jenkins, *Churchill*, p94
[11] *Manchester Guardian*, 5/05/1908 quoted in Jenkins, *Churchill*, p132
[12] N. and J. McKenzie, (eds) (1983-4) *Diary of Beatrice Webb*, London: Virago, vol. II, p287, 326 and vol. III, p100
[13] Jenkins, *Churchill*, p151-2. Although Jenkins also remarks that this is true of most social reformers from Chamberlain to Bevan.
[14] Jenkins, *Churchill*, p168, 173
[15] Churchill, W.S. (1930) *My Early Life*, p383
[16] Jenkins, *Churchill*, p211-2

to his whole political identity".[17] Underlying this policy was Churchill's firm belief in the requirement of Empire, remarking "The British navy is to us a necessity...Our naval power involved British existence...the whole fortunes of our race and Empire...it is the British navy that makes Great Britain a great power".[18]

Churchill's war experiences were chequered, being deemed responsible for the failure at the Dardanelles and adventurism in his support for the White Army in Russia's civil war.[19] He later rejected the Locarno Treaty not as a pact of mutual security but as an entangling commitment, preferring to leave France to "stew in her own juice".[20] He was supportive of the idea of European unity as early as 1930, recognising the failure of Versailles to halt the enmity between France and Germany.[21] Ostracised over his rejection of self-government in India, Churchill aligned with die-hard imperialists. He moderated his position, softening his rhetoric on India, supporting the League of Nations and the need for an armed defence of collective security. Becoming leader of the coalition government in 1940, Churchill's policy was to avoid losing the Empire and to return the country in the same state as it was in 1939 at least geo-politically. However, "Churchill's willingness to sacrifice all to defeat Germany did not necessarily serve the best interests of Britain as a world power" argues one

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[17] Jenkins, *Churchill*, p222

[18] Churchill, R. (1969), *Winston S. Churchill*, London: Heinemann, vol. 2, p563; Jenkins, *Churchill*, p236-7

[19] Churchill is blamed for pushing a solely naval-based solution and a failure to coordinate ground troops into effective planning resulting in a late addition of troops who were felled almost immediately. Blame is heightened further since both Kitchener and Fisher had serious misgivings about Churchill's approach.

[20] Attributed to Churchill, Jenkins, *Churchill*, p398

[21] Young, *This Blessed Plot*, p10

commentator who concedes that "the strategic realities of Britain's position were out of Churchill's control".[22]

4.2.2 Anthony Eden[23]

Educated at Eton and Christ Church College, Oxford, Eden came from a minor aristocratic family in the North East. His background was naturally conservative with a devout Anglican mother and atheist father. Elected MP for Warwick and Leamington in 1923 until he retired in 1957, Eden's Parliamentary career began as Private Secretary to the PUS at the Home Office from 1924-1926, then to the same post in the Foreign office in 1926, Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Foreign Secretary in 1927, he became PUS at the Foreign Office, 1931-1933. Lord Privy Seal from 1933-1935, Eden was briefly the Minister without Portfolio for the League of Nations Affairs before becoming Foreign Secretary from 1935 until 1938. With the outbreak of war, Eden was the Secretary of State at the Dominions Office until 1940 before a brief tenure as Secretary of State for War and then Foreign Secretary from 1940 until 1945, retaining the position in opposition and again, once in office from 1951 to 1955 before finally becoming Prime Minister in 1955, then resigning in 1957 in the wake of the Suez crisis of 1956.[24]

In tracing Eden's beliefs, we can identify four points that link him to the tradition of the patriotic right: the importance of World War One in shaping Eden's political desires; the patriotic defence of British interests in his maiden

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[22] Eccleshall and Walker, *Dictionary of Prime Ministers*, p301
[23] Robert Anthony Eden, 1897-1977
[24] Eccleshall and Walker, *Dictionary of Prime Ministers*, p315

speech; his encounter with the *realpolitik* of the 1930s; and his opposition to appeasement.

Alert to politics from the age of eleven, Eden's political beliefs were shaped most by his experiences in the First World War by military service in Passchendaele and the Somme.[25] So when Eden sought a life in politics after the war, "his motivation was simple. The experience of war, and the close companionship he had forged with all classes of soldiers, had brought home to him more vividly than life at Windlestone [the family home] ever could, the true state of what Disraeli called 'the condition of England' and had developed in him a sense of responsibility for his country's welfare".[26] Eden's volatility is attributed to his father's own mood swings.[27] An aesthete and cultured Eden had a love of literature and languages which would develop into an academic interest in oriental languages and literature at university.[28]

As for many of his peers, the War was a deeply influential period shaping beliefs and attitudes Eden was to hold for the rest of his life.[29] "In war he had learned about the precarious demands of leadership...and he had learned that executive responsibility was best fulfilled through practical attention to detail [mistrusting] instant solutions, particularly the panaceas of political leaders".[30] It was a theme which imbued Eden's maiden speech on the subject of adequate

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[25] He was deeply affected, also by the fact that two of his brothers were killed in action and his father also died during the war.
[26] Thorpe, D.R. (2003) *Eden: The Life and Times of Anthony Eden, First Earl of Avon, 1897-1977*, London: Chatto and Windus, p41
[27] Thorpe, *Eden*, p17-21
[28] Thorpe, *Eden*, p47
[29] Eden, A (1976) *Another World, 1897-1917*, London: Allen Lane; Thorpe, *Eden*, p3
[30] Thorpe, *Eden*, p42

military provisions and established him as a patriotic defender of the British interest. His progressive views on domestic policy were rewarded with his first political appointment. Based on the belief that the Conservatives needed to take a more progressive line with the rise of Labour and the fall of the Liberals, he endorsed a property-owning democracy as the Conservative's answer to Socialism.[31]

Eden's beliefs were influenced by the *realpolitik* of the interwar years. A pupil of the diplomacy of fellow Francophile, Austen Chamberlain, Eden felt Anglo-French understanding was the key to maintaining political stability in Europe.[32] His beliefs also developed about the League of Nations. Initially cautious, the invasion of Manchuria by Japan in September 1931 meant Eden modified his beliefs over the need for the League. He thought it would be an impotent entity without American involvement. Above all, Eden thought the League imperative to the defence of British interests. Whereas Europe was committed to operating within the conventions of the League, America was adding pressure which eventually led to an open rebuff from Eden in a speech in February 1932. The episode revealed to Eden the need to base foreign policy on long term British interests, and that only through the League were those interests best served.[33]

Eden made two important political friendships: to the arch-imperialist 'Bobbety' Cranbourne and Jim Thomas, the three resigning together over

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[31] Thorpe, *Eden*, p58-68; Eden's belief in the concept of a property-owning democracy owed much to Noel Skelton who had developed the idea, in Thorpe, *Eden*, p82, 98
[32] Thorpe, *Eden*, p102
[33] Thorpe, *Eden*, p114-7

Munich.[34] An exploratory tour of Europe in 1934 with a British Memorandum on disarmament led nowhere but Eden's beliefs crystallised seeing French political disorganisation, German militarism and the Italian obsession with Germany.[35] As British representative to the League of Nations Eden was a key voice within the Government over how best to avoid a future conflict. He dismissed pacifist or sanction-based solutions, preferring to negotiate from strength and so supporting rearmament.[36] His resignation came as Chamberlain practised personal diplomacy at odds with official policy. A fillip to Eden's position was that it was shared by Roosevelt.[37]

Eden and Churchill were unlikely political partners having shared little in common before the formation of the National Government.[38] War meant they shared the same beliefs about the need to maintain British interests as the cornerstone to maintaining British power but existing differences only increased over time most notably over America. Churchill brokered the lend-lease deal while Eden felt that "the common language should not delude the British into believing that the Americans also had common interests. He was wary of the price the Americans might eventually exact from Britain for their support."[39] Churchill's wartime strategy, lack of preparation over Yalta, and the exclusion of France from the talks all horrified Eden.[40]

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[34] 'Bobbety' Cranbourne was later Lord Salisbury; Thorpe, *Eden*, p125-6
[35] Thorpe, *Eden*, pp130-5
[36] Thorpe, *Eden*, p139, 154
[37] Thorpe, *Eden*, p194-206
[38] Thorpe, *Eden*, p109
[39] Thorpe, *Eden*, p270
[40] Thorpe, *Eden*, p271,303,307. In fairness, Roosevelt had vetoed the French from attending Yalta and Churchill acquiesced, despite Eden's beliefs that it was crucial for French involvement in a peace process which would intimately affect them.

In assessing both Churchill and Eden up to 1945, it is possible to trace their beliefs to a tradition of the patriotic right, though their manifestations were different. Both were deeply patriotic and aware of their nation's inheritance. Churchill's expression of his patriotism was founded on a romanticised view of the role of Empire whereas Eden's was based on a pragmatic assessment of British economic and strategic needs. Churchill's beliefs regarding America and its intentions were more benevolent whereas Eden's were reflective of *realpolitik,* feeling that Britain should concede as little ground to other states as possible. Finally, over Europe, Churchill's approach was didactic, preferring to offer inspiration to the concerted effort for a workable solution. Eden, in contrast, was distinctly more pragmatic, becoming involved in the process. Having established the roots of Churchill and Eden's beliefs in foreign affairs, we now turn to establishing the historical context of the period under analysis.

4.3 The Historical Setting

The period can be broadly split in two, marking the periods of dominance by Churchill first and Eden second. Churchill set the agenda for retaining as traditional a role in foreign policy as possible by conceding ground to the Labour Government's domestic policy agenda. The Conservatives responded to electoral defeat with internal party reform, creating a clear policy research role and rearticulating the Party's principles of thought. One Nation Toryism defined the progressive direction of the Party, while in international affairs Churchill capitalised on his wartime role. With Churchill performing the role of trailblazer in expressing Party beliefs, Eden's role was limited to that of enforcer and so the Cold War and Imperial context in which this occurred is important.

4.3.1 The Domestic Situation

Defeat in 1945 prompted questions over party organisation and the lack of a political programme. As commented upon at the time, "[T]he Conservatives lacked a doctrine. It was fatal that they lacked a method too".[41] RAB Butler was made chair of the Conservative Research Department (CRD) and charged with co-ordinating the Conservative Party's domestic policy revival.[42] He did this by creating the Conservative Political Centre (CPC) whose aims were to foster knowledge among the activists of party policy and a flow back of ideas to keep the Party in step with grassroots thinking. He also instigated the rearticulation of party principles and a root and branch reorganisation of the Party. This made it more meritocratic by changing its funding methods, linked the Conservative and the National Liberal parties at constituency level,[43] and democratised candidate selection[44] with the end result accounting for an estimated third of the Tory recovery by 1951.[45] He appointed Quentin Hogg to rearticulate party principles published as *The Conservative Case*.[46] By raising Disraeli's profile, the Conservatives were equated with a more inclusive form of Toryism.[47] While proposing the organic theory of society, Hogg was keen to identify strongly with those totems of conservative tradition such as Church, liberty and industry. There were, despite the appearance of consensus, very different motivations

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[41] Burn, W. L. (1947) 'The General Election in Retrospect', *The Nineteenth Century and After*, CXLII, p18

[42] Butler, RAB (1902-1982) was in the Baldwin tradition of paternalism. Key assistants to Butler, his 'backroom boys' included Enoch Powell, Iain Macloed, and Reginald Maudling. See Charmley, *Conservative Politics*, p125; Butler, RAB (1971) *The Art of the Possible*, London: Hamish Hamilton, p140-1

[43] The Woolton-Teviot Agreement of 1947

[44] The Maxwell Fyfe Committee Report, 1948

[45] Ramsden, *Churchill and Eden*, p5

[46] Hailsham,Viscount (1959) *The Conservative Case* Middlesex: Penguin Books

[47] Hailsham, *The Conservative Case*, p20, 35

behind the One Nation Toryism that emerged in the late 1940s and the nationalisation programme of the Labour Government. The success of this rearticulation was sealed with the emergence in 1951 of the One Nation Group.[48] This was the outward manifestation of a subtle shift in party power[49] to those who had only experienced war, appeasement and the slump before it.[50]

Once in Government emergency measures were initially used, 1953 being the first time tax cuts in income and purchase tax were introduced and excess profits tax abolished.[51] Rationing ended, the economy improved, while decontrol and intervention were watchwords of the Tory administration, through the denationalisation of road haulage and steel and iron, and the promise to build 300,000 new houses.[52] Industrial relations were generally good with an overt policy of conciliation.

4.3.2 The International Situation

In *The Case for Conservatism* Hogg identified the constitutive parts of British greatness as follows: "The material factors which have made for our success are our geographical position, our power at sea, our commercial wealth, and our Commonwealth and Empire." Linking the past with the future, he added "Conservatives are proud of...all these assets, and they do not think it unworthy

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[48] Walsha R (2000) 'The One Nation Group: A Tory Approach to Backbench Politics and Organisation, 1950-55', in *Twentieth Century British History*, vol. 11.2, pp183-214

[49] Largely as a result of the Tory Reform Group (TRG). A small ginger group born during the war, it consisted of the rising stars of conservative politics who would beat the progressive drum during the next two decades in domestic politics. In foreign policy, its composition of largely leftward leaning MPs meant they were generally open to the idea of Europe, but affiliated more to the paternalist-whig tradition. See Ramsden, *Churchill and Eden*, p45; Turner, *The Tories and Europe*, p27

[50] Charmley, J (1996) *A History of Conservative Politics, 1900-1996*, New York: St. Martin's Press, p123

[51] Ramsden, *Churchill and Eden*, p248

[52] Ramsden, *Churchill and Eden*, p256

signalled the end of seventy years of a British role in Egypt. It provoked a rebellion from the right in Parliament, challenging this act as one of appeasement. The formation of the Suez Group embodied the anti-appeasement argument. When Nasser nationalised the Canal in July 1956, pressure to react came from the Suez Group but the crisis spanned several months as several diplomatic solutions were proposed. Finally, in October 1956 a covert agreement was made at Sèvres between Britain, France and Israel. It was agreed that Israel would attack Egypt. This would be followed by an ultimatum presented by the French and British. The failure to meet this would result in military intervention ostensibly to separate the warring factions but in reality to reclaim the Canal Zone. Receiving almost universal condemnation over the action, speculative pressure on Sterling forced a ceasefire and Eden eventually resigned.[56]

In Cold War politics, the explosion of the atomic bomb in 1952 presaged Britain's decision to manufacture the hydrogen bomb. Churchill aimed to convene one last superpowers' meeting after Stalin's death in March 1953 but was frustrated by the United States. Continued competition for spheres of influence between the two superpowers meant security arrangements between the US, Australia and New Zealand forming ANZUS in 1951 and the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) in 1954.[57] The Middle East increasingly became the ideological battleground of the Cold War with the Baghdad Pact of

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[56] Brown, G (1972) *In My Way*, London: Penguin, p55; Thorpe, D. R. (1989) *Selwyn Lloyd*, London: Jonathan Cape, p202; Butler *Art of the Possible*, p183; Brown, *In My Way*, p55; Nicholson, N (ed) (2005) *The Harold Nicholson Diaries, 1907-1964*, London: Phoenix, p448, 449

[57] SEATO contained the United States, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan Thailand and the Philippines.

1955 containing Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan while in February 1956, the Washington Declaration affirmed Anglo-American policy in the Middle East.

4.4 Élite Beliefs and Tradition Change

Churchill and Eden identified the dilemma of re-establishing Britain's traditional foreign policy role. This meant reviving Empire and Commonwealth relations, restoring trade links through Imperial Preference and reasserting the role of Sterling as an international currency. It also meant maintaining an influence in strategically and economically important regions such as the Middle East, South East Asia and Europe. Through these undertakings, beliefs consistent with the tradition of the patriotic right were being articulated. Changes created by war provoked a dilemma in that pursuing this traditional approach to foreign policy became increasingly difficult. In turn it prompted questions about Conservative beliefs about Empire, Britain's role in the world political economy and conceptions of national sovereignty and identity.

4.4.1 Identifying the Dilemma

Churchill and Eden accepted and responded to the dilemma of re-establishing a traditional foreign policy by articulating the "three circles" concept. This concept meant redefining Britain's relations with each circle: Empire, America and Europe. It was an approach aimed at sustaining the notion of Britain as a great power and attempting to forge the basis of the post-war relationship with each of the three circles. Strategies to achieve this were the attempts to establish in peace the Atlantic Alliance forged in war; to carve out a

leadership role in Europe; and to define Britain as the head of a flourishing Empire and Commonwealth. We now examine these in turn.

4.4.1.1 Re-establishing the Atlantic Alliance

The tactics used by Churchill to re-establish the Atlantic Alliance were threefold: firstly, he resorted to fear of communism and the Soviet Union. Secondly, he highlighted the cultural similarities and shared language of both nations. Thirdly, he made a direct appeal to America not to return to isolation.

In March 1946, Churchill delivered his Fulton Speech. Invited by President Truman, it was expected he would deliver a speech based on reminiscences, but instead delivered a "single-shot salvo [behind which] he decided to put a great weight of explosive".[58] Called the 'Sinews of Peace', Churchill's speech at Fulton came on the heels of a souring of relations between Britain and the United States in the immediate peace. Fearful of being alienated as an equal player, Churchill's speech can be seen as an attempt to address this imbalance by reframing the dangers of communism. Reminding his audience that Communism was an expansionary force, the only solution was a concerted western alliance. As the two most powerful states in this western alliance it followed that an Anglo-American Alliance should constitute its core. Churchill went on:

> What then is the overall strategic concept which we should inscribe today? It is nothing less than the safety and welfare, the freedom and progress, of all the homes and families of all the men and women in the lands". [The most effective method] of realising our overall strategic

[58] Jenkins, *Churchill*, p810

> concept [is] what I have called the fraternal association of the English-speaking peoples.[59]

At the core of the Atlantic-Alliance was the notion of fraternity; a cultural and linguistic connection rooted in defensive needs. It meant "a special relationship between the British Commonwealth and Empire and the United States. Fraternal association requires not only a growing friendship and mutual understanding between our two vast and kindred systems of society, but the continuance of the intimate relationship between our military advisors".[60] Churchill added, "let no man underrate the abiding power of the British Empire and Commonwealth" before linking it to the United States:

> If the population of the English-speaking Commonwealth be added to that of the United States with all that such co-operation implies...in moral force, there will be no quivering, precarious balance of power to offer its temptation to ambition and adventure. On the contrary, there will be an overwhelming assurance of security.[61]

For Churchill, the long-term logical and ultimate conclusion to such an alliance was shared citizenship between the two countries.

By re-articulating Britain's identity in the world, Churchill was identifying a common enemy; the antithetical system of society which operated under Communism and its expansive potential. It was a direct appeal to protecting the 'American way of life' and yet drew into that image those shared elements of identity with Britain: language; the fraternity of a linked past and the intimacy of recent wartime relations. By tying together the United States and

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[59] Churchill, *The Sinews of Peace*, quoted from a copy of the Fulton speech in Chandos II 4/5, Churchill College Archive, Cambridge
[60] Fulton speech in Chandos II 4/5, Churchill College Archive, Cambridge
[61] Fulton speech in Chandos II 4/5, Churchill College Archive, Cambridge; Jenkins, *Churchill*, p810

Britain, Churchill was identifying fears that required resolution if the process of re-articulating a British global identity was to proceed.

The chief fear in Britain was a repeat of American isolationism after World War One. Identifying the United States as at the "pinnacle of world power" and linking this to "an awe-inspiring accountability to the future"[62] created the sense of moral obligation, preventing a return to self-sufficiency. Churchill concluded: "Our difficulties and dangers will not be removed by closing our eyes to them. They will not be removed by a policy of appeasement", which was as much of a parting shot at the Americans as to the Conservatives at home. Protection from "war and tyranny" was why Britain and America had fought World War Two, but the future lay in the United Nations. The success of that future through the United Nations, Churchill implied, hinged on the role Britain, through her Commonwealth and Empire, was to play.[63]

The reaction to Churchill's speech was cool from all quarters: the American press was hostile to Churchillian sabre rattling; British opinion was underwhelmed, not sharing the same positive outlook about American intentions as ascribed by Churchill; Stalin responded to Churchill's "racial theory" by recognising it as an ultimatum to "those nations who do not speak English... recognise our supremacy over you and all will be well".[64]

This provoked a dilemma in itself. For Churchill's beliefs about Britain in the world to succeed, it required a degree of American assent and support.

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[62] Fulton speech in Chandos II 4/5, Churchill College Archive, Cambridge
[63] Fulton speech in Chandos II 4/5, Churchill College Archive, Cambridge
[64] Gilbert, *Churchill*, VII, p211

This was countered in four significant ways: first, Churchill's speech in Zurich resulted in a more favourable reaction which in turn provided positive feedback from the American administration; secondly, the emergence of clearer divisions between East and West proved Churchill's prophecy and created a change in reaction; thirdly, the announcement of Marshall Aid provided the essential sign for Churchill to announce his 'three circles' vision in 1948; and finally, the founding of NATO in 1949 provided confirmation of that vision.

Continuity of belief was evident in the 1951 election manifesto in which the Conservative priorities were listed in order of importance: the safety of Empire and Commonwealth followed by the cohesion of "English-speaking peoples" and only when these foundations were satisfied was Europe mentioned.[65] The manifesto went on to elaborate, arguing that peace was only possible with firm defence and a strong foreign policy. Reiterating the need for close transatlantic ties, it went on:

> In a world threatened by Soviet imperialism, the surest hope for peace must lie in the close association of the British Empire and Commonwealth and the United States of America...under the Atlantic Pact...we shall make a full contribution of arms and men...Defence in depth in Europe is essential to the defence of Britain.[66]

Echoing these themes again in a speech to Congress in January 1952, Churchill related the importance attached by Bismarck to the shared language of Britain and America and urged the two countries to "tread the same path".[67]

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[65] http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/con51.htm accessed 02/11/2004
[66] The Conservative Party (1951) *Britain Strong and Free*, London: Conservative Central Office, p8
[67] Churchill, W. S. (1953) *Stemming the Tide*, London: Cassell, p220-7

Eden's beliefs differed, not sharing Churchill's expansiveness and more concerned with creating a unified position regarding European defence. Suspicious of American motives, he rebuffed perceived attempts by the American administration to direct Britain towards Europe. Noting the Atlantic Community, which without loss of sovereignty was "achieving increasing unity of purpose and action" and the European Community which was "moving towards political federation", he concluded that neither were mutually exclusive.[68] It was possible to play intrinsic roles in each, affirming Churchill's position. However, Eden had qualms about those relations in practice; the fear remained that if Britain was to take the lead fully in Europe, America would disengage. Creating an American presence in NATO was a success but Eden feared British involvement in the European Defence Community (EDC) would result in a weakening of America's commitment to the Continent. It also implied accepting a change of perspective about Britain's identity in the world which ran contrary to the three circles idea. A speech by Eden outlined his views on the triangular relationship between Britain, America and Europe:

> The American and British peoples should each understand the strong points in the other's national character. If you drive a nation to adopt procedures which run counter to its instincts, you weaken and may destroy the motive force of its action...This is something you would not wish to do...to an ally on whose effective co-operation we depend...You will realise that I am speaking of the frequent suggestions that the United Kingdom should join a federation on the continent of Europe. This is something which we know, in our bones, we cannot do.[69]

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[68] Eden, 15/02/1952, CAB 129/49, PRO
[69] Eden, speech at Colombia University, 11/01/1952, quoted in Thorpe, *Eden*, p368

Eden's beliefs differed little from the official Foreign Office view whose policy was to restate the three circles, note obstacles to creating federation not least experienced in America, and show a dislike for American interference with the 'political destinies' of other countries.[70] It was defensive, not least since the American position supported, as integral to the Special Relationship, the continuation of the Commonwealth for strengthening Western Europe.[71]

4.4.1.2 Establishing leadership in Europe

Churchill articulated a vision of leadership in Europe in three ways. First, he linked Europe with the 'circles', thus reformulating the traditional concept of the balance of power. Secondly, he connected the idea of Britain's participation in maintaining European security through the stability afforded by the Commonwealth. Thirdly, he attempted to steer the debate over the future of Europe in a way sympathetic to British needs.

At Zurich in September 1946, Churchill identified the need for France and Germany to be equal partners in the economic and political revival of Europe. It provided France with the means to recover the "moral and cultural leadership of Europe". Complementary to the United Nations, Churchill continued:

> I believe that the larger synthesis can only survive if it is founded upon broad, natural groupings...we British have our own Commonwealth of Nations [which strengthens] the world organisation...a European group...could give a sense of enlarged patriotism and citizenship to the distracted peoples of this mighty continent.[72]

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[70] DBPO (1986) Foreign Office, 20/12/1951, series II, vol. III, pp 1191
[71] FRUS (1950) vol 3, pp874-5
[72] Churchill's Zurich speech, http://www.ena.lu/mce.cfm accessed 05/11/2004

By comparing Europe and the Commonwealth, it both legitimised the strategic idea of regional groupings and brought coherence to international organisations like the UN.

It was a paternalistic vision which recurred in the following years. First at a speech to the Primrose League in April 1947 in which he proclaimed "Let Europe Arise", and then at The Hague Congress in 1948.[73] He called on the 'great powers' to support this fledgling idea: "Great Britain, the British Commonwealth of Nations, mighty America- and I trust Soviet Russia, for then indeed all will be well – must be the friends and sponsors of the new Europe and must champion its right to live".[74] A legitimate European grouping was articulated in terms modelled on the Commonwealth and Empire grouping. The British role was replicated: offering leadership in a hierarchical system.

Churchill's beliefs about Britain's identity were clear; there was no role for Britain as an equal player within this process of unity. Britain had her 'natural' grouping, as did the United States. Unity was important to resist external pressures. Using the language of a 'kind of United States of Europe' served to reinforce the idea of a third, independent, but ideationally similar regional force. Integral to Churchill's beliefs was the concept of inter-relatedness: the impact of states and situations upon others. On a long-term peace in Europe he remarked "it would be a milestone...not only of Europe, but

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[73] Young, *Blessed Plot*, p18-20
[74] Churchill's Zurich speech, http://www.ena.lu/mce.cfm accessed 05/11/2004

of the world, because we must remember how everything is connected with everything else."[75]

This was modified when Sterling was devalued in 1949. In public the Party supported "all practical measures to promote closer European Unity, consistent with the full maintenance of the British Empire…and the continuing collaboration of the United States".[76] In private, it was hoped devaluation could mean tying together Britain, Western Europe and the Sterling Area. Britain could not compete with America even with the Empire but might if the Sterling Area were linked with Western Europe.[77] This led one enthusiastic supporter to write "[T]he Imperial-European marriage, spectacular and even paradoxical as it may seem at first sight, is the new idea which provides the hope of an ultimate solution…It appeals to traditional Conservative loyalties: it appeals to the great body of 'liberal' and idealist opinion."[78]

Third, the federalism debate in Europe had the potential to create a closed system and a third force. Both of these possibilities were antithetical to Churchill's vision which is why, despite attacking the Labour Government for its poor response to the Schuman Plan, the Conservatives couched their responses solely in terms of intergovernmental measures. Strategically, Churchill preferred the direction of the United Europe Movement (UEM).[79] The UEM's main goal

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[75] Hansard, (1946-7) *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. 430, cols. 9-45, col. 22-3
[76] DNSD 9/3/2 pt 1, Conservative Party Conference, Empress Hall, London 13/10/1949, Churchill College, Cambridge
[77] DNSD 9/3/2/ pt 1 Sandys to Churchill, 24/09/1949, Churchill College, Cambridge
[78] Probably Churchill, DNSD 9/3/2 pt 1 Undated, unnamed, made in reference to general election prospects, October 1949, Churchill College, Cambridge
[79] Established in May 1947 as a result of Churchill's Zurich speech by his son-in-law, Duncan Sandys, and paved the way for the Hague Congress in 1948

was to secure support for its ideas, both at home and across Europe.[80] It called for the free movement of people, ideas and goods, a Charter of Human Rights and Court and a European Assembly.[81]

Churchill offered Britain's "full contribution" to the UEM but it was used to steer the debate.[82] Divisions emerged when Conservative representative at the European Parliamentary Union (EPU), the fore-runner of the European Assembly, adopted intergovernmental solutions which were rejected by the Congress as a whole. They consequently severed their links with the EPU, creating rivalry between the UEM and EPU over federalist or intergovernmental approaches.[83] Opinion on Churchill was mixed: "[his speeches] in defence of the English policy of imperialism and for a union of western states…to be used as weapon against the USSR…does little to reassure us", stated a memo just prior to the Hague Congress inviting Labour Party representation to act as a counterweight.[84] Similarly Monnet was sceptical of the grand gesture of a Council of Europe which lacked substance.[85] At home some even felt Churchill's vision to be "still back in the pre-1939 or even pre-1914

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[80] Mauter, W (1998) 'Churchill and the Unification of Europe', *Historian*, vol.61, p67-84, p71

[81] http://www.europeanmovement.org/history_message1948.cfm accessed 10/11/2004

[82] Wurm, C (1988) 'Great Britain: Political Parties and Pressure Groups' in Lipgens, W and W. Loth (eds) *Documents on the History of European Integration: The Struggle for European Union 1945-1950*, vol.3, Berlin: De Gruyter, p668-9

[83] Mauter, 'Churchill and the Unification of Europe', p73; http://www.ena.lu?lang=2&doc=285 accessed 10/11/2004; for more detailed contemporary account of the ideological division: 'The Hague Congress', *Le Monde*, 9-10/05/1948 from http://www.ena.lu?lang=2&doc=904 accessed 07/11/2004

[84] Memorandum on preparations for the Hague Congress, 22/01/1948, http://www.ena.lu?lang=1&doc=3023 accessed 07/11/2004

[85] Monnet, J (1978) *Memoirs*, London: Collins, p212;Jean Monnet Foundation (1986) *Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Correspondance 1947-1953*. Lausanne: Fondation Jean Monnet pour l'Europe, Centre de recherches européennes, pp.48-53; http://www.ena.lu?lang=2&doc=5095 accessed 15/11/2004

mentality".[86] Despite Churchill's claims of raising Europe above the party fray, he spent the first half of 1948 making partisan pronouncements aimed at forcing the Government's hand, and when this did not succeed, resorted to covert threats.[87]

Eden extended Churchill's vision of British leadership in Europe in three significant ways. Firstly, he offered support for measures of European defence. Secondly he attempted to rearticulate the European 'circle' through the Eden Plan and Western European Union (WEU). Finally, his strategic approach to the Messina negotiations was based on a gamble that it would fail.

First, for Eden like Churchill, federalism posed no dilemma. It stood contrary to themes consistent with the tradition of the Patriotic Right such as national sovereignty. The EDC announced in 1950 envisaged an integrated European army, which would remove the threat of future German rearmament. Prompted by American concerns over the future security arrangements of Europe, Eden declared that Britain would not be involved in a federation.

Although clear about the limits of British involvement, Eden was nevertheless intimately involved in trying to make the EDC work. As the threat of a French veto loomed and the Americans threatened to remove support unless there was ratification, Eden proposed strengthening NATO's role in controlling Germany. When the EDC finally collapsed during August 1954, he proposed the

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[86] Julian Amery commenting of his father, Leo Amery that he was one of the few forward-thinkers in the Party: Amery Diaries, 22/11/1948, AMEL 49, Churchill College, Cambridge

[87] Churchill to Stafford, 26/04/1948, CHUR 2/376, Churchill College, Cambridge; Bevin to Attlee, FO 800/460, Secretary of State's Papers, 19/07/1948, PRO

Western European Union (WEU) as a non-federal alternative. By bringing West Germany into NATO, the allied occupation ended, and German rearmament became possible. Eden felt the EDC must not fail for strategic reasons believing it would provide a bulwark against German and Soviet desires to disturb the peace. It was a view shared by the American administration and other leading Conservatives.[88]

Secondly, the failure of the EDC did nothing to challenge the existing set of beliefs held by Churchill and Eden, if anything reinforcing them by continued French suspicions of Germany. As one commentator remarks, "The official British scepticism about the impractical idealism of the European Federalists appeared to be vindicated. With the fall of the [EDC], the initiative Britain had lost with the advent of the Coal and Steel Community now swung back towards her."[89] It gave Eden the opportunity to rearticulate beliefs about Europe's direction through the Eden Plan and WEU.

The Eden Plan of 1952 redefined the role of the Council of Europe and was regarded as a positive development by some Europeans.[90] It was a response to attempts to create a European Political Community. In December the committee of ministers voted to combine the OEEC and the social and cultural bodies of the BTO into the Council of Europe. As it floundered, Eden proposed an alternative 'twin plan' which aimed to keep the Council of Europe as the forum for intergovernmental measures while leaving the representative of the six

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[88] Young, *Blessed Plot*, p66
[89] Charlton, M (1981) 'How and Why Britain Lost the Leadership of Europe', pt.1, *Encounter*, August, p9-21, p9
[90] Mollet, Guy, (1952) 'Réflexions sur le Plan Eden' in *Notre Europe*, no.16-17, pp59-64, from http://www.ena.lu/mce.cfm accessed 05/11/2004

ECSC states free to continue integrationist measures.[91] Eden wished to "help reconcile the aim of the six…to create a supranational authority with the need to keep Europe united".[92]

The basis of WEU was the inclusion of West Germany and Italy into the BTO, and West Germany in particular into NATO. In doing so, Eden crucially shifted the British position by offering a permanent British force on French soil under the BTO and accepting that it was only removable by the consent of the BTO powers and not British discretion.[93]

Third, the negotiations at Messina in 1955 represented a reprise of political and economic collaboration, resulting in the Treaty of Rome to establish a common market. It was in essence an extension of the Benelux customs union. It has been argued that Britain 'missed the bus' at Messina.[94] Instead, we can see that Eden undertook a strategy which developed from his approach to the EDC and EPC. These failures meant the most likely outcome at Messina was also failure, from which the idea of federal measures could be finally eliminated for good. Letting it fail by itself and then allowing the intergovernmental approach to ascend was preferable to Britain being perceived as pushing a particular

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[91] Julian Amery, (1952) 'The Eden Plan' in *Notre Europe*, no.14, pp43-46 http://www.ena.lu?lang=2&doc=12546 accessed 05/11/2004

[92] Anthony Eden, speech to the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, 15/09/52, from http://www.ena.lu?lang=2&doc=12548 accessed 05/11/2004

[93] Eden, A (1960) *Full Circle* London: Cassell, p165

[94] Charlton 'How and Why Britain Lost the Leadership of Europe', pt1, p9; Young, *Blessed Plot*, p79

agenda.[95] It was an assessment based on scepticism and uncertainty in Europe, not least on the part of Monnet himself.[96]

Eden felt that Messina was in danger of replicating the role of the intergovernmental OEEC as the principal organ through which European unity could be achieved. The Treasury had begun to shift over the benefits of a customs union with Europe, believing it would enhance Britain's overall trading capacity rather than act as a hindrance to her Commonwealth trade.[97] The removal of Britain's representative from the talks in November 1955 ended British engagement, withdrawing to a policy of "co-operation without commitment". The federal ambitions of Messina, despite the open-ended nature of the talks, were assumed.[98] It was a policy based on an assessment of a tactical withdrawal to pave the way for a collapse of the negotiations. Eden was not alone in this belief, it being shared by Macmillan who made little effort to shift trading policy towards the EEC: "Macmillan, for all his pro-European sympathies, was no more ready to contemplate British adherence to an emerging supra-national European entity than Churchill or Eden".[99]

4.4.1.3 Redefining Empire

The reaction of Churchill to changes in imperial relations under the Labour Government did not provoke an acute dilemma of belief but rather the retreat to a safe but increasingly fluid conception of Empire. This challenged beliefs about

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[95] PRO: CAB 134/1226 E.P. (55) 11th Meeting, 11/11/55
[96] FO 371/116040, 11/06/1955, PRO; FO 371/116038 03/06/1955, PRO; Young, *Blessed Plot*, p81
[97] Young, *Blessed Plot*, p90
[98] Russell Bretherton quoted in Charlton 'How and Why Britain Lost the Leadership of Europe', pt1, p14
[99] Ramsden, *Churchill and Eden*, p304-5

British greatness in the form of autonomous action, retaining sovereignty and independence, and exorcising the legacy of appeasement.

During the election campaign in 1945, Churchill outlined his aims in foreign policy, presuming a return to Number 10. "We shall base the whole of our international policy on a recognition that in world affairs the Mother Country must act in the closest possible concert with all other parts of the British Commonwealth and Empire.[100] Stirring the emotions with an appeal to national greatness, Churchill continued:

> Ours is a great nation and never in its history has it stood in higher repute in the world than today. Its greatness rests not on its material wealth, for that has been poured out in full measure, nor upon its armed might, which other nations surpass. It has its roots in the character, the ability, and the independence of our people and the magic of this wonderful island. British virtues have been developed under the free institutions which our fathers and forefathers struggled through the centuries to win and to keep. We of this generation are trustees for posterity, and the duty lies upon us to hand down to our children unimpaired the unique heritage that was bequeathed to us.[101]

It legitimised a maintenance of the past while playing directly into classic Conservative traditions of the power of institutions which dated back to Burke. As one contemporary remarked "The right is acutely aware that the kind of Britain it wishes to preserve very largely depends on Britain remaining a great power".[102] As the Party of Empire and the intimate link in Conservative mythology between greatness and Empire, the "decline of Britain as a great

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[100] http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/con45.htm accessed 02/11/04
[101] Conservative Election Manifesto, 1945, http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/con45.htm, accessed 02/11/2004
[102] Worsthorne quoted in Hoffman, *The Conservative Party in Opposition*, p200

power, therefore, would undermine the basic Conservative appeal far more effectively than socialist legislation."[103]

The Churchillian conception of foreign policy[104] relied on the Empire and Commonwealth as the foundations of Britain's power base. This formed the basis of the *Imperial Charter*. Butler later regarded the *Imperial Charter* as a "policy for furthering the Empire's economic and political unity" while others felt that Britain's relationship to her Empire had changed from an 'Empire of Government and peoples' to an 'Empire of positions'.[105] Even while it was being articulated, it was unravelling. Churchill could not remain unmoved by demands for self-determination, remarking in 1947 "It is with deep grief that I watch the clattering down of the British Empire, with all its glories, and all the services it has rendered to mankind".[106] Churchill came to represent an increasingly outmoded past even within the Party who feared he was becoming an electoral liability. Others were more alert. Events in opposition already demonstrated the fragility of the policy: Indian independence, the withdrawal from Palestine and the loss of oil refineries in Abadan revealed to Eden, for example, that the country's strength must equal its obligations.[107]

Divisions emerged within the Party over interpretation, thus while the Empire remained the centrepiece of foreign economic policy, it created confused opinion, with some sections of the party calling for a reinstatement of the term

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[103] Worsthorne quoted in Hoffman, *The Conservative Party in Opposition*, p200
[104] Ramsden, *Churchill and Eden*, p230
[105] Butler, The Conservatives, p149; Onslow, S (1997) Backbench Debate Within the Conservative Party and its Influence on British Foreign Policy, 1948-57 London: Macmillan, p116
[106] Churchill quoted in Pelling, *Winston Churchill*, p570
[107] Eden, 'British Overseas Obligations', 18/06/1952, CAB 129/53 C (52) 202, PRO

Empire and celebration of Empire Day. Others felt this was a regressive step and urged for a more progressive form of social imperialism. Ambiguous terms such as colonial development were then used which meant all things to all men; progressives took it to mean the shift towards a post-colonial world while imperialists took it to mean refreshing trading ties and making them stronger. Calls then for a Central African Federation were seen on the one hand as providing much needed local autonomy by some and for others, consolidating British presence within the rich materials resource base of Africa.[108] Some such as Enoch Powell even advocated going it alone. He argued that the loss of India meant Britain was no longer an imperial power, but rejected links with America and Europe.

Besides strong emotional ties to continuing links with the Commonwealth and Empire, there were historic ties within the Party that precluded an easy shift, and economic indicators that did not make the attraction of Europe inevitable. In 1955, relative trade values between Britain and the Commonwealth and Sterling Area far outstripped that with the nascent Six by a factor of 4:1.[109] It informed the Government's position to withdraw from Messina as did the Trend Report, which argued that the dangers facing Britain were a shortfall from the economic links and extended sets of preferences provided by the Commonwealth and Sterling Area if substituted for those in Europe.[110] In 1956 the idea of finding a linking institution emerged under the name of 'Plan G' in which a looser organisation of states could find affiliation

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[108] Ramsden, *Churchill and Eden*, p263
[109] PRO: T234/195
[110] PRO: CAB 134/1030, M.A.C. (55) 200, 24/10/1955

without full membership. This was to develop into the European Free Trade Area (EFTA).

The inability to articulate a clear policy about Britain's Commonwealth and Empire role created division within the party with forty-one rebels signed an EDM opposing the government's Anglo-Egyptian Treaty in 1954. The rebellion was suppressed by Churchill's intervention to the 1922 Committee by arguing that financially it was impossible for Britain to continue in the Canal Zone. It touched on the symbolism of appeasement. "In such debates the vocabulary of appeasement was a constant virility test of all Tory policies at home and abroad".[111] It paved the ground for Eden's difficulties when the Suez Crisis occurred in July 1956. Initial outrage fizzled out while a policy was being formulated. American support for British action was noticeably absent.[112] Pressing for conferences to find a solution, the American Secretary of State, Dulles, was arguably buying time to make it harder for Britain and France to react militarily.[113] Frustrated by Eisenhower's declaration that he was prepared to go to any lengths to secure peace, British and French appeals to the United Nations Security Council were met with further American objections. An attempt to establish the Suez Canal User's Association (SCUA) was scuppered almost immediately by American comments that it lacked teeth. It created

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[111] Ramsden, *Churchill and Eden*, p264
[112] Memorandum of Conference with the President, 31/07/1956 from http://www.ena.lu/mce.cfm accessed 05/11/2004
[113] Butler, *Art of the Possible*, p198-190; Heath, E (1995) *The Course of my Life*, London: Harper Collins, p167-8

tensions within the Cabinet which remained largely intact until military action prompted some senior resignations.[114]

The end of Eden's leadership meant the collapse of his and Churchill's particular articulation of the tradition of the patriotic right. Eden's position had been exacerbated by pressure from sections of the Party which had disagreed over the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1954 and the Government's apparent abrogation of responsibility over Empire. The strength of feeling was high within the Conservatives.[115] Eden's portrayal of Nasser as a fascist in the Mussolini mould was initially shared by Gaitskell.[116] Yet critically, Eden continued to use this motif once he had begun to lose support from the opposition, even though commentators recognised that a loss of support from the opposition was fatal to the idea of a war.[117] It was a throwback to 1930s British insecurities about appeasement through the language of personalisation. The appeasement legacy represented "deep-seated emotions affecting liberal-minded people, but they coalesced only too easily with less generous sentiments: the residues of illiberal resentment at the loss of Empire, the rise of coloured nationalism, the transfer of world leadership to the United States".[118]

Eden had forged his premiership on sustaining British interests through regional security arrangements in which the United States was due to shoulder the financial burden. This policy had worked with SEATO, but difficulties in

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[114] Heath, *The Course of my Life*, p166; Anthony Nutting resigned as Minister of State at the Foreign Office
[115] Nicholson, *The Harold Nicholson Diaries*, p449
[116] Macmillan, H (1971) *Riding the Storm*, London: Macmillan, p103
[117] Nicholson, *The Harold Nicholson Diaries*, p450
[118] Butler *Art of the Possible*, p189

securing the Americans' explicit support for the Baghdad Pact through membership left Britain exposed. The policy had demonstrated a significant shift in Eden's beliefs that American ambivalence to supporting the British conception of her status in the world meant pursuing a more independent line.[119] Britain's place in the Middle East and thus her role in the Pact looked to come under threat since a loss of security over the canal visibly cut Britain's claim in sustaining the *Pax Britannica* in the Middle East while dependence on British and mainland Europe's oil needs rested on the use of the Canal.[120] In August, it was noted that "without oil, both the United Kingdom and Western Europe were lost".[121] It was recognised that unless action over the Canal was resolute, "the general view in the Middle East and the East is that the Europeans particularly the British have 'had it'. That is what this row is really about".[122] The wider ramification was the impact on trade relations with the rest of the Commonwealth.[123] The Canal came to represent all the power of the remaining Empire.

Finally, Suez represented a shock to traditional Conservative Party beliefs about Britain and Empire and Britain's role in the world. All approaches to foreign policy hitherto were merely papering over the cracks of a set of beliefs under attack. Suez provided the absolute fissure forcing a rethink of beliefs. It presented a humiliating end to the idea of acting independently on the world stage. It demonstrated the fragility of the economy which saw the outflow in one

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[119] Ruane, K (2005) 'SEATO, MEDO, and the Baghdad Pact: Anthony Eden, British Foreign Policy and the Collective Defence of Southeast Asia and the Middle East, 1952-1955', *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Vol. 16.1, pp169-99; Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p91
[120] PRO: T273/380 'Middle East Oil Policy' by Sir Robert Hall, 28/11/56
[121] PRO: T273/380 Harold Macmillan to Anthony Eden, 26/08/56
[122] PRO: T273/380 Harold Macmillan, 16/08/56
[123] Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p101

week of gold and dollar reserves amounting to 15% of the total. It saw the end of Britain's role as a powerbroker in the Middle East and therefore, showed its limited ability to play a big role in the Cold War. It demonstrated the formal transfer of influence in the Middle East from Europe to the United States. It represented a vain attempt to stem the anti-imperial tide in Africa and Asia. It damaged Anglo-American relations and those with some Commonwealth countries. It damaged Britain's international standing: the UN passed a resolution condemning Anglo-French action by 63 votes to 5.[124] It ended the career of Anthony Eden.

4.5 Modifications

The dilemma of re-establishing a traditional foreign policy prompted the collapse of the patriotic right's ability to narrate a clear set of beliefs about Britain in the world. In this section, we examine the ways in which the dilemma of re-establishing a traditional foreign policy prompted Churchill and Eden to modify their beliefs about Britain's interests. Where Churchill and Eden modified their beliefs, this was the product of identifying information at odds with their beliefs and the application of strategies with which this was countered. These changes are then contrasted with the ways in which other beliefs were buttressed. Finally, this section deploys Bulpitt's measurements: the success of establishing political argument hegemony and the effectiveness of party management.

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[124] Ramsden, *Churchill and Eden*, p317

Re-establishing traditional foreign policy challenged the idea of what it meant to be Britain in the world and required a reformulation of its great power status, forcing a re-conceptualisation rather than a rejection of its component parts. This was defined by Churchill's 'Three Circles' relationship.

The concept of the 'Three Circles' was established in 1948, crucially three years after the end of the war and with enough time to assess whether such a concept was viable. It was a redefinition of traditional British foreign policy by Churchill which articulated a distinct relationship with America. Churchill's strategy was to court America by explicit reference to areas of commonality, such as language and culture. This was entirely consistent with Churchill's beliefs and his own background. Born to an American mother, Churchill's affections for the United States were stronger than most within the Conservative Party. Sentiment and experience informed Churchill's beliefs and it was his experience in war that propelled him to seek a continuation of the Atlantic Alliance in peacetime. Churchill's Fulton speech was delivered at a time when Anglo-American relations had drifted and Britain stood to be alienated.

The articulation of the 'three circles' concept therefore contained within it a significant modification of beliefs which recognised the power of the United States and tried to link that power to the other predominantly white, English-speaking group: Britain and the Commonwealth. Despite initial hostility from the Americans several key events served to support the notion of Churchill's idea: the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Aid gave clear indications of American support while the establishment of NATO secured them.

Eden's beliefs had mirrored this accepted party doctrine about Britain's place in the world. He did not share Churchill's beliefs in the essentially benign root of relations between the two countries, but as leader sought to restate the three circles concept. His realist beliefs precluded the sentimentality displayed by Churchill but echoed the same pervasive fear of American isolationism, more specifically when it came to Britain undertaking explicit and costly commitments in Europe. Eden's beliefs, as well as those of officials in the Foreign office, began to show increasing defensiveness as the foundations of the reformed Atlantic Alliance showed cracks. That America became engaged in Europe's defensive security and economic revival undermined the concept of an equitable Alliance. The beginnings of decolonisation made increasingly hollow the traditional idea of Britain in the world.

A second area of dilemma emerged over relations with Europe and did provoke, for Eden, modifications of approach, if not belief. Churchill's views were clear: Europe played second fiddle to Britain's relationship with its Empire and America. The relationship with Europe was pedagogic; British guidance meant Europe could provide its own security through a Franco-German partnership. This partnership, Churchill had identified, was sympathetic to the grouping of the British Commonwealth and Empire and America. He called for instance, the Big Three, to be sponsors of this fledgling entity. Europe had a function in playing alongside other big players in international relations. It was a simple relationship for Churchill whose beliefs never wavered; European unity was good for the Europeans but Britain was not simply European and therefore

its identity was cast as a leader not as a player. Churchill's beliefs remained unchanged but his views were identified as archaic by some even in his own Party who wished for a stronger or more decisive role in European affairs.

Eden's beliefs reflected the modifications of approach for which some party dissidents were calling. A more positive outlook was needed in order to retain goodwill from Europeanists and to this end, Eden took a positive role in supporting as far as his patriotic right beliefs allowed. This showed in three key ways: his overt support for European efforts to secure their own defence without committing Britain, which was at odds with Churchill's pessimism; his solution to the collapse of that effort in creating the WEU as the means through which Germany could rearm; the modification of approach which recognised that in order for this solution to work, Britain would have to commit armed forces which significantly required rescinding the right to withdraw them unilaterally.

Eden's beliefs did not change, as the Messina negotiations did not produce a different approach. Rather, the experience of one wide-ranging but failed attempt at a supra-national model had not challenged enough the success of one discrete area of integration in the ECSC. Instead, the modification of approach continued along traditional lines by seeking to explore ways in which Britain could be affiliated to this newly emergent economic force. Plan G, later EFTA, emerged during the time of the Messina negotiations as a means for Britain to access European markets at preferential rates without damaging the preferential trading arrangements which existed with the Commonwealth.

Finally, the greatest area of dilemma was the notion of Britain's status in the world. Churchill had expressed this belief to be intricately bound in the notion of Empire and Commonwealth, and it was one shared by many in the Conservative Party, not least Eden. However, challenges to that conception began immediately with the recognition of demands for independence by some countries such as India and the tactical withdrawal from indefensible areas or those of less strategic importance. The scale of change in the relations between Britain and its Empire was such that despite the apparent cohesiveness, this was not something that could be relied upon in the future, a point clear to American foreign policy advisors. Modifications of beliefs occurred within the Party and pressed themselves on the leadership. Churchill's beliefs were characteristically Conservative Party beliefs in that he focused on defining national greatness through totems of past national greatness.

By the early 1950s, these were increasingly archaic and reflected a sense of Britain from the past which had increasingly little to do with the realities of the present. There emerged differences of interpretation about the role of Britain in the world, the basis of her status and how best to achieve and support that status which increasingly differed from that of Churchill. Perhaps most troublesome was that while allegiance to the notion of Empire remained an article of faith within the Party, the economic fruits of that relationship became less abundant. Furthermore, voices from outside were challenging the avowed status of Britain in the world. Arguably, in the midst of this emergent crisis of belief arose a direct challenge to the status of Britain in the world through the

Suez crisis. Influential in that crisis was the spectre of appeasement which tapped into insecurities over the future role of Empire.

When examining the composite parts of traditional foreign policy, Churchill and Eden identified key themes of traditional Conservative foreign policy: the need for strong leadership; support for institutions of authority and hierarchy; defence of sovereignty; and support for evolutionary change. When identifying discrepant information, it was these themes that informed their beliefs about how to counter the threats to the dilemma of re-establishing a traditional foreign policy.

The need for strong leadership was a strategy to counter the threat of American dominance in western relations and from Soviet pressure from the East. It took form through the cult of Churchill's personality and the tying together of Britain's world status to that as head of Empire and Commonwealth. Churchill's patrician beliefs outlined the hierarchy of relations: "Hand in hand with France and other friendly powers we shall pursue the aim of closer unity in Europe", but relations with America were the pre-eminent concern: "Above all we seek to work in fraternal association with the United States to help by all means all countries, in Europe, Asia or elsewhere, to resist the aggression of Communism by open attack or secret penetration."[125]

Support for institutions of authority and hierarchy meant countering the threat of imperial self-determination through converting relations into the

[125] http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/con50.htm accessed 02/11/2004

Commonwealth where Empire could not be retained. It meant support for international organisations where Britain could exert a stronger voice than through international relations alone such as the UN or NATO. And in European policy it was used to cement Britain's leadership ambitions. For example, Eden remained consistent in his articulations about Britain's role as a partner and not a participant in European unity. It was a position he restated eighteen months later at the Party Conference.[126] A boost to claims of British difference came with the explosion of Britain's first atomic bomb during the EDC negotiations, effectively countering pressures to become more of a European player.[127]

Defence of sovereignty operated where relations would affect the theme of strong leadership. The patriotic right privileged Britain's identity as separate and independent, sustaining its claim to be the third superpower. Trading sovereignty for a perception different to this was systematically rejected. There is no evidence that Eden or Churchill's beliefs changed over time.[128] For instance, Churchill was consistently opposed to British 'entanglement' in Europe before the war. His support of European unity was couched in terms which separated Britain from the mechanics of the process:

> I never thought that Britain or the British Commonwealth should, either individually or collectively, become an integral part of the European federation, and have never given the slightest support to the idea. Our first object is the unity and the consolidation of the British Commonwealths and what is left of the former British Empire. Our second, the 'fraternal association' of the English-speaking world and

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[126] Thorpe, *Eden*, p372
[127] Pelling, H (1999) *Winston Churchill*, Ware: Wordsworth Editions, p600
[128] Jenkins, *Churchill*, p815; Young, *Blessed Plot*, chapter one.

> third: United Europe to which we are a separate closely –and specially-related ally and friend.[129]

When we measure the success with which Churchill and Eden gained support for their interpretations of foreign policy, we examine party management and political argument hegemony. The period ended with the Suez Crisis demonstrating the loss of both party management and political argument hegemony. In the run up to the Suez Crisis, two key rebellions occurred, both about Government policy towards Suez. A secret cabal formed consisting of supporters of Empire or 'imperialists', such as Julian Amery, the former Chairman of the Party Organisation Ralph Assheton and the Conservative Defence Committee Chairman, Captain Waterhouse. In December 1953, an EDM garnered 41 signatories opposing Government policy in the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement. Support for the EDM came from the government whip, Harry Legge-Bourke who resigned the whip in protest. Despite attempts by Churchill to rally the rebels, 28 still voted against the government.[130] This was indicative of the approach of the leadership with "many examples in this Parliament of the Government changing its policy in response to backbench pressure without the discord reaching the stage of an open rebellion".[131]

This reflected the growing climax of opposition to progressive tendencies within the Party. The Tory press had levelled criticism at the domestic policies emerging from the Party since 1945 but had offered wholesale support of Churchill's Imperial Charter and the Party's avowed dedication to retaining the

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[129] PRO, CAB 129/48C (51) 32, 29/11/51
[130] Jackson, R (1968) *Whips and Rebels*, London: MacMillan, p104, 111-2
[131] Jackson, *Rebels and Whips*, p113

Empire in 1948-49.[132] The imperialists who would later form the Suez Group began during these years of opposition to flesh out their beliefs against the backdrop of Labour policy failures in Palestine and Abadan.[133] The early power of the Suez Group came from the tacit support lent by Churchill. It went on to become highly organised with contacts in the press who were briefed both openly and in private, and the military from which opinion was channelled.[134] Despite the presence of some die-hard imperialists, the group composition was more complex with many in key positions within the Party organisation with at least five being members of the Progress Trust.[135]

More broadly, Eden was under attack even before the Suez Crisis, suffering from press hostility over his Government reshuffle in December 1955[136] and over his leadership style.[137] Falling approval ratings and constituency disquiet added to the loss of coherence resulting in a short-lived middle class revolt.[138] Right-wing groupings formed, attacking government policy, such as a precursor to the BNP, the League of Empire Loyalists.

The issue of party management goes hand in hand with that of establishing an easy predominance in the élite debate and a winning rhetoric through a generally acceptable argument. In this period, we can see that there was an initial, but generally accepted, expression of beliefs by Churchill. However, Churchill consistently refused to provide details for fear of being a

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[132] Hoffman, *The Conservative Party in Opposition*, p153
[133] Onslow, S (1997) *Backbench Debate within the Conservative Party*, p107
[134] Onslow, *Backbench Debate within the Conservative Party*, p115
[135] Onslow, *Backbench Debate within the Conservative Party*, p117-8
[136] Butler, *Art of the Possible*, p183
[137] James, RR (1986) *Anthony Eden*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, p405-6
[138] Ramsden, *Churchill and Eden*, p295

'hostage to fortune'. While domestic policy was being worked out in detail by Butler, Churchill used his personality as the guide for the Party's foreign policy. It was not until 1948 that he began to make this position clearer and more detailed policies emerged. At this point, an easy predominance seemed in place since much of the Conservative position was in parallel to the Government's approach. A rapid change in perception marked the years 1952 to 1956 as the articulations of the three circles became undermined, with the emergence of alternative positions, one of which consisted of some elite members and which briefly but catastrophically gained predominance in internal party debate.

4.6 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to apply Bevir's interpretative theory to the Conservative Party both in and out of Government, 1945-1956. This was done by tracing the conceptual and temporal links that tied Churchill and Eden to the tradition of the patriotic right. By outlining the historical context, the dilemma of re-establishing a traditional foreign policy was identified. This dilemma showed that the changes wrought by war affected fundamentally the traditional Conservative claim to be the Party of Empire and the preserver of historical institutions, forcing Churchill and Eden to rearticulate their beliefs. It was demonstrated that this dilemma continued to manifest itself despite attempts by Churchill and Eden to articulate Britain's identity in the world and resulted in the Suez Crisis. The Suez Crisis fatally undermined the ability of the tradition of the patriotic right to provide a consistent and feasible narrative about Britain in the world. Changes in imperial relations had forced the pace of articulations. Finally, modifications that Churchill and Eden made were largely unsuccessful

reflected by an increasing loss of party management and of the political argument hegemony.

Chapter Five

The Conservatives 1957-1963

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter we examine the beliefs held by the Conservative leader, Harold Macmillan and his Foreign Secretary, later Chancellor, Selwyn Lloyd. Selected as the key players involved in the strategic direction of Britain's foreign policy from 1956 to 1963, it is argued that Macmillan and Lloyd modified their beliefs about Britain's interests in response to the perceived twin-dilemma of the establishment of the EEC and its nascent economic success.

We begin by positing that Macmillan and Lloyd's beliefs were part of the traditions of Whig Paternalism and a modified patriotic right, respectively, and trace the appropriate links. We then give a brief historical summary of the period from 1956 to 1963 covering both the domestic and international landscape. The content of the dilemma as articulated by Macmillan and Lloyd is examined before analysing the impact upon the traditions of Whig paternalism and the patriotic right of Macmillan and Lloyd's modified beliefs. Finally, we examine the impact of their articulations on party management and sustaining political argument hegemony.

5.2 Élite Beliefs

As outlined in previous chapters, the Conservative party is constitutive of a number of traditions summarized as the patriotic right, economic liberalism, the paternalist Whigs and finally the progressives. Chapter Four showed that the

tradition of the patriotic right had become fatally undermined by its inability to articulate a coherent and feasible set of foreign policy beliefs.

In seeking to locate the beliefs of Harold Macmillan and Selwyn Lloyd, we examine the temporal and conceptual links in the webs of beliefs of the relevant individuals and locate these within traditions of Conservative Party thought.

5.2.1 Harold Macmillan[1]

Born to a family of Scottish crofters turned publishers, Macmillan was educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford. Marrying the daughter of the Duke of Cavendish, he became MP for Stockton-on-Tees from 1924-1929, returning in 1931 until 1945 when he then became MP for Bromley until 1964. A Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of Supply during 1940-42, then Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1942, Macmillan was resident Minister for North Africa from 1942-45 before ending the war as Secretary of State for Air. He was Minister of Housing and Local Government from 1951 to 1954, Minister for Defence in 1955, had a brief spell as Foreign Secretary, then became Chancellor until 1957 when he took over from Eden as Prime Minister until 1963. He retired from the Commons in 1964.[2]

Macmillan's persona played as much of a role as his beliefs in politics. Labelled the 'last of the Edwardians' and 'Supermac', his ambiguity won him

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[1] Maurice Harold Macmillan, 1894-1986
[2] Eccleshall and Walker, *British Prime Ministers*, p320

both support and opposition.[3] While lauded for his achievements in housing policy, articulating the 'middle way' during the 1930s and inventing premium bonds, his commitment to Europe has been questioned. We can trace links that tie Macmillan to the tradition of Whig paternalism in four ways: the influence of Christian socialism; a synthesis of progressive Conservative beliefs; the influence of his constituency's economic depression; and a conventional outlook in foreign policy.

First, close family links with Christian Socialism informed the backdrop to Macmillan's beliefs; F.D. Maurice and Charles Kingsley[4] were godparents to Harold's father, a link which Macmillan continued.[5] When Macmillan went into politics, despite his Christian Socialist heritage, he stood as a Conservative. "Macmillan became a Conservative MP because it would have been unnatural for him to join any other party. Temperament, culture and family impelled him to do it".[6]

Second, Macmillan's pre-war interests were domestic policy; his position defined as centrist and socially progressive, the culmination of which was the publication of the 'Middle Way', an essentially *dirigiste* solution to unfettered laissez faire economics. "It is", Macmillan argues, "along these lines that the

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[3] Siedentop, L.A. (1970) 'Mr. Macmillan and the Edwardian Style' in Vernon Bogdanor and Robert Skidelsky (eds) *The Age of Affluence*, London: Macmillan; Sampson, A (1967) *Macmillan: A Study in Ambiguity*, London: Allen Lane; Turner, J (1994) *Macmillan*, London: Longman

[4] Turner, *Macmillan*, p7; F.D. Maurice founded the idea of Christian Socialism and with him, as part of his 'band of brothers' was Charles Kingsley. The ethic of Christian Socialism stood opposed to the economic basis of the Manchester School, also prominent in the mid nineteenth century

[5] Macmillan was friends with Ronald Knox, disciple of Newman's interpretation of Christianity.

[6] Turner, *Macmillan*, p14

Tory tradition springs from the past and leads to the future".[7] It was a bold attempt to redirect Party tradition, one which would tap into Tory Reform Group and later, One Nation Group thinking. Macmillan's progressive social policy beliefs, supportive of some measures of state intervention, made him the ideal candidate for Housing Minister. He excelled by delivering the target of 300,000 houses per year.[8]

Third, while Macmillan's social policy had practical applications, his beliefs about economic policy were defined by his experience as MP for Stockton during the depression of the 1930s. Later labelled as an 'inflationist' by Treasury ministers when he was Chancellor, Macmillan was reluctant to sacrifice real wealth to "maintain a figure on a price tag".[9] However expansionist Macmillan's economic beliefs, as Chancellor he oversaw the cutting of demand, which it has been argued was a testament to the dominance of Treasury and Bank of England views and only served to deliver a stagnant economy.[10]

Fourth, service in World War One prompted a deep patriotism which defined his approach to foreign policy. His anti-appeasement stance earned him his first government post in a war where he made diplomatic and personal links

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[7] Macmillan quoted in Turner, *Macmillan*, p37
[8] For a selection of Macmillan's writing from the period see: Boothby et al (1927) *Industry and the State: A Conservative View*, London: Macmillan; Macmillan, H.M (1932) *The Next Step*, London: no information; H.M. Macmillan, (1933) *Reconstruction: A Plea for a National Policy*, London: Macmillan; H.M Macmillan, (1938) *The Price of Peace: Notes on the World Crisis*, London: Macmillan; H.M. Macmillan, (1938) *The Middle Way*, London: Macmillan; H.M Macmillan, (1939) *Economic Aspects of Defence*, London: Macmillan
[9] CHANDOS II 4/5, Oliver Lyttelton to William Robinson, 16/08/56 and 27/02/57, Churchill College, Cambridge; Brittan, S (1964) *The Treasury under the Tories, 1951-1964*, London: Penguin, p180
[10] Brittan, *The Treasury under the Tories*, p183

with Eisenhower and de Gaulle[11] and established himself as a minister independent from Churchill and Eden.[12] Under Churchill he was aligned to the patriotic right but Macmillan's beliefs were never as emotionally defined by the Commonwealth as the traditional patriotic right wing of the Party; his position was more open to possibilities and opportunities. His early involvement in the European Movement alongside Churchill and his support in 1952 for a concerted effort to engage more fully with Europe reflected a realism akin to that of Eden. For Macmillan, it was a mistake for Britain to opt out of directing the process of European integration. An identifiable theme in Macmillan's beliefs was that of Britain's necessary leadership of Europe under a more desirable confederal structure. As a junior minister, Macmillan pinned his hopes on the failure of various initiatives after the ECSC such as the EDC and the EPC and felt this would be the case for Messina too, finally allowing Britain to take the lead.

Macmillan's beliefs were sympathetic to the 'three circles' concept though the stresses within those circles and the strategies to maintain them differed. While Europe represented a potential strategic opportunity, the bread and butter of Britain's international prominence still lay in finding the mechanism through which to make the Imperial relationship economically equivalent to the superpower status of the United States and Soviet Union. Young argues that "Macmillan was a man of Empire. For a country that found it hard to contemplate the thought of no longer being a big player in the world,

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[11] American foreign policy until Pearl Harbour had been to maintain friendly relations with the Pétain Government at Vichy. Eisenhower was suspicious of de Gaulle as he was considered a loose canon.

[12] Turner, *Macmillan*, p55-7

Empire was a timeless seduction".[13] Macmillan was accused of being 'first in first out' over Suez. He believed restoring British access to the Canal was the symbol essential to curbing the erosion of British greatness but withdrew this support once the escalating costs demonstrated the futility of the attempt. Whatever Macmillan's credentials until 1956, he did not engage in the Messina negotiations while Foreign Secretary so that "he was...a European only of his time and place, which is to say a tormented and indecisive one".[14]

His beliefs therefore were a combination of Whig paternalism at home and a modified patriotism of the right which valued the historical links of the Commonwealth but was not bound by them. Opinion of Macmillan's European credentials is therefore mixed from those who claim that had Britain joined in 1962/3, he would have acted as a retarding force[15] to those who argue "this was more than a symbolic commitment to a pious aspiration. By taking part, Macmillan was promoting the concept of European political unity as a defence against communism." He also used it as a means to jockey for position within the party.[16]

5.2.2 Selwyn Lloyd[17]

Educated at Fettes College then Magdalene College, Cambridge, Lloyd became a barrister and was active in local government until 1939. Serving in the war as an officer, he rose to the rank of Brigadier before being elected as Conservative MP for the Wirral, 1945-1976. Appointed by Churchill as Eden's

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[13] Young, *Blessed Plot*, p114
[14] Young, *Blessed Plot*, p114
[15] Davenport-Hines, RPT (1993) *The Macmillans*, London: Mandarin, p281
[16] Turner, *Macmillan*, p70
[17] John Selwyn Brooke Lloyd, later Baron Selwyn-Lloyd, (1904-1978).

Minister of State at the Foreign Office in 1951-1954, he then became Minister of Supply, 1954-55 and Minister of Defence, 1955. In December 1955 Lloyd was appointed Foreign Secretary, a post he would retain until July 1960 when he became Chancellor of the Exchequer. Selwyn Lloyd was one of Macmillan's victims in the 'night of the long knives' in July 1962.

Selwyn Lloyd is largely a forgotten minister despite holding government offices for twelve of the thirteen years of Conservative governments in the 1950s and 1960s.[18] As Eden's Foreign Secretary, he was linked with Suez and despite remaining in the post until 1960, there is little written about him.[19] Presented as a mere cipher to the more dominant Eden and Macmillan, Lloyd appears as the 'yes man'. Macmillan, upon becoming Prime Minister in January 1957, kept him as Foreign Secretary as "one head on the charger was enough".[20] He nevertheless showed significant differences from Eden, for instance, by his consistent search for a diplomatic answer to Suez. Lloyd was therefore a man whose loyalty to Party and leader was greater than his personal ambition. His move to the Treasury in 1960 was symbolic of the change in direction of British foreign policy and for that Macmillan needed someone sympathetic.

We can trace Lloyd's beliefs to the modified tradition of the patriotic right in four ways: a liberal inheritance, progressive beliefs in social policy; alignment with centrists in Parliament; and the development of foreign policy beliefs as Eden's Foreign Secretary.

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[18] Thorpe, *Selwyn Lloyd*, pxv
[19] Apart from D.R. Thorpe's biography of Lloyd, there exists little literature specifically about the man
[20] Thorpe, *Selwyn Lloyd*, pxv

First, Lloyd's family background was professional, middle-class and strictly nonconformist. Originally weavers from Wales, the rise of Wesleyan Methodism became a strong anchor transforming weavers to ministers and the family moved from north Wales to Liverpool. Lloyd's grandfather entered the professional middle classes as a dentist but remained a minister and opened the Shaftesbury Hotel, a temperance hotel for travelling ministers.[21] It was indicative of the backdrop to Selwyn Lloyd's tradition of beliefs. Described as "forward-looking...staunch Liberals" they were supporters of free trade at a time when nonconformism formed the backbone of Liberal thinking. The name of the hotel indicated a belief in social reform while family links with Lloyd George ignited Lloyd's interest in politics.

Second, this backdrop informed Lloyd's career trajectory. He trained as a lawyer, becoming a Kings Counsel, motivated by defending against injustice. An early and open opponent of capital punishment, his biographer claims this prevented him from becoming Home Secretary.[22]

Third, Lloyd acted on his political beliefs by standing first as a Liberal candidate in 1929. Reflecting his inherited beliefs, Lloyd's support for Liberal politics stemmed from the free trade tradition. In 1931 as the National Government reflected the dilemma between introducing tariffs and maintaining free trade, Lloyd split with the Liberals and modified his beliefs. His modification came from an assessment that spiralling unemployment needed a

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[21] Thorpe, *Selwyn Lloyd*, p1-5
[22] Thorpe, *Selwyn Lloyd*, p55

change of policy to stem the flow and he shifted his support to the Conservative Party. Initially involved in local government, Lloyd's move to Westminster in 1945 was motivated by his wartime experiences.

Once at Westminster, Lloyd began to establish a reputation for being knowledgeable about finance and taxation. Over the next few years he became the protégé of Oliver Stanley and of RAB Butler, placing him more firmly in the progressive liberal centre tradition.[23] His appointment by Macmillan as Chancellor came when the "Curzonian detachment of [the Foreign Office's] glory years" were coming to an end and the dividing line between foreign affairs and economic affairs became increasingly blurred.[24] His experience of international affairs meant he could more readily place in context Britain's changing global economy. The results were mixed – he was praised for handling inflationary pressures by instituting the 'pay pause' but questioned over his grasp of economic theory. He was also praised for more long-term policy initiatives such as establishing the National Economic Development Council (NEDC) but criticised for poor day-to-day handling of the economy.[25]

Fourth, his beliefs about foreign policy were more conventional views of the patriotic right but were very much undeveloped as a result of his focus on domestic policy. His appointment to the Foreign Office in 1951 came as a surprise. His early articulations indicated support for American involvement in European defence and a strong line against any perceived Soviet aggression. In

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[23] Thorpe, *Selwyn Lloyd*, p108, 146
[24] Thorpe, *Selwyn Lloyd*, p193
[25] Brittan, S (1964) *The Treasury Under the Tories, 1951-1964*, Middlesex: Penguin, p210-1. These were criticisms with which he agreed, Thorpe, *Selwyn Lloyd*, p312

negotiating the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement in 1954, Lloyd took the view that local nationalism and anti-British sentiment were a critical shift, and became wary about the Egyptians' agreement to respect Sudan's independence.[26]

Lloyd's appraisal of Britain's' post-war status differed from Eden. He supported Churchill's attempt to recreate a meeting of the big three to establish a framework for détente after the death of Stalin. Lloyd agreed with Churchill's instincts whereas Eden and many others stood opposed. Again, like Churchill, Lloyd had doubts over pursuing a strong line over Suez because of the agreement of 1954 and because the advent of nuclear weapons made a base in Egypt less important.

He differed from Eden by being sensitive to the lack of any real American support for a muscular response and in fact echoed Dulles's line for diplomacy first and foremost.[27] His pursuit of diplomatic solutions continued until the signature of the Sèvres Protocol. We can see that Lloyd held beliefs consistent with the patriotic right but that these were modified in being significantly more practical.[28]

It seems that above all, Lloyd's ability for detail was not matched by an appreciation of the broader picture which made him useful to both Eden and Macmillan, and which perversely meant he survived Suez.

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[26] Thorpe, *Selwyn Lloyd*, p169
[27] Thorpe, *Selwyn Lloyd*, p212
[28] Thorpe, *Selwyn Lloyd*, 193

We can trace Macmillan's beliefs to the tradition of Whig Paternalism in domestic policy in his development of middle-way thinking in the 1930s and these beliefs were informed by the influence of Christian socialism. While nevertheless progressive in terms of social outlook, Macmillan was defined by a paternalist approach. His interests had always been foreign affairs where again he proved to be pragmatic in applying his beliefs, but did not deviate greatly from conventional thinking on Britain's role in the world. Similarly, Lloyd's nonconformist, Liberal background shaped his progressive domestic policy beliefs. His beliefs in foreign policy were more orthodox liberal, originally in the tradition of free trade beliefs. An early dilemma in 1931 shaped his beliefs on the need to accept the protection of British industry and economy. His post-war beliefs, although remaining of the patriotic right, were defined by the search for diplomatic solutions with an awareness of the limits of British power and the need for American support.

5.3 Historical Setting

To understand why membership of the EEC became a dilemma for Macmillan and Lloyd, the historical setting needs to be outlined. In the domestic context, economic difficulties dominated Macmillan's early premiership, while later he was dogged by political scandal. In the international context, the fall of Hungary and Britain's lag in nuclear weaponry increased Cold War tensions. The Cold War extended to states undergoing domestic political revolution or being granted independence such as Iraq, Cuba and parts of Africa. In Europe, the return of de Gaulle to French politics, first as Prime Minister and then President signalled a step change in relations.

5.3.1 The Domestic Situation

The Suez crisis threatened British gold reserves, and stand-by credits were introduced to ease the balance of payments crisis that ensued. In the summer of 1957 interest rates were increased to seven percent to counter a speculative crisis. The pound was expected to be devalued in line with a partial devaluation of the French Franc. During the same summer, the Council on Productivity and Prices was established in an attempt to establish an incomes policy. It was abandoned in 1961 in favour of the NEDC which came into force in March 1962.

The economy remained a central issue in domestic politics. Macmillan's first Chancellor, Peter Thorneycroft, resigned in January 1959 along with two other Treasury ministers, over a failure to impose spending cuts. The run on Sterling had offered an opportunity to devalue in 1957 which had been rejected and this led to a continued balance of payments crisis. In 1961 a mini-budget introduced a pay pause to offset balance of payments problems in which public sector wages were frozen. The same year saw the IMF make available £714m to Britain. The introduction of the NEDC was meant as a forum between government, business and workers to raise productivity.

Political problems affected Macmillan's tenure most notably towards the end with the night of the long knives in July 1962 where seven Cabinet ministers were asked for their resignation. The Cold War also inspired domestic political intrigue in the Profumo Affair of 1963; the linking of a call-girl, Christine Keeler, to the Secretary of State for War, Profumo, and the senior naval attaché

at the Soviet Embassy in London, Yevgeny Ivanov. Macmillan's position was undermined when he defended Profumo even after it was revealed that Profumo had lied to the House of Commons.[29]

5.3.2 The International Situation

As Britain and France were engaged in the Suez crisis, troops from the Soviet Union entered Hungary on 24th October as internal protests in support of autonomy drew support from the Hungarian army. The Soviet Party leader was replaced by the popular Emre Nagy who formed a coalition of communist and non-communist parties. In order to retain the support of popular dissent he withdrew from the Warsaw Pact and sought protection from the West for Hungarian neutrality under the UN. As Britain and France were engaged in Suez, no support was forthcoming and on 3rd November, Soviet troops returned to Budapest, closed Hungary's borders and the following day a Soviet Government was announced.[30]

The Cold War was beginning to show marked divergence between the USA, USSR and Britain. While Britain was detonating its first atomic bomb in 1952, the US was testing its first hydrogen bomb. Britain while lagging in nuclear developments also became sidelined in the space race. The launch of the first artificial satellite Sputnik, in October 1957 was followed by the American Explorer in January 1958. The following year, the launch of the Soviet Luna probe was the first attempt to reach the moon and in April 1961 the first cosmonaut, Yuri Gagarin, reached space. Britain meanwhile pressed for

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[29] Cook and Stevenson, *Britain Since 1945*, p249, 299; Eccleshall and Walker, *British Prime Ministers*, p327; Macmillan, *At the End of the Day*, pp422-452

[30] Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, pp288-312; Cook and Stevenson, *Britain Since 1945*, p272, 299

disarmament. Britain exploded its first H-bomb in 1957 but by 1960 Britain had abandoned Blue Streak as the independent delivery method and opted for an American delivery system in Skybolt, later cancelled and replaced with submarine-based delivery in Polaris.[31]

The military and technological side to the Cold War showed up Britain's inferiority as a superpower player. The arrival of Khrushchev signalled the shift towards economic and political warfare. When American and British finance for the Aswan dam was withdrawn in June 1956 it was replaced by Soviet finance in 1958. When Macmillan delivered his 'Winds of Chance Speech' to the South African parliament in 1960, recognising the rights of indigenous nationalism, it precipitated the ideological scramble for Africa. The same year 16 African states became independent.[32] The majority of these had been French colonies with most British colonies gaining independence throughout the 1960s.[33] The fear in the United States and Britain was the political vacuum this created would be filled by communism.

These fears about communism extended to other areas such as the Middle East with the revolution in Iraq which removed the monarchy in 1958 and the Castro-led revolution in Cuba. The prospect of Soviet nuclear weapons off the coast of the United States prompted the failed Bay of Pigs military response. A blockade of Cuba by the United States forced the withdrawal of the

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[31] Macmillan, *Pointing the Way*, pp252-8; Cook and Stevenson, *Britain Since 1945*, p284, 298; Ramsden, *British Politics*, p60, 512, 603

[32] Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Congo, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Togo, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania.

[33] Sierra Leone and Tanzania, 1961, Uganda and Kenya in 1962 and 1963 respectively followed in 1964 by Malawi and Zambia, Gambia, 1965, Lesotho and Botswana 1966, Mauritius and Swaziland in 1968.

Soviet presence in 1962. In the meantime, the Vietnam War began in 1960 after a period of tension and division since the end of the Second World War. The War, considered a proxy war, was fought between North and South Vietnam; the north being sponsored by China and the Soviet Union, the south by the United States.[34]

In Europe, the Treaty of Rome was signed in January 1957. In parallel to the discussions at Messina was the emergence of Plan G, the British counter proposal. Plan G would later become the European Free Trade Area (EFTA), the organisational basis being intergovernmental and able to operate without disrupting Commonwealth relations. Attempts to create a formal association between the EEC and EFTA through the Maudling Committee eventually failed and this formed the basis of the British application for membership in 1961.[35]

In January 1959, de Gaulle was elected President of the new Fifth Republic of France. He had returned to politics in June 1958, forming a government with a mandate to resolve the situation in Algeria and in December had won an overwhelming majority in the Presidential elections. The arrival of de Gaulle affected the French approach to EEC relations, which became more doctrinaire. In August 1961, the Berlin Wall was built making official the division of East and West Germany. This prompted attempts by the Six to increase internal cohesion with initiatives such as the Fouchet Plan, the French-led plan to improve political and foreign policy co-operation.[36]

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[34] Macmillan, *At the End of the Day*, pp181-220, 236-244
[35] Young, *This Blessed Plot*, p99-145; Macmillan, *At the End of the Day*, pp1-34, 110-141
[36] Gildea, *France Since 1945*, p79; Cook and Stevenson, *Britain Since 1945*, p11, 168-9, 192-4, 278; Ramsden, *British Politics*, p229-234

5.4 Élite Beliefs and Tradition Change

In this section we explore how Macmillan and Lloyd identified the perceived dilemma posed by the early success of the EEC. The years between the Suez Crisis and the negotiations for membership of the EEC showed the rapid transition of belief states as dilemma after dilemma emerged. This forced the rapid reconceptualisation of Britain's foreign policy direction. The Churchillian 'three circles' concept was repeatedly challenged: by differences of perception, by economic constraints and by emergent nationalism. All these challenged conventional ideas of what it meant to be Britain in the world.

The dilemma of membership of the EEC played itself out well before the formal application was made in July 1961. Attlee and Bevin resolved the dilemma of reduced capabilities, Churchill and Eden did not resolve the dilemma of re-establishing a traditional foreign policy. In the aftermath of the Suez Crisis Macmillan and Lloyd initially sought to re-assert the 'three circles' concept in a heavily modified form. Economic difficulties were in fine balance with the political priorities Macmillan and Lloyd wished to establish; issues of finance acted as a check upon political and strategic ambitions. We can identify the facets defining this dilemma as: first, the need to restore and retain a close relationship with the United States; second the formal declaration of the end of Empire in Africa for both strategic and economic reasons; and finally the attempt to establish EFTA followed by the decision to seek membership of the EEC.

5.4.1. Restoring American Relations

We can break down Macmillan's attempt to restore Anglo-American relations into four parts. Firstly, Macmillan sought to rearticulate the content of the Anglo-American Alliance. Secondly Macmillan and Lloyd sought to establish more intimate involvement of the Americans in Middle East policy. Thirdly, Macmillan used his personal connection with Eisenhower to cultivate a renewed nuclear relationship. Finally, Macmillan sought to carve a role for Britain in Cold War diplomacy over summitry and disarmament discussions.

Macmillan's first aim in foreign policy was the restoration of Anglo-American relations through his longstanding friendship with Eisenhower. The means to this end came at the Bermuda Conference in March 1957. Strategically, Macmillan had learnt the lessons of Suez, such as keeping Washington informed and co-ordinating efforts where possible.[37] In doing so Macmillan believed "that America would help Britain preserve some international influence despite the manifest weakness of the British economy".[38] At Bermuda he dressed up Britain's remaining political clout, telling Eisenhower "You need us: for ourselves; for Commonwealth and as leaders of Europe. Powerful as you are, I don't believe you can do it alone".[39]

In November 1957 Macmillan was pleased to announce that Eisenhower and he had reached a 'Declaration of Common Purpose' in which the importance

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[37] Ashton, N (2005) "Harold Macmillan and the 'Golden Days' of Anglo-American Relations Revisited, 1957-63" [online] London: LSE research online, http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/archive/00000740/ accessed 05/09/06, p4; Originally published in *Diplomatic History,* vol. 29.4, pp691-723

[38] Turner, *Macmillan*, p128

[39] Geelhoed, E. B. and Anthony Edmonds, (2003) *Eisenhower, Macmillan and Allied Unity, 1957-1961*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p15; Macmillan, *Riding the Storm,* p252

of inter-dependence was agreed and that common tasks should be shared between the UK and the US.[40] Expansive in his tone, Macmillan was keen to establish many joint working parties across departments and at all levels to ensure the longevity of this 'interdependence'. He was also keen for co-ordination by all departments with the Foreign Office to ensure the smooth operation of the declaration.[41] It was a significant coup in restoring Anglo-American relations and was part of a strategy of resurrecting the embedded nature of Anglo-American relations from the war.[42] By the end of the year Macmillan was pleased to report that a letter from Eisenhower was indicative of a renewed desire by the United States to want to work closely with the United Kingdom.[43] In short, Macmillan felt he was able to demonstrate that his strategy of lassoing the US into British defensive concerns was proving effective.

A second strategy deployed by Macmillan to secure the basis of restored Anglo-American relations was in establishing American involvement in the Middle East. Despite defeat over Suez, Macmillan had identified the importance of retaining access to the Canal for trade, and access to the Commonwealth and Empire and oil. The Baghdad Pact of 1955 formed Britain's Middle Eastern policy but its ability to assure it was weak since it lacked American membership. Consisting of Turkey, Iraq, Pakistan, Iran and Britain, it had American support

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[40] PRO: CAB 129/90 C(57) 271, 'Anglo-American Co-operation', 15/11/57
[41] PRO: CAB 129/90 C(57) 271, 'Anglo-American Co-operation', 15/11/57
[42] Ashton, "Harold Macmillan", p12
[43] PRO: CAB 128/31, 86(1), 31/12/1957

in principle but they had made it a condition of their support in the Middle East that Britain withdrew from the Canal Zone.[44]

The Eisenhower Doctrine in January 1957 gave an American commitment to help any state which asked for its assistance from the threat of Communist aggression specifically in the Middle East. Macmillan was still searching for a greater American presence in the region to protect its own assets and access to oil fields. In his opening address at the Bermuda Conference, Macmillan had raised this first declaring the "life of Europe" depended on the Middle East.[45] Yet he did not achieve any further commitment to the Middle East, exposing the limitations of British diplomacy. It was not until the following year that the US entered into the Baghdad Pact, prompted by the military coup d'etat in Iraq.[46] In the meantime, American fears of communism in Syria resulted in an agreement to a joint working party with Britain to thwart such an outcome, forming the basis of the Declaration of Common Purpose just two months later.[47]

Third, Macmillan and Lloyd also sought to restore Britain's nuclear status, first by retaining an independent deterrent and second, by repealing the McMahon Act of 1946 to allow the sharing of nuclear information. The decision to opt for a nuclear deterrent as the centrepiece of defence policy was formalised in the Sandys White Paper of 1957. Macmillan's appointment of Sandys was

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[44] Julian Amery, in 'The Move Towards The Sandys White Paper of 1957', seminar held July 1988, (Institute of Contemporary British History, 2002, http://www.icbh.ac.uk/icbh/witness/sandys), p20

[45] Macmillan, *Riding the Storm,* p251

[46] PRO: CAB 128/32 C.M.(58), 63(1), 22/07/58; CAB 128/32 C.M.(58), 65(3), 29/07/58

[47] For the extent to which Macmillan and Eisenhower were prepared to go, see: *The Guardian*, 27/09/03

also the first step of a strategic change in Whitehall to create uniformity between the disparate defence interests.[48] Economic considerations were high in defence strategy, and so too were the twin political beliefs that an independent nuclear deterrent would provide a point of equivalence between the US and Britain, and second, the continuing fear stemming from the inter-war years that the Americans might at some point adopt an isolationist stance.[49]

The Bermuda Conference provided the conclusion to discussions over the placement of American Thor intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) on UK soil. It was not the nuclear equality that had been searched for since the McMahon Act of 1946. This would not be achieved until the launch of the Soviet satellite, Sputnik, in October 1957, prompting a rapprochement of American interests with those of Britain. Macmillan tried to capitalise on Sputnik's launch within the week, linking the effectiveness of the recent Anglo-American partnership over Syria with the threat posed by Sputnik: "I would like to see this sort of cooperation continued with a view to our working out together the role of the free countries in the struggle against communist Russia".[50] In private, Macmillan welcomed the crisis brought by Sputnik, noting that it was akin to "Pearl Harbour. The American cocksureness is shaken...President is under attack for first time".[51]

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[48] Macmillan, *Riding the Storm,* p244

[49] Richard Powell, in 'The Move Towards The Sandys White Paper of 1957', seminar held July 1988, (Institute of Contemporary British History, 2002, http://www.icbh.ac.uk/icbh/witness/sandys), p38

[50] PRO: PREM11/2461, Macmillan to Eisenhower, 10/10/57

[51] Harold Macmillan Diary, 23/10/57, quoted in Ashton, "Harold Macmillan", p10

Macmillan describes this period in his autobiography as a honeymoon.[52] Indeed, the rapprochement gained during 1957 only highlighted the extent to which relations gradually diverged over the subsequent years as British representations to America were less obligingly met. Macmillan finally modified his belief in his ability to influence Eisenhower when he could not persuade the President to apologise over the U2 spy plane incident just prior to the Paris summit of May 1960.[53]

Finally, Macmillan also sought to use a restored Anglo-American relationship by attempting to carve a niche in summitry and détente as the Cold War threatened to spiral. It was a mediating role that Churchill had attempted to establish after the war. Macmillan took this role and in the nuclear context added détente as the alternative to an expansive nuclear programme. With the Declaration of Common Purpose, Macmillan believed that the newly established relationship would mean Washington's acquiescence over this role as bridge-builder between the superpowers.

There were additional reasons for the attraction to this role namely an increase in tensions in 1958 in Cold War politics, particularly over Berlin and an impending election in 1959. To this end Macmillan had more success with Khrushchev than Eisenhower. While Khrushchev accepted a summit meeting instead of the deadline over Berlin, Eisenhower scuppered Macmillan's chances of securing a deal at the Paris summit in 1960 by refusing to apologise for the

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[52] Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, chapter 10.
[53] Ashton, "Harold Macmillan", p13; for more on this see: John Baylis, (2001), 'Exchanging Nuclear Secrets: Laying the Foundations of the Anglo-American Nuclear Relationship', *Diplomatic History*, vol. 25.1, pp55-61

downing of an American U2 spy-plane over Soviet airspace. The collapse of the summit was underlined by the open-topped ride in which Eisenhower had invited Macmillan. Macmillan interpreted this as a sign to the Soviet Union that the collapse of the summit would not affect Anglo-American relations whereas it could equally have meant an American resumption of control in the relationship. Macmillan was aware of this, his disillusionment with Anglo-American relations shared with Lloyd saying he could no longer "usefully talk to the Americans".[54] It was for Macmillan both a tragedy and an epiphany, moving away from the Americans towards Europe through a 'hedging strategy' in which ties with Washington would remain while a more secure future was established in Europe.

5.4.2 End of Empire

Macmillan redefined Britain's relationship with the Empire, the cornerstone of Conservative beliefs in national greatness. Three factors prompted a redefinition of this relationship: the strategic value of Empire in defence terms, the economic costs of maintaining an empire and the response to political changes within the Empire. Three events demonstrated this shift in belief: the Sandys White Paper of 1957, changes in British currency relations, and Macmillan's 'Winds of Change' speech in February 1960.

First, Macmillan's opening statement as Prime Minister was to reformulate Britain's defence policy through the Sandys' White Paper of March 1957. The shift towards making nuclear arms the centrepiece of defence policy had been touted for some years and the call for cuts in conventional forces had

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[54] PRO: FO371/152128, Macmillan to Lloyd, 24/05/60

been raised intermittently for at least four years.[55] The burden of defence costs was identified as a key reason for the sluggish economic revival since the war.[56] Macmillan gave Sandys wide-ranging powers to achieve cuts in costs, predicted by the incoming Chancellor, Thorneycroft, as exceeding £1.5 billion. This was of some importance since the budget was suffering a deficit of £500m.[57]

The major objectives of the defence White Paper were to "have the minimum forces needed to defend and maintain order in British colonies and protectorates;...play a role in preventing world war by creating a 'British element of nuclear deterrent power'; and...to play a modest part with other Commonwealth countries and allies in SEATO and the Baghdad Pact."[58] It signalled the end of national service as the least cost-effective part of military spending.[59] The forces were due to be cut from 770,000 to 380,000, although bitter arguments with the Chiefs of Staff produced a brake on these numbers. Those imperial outposts of greatest value to Britain were also those where the "determination to perpetuate her control was particularly marked".[60]

Second, the post-war reformulation of the Empire was as a bulwark against communist expansion and as the base for Britain's economic recovery. These served to sustain the 'three circles' concept. The idea of reforming the

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[55] Chronology, 'The Move Towards The Sandys White Paper of 1957', http://www.icbh.ac.uk/icbh/witness/sandys), p14
[56] Richard Powell in 'The Move Towards The Sandys White Paper of 1957', http://www.icbh.ac.uk/icbh/witness/sandys), p19
[57] Chronology, 'The Move Towards The Sandys White Paper of 1957' http://www.icbh.ac.uk/icbh/witness/sandys), p14
[58] Chronology, 'The Move Towards The Sandys White Paper of 1957', http://www.icbh.ac.uk/icbh/witness/sandys), p15
[59] Richard Powell, in 'The Move Towards The Sandys White Paper of 1957' http://www.icbh.ac.uk/icbh/witness/sandys), p55
[60] Cain, P.J and A. G Hopkins (1993) *British Imperialism: Crisis and Deconstruction 1914-1990*, London: Longman, p280

remaining Empire was gradually abandoned despite the revival of imperial relations being integral to Britain's economic recovery up to1955. However, the recovery was fragile in comparison to booming European countries. By 1958 it was calculated that the British economy had more to gain from invisible earnings from the wider world than from those within the Sterling Area.[61]

The decision to forge ahead with convertibility in 1958 was based on recognising the waning power of the Sterling Area, the rise of Japan and Western European economic growth itself driven by trade between industrial powers. It was coupled with an attempt to establish Sterling's credibility as a second currency. In the run up to convertibility, Imperial Preference was discarded as an effective instrument of economic policy. Capital investment had been shifting from traditional imperial areas to Europe and the US throughout the 1950s resulting in even less importance attributed to the Sterling Area. By "the close of the 1950s, it was apparent that Britain's future international economic policy could no longer be based on the Commonwealth, still less on its colonial component".[62] For Sterling to achieve success it needed to be tied with the European revival and to discard colonies while keeping them close to Sterling and 'friendly' to the West. "Constitutional concessions offered a cheap and ideologically congenial alternative, as well as being an increasingly necessary response to nationalist pressures".[63]

The difficulty between supporting the pound and continuing a world role surfaced as the ability to maintain both diverged. The Empire was becoming

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[61] Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism*, p266
[62] Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism*, p285
[63] Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism*, p287-8

costly, not only in terms of its own defence but in terms of Sterling balances and diminishing trade. For Macmillan, the decision between pound and Empire was made at Suez, his defence review indicative of this direction. By the time he made his 'Winds of Change' speech, he was reacting to events rather than hinting at the imminence of them. As one contemporary remarked, "The political-military commitments remained. We lagged behind the *zeitgeist*".[64]

Third, Macmillan's 'Winds of Change' speech precipitated the independence of the majority of British colonies in Africa. Macmillan had made the speech at Accra in Ghana in January 1957, but it was not until he made the same speech in South Africa that attention was drawn to the magnitude of what he was proposing. For Macmillan was not only proposing African nationalism in states where the white settler numbers were insignificant, but also in states where the powerful white minority had hitherto enjoyed protection through British imperial policy.

Macmillan's use of language was important for it allowed no ambiguity and served to reinforce many times over the simple message of the speech. Likening African nationalism to that of European nationalism, Macmillan could not fail to draw attention to the end of Empire; the first being the Roman Empire, and, by implication, the second being the British Empire. The use of the word 'fact' was repeated: "The wind of change is blowing through this continent, and whether we like it or not this growth of national consciousness is a political fact. We must accept it as a fact, and our national policies must take account of it".

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[64] T.G.C. James in 'The Move Towards The Sandys White Paper of 1957', seminar held July 1988, (Institute of Contemporary British History, 2002, http://www.icbh.ac.uk/icbh/witness/sandys), p57

Again later he stated, "As I have said, the growth of national consciousness in Africa is a political fact and we must accept it as such".[65]

Macmillan's implied message was that failure to accept it as such would ultimately lead to these states being drawn towards communism. He linked African nationalism with the Cold War struggle, stating that the world was divided into three: the west, the communist countries, and the undecided. Africa and Asia fell into the third group and Macmillan mused where they would be drawn. Pressing the 'One World' concept, Macmillan claimed "no country, not even the greatest, can live for itself alone".[66] It was the 'one nation at home and abroad' tradition of Conservative belief rearticulated to draw back towards the Commonwealth those countries that would seek independence. The Commonwealth was linked to the organic tradition of Conservative thought.

The issue of Empire was deeply sensitive at home. The Suez Group had already formed a hardened resistance on the right. While the Party was licking its wounds, Greek claims on Cyprus in March 1957 inflamed the right of the Party again and resulted in Salisbury's resignation. Macmillan made a conscious decision to minimise African policy over the next few years.[67] It was not until after the general election in October 1959 that Macmillan refocused on Imperial policy, appointing Macleod as Colonial Secretary tasked with the hastening of decolonisation. Meanwhile Macmillan scheduled a month long tour of Africa, culminating in the speech.

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[65] Macmillan, H (1960) *The Prime Minister on Africa's Problems*, London: CCO
[66] Macmillan, *The Prime Minister on Africa's Problems*, p11, 14
[67] Myers, F (2000) 'Harold Macmillan's "Winds of Change" Speech: A Case Study in the Rhetoric of Policy Change', *Rhetoric and Public Affairs*, vol.3.4, pp555-575, p561

The fall-out at home produced the Monday Club, a right-wing pro-Empire ginger group, and a campaign waged by Salisbury against Macmillan which threatened to divide the Government over the following year.[68] Salisbury established the 'Watching Committee' in December 1960 which had its roots in the anti-India Bill agitation of the 1930s.[69] In its original incarnation it had caused deep division within the Party, so its ambit was clear.[70] Dissent focused on one area of decolonization, Macmillan's effective dissolution of the Central Africa Federation. Throughout the autumn of 1961, membership of the Watching Committee increased, resulting in Cabinet division. Finally the crisis fizzled out and while Macmillan was left relatively unharmed, Salisbury and his acolytes were left marginalized.

5.4.3. Europe

Macmillan and Lloyd's evolution of beliefs over Europe experienced significant change. These fall into three phases. The first was the rejection of Lloyd's 'Grand Design' in favour of Plan G. The second was Macmillan and Lloyd's attempt to secure Plan G: the European Free Trade Area's (EFTA) success by seeking a link with the EEC. The third was the abandonment of EFTA in favour of EEC membership.

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[68] For a detailed account of this see Ball, S.J. (2005) 'Banquo's Ghost: Lord Salisbury, Harold Macmillan, and the High Politics of Decolonisation, 1957-1963', *Twentieth Century History*, vol. 16.1, pp74-102,
[69] Ball, 'Banquo's Ghost', p88
[70] Ball, 'Banquo's Ghost', p88-9

The first phase defining Macmillan and Lloyd's beliefs was the emergence of Plan G and Lloyd's counter-proposal of the 'Grand Design'. Plan G emerged as a response to the Treaty of Rome negotiations and became Conservative policy in the summer of 1956, gaining Parliamentary support that November.[71] Its purpose was to form a ring around the EEC which, excluding agriculture, would gradually eliminate tariffs; allow members freedom of action over external tariffs and imports within the rules of GATT; and aim for the continuation of Imperial Preference.[72] Plan G was a strategic but meaningful proposal, formulated to serve British interests but also offering an alternative to the EEC which itself would not be attractive to all members of the OEEC. It was formulated to allow Britain to continue with her own external links.

In the post-Suez tumult however, Selwyn Lloyd presented an alternative policy at the NATO Council in December 1956; the idea of a 'Grand Design'. He "saw a grand design now emerging for [the] Atlantic Community made up of three elements:

(1) high military and political directorate as represented by WEU and NATO;

(2) economic co-operation under and associated with the OEEC [including the ECSC and EPU, the projected EEC and Euratom];

(3) single assembly in Parliamentary lines".[73]

In January 1957 he expanded in Cabinet the idea of a 'Grand Design', also known as "Co-operation with Western Europe", opening with the

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[71] Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p67

[72] Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p80

[73] Telegram from US delegate, NAC to State Department, 13/12/56, Department of State Central Files, 740.5/12-1356, National Archives and Records Administrations, Washington D.C., quoted in Kane, Liz (1997) 'Europe or the Atlantic Community? The Foreign office and Europe, 1955-1957, *Journal of European Integration History*, vol.3.2, pp83-98, p94

acknowledgement that "two great powers, America and Russia, now immeasurably outstrip all others". To be a member of this club required, in Lloyd's view, the ability to construct and deploy nuclear arms:

> A country which wishes to play the role of a great power must not only possess certain conventional forces. It must also have the power to use the whole range of thermo-nuclear weapons...Britain cannot herself go the whole distance. If we try to do so we will bankrupt ourselves.[74]

For Lloyd the choice was clear, either go it alone and have "an insufficient stockpile and inadequate means of delivery or we must seek to achieve our end by other means".[75]

Lloyd presented a dramatic rearticulation of British foreign policy choices in the light of Suez, going much further than Plan G in its limited economic form. The 'Grand Design' proposed a western European political and military association from which Britain could regain her role as a world class power in thermo-nuclear arms. From this, Lloyd clearly believed Britain would lead the European states to form a collective third power, not as a third force, but integrated into the NATO framework: "the high political and strategic direction would remain in NATO as long as the Americans remained there".[76]

For Lloyd, this was the perfect solution to retaining the balance of the 'three circles'. Britain would naturally lead this military European group because of prior knowledge and research "therefore we should be in a strong position to see that the arrangements were made on our terms". It gave Britain the

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[74] PRO: CAB129/84 C.P.(57) 6, 'The Grand Design', 05/01/57
[75] PRO: CAB129/84 C.P.(57) 6, 'The Grand Design', 05/01/57
[76] PRO: CAB129/84 C.P.(57) 6, 'The Grand Design', 05/01/57

opportunity to reclaim the political leadership of Europe which was seen as drifting away: "the political advantages would be solid. [The Five] and probably the present French Government would welcome the proposal. They have always wanted us to 'go into Europe'". It did not even require supranational organisations to decide on the use of the nuclear capacity: "the machinery of the WEU could serve, developed in due course as was necessary for closer co-operation".[77]

Lloyd's proposal was significant for it anticipated the withdrawal of America from Europe, but like the Six, sought to present a coherent, feasible and pro-active alternative: "While we should not set up as rivals to America, we should nevertheless attain some degree of reinsurance against the eventual American withdrawal from Europe...We should take our place where we most belong, i.e. in Europe with our immediate neighbours and thereby give greater cohesion and strength to Europe." He remained sensitive to the risks this proposal had for nuclear relations with the US and Canada but believed that as the basis of the nuclear relationship between the Anglo-Saxon powers was of mutual confidence agreement could be reached. The creation of a third nuclear grouping had economic benefits with European partners sharing the burden of research and development, thus mitigating the balance of payments problem.

In Cabinet, Lloyd's case failed to move the Cabinet chair and Lord President, 'Bobbety' Salisbury.[78] Stating he was "disturbed" by Lloyd's proposals, Salisbury returned to the Anglo-American relationship as the "best

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[77] PRO: CAB129/84 C.P.(57) 6, 'The Grand Design', 05/01/57
[78] PRO: CAB128/30 C.M.(57)3, 08/01/57

hope of securing the free world from Soviet aggression" while Lloyd's proposals ran counter to proliferation concerns voiced by the Americans. Finally, Salisbury contested Lloyd's belief that nuclear defence would bankrupt Britain, it thus being necessary to join with Europe; if America became hostile, as a result, then they could block supplies of uranium which would end Britain's nuclear defence programme. Furthermore, any attempt to engage with Europeans without full disclosure to the Americans was out of the question after Suez.[79] Salisbury had support from Commonwealth Secretary, Douglas Home and outgoing Defence Minister, Antony Head, Salisbury's protégé.[80]

The discussions about the 'Grand Design' were important in securing Cabinet agreement that closer relations with Europe were necessary since it was unsure about the extent to which Britain could reclaim her special status with the Americans. Lloyd believed that Britain would be "better able to influence them [the Americans] if we were part of an association of Powers which had greater political, economic and military strength than we alone could command. We ought to be in a position to deal with the United States Government on equal terms; and, if that position had now to be founded on economic strength and military power, we must seek it through a new association with other countries."[81] Lloyd's proposal was an important influence upon strategies pursued in the following six months. Liz Kane argues the WEU bomb idea must be seen in the context of the Sandys White Paper on defence of March 1957 and decisions to improve relations with the Six.[82] These efforts were stunted, until

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[79] PRO: CAB128/30 C.M.(57)3, 08/01/57
[80] Ball, S.J. 'Banquo's Ghost', p77
[81] PRO: CAB128/30 C.M.(57)3, 08/01/57
[82] Kane, Liz (1997), 'Europe or the Atlantic Community?', p97

May 1957 when a change of strategy was made, by the avowed policy of pursuing in parallel the strengthening of the Atlantic Alliance and political association with the Six.

The second phase was the attempt to secure the future of Plan G by establishing a bridge between it and the EEC. Once Macmillan became Prime Minister, an exercise in public relations was undertaken to present Plan G as a benign adjunct and not a substitute to the EEC.

In defence of EFTA, Macmillan argued, "It was then universally believed that our obligations to the Commonwealth and our outside interests made it impossible for us to adhere to a tightly drawn plan for a Common Market, with all its supra-national apparatus".[83] In actuality, he shared Eden's belief in hoping for the failure of Messina as " it was against British interests for any grouping to exist in Europe which was closer-knit than the grouping to which Britain could subscribe"[84] Macmillan recognised that in the long-term, the future of Britain's economic trade with the Commonwealth would only continue to erode: EFTA "[gave] us the opportunity of re-establishing the commercial leadership of Europe", while retaining as much of a link with the Commonwealth as possible. Simultaneously adding to European security it would also be directly advantageous to British industry by opening up new markets in Europe while old ones remained.[85] He did recognise that the British position was weak and shared Lloyd's belief in the need to develop a political role in Europe which EFTA so clearly lacked. Flirting with the idea of supranationalism Macmillan confided in

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[83] Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p84
[84] Turner, *Macmillan*, p97-8
[85] Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p81

Thorneycroft that the management of EFTA "should be left to a European managing board. This might well be called a 'supra-national' institution. But does it matter?"[86]

Throughout 1957 a strategy of pressurising the Six to negotiate association between the EEC and nascent EFTA was followed but stalled until ratification of the Treaty of Rome was complete. Attempts to elicit agreements before the EEC had completed its own tariff reduction programme were based on fears that the British economy would suffer if negotiations over the free trade area were not synchronised.

In the autumn of 1957 negotiations between the Six and Seven opened. As member governments were waiting for the Treaty to be ratified, there was an impasse on any further negotiation with the idea of EFTA. Macmillan anticipated that stalling until ratification would weaken Britain's bargaining position.[87] Two strategies failed to save negotiations: concessions on agriculture as a precondition to entry of British industrial goods[88] and Macmillan's personal diplomacy in meeting with de Gaulle during the summer of 1958, backed by correspondence between the two during the autumn. The plan was killed off in November 1958.

Linking EFTA to the EEC demonstrated two distinct sets of interests and beliefs between the British and the French. The Suez Crisis created a divergence

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[86] Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p436
[87] Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p436
[88] D. Scott Johnstone in 'British Agriculture and the UK Applications to Join the EEC', seminar held November 2005, Institute of Contemporary British History; Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p438

which in France prompted a refocusing of attention on the European project. Suez and the Hungarian revolution exposed the fragility of European security. The British ceasefire before completing the objectives of the operation in particular had left France exposed and the Americans identified as the problem.[89] In the prelude to Suez two significant changes had already taken place: the pursuit of Empire by the Prime Minister, Mollet, left the ground open for the centre-right to claim the EEC in which it became successful. The rhetoric by the Eisenhower administration in reviewing foreign economic policy signalled a future withdrawal from Europe.[90] After Suez, de Gaulle's return to the Presidency in December 1958 sealed these changes with a programme of establishing an independent France in an independent Europe.[91] In the EEC he saw "that France could play the role of Europe and thus acquire greater leverage on the world stage." In short, de Gaulle sought to resurrect Napoleon's Continental System, not only to shut out the UK as it had been used originally, but to extend this to the United States and to a lesser extent, the Soviet Union.[92]

While Suez had effectively ended the British narrative on the conventional Empire, in France it signalled a step change in political confidence. This would provoke difficulties for Macmillan and challenged the narrative of British leadership in Europe. For instance, in a stinging role reversal of 1950 when the British refused to participate in the ECSC by requiring detailed knowledge over an agreement in principle, de Gaulle rejected Macmillan's

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[89] Pitman, P (2005) '"Un Général qui s'appelle Eisenhower": Atlantic Crisis and the origins of the European Economic Community', *Journal of European Integration History*, vol.6.2, pp37-59
[90] Pitman, 'Atlantic Crisis and the Origins of the EEC', p42-3, 55-6
[91] Gildea, R (1996) *France Since 1945*, Oxford: OUP, p44-5
[92] Gildea, *France Since 1945*, p210-211

search for an agreement in principle instead of focusing on the technicalities of linking of EFTA and the EEC.[93]

The failure to achieve the status of a bridge between the EEC and the remaining OEEC states undermined the rationale for EFTA, creating confusion over its purpose when it was launched in November 1959. It prompted the third phase, paving the way towards opening negotiations for entry into the EEC. When EFTA came into existence in May 1960, Macmillan and Lloyd were already looking for ways to strengthen economic ties with the Six. Macmillan, aware of the shift in political confidence in Europe adopted the language of strategic battle: "we are erecting a first line of defence in the economic field through the Seven. For the first time since the Napoleonic era the major continental powers are united in a positive economic grouping, with considerable political aspects, which although not specifically directed against the United Kingdom, may have the effect of excluding us both from European markets and from consultation in European policy".[94]

The following year was spent pursuing two strategies. The first was to safeguard British industry by applying brakes to the tariff reduction process while appealing to American sensibilities over the inequities of the EEC's economic and therefore defensive direction. The second was to approach the EEC through the prospect of NATO reform, for which de Gaulle had been

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[93] Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p457
[94] Macmillan, *Pointing the Way*, p54-5

pressing, under tripartitism where France would represent the Six and Britain would represent the Commonwealth.[95]

Essential to these strategies was maintaining the role of EFTA for leverage but Macmillan conceded that "there was little reason on present evidence to suppose that negotiations between the Six and Seven would be any more successful than had the original negotiations about a Free Trade Area; the Seven had really no new ideas to put forward on this subject".[96]

Tripartitism was reintroduced by Lloyd. In February 1960 he had suggested changing "course a little" based on his belief that in the coming years the attention of the United States would be ever more drawn to the EEC. He argued to Macmillan "our assets are your personal relationship with General de Gaulle, the underlying French fear of Germany, and the fact that we do not really object to tripartite consultation which they want...It might prevent the diminution of our power to influence the Americans".[97] Lloyd's opinion came when the Future Policy Study reported that Britain's relative strength was set to decline over the next decade, urging a stronger Atlantic Alliance. The rising power of the EEC was noted but it concluded "whatever happens, we must not find ourselves in a position of having to make a final choice between the two

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[95] Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p453; PRO PREM 11/2679 'European Economic and Political Questions: Meeting Held at Chequers between Prime Minister, Senior Ministers and Officials', 29/11/59, pt1, p7

[96] PRO PREM 11/2679, 29/11/59, pt1, p9

[97] PRO: PREM11/2998 Harold Macmillan and de Gaulle at Rambouillet, March 1960, Selwyn Lloyd to Macmillan 15/02/60,

sides of the Atlantic. For this it is essential that the American presence in Europe was maintained."[98]

Tripartitism was the three-way consultation over nuclear matters between France, the UK and the US and was the ace to be used only when other avenues were exhausted. These included reworking preferences so as to include the US and Canada as a third tier to EFTA's second tier relation to the EEC. Although all recognised that this was contrary to the terms of GATT, it was judged that if enough powerful participants were game, then GATT would change.[99] The possibility of using WEU to engage politically with the EEC was discarded as it contravened arrangements with NATO. Reorganising NATO whereby WEU ended and the French gained nuclear recognition was too risky for Britain.[100] Further reformulations of strategy included that the EEC join EFTA; the UK join the European Customs Union on condition that imports of Commonwealth foodstuffs remained untouched; or another form of EFTA with a common tariff but excluding agricultural products.[101]

Since the end of 1959, Lloyd had been pressing Macmillan to support a stronger France. Looking to the future, once Adenauer had gone, it was wiser to "bend our policy towards this as long as it did not harm us economically nor mean the end of NATO".[102] In contrast, Macmillan focused on retaining a position of world influence and great power status and in this he identified the

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[98] PRO: CAB129/100 C(60) 35, "Future Policy Study, 1960-70 [F.P. (60) 1]", 22/02/60, p40-1
[99] PRO PREM 11/2679, 29/11/59, pt1, p10
[100] PRO PREM 11/2679, 29/11/59, pt1, p14
[101] Macmillan, *Pointing the Way*, p321
[102] PRO PREM 11/2679 'European Economic and Political Questions: Meeting Held at Chequers between Prime Minister, Senior Ministers and Officials', 29/11/59, chronological account, p39

EEC as a greater economic threat than did Lloyd claiming "if the threat really were substantial then we must do all that we can to try and thwart it. After all, nothing else mattered if there were a danger that our whole economy might be imperilled. That was the basis of our national existence".[103] He continued:

> The UK must try to preserve its position as a Great nation with world-wide responsibilities" and mused "Would we be so threatened by this new nation as to require us now to strain the political consequences to the utmost to take counter-measures?[104]

Despite Macmillan's bellicose reflections, action was limited to lobbying the Six and the US in a bid to create some leverage. A lack of movement forced Macmillan to accept the reality of the EEC by signalling a further change of strategy with the appointments of Edward Heath and Duncan Sandys.[105] Anticipating the newly elected President may be more accommodating to the British position, Macmillan and Lloyd were quickly disabused. The ace of tripartitism was vetoed by Kennedy in January 1961. The following month, Heath, with Macmillan's backing, declared to the WEU that Britain was "prepared to contemplate a 'fundamental change of principle' in its approach to the Common Market and to participate in the political consultations of the Six if unanimously invited to do so". Lacking a clear direction, the subsequent months were spent assessing the impact on the Commonwealth and where concessions should be sought.[106] By June, Macmillan faced an impasse in the renewed negotiations between the Six and Seven on any European front while domestic

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[103] PRO PREM 11/2679, 29/11/59, chronological account, p43
[104] PRO PREM 11/2679, 29/11/59, chronological account, p49-50
[105] Heath was appointed as Lord Privy Seal with special responsibilities over Europe and Sandys explored the links between Commonwealth and Europe as Commonwealth Secretary. Macmillan, *Pointing the Way*, p317
[106] Macmillan, H (1973) *At the End of the Day*, London: Macmillan, p5

economic pressures mounted.[107] On July 27th Macmillan led the Cabinet agreement that Britain should join the EEC remarking "This decision can be regarded as a turning-point in our history."[108]

5.5 Modifications

The dilemma that faced Macmillan and Lloyd developed progressively over the first four years of Macmillan's premiership. The nascent success of the EEC provoked three perceived dilemmas for Macmillan and Lloyd. Firstly it emptied of meaning the concept of the 'three circles'. Secondly it revealed fundamental weaknesses in the Anglo-American relationship. Thirdly it threatened to reduce British influence in Europe.

If Suez had destabilized the narrative of Britain's imperial role, failure to achieve entry into the EEC undermined the narrative of Britain as a power broker between states. In this section, we examine the ways in which Macmillan and Lloyd responded to the perceived dilemma of the EEC and modifications to their beliefs about Britain's interests. We then measure the success of Macmillan and Lloyd's ability to establish political argument hegemony and effective party management.

The first dilemma Macmillan and Lloyd faced was not about Europe, but how to restore Britain's position after Suez. Macmillan and Lloyd's first strategy had been to rearticulate the 'three circles' concept. They identified the need to restore the Anglo-American relationship and undertook two strategies to

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[107] Macmillan, *Pointing the Way*, p374
[108] Macmillan *At the End of the Day*, p1

enhance this in line with British interests: first by formalising attempts to embed and share information through working parties between the two countries, including nuclear information; and second by entreating American engagement in the Middle East.

Macmillan's success in restoring Anglo-American relations was short-lived, experiencing a steady decline and disillusionment in his beliefs about the nature of the 'special relationship'.[109] Macmillan and Lloyd shared an acute awareness of the vulnerability of the British position in relation to the United States precipitating the shift in beliefs underpinning the move towards Europe.[110] The failure to establish an Anglo-American alliance which at least sustained the appearance of the 'three circles' provoked a re-direction of strategy. The decisive moment where Macmillan modified his beliefs were over his impotence at securing an American apology over the U2 spy plane incident.[111]

In order to restore Britain's international status after Suez, Macmillan modified his beliefs about the second circle, Empire. The narrative of Empire became focused on its value as an economic and strategic asset, its defensive role waning since the early 1950s. To underline this new role of Empire, Macmillan commissioned Sandys to formulate the defence White Paper. This made clear three changes to the future of British military commitments and its impact on Empire. By cutting conventional forces more territorial areas would become indefensible. Adopting nuclear weapons as the centrepiece of defence policy meant a decisive shift away from non-strategic areas of the Empire. The

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[109] Ashton, "Harold Macmillan", p5-7
[110] PRO: PREM/2679, Macmillan to Lloyd, 22/10/57
[111] Macmillan, H (1972) *Pointing the Way, 1959-61*, London: Macmillan, p208

harmonisation of departments concerned with defence and military matters reflected a contraction of Britain's global presence.

While Lloyd and Macmillan were both sensitive to restoring Britain's international position after Suez, Imperial defence was an area jettisoned as being too costly to maintain. Instead, by pursuing a nuclear policy, the essential great power status was retained. It was a modification of Britain's great power role; shifting from the traditionally large conventional army to a much smaller army supplemented by nuclear arms.

A second strategy to counter indigenous nationalism was to avoid the French experience and take the lead in presenting the end of Empire. While it was possible to sustain the illusion of great power status temporarily, the political corollary was the rise of colonial nationalism. This forced a further modification of belief; if economic ties were sought elsewhere and defence policy had shifted away from the traditional Empire role, politically it became indefensible to sustain any links by force. Macmillan's 'Winds of Change' speech reflected this modification of belief. Significantly, he also presented a reformulation of the traditional Conservative foreign policy belief of one nation at home and abroad in light of these changes, with the slogan of One World. Cultivating relations by appealing to colonial states to choose the democratic path, and through evolutionary means to become independent of Empire Macmillan's vision was of interdependence in one world.

Finally, Macmillan and Lloyd responded to the emergence of the EEC by deploying several strategies. Lloyd initially used the aftermath of Suez to present an ambitious reformulation of British European policy. By articulating his 'Grand Design', he sought to link Britain and Europe beyond merely economic terms and to include a coherent defensive arrangement and a political dimension. It lacked support within Cabinet although Lloyd continued to press for a greater British political presence in Europe.

Macmillan and Lloyd implemented the accepted policy of Plan G which had been agreed before Suez. EFTA was recognised as weak by Macmillan and Lloyd by its timing in relation to ratification of the Treaty of Rome and by its exclusion of agricultural goods. The importance of securing this link precipitated modifications over exclusions of agriculture and the intervention of personal diplomacy.

The failure to establish EFTA as a bridge prompted further modifications and strategies with which to boost the British position. The rapid appraisal of various other arrangements which could sustain the British position were rejected for falling foul of international agreements or being too risky. By relying on direct appeals to the American administration, Macmillan and Lloyd were left with no more options once the possibility of tripartitism was removed.

When it came to party management, creating acceptance for Plan G revealed some resistance within Cabinet as some Ministers thought such an arrangement was still too close to Europe. Macmillan sought to counter criticism

at the Party Conference in 1957 with a direct appeal to tradition: "Our party has never been afraid of new ideas, from Benjamin Disraeli to Joseph Chamberlain. While our opponents still cling with all the fervour of bigoted devotees, to the obsolete dogmas of an outworn socialist creed, we must reach out into new and dramatic fields of endeavour. We must not live in the past, but for the future".[112] Linking past and present, Macmillan sought to identify the flexibility and pragmatism of Conservative traditions. As the cornerstone of British European policy, it was articulated in terms of the 'three circles' providing not a break with the past but a modification of the stresses placed upon each circle of interest.

In terms of establishing political argument hegemony, Macmillan's address to Parliament in November 1956 made clear this continued reliance on the rhetoric of the 'three circles' when he drew attention to Britain's "triple duties".[113] Of the Commonwealth he stated that there continued to be strong emotional, economic and financial ties. Of Europe he recognised the geographical link and the historical link with the continent. Finally, of America he reiterated without a sense of irony the 'great alliance' between the two nations despite the current circumstances.[114] Plan G was accepted by Parliament.

Plan G did not threaten the concept of the 'three circles' and was acceptable as it protected British business, retained close relations with Europe without federalist measures and did not affect relations with the US or Commonwealth. Of Lloyd's 'Grand Design', the Cabinet disquiet was greater

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[112] Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p87
[113] Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p87
[114] Hansard, (1956) vol 560, 26/11/1956; the speech was delivered amidst the Suez crisis

and it was rejected as contrary to the 'three circles' concept for potentially threatening the Anglo-American alliance. This did not become an issue of party management or of establishing any political argument hegemony since it was cast off as a serious policy proposal by Cabinet heavyweights.

The greatest challenge to party management, and over which there existed little political argument hegemony, was the decision to end Empire. Here we can trace the difficulties of Party management to members of the Suez Group and to the bitter relationship between Macmillan and Salisbury which resulted in the establishment of the Monday Club and Salisbury's support of the Watching Committee, which through stoking the fires of discontent sought to undermine Macmillan's authority on Africa. Macmillan was under pressure during 1961 as opinion mounted against him from the right of the Conservative Party. Leading a divided Cabinet, Macmillan was able to overcome division and dissent, effectively marginalising Salisbury in the process. Macmillan was unable however to establish an easy dominance in the debate over the end of Empire.

5.6 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to apply Bevir's interpretative theory to the Conservative Government of 1957-63. This was done by tracing the conceptual and temporal links that tied Harold Macmillan's beliefs to the tradition of Whig Paternalism and Selwyn Lloyd's beliefs to the tradition of the modified patriotic right. By outlining the historical context, it was possible to identify the perceived dilemma of the EEC. This showed that Macmillan and Lloyd engaged in a process of rapid redefinition of the increasingly beleaguered 'three circles'

concept resulting in accepting the need for membership of the EEC. It was also demonstrated that this process of modification was incremental, and retained significant emotional attachments to elements of the 'three circles' concept. Finally, it was argued that modifications of belief by Macmillan and Lloyd were initially relatively successful within the Party but that a significant section of the public were unmoved by the shift from Empire to Europe.

Chapter Six

The Labour Party 1955-1963

6.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the beliefs of the Labour Party leader, Hugh Gaitskell, and the spokesperson on defence, Denis Healey. It is argued that Gaitskell and Healey held beliefs expressive of the tradition of democratic socialism. The dilemma Gaitskell and Healey faced was over management of the direction of the Party which in turn shaped their responses to European policy. The chapter begins by tracing the conceptual and temporal links that tie Gaitskell and Healey to the tradition of democratic socialism. It then provides a contextual summary of the period, 1955-1964. Finally we measure the success of the two men's response to the dilemma by their effect on party management and the political argument hegemony.

6.2 Elite Beliefs

In chapter three, Attlee and Bevin modified the content of Labour's foreign policy traditions by formalising the rejection of anti-militarism and anti-capitalism and by fleshing out a new internationalism. To identify the beliefs of Gaitskell and Healey it is first necessary to trace the transmission of relevant ideas, identifying both the temporal and conceptual links in the webs of beliefs of the relevant individuals.

6.2.1 Hugh Gaitskell[1]

Gaitskell is regarded as the best and most influential representative of the democratic socialist tradition within the Labour Party.[2] An academic, he became Private Secretary to Hugh Dalton as Minister of Economic Warfare in 1940 and then Dalton's Personal Assistant at the Board of Trade in 1942. Elected MP for Leeds South in 1945 until his death in 1963, he rose from Parliamentary Secretary to Emanuel Shinwell in 1946, to Minister of Fuel and Power in 1947, Minister of State to the Treasury in February 1950 and then Chancellor of the Exchequer the same October. By 1955, he replaced Attlee as leader of the Party.

Gaitskell's background was affluent. With a history of public service either in the military or the civil service Brivati argues, "Hugh Gaitskell…was not born into the Labour Movement; his world was defined by the British Empire [and] that unique middle-class internationalism which the Empire created".[3] Gaitskell was influenced by his father's conscientiousness in politics and his mother's vivacity in his social life.[4] Educated at the Dragon Preparatory School in Oxford, Gaitskell went onto Winchester in 1918 and in 1924 to New College, Oxford, where he made significant friendships with Evan Durbin[5], Frank Pakenham,[6] and the Coles.[7]

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[1] Hugh Todd Naylor Gaitskell (1906-1963)
[2] Cook and Stevenson, *Britain Since 1945*, p234; Williams, P (1982) *Hugh Gaitskell*, Oxford: OUP, pix
[3] Brivati, B (1997) *Hugh Gaitskell* London: Richard Cohen Books, p1, 2
[4] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p4
[5] Durbin, E.F.M. (1906-48), Labour Party intellectual after abandoning Gladstonian Liberalism for democratic socialism, Durbin lectured at the LSE, was close in intellectual outlook and friends with Gaitskell, working together during the Attlee governments before his early death.
[6] Pakenham, Frank (1905-2001), later Lord Longford. Labour politician and philanthropist, whose socially inclined work was underpinned by his Christian faith. Later in Wilson's cabinet, but resigned in 1968.
[7] Cole, GDH (1889-1959), Historian and socialist political theorist who collaborated with his wife, Margaret, (1893-1980).

We can trace beliefs which tie Gaitskell conceptually and temporally to the tradition of democratic socialism. This can be demonstrated in three ways: the influence of the General Strike; the development of his thought on economics; and the impact of 1930s appeasement.

First, the General Strike of 1926 affected Gaitskell as an event which Brivati describes as a "defining experience [that] entirely shifted his priorities".[8] It tapped into his inherited family beliefs, and resonated with the adoption at university of logical positivism. Accordingly, his biographer notes "He was not born a socialist but he chose socialism and in turn socialism allowed him to combine features of his character successfully". This was possible because "it gave him an identity that liberated him from his family and his class, while combining strong rational arguments for change with strong emotional attachments and moral certainty that the cause was just".[9]

His shift was immediate with an offer, through the Coles, to help the strikers, and cemented through consequent links with senior Labour and union leaders. After the Strike, Gaitskell aligned himself with Cole and articulated his beliefs on the nature of class, politics and revolution. Rejecting revolt for moderate gains, he advocated a pact between classes which would see the middle class lead the working class on a platform of middle class ideas.[10] Such was the persuasiveness of Gaitskell's views that the teacher-pupil relationship between him and Cole became reversed by 1929.[11]

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[8] Brivati, *Gaitskell*, p17
[9] Brivati, *Gaitskell*, p17
[10] Gaitskell, H (1929) *Chartism* London: Longman; Brivati, *Gaitskell*, p18-9
[11] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p25

Second, Gaitskell studied economics at university, and returned to the subject as a lecturer at University College London, immersing him in the trend of Keynesian thinking. He injected realism into his hitherto utopian socialism.[12] Credited with influencing Dalton's beliefs on economics, he also met Evan Durbin again. Both were introduced to the XYZ Club in the early thirties by Dalton, a club set up to avoid a repeat of the last Labour Government's disastrous relations with the City.[13] By now Gaitskell's beliefs had developed to adopt Keynesian demand management and not public ownership as the means to improve economic relations.[14] In this respect, Gaitskell's beliefs had developed further than those held by the Labour leadership whose cardinal tenet had been public ownership since before the Constitution was written.

In 1945, this became evident as the Party withdrew from the more nuanced Keynesianism inherent in the *Immediate Programme of 1937* in favour of the cruder, but more potent symbol of nationalisation. Although Gaitskell embraced these policies, once the opportunity arose he challenged their substance and was pivotal in outlining the need for the devaluation of Sterling in 1949. It was regarded as a necessity to boost exports, but also to counter the memories of the Labour Government's experiences of 1931.[15] In this he was joined by Jay and Wilson. It was during this time that a shift of beliefs on the future of Labour's economic policy was forming the bedrock of revisionism in

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[12] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p33
[13] Brivati, *Gaitskell*, p26
[14] Brivati, *Gaitskell*, p28
[15] Brivati, *Gaitskell*, p84

the 1950s.[16] While the issue of nationalisation remained under the Morrisonian model, it did not allow for the socialisation of industry, merely the shift of control from private hands to the state.[17] However, Gaitskell was already showing signs of Tawney's influence[18] in shifting his focus on to equality rather than public ownership.[19] Once Gaitskell became leader his attempts to move the Party towards redefining its relationship towards Keynesian management of the economy would eventually culminate in the Clause Four debate.[20]

Third, during the 1930s Gaitskell, like many of his contemporaries, flirted with Marxism and support of the Soviet Union. Deliberating over the problems facing the Chartists sharpened his thinking over the difficulties of revolutionary responses to social inequalities.[21] His belief in the methods and approach of democratic socialism was confirmed by spending time in Austria in the early 1930s when political opposition was being outlawed, with the socialists mainly targeted.[22] Gaitskell became actively involved in helping Austrian socialists escape, an experience which made him an "early, consistent and passionate anti-appeaser".[23] Gaitskell embraced *realpolitik* to a degree untypical of the Labour Party, developing by the time war broke out, two fixed points to his philosophy: first, that Labour needed to pursue the democratic route and in doing so it had to maintain independence; and secondly, that in

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[16] Brivati, *Gaitskell*, p86
[17] Herbert Morrison, (1888-1965), was a senior Labour politician. In the war Cabinet and in Attlee's governments, Morrison is credited with organising the winning electoral strategy of 1945 and is also deemed responsible for the nationalisation programme which then followed.
[18] R.H. Tawney, (1880-1962), economist and social critic who was influenced by Christian socialism and working in London's East End. Involved in the Worker's Education Association, Tawney influenced Labour's economic and ethical thought.
[19] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p48
[20] Brivati, *Gaitskell*, p83
[21] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p49
[22] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p60-4
[23] Brivati, *Gaitskell*, p38

international relations, democracies had to negotiate from a position of strength.

As his biographer claims:

> Power was what mattered in this situation...on the domestic front the impotence of the Labour Party after the split of 1931 made unity and realism his paramount political principles [while] in international relations his natural inclination towards internationalism was challenged somewhat by the feebleness of the...democracies' inability to work together against the dictators.[24]

Unlike Attlee's idealised internationalism, Gaitskell's was qualified, a point proved when presented with the opportunity to participate in the British section of UNRRA during the war.[25] According to Brivati,

> There was a strong pull on his colonial roots and away from the political path he had taken since Oxford. It would have offered a constructive way of implementing socialist principles in an international setting and would have made him a permanent member of the international civil service which developed in the post-war world.[26]

Yet Gaitskell rejected this offer, choosing instead to continue working with Dalton.

The themes that emerge when we trace Gaitskell's beliefs are a patriotic outlook and the impact of Bevin's beliefs in shaping the contours of his foreign policy. Like Attlee, Gaitskell also believed in respectability in foreign affairs, conducted on a strong and moral base. Britain's world role was based on Empire, but the relationship was modified, adopting idealism about equality in the Commonwealth. We can trace also strong support for the Atlantic Alliance formed by a visit to the United States in October 1950 which "crystallised the

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[24] Brivati, *Gaitskell*, p41-2
[25] United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
[26] Brivati, *Gaitskell*, p56

connection between his patriotism and his pro-Americanism. It was to have profound political significance for the remainder of his life".[27] This in turn impacted on his beliefs about the Commonwealth "based both on his patriotism and on his belief that Britain had a role to play: different, modernised and not based on colonial exploitation, but a world role nevertheless".[28]

6.2.2 Denis Healey[29]

Healey's political career began in 1945 as Secretary of the Labour Party's International Department. Elected in 1952 as Labour MP for Leeds South East, subsequently Leeds East, Healey was spokesperson for Defence in 1954 and then shadow Minister of Commonwealth and Colonial Affairs in 1959. He was later Defence Secretary under Wilson and Chancellor of the Exchequer under Callaghan. Healey's background was middle-class, professional and driven by self-improvement and influenced of his mother's socialism and his father's social liberalism. Educated at Bradford Grammar school and Balliol College, Oxford, Healey's early influences were art, music and literature rather than politics.

Healey's relationship with Gaitskell was particularly defined. As the architect of the revisionists' defence policy, he articulated a narrow area of beliefs. In this chapter, we examine how this role impacted upon Labour's broader foreign policy reach. In particular, how Healey's realism impacted on the Party's attitude to Europe.

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[27] Brivati, *Gaitskell*, p100
[28] Brivati, *Gaitskell*, p100
[29] Denis Winston Healey, Baron Healey, (1917-)

Healey's beliefs can be tied temporally and conceptually to the tradition of democratic socialism. We can identify this in three ways: the effects of appeasement, rejection of his early left-wing radicalism; and his role as Secretary of the International Department of the Labour Party.

First, Healey was influenced by the War poets, adopting pacifist beliefs, and by the 1930s political upheavals.[30] At University he was a member of "perhaps the most political generation in Oxford's history". His early radicalism was reflected by his membership of the communist party and campaigning for the anti-appeaser and socialist Sandy Lindsay who stood as an Independent Progressive in a by-election fought on foreign policy. Healey rejected conscription and opposed the Democratic Socialist Party, the result of a split in the university's Labour Party and headed by Jenkins, Crosland and Phillip Williams.[31]

Second, these beliefs were profoundly modified by war itself. Healey's rejection of communism came with the fall of France in 1940 but was supported by witnessing the devastation wrought across Europe at first-hand. In a letter to the Labour selection committee, he described the wreckage he saw, arguing that the defeat of totalitarian leaders such as Hitler and Mussolini was not enough; that a "more glorious future" was needed to make up for the "annihilation of the past".[32] He no longer had faith in the possibility of communism and, "appalled" at the purges in the 1930s, was unconvinced that Stalin intended to honour the

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[30] Healey, D (1989) *The Time of My Life*, London: Michael Joseph, p20
[31] Healey, *The Time of My Life*, p 38; Phillip Williams, Gaitskell's biographer
[32] Healey, *The Time of My Life*, p67

Yalta Agreements.[33] By 1945, Healey had modified his beliefs substantially and was showing the nascent signs of his later cold warrior phase.[34]

Third, this transition in belief was sealed and further developed by Healey's appointment as Secretary of the International Department of the Labour Party. This had two important effects. Firstly it placed Healey at the heart of the social democratic leadership and government machinery. He had been nominated by Dalton, Laski and Bevan, securing an intellectually broad backing.[35] Healey's role consisted of two functions: to rebuild the relationship between the Labour Party and socialist parties worldwide; and to act as a bridge between the Labour government and the Party on international policy.[36] One of Healey's first tasks was to amend the Party's constitution at the 1946 Conference to curtail the influence of the Communist Party. The communists had been identified as attempting to infiltrate the trade unions, exploiting their block vote and capitalising on increased radicalism in the constituencies.[37] It would be the symbolic end of his radical past.

The second important effect this had was to introduce Healey to the nascent revisionist strand which influenced his own outlook on foreign policy. Healey became the intellectual successor to Bevin's beliefs about foreign policy and gained support from the right in the Party. Becoming defence spokesperson

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[33] Healey, *The Time of My Life*, p74, 76
[34] Pearce, *Denis Healey*, p54-56
[35] Pearce, *Denis Healey*, p64. Harold Laski (1893-1950) was a political theorist and economics lecturer at the LSE who was a senior figure in the Labour Party.
[36] Healey, *The Time of My Life*, p74, 97
[37] Healey, *The Time of My Life*, p75; Callaghan, J (2005) 'The Plan to Capture the British Labour Party and its Paradoxical Results, 1947-1991', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol40.4, pp707-725

shortly after being elected cemented his position and the direction of the Party's strategy despite internal difficulties. This provided a mutual stance between the domestic revisionism at home and the *realpolitik* approach abroad. A keen adherent of planning from his time in the army, Healey's attempts to incorporate this into his foreign policy approach can be seen by the establishment of the Bilderberg Group.[38]

Healey as the mouthpiece to Bevin's foreign policy approach differed in his belief in detail, though not in substance. For instance, he did not believe the threat of communism to be as strong in Western Europe. His role in re-establishing links with socialist groups elsewhere meant he met former communists turned moderate socialists. He felt that Western Europe did lack capable and effective socialist leaders.[39] Healey also echoed the need to halt expansive Soviet foreign policy while conceding that Britain lacked the power to act as the traditional arbiter of the European balance of power. Although a firm believer in collective security, the experiences of the 1930s qualified its meaning. For Healey, the failure of collective security meant that he regarded the basic unit of world affairs as the nation state and believed that attempts to build international solidarity on a common ideology were fruitless. Furthermore, in a world of nation states, order could not be maintained by law alone. Rather, through a functional form of co-operation between allies would develop a network of interdependence in military and economic affairs so that vested interests would come to maintain the co-operation.[40]

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[38] The Bilderberg Group was established in 1954 and meets once a year. Its membership consists of European and North American power brokers. Healey was one of the four founder members
[39] Healey, *The Time of My Life*, p76, 92
[40] Healey, *The Time of My Life*, p98-100

Healey's beliefs were influenced by the works of Hans Morgenthau, William Fox and Christian pessimists such as Niebuhr and Herbert Butterfield.[41] As the mouthpiece of Labour Party foreign policy he was adding theoretical depth to a starting point taken by Bevin. The focus of the realist perspective is the balance of power and Healey used this to craft a response to Britain's declining international power from the late 1940s onwards.

Gaitskell and Healey's beliefs drew from the tradition of democratic socialism, despite their differing interpretations. The 1930s profoundly influenced them so the ideal of internationalism became heavily qualified. Healey went further than Gaitskell in adopting a hard realist outlook in foreign affairs in contrast to the more domestic-oriented Gaitskell. However, they both shared the belief in Britain's continued independence in the world and an acceptance that in order to maintain that, alignment with the United States was necessary.

6.3 Historical Summary

To understand why party management became a dilemma for Gaitskell and Healey the domestic and international context needs to be outlined. Pressures arose within the party as Gaitskell and Healey inherited the Attlee-Bevin mantle. This section examines the election manifestoes of the Labour Party during the 1950s showing how election defeats reopened old wounds which then defined the content of domestic and foreign policy.

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[41] Healey, *The Time of My Life*, p103, 99

6.3.1 Domestic

Attlee remained Labour leader after electoral defeat in October 1951 until December 1955 in a period marked by inertia and latent tensions over the future direction of the party between the Bevanite left and Gaitskellite revisionists. The party's policy was still rooted in nationalisation, coupled with scientific and technical investment to build on the foundations established in 1945. The 1955 manifesto echoed this safe ground by pledging to continue housing subsidies, the provision of health benefits and pensions, the restoration of a fully free national health service and abolishing the eleven plus.[42] The manifesto argued the Conservatives had failed to achieve a stabilised cost of living. Instead Labour linked a stable domestic cost of living with long-term trade agreements through the Commonwealth. On this basis, the party proposed combating monopolies and restrictive practices in the supply, and improvements in the quality of, consumer goods.

The 1959 manifesto articulated the same themes[43] although Gaitskell had introduced some revisionist elements such as enabling home ownership and more controversially a promise not to increase income tax to pay for reforms. Gaitskell's campaign performance lifted his profile and rallied supporters but it also signalled the end of his conciliatory approach in managing the party and trade unions.[44] Feeling that appeasing the unions would ultimately lead to Labour's demise, he contested their power by challenging a core tenet of Labour's constitution, Clause Four; the commitment to the redistribution of the

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[42] http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/lab55.htm accessed 21/09/2004
[43] http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/lab59.htm accessed 21/09/2004
[44] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p307

ownership of the means of production. It was an issue over which he would be forced to retreat.

With Gaitskell as leader, the revisionism of the *New Fabian Essays* published in 1952 now found a platform for consolidation, supported by the follow-up publication, *The Future of Socialism*.[45] In this, Crosland argued for the use of the mechanisms of Keynesian demand management rather than ownership of industry to regulate the economy.

6.3.2 International

In 1951, Labour's aim remained unchanged, declaring in the election manifesto, "We arm to save the peace".[46] The manifesto restated the link between providing a defensive peace with economic assistance, with a focus on developing nations. Central to achieving this was a strong international presence: "the Labour Government decided without hesitation that Britain must play her full part in the strengthening of collective defence. Britain must be strong: so must the Commonwealth".[47] In 1955, with the development of the hydrogen bomb, Labour's foreign policy plan was threefold: multilateral disarmament; the reunification of Germany; and the narrowing of the north-south divide between industrialised and developing states.[48] The policies of disarmament and development were again features of the 1959 manifesto, echoing the Party's commitment to the international rule of law and an armed

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[45] Crossman, RHS (ed.) (1952) *New Fabian Essays*, London: Turnstile Press; Crosland, CAR (1956) *The Future of Socialism*, London: Jonathan Cape

[46] http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/lab51.htm accessed 21/09/2004

[47] http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/lab51.htm accessed 21/09/2004

[48] Labour Party (1955) *Forward With Labour*, election manifesto, http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/lab55.htm accessed 21/09/2004

peace. Just as the right put up Clause Four on the sacrificial altar, the left revived its pacifism in the face of nuclear arms races and called for unilateralism, thus posing a direct threat to conceptions on the right of the Party as to what Britain's international role should be.

Chapter three discussed the idea of joining the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) as an equal member being alien to Attlee and Bevin's beliefs as both understood Britain's role in the world to be still that of a global power. Despite challenges to this perception, little change occurred in the Party until after Attlee departed. This defined the Party's negative stance on Messina despite publicly capitalising on the position adopted by the Conservative government. The internal wrangles of the Party ultimately came to define the leadership's stance on Europe: the failure to achieve reform over Clause Four meant the necessity of defeating the left over unilateralism. The Common Market then became the cause around which both left and right could unify, and that had to be in contrast to the Conservative's positive approaches towards membership.

6.4 Elite Beliefs and Tradition Change

The perceived dilemma of party management was accepted by Hugh Gaitskell and Denis Healey, so prompting modifications of belief about how to establish support for a party programme. When Gaitskell and Healey refer to party management, they refer to four facets of intra-party dissent. These are: German rearmament, Clause Four, unilateralism and membership of the EEC. It is argued that when Gaitskell rejected membership of the Common Market in

1962 he was jettisoning a weaker, under-articulated and less rooted area of belief in favour of the more established belief in internationalism through Commonwealth reform. It is proposed that this was the sacrifice around which the critical majority could rally to end the internal wrangling between Left and Right over the ideational direction of the Party. It is also argued that adopting this position afforded Labour important support from the general electorate.

When we inspect each part of the dilemma we examine: what it was; why it was problematic to Gaitskell and Healey; what opposition it garnered and from where; and the articulations of the leadership's attitude.

6.4.1. German Rearmament

The rehabilitation of Germany meant, for many on the Labour right, the rearmament of Germany. However, it also tapped into a wider belief about the idea of rearmament which had provoked a schism within the Party in 1951. A commitment to rearmament in 1951 was couched in terms which made the Labour Party's position on the Cold War definitive: deterrence of Soviet aggression to Britain and its interests. In respect of German rearmament, it also meant accepting the need to revive Germany as an equal player in European economic and military affairs. The issue of German rearmament was the peak of a series of flashpoints requiring the clarification of party beliefs. While early attempts were made to bridge the gulf between a socialist foreign policy and one rooted in realism, the right then went on to set out its own stall against which Bevan launched an attack to revive the voice of the left.

In the prelude to German rearmament, *Socialism and Foreign Policy*[49] retraced the roots of socialist foreign policy to support of the League of Nations and the United Nations as the "keystone of [Labour's] foreign policy", reminding its readers of the belief in collective security and upholding the law against aggression.[50] While it sought to link policy to principle, the text recognised the changed circumstances of Britain meant a more realist than idealist foreign policy.[51] Critical of Attlee and Bevin's approach as opportunistic[52] it still went on to support the shift towards realism as an "effort to see things clearly and to see them whole [which] has already been a *healthy* development".[53]

While this attempted to bridge the cleavage between left and right, the revisionists went on to set out their stall. The *Socialist Commentary* reflected the values and direction of the revisionists.[54] It differed from other, mainly left wing, periodicals in its outlook on foreign affairs with an "awareness of the anarchical nature of international politics and also the irrelevance of an ideological approach to it" and as such "dismissed as unattainable a distinctive socialist foreign policy".[55] The *Socialist Commentary* sought to challenge the philosophical position offered by the Marxist and left social democratic school

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[49] Socialist Union, (May 1953) *Socialism and Foreign Policy*, London: Book House Limited. The foreword was written by Philip Noel Baker (1889-1982), One time PPS to Attlee, Noel-Baker was a lifelong advocate of pacifism and disarmament, ultimately earning a Nobel peace prize in 1959 for his work, *The Arms Race: A Programme for World Disarmament*, (1958). Arguably, his unshakeable pacifism prevented his ascent to higher office.
[50] Socialist Union, *Socialism and Foreign Policy*, p6
[51] Socialist Union, *Socialism and Foreign Policy*, p9, p11-12
[52] Socialist Union, *Socialism and Foreign Policy*, p32
[53] Socialist Union, *Socialism and Foreign Policy*, p33, italics mine.
[54] Haseler, S (1969) *The Gaitskellites: Revisionism in the British Labour Party, 1951-1964*, London: Macmillan, p73: Gaitskell was one time Treasurer of the wider group, *Friends of the Socialist Commentary*.
[55] Haseler, *The Gaitskellites*, p72

in the Labour movement. Even if a socialist foreign policy could be formulated, it argued, it would never be the sole preserve of socialism and instead urged a foreign policy for socialism to pursue.[56]

Finally, establishing himself as a major intellectual force behind the Party's commitment to collective security,[57] Healey, in his pamphlet, *Neutralism*,[58] attacked the pursuit of neutralism for oscillating between defeated passivism and third forcism. "As a practical policy, neutralism is vitiated by its failure to meet the need for an international order sufficient to prevent World War Three".[59] Healey's attack on neutralism by its implicit link to appeasement and thus reference to its failure in the pre-war period was backed up by an attack on the ethical claim of its adherents.[60] Healey attacked neutralism as a viable policy for its inherent weakness[61] and its "refusal to commit oneself in the struggle against Communist expansion in fact means an abdication of responsibility to play an active role in progressing beyond power-politics towards an international society". While the idea of a third force was deemed even worse "since it [depended] on dividing the non-Communist camp so as to create a new balance of power".[62]

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[56] Editorial (1952) 'A Socialist Foreign Policy', *Socialist Commentary*, October, p3
[57] Haseler, *The Gaitskellites*, p73
[58] Healey, D (1955) *Neutralism*, London: Ampersand Ltd.
[59] Healey, *Neutralism*, p10-12
[60] Healey, *Neutralism*, p14; displaying virulent anti-Communism, Healey argued that neutralism missed the point when it came to dealing with totalitarian states. As their central thesis was based on being equidistant from the United States as from the Soviet Union, Healey argued that failure to recognize the political limitations of the Soviet system on its subjects was a far greater ill than recognition of its economic system.
[61] Healey, *Neutralism*, p45
[62] Healey, *Neutralism*, p57, 58

The European Defence Community (EDC) was the brainchild of Monnet and Pleven and a response to American pressure for the readmission of Germany into the defence system of Europe. Its supranational element meant British Government support without involvement. The Labour leadership had "thought it responsible" to back the idea of EDC but "in doing so they were damaging a solid majority for their foreign policy and weakening the right wing of the party".[63] The EDC would become one element within the civil war of the party, with the left's opposition to German rearmament gaining wider support than with just the Bevanites in Parliament.[64] It tapped into the continuing underlying dissent towards foreign policy as defined by the right of the party.

Once it came to German rearmament, the threat of the past was a potent and widespread fear and provided the battleground for the left to claim ground. Bevan tested the left's chances by opposing the Paris Agreements, the mechanism through which Western Germany was able to rearm.[65] By resigning from the Parliamentary Committee to canvass wider support than from his loyalists, he was also challenging the right for the succession to Attlee by abandoning his secure post as constituency party representative to stand for the position of treasurer of the Party, a post widely regarded as a trial run for the leadership.[66] Union backing of the right essentially prevented the left and Bevan from securing success. Hinton argues that the right was "alarmed by Bevanite

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[63] Pearce, *Denis Healey*, p160
[64] Radice, G (2002) *Friends and Rivals*, London: Little, Brown, p81
[65] This was later Western European Union, WEU
[66] Hinton, J (1983) *Labour and Socialism*, Brighton: Wheatsheaf Books, p182

advances in National Executive elections [they] organised to prevent a recurrence of the lurch to the left that had followed the 1931 debacle."[67]

The core of the right's power in the early 1950s lay in the 'triumvirate' of trade union leaders – Arthur Deakin (TGWU), Tom Williamson (NUGMW), and Will Lawther (NUM) – who had established their authority in defending Bevin's anti-communist foreign policy…in the 1940s".[68] Frustrated by Attlee's apparently soft approach to the Bevanites, they swung behind the new rising group in the PLP whose leading personality, Gaitskell, had already ensured a head-on confrontation with Bevan in 1951. Not only did they manipulate union votes to secure a positive vote on German rearmament, they put Gaitskell up for the treasury post and later elected him leader. Bevan's appeal beyond his immediate supporters, meanwhile, was already waning, with Wilson quickly securing Bevan's old place on the executive.

The 1955 General Election saw Labour's vote fall.[69] When Attlee retired in December he felt Gaitskell's right-wing credentials would alienate him as leader from the left-wing.[70] However with union backing, Haseler argues:

> It was inevitable that the right wing and moderate elements would succeed in electing the Party leader from amongst their own ranks. The power-structure of the Party was inherently anti-Left and therefore Bevan's candidature was never realistic, at least as an attempt to grasp the leadership.[71]

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[67] Hinton, *Labour and Socialism*, p190
[68] Hinton, *Labour and Socialism*, p182
[69] While the Conservatives increased their majority from 16 to 54, Labour lost 22 seats. In terms of the absolute share of the vote, the Conservatives stood at 49.7% while Labour's fell to 46.4%. See Cook and Stevenson, *Britain Since 1945*, p57; Harmer, *The Labour Party*, p36
[70] Dell, E (1999) *A Strange Eventful History: Democratic Socialism in Britain* London: Harper Collins, p284
[71] Haseler, *The Gaitskellites* London: MacMillan, p34

By December 1955, the revisionists appeared to have won the battle between the left and the right. Gaitskell polled 166 votes to Bevan's 70 in the leadership election.[72] By creating the Gaitskell-Bevan Axis, the new leader was ensuring his neutralisation and discrediting by both left and right.[73]

6.4.2 Clause Four

The attempt to establish the revisionist ideational approach in domestic politics focused on the challenge to Clause Four. It was the attempt to make real those goals argued for in *New Fabian Essays*[74] and *The Future of Socialism.*[75] It proposed enacting the redefinition of the Party beliefs and, in turn, British Socialism based on a belief that "constructive political action is more than simply the erection of ideal political goals. It should also consist of an understanding of the complexities of political practice and action".[76] This had wider implications since it marked an attempt to widen the appeal of the Labour Party in winning elections by questioning the 'means' and 'ends' of socialist policy. Challenging the 'cloth-cap' image of the Party, widening electoral appeal, resolving the ambiguity between 'ends' and 'means' and developing an economic strategy cognizant of advances made by the Attlee government, were themes that underscored the division over Clause Four in the aftermath of the general election defeat of 1959.

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[72] Harmer, *The Labour Party*, p6
[73] Hinton, *Labour and Socialism*, p183
[74] Crossman *New Fabian Essays*; Although the *New Fabian Essays* was the manifesto of the 'new thinkers', the right of the Party, the series of essays was in fact edited by Crossman, amember of the left wing of the Party!
[75] Crosland, *The Future of Socialism*
[76] Haseler, *The Gaitskellites*, p67

Gaitskell's attempt to amend Clause Four had been preceded by the attempt to get union leaders to adopt demand management in 1957 through *Industry and Society.*[77] Gaitskell's ideas about public ownership had been voiced in *Socialism and Nationalisation.*[78] He argued that public ownership needed to be more inclusive a concept, not merely the end product of nationalisation, and to include other methods in a bid to improve equality. These ideas formed the basis of *Industry and Society*, which attempted to provide unity couching public ownership in ambiguous terms, but with enough latitude to "conceal the differences of purpose behind an accepted formula".[79] The make-up of union support changed once Frank Cousins became leader of the T&G. Initially won over by Bevan's official support of Gaitskell's position, Cousins would come to reject official policy in both domestic and foreign policy.

Electoral defeat in 1959 and the ensuing post-mortem over the reason for failure split the wound open again, only this time with ferocity on both sides and the debate became about who would gain control of the leadership.[80] For Gaitskell, the only way to regain public confidence was to modify Clause Four which pledged the public ownership of the means of production, manifest in 1945 via the nationalisation of key industries. It has been argued that "[B]y using his high office as an instrument of one side in the dispute [Gaitskell] purposely led the Gaitskellites onto a collision course with the left".[81] Alternatively, despite defeat, there was a sense of buoyancy about Gaitskell's

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[77] Labour Party (1957) *Industry and Society: Labour's Policy on Future Public Ownership*, London: Labour Party
[78] Gaitskell, H (1956) *Socialism and Nationalisation*, London: Fabian Tracts no. 300
[79] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p295
[80] Robbins, L.J. (1979) *The Reluctant Party: Labour and the EEC, 1961-1975*, Ormskirk: G.W. and A. Hesketh, p31
[81] Haseler, *The Gaitskellites*, p156

handling of the election, the depth of which was misread by the right.[82] Certainly, the point of the exercise had been to take Gaitskell's renewed endorsement from electoral defeat and translate it into a platform for action. Whether Gaitskell's aim was merely to renew the relevance of Clause Four[83] or to be bullish about effecting change,[84] the focus on domestic policy was significant for avoiding the minefield of foreign policy divisions. It was significant too for attempting to formalise change that had been argued for a decade by the right.

Gaitskell's "challenge was the product of a dedicated and considered conviction"[85] and followed the logic of the last years of the Attlee Government. The mixed economy, Keynesianism and the managerial society had transformed the nature of British capitalism. This meant that socialism was no longer simply about the common ownership of the means of production, "Keynesian techniques of economic management rendered nationalisation obsolete as a means of public control over economic decision making".[86] The pursuit of ends and means was not the only way in which to achieve a better distribution of wealth.[87] It altered too the emphasis placed on equality between classes in favour of a more *dirigiste* approach.[88] The party's image was deemed outmoded, inadequate and increasingly irrelevant.[89] The revisionists had tapped into a long held belief expressed from Bernstein to Durbin emphatically rejecting the notion

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[82] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p314; Pearce, R (1992) *Patrick Gordon-Walker: Political Diaries, 1932-71*, London: The Historian's Press, p36
[83] Haseler, *The Gaitskellites*, p167
[84] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p314
[85] Haseler, *The Gaitskellites*, p159
[86] Hinton, *Labour and Socialism*, p183
[87] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p324
[88] Randall, N (2000) *The Dynamics of Ideological Change in the British Labour Party, 1951-64 and 1983-97*, unpublished PhD thesis, Manchester University, p208
[89] Labour Party, (1960), *Labour in the Sixties*, London: Transport House

of a class struggle. They were now rooted in the practicalities of electoral considerations, while also articulating a "non-Marxist, Social Democratic philosophy: the commitment to social harmony and stability".[90] They urged unions to broaden their base to include white collar workers, hence bridging the gap between the essential role of the unions and shifting away from its narrow working class definition.

However, for the left-wing and the majority of unions, this questioning of fundamentals represented a strike to the very heart of traditional socialist sentiment and aspiration. It challenged in a very direct way the rhetoric of the 'new Jerusalem' concept. Gaitskell's rhetoric seemed contrary to that of the aspirational left. "His political sentiments were often expressed more in terms of human values than the quasi religious idealism many wanted to hear. Gaitskell also guarded himself against 'affirmationism' as a political reflex".[91]

Whereas the left recognised that change was necessary, its position seemed to be galvanised into an increasingly hard-line attitude. At the 1959 Party Conference, Barbara Castle urged delegates to stop navel gazing and instead, to 'go out and make socialists'.[92] For the left, electoral defeat represented a lack of education among the electorate, not an excuse to surrender.[93] Indeed it was a failure to carry the unions which signalled defeat over Clause Four with only two of the six major unions backing the call for amplification. Of those rejecting the challenge, two were part of the right's

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[90] Haseler, *The Gaitskellites*, p145
[91] Haseler, *The Gaitskellites*, p156
[92] LPCR, (1959), p84
[93] Haseler, *The Gaitskellites*, p163

'faithful' triumvirate.[94] The failure to effect change highlighted the limitations of the revisionists without union backing.[95] Support in this sphere was essential. It meant Gaitskell's relationship with the left was now very precarious with Bevan edging away,[96] moving within a period of a few months from the "unity and fervour of the general election into the worse mood of bitterness and suspicion since the war".[97]

The Party's statement presented to the 1961 Conference, *Signposts for the Sixties*, signalled a shift further left than expected, on the issue of public ownership.[98] It found favourable support from Labour voters and although Cousins voted against it, the Conference accepted it readily. Although this meant Gaitskell conceded ground over his beliefs about domestic policy, the statement's aim had been primarily at establishing unity after the division of Clause Four.

6.4.3 Unilateralism

Unilateral nuclear disarmament emerged as an issue in foreign policy as the dynamics of international relations changed. The refreezing of the Cold War and the concomitant search for nuclear security was at the root of the debate as Britain was no longer able to maintain an independent nuclear capability. The

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[94] USDAW and the NUGMW supported the amplification of Clause Four vote while the TGWU, AEU, NUM and NUR all rejected it.
[95] In February 1960, a compromise was reached between the aims of Gaitskell over Clause Four and the retention of the old constitutional Clause Four to which all could agree and eventually controversy subsided.
[96] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p326: Bevan had offered ambiguous support for Gaitskell, but as Williams claims, was possibly more inclined to let Gaitskell deal with his own problem as he had been notified of Gaitskell's proposals only shortly before the speech was delivered.
[97] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p330
[98] 'Signposts for the Sixties' was a Labour Party Policy statement issued in 1961. It identified themes which Wilson would later make central to his successful election campaign, such as linking economic progress to the scientific revolution.

issue also emerged after Suez had revealed the limits of British military action. Although unilateralism represented a coalition of interests ranging from traditional pacifists, to those with moral belief and to pragmatists fearful of the economic implications, it provided within the Labour movement the spearhead for a counter-attack on Gaitskell's domestic reforms.

The issue of Britain's defence position peaked at the 1960 Party Conference. Questions over an independent nuclear deterrent, neutralism, foreign bases on British soil, and nuclear testing formed a confluence of themes that had been the backdrop to Labour debates during the 1950s. Their renewed importance was driven by more general fears regarding the foreign policies and the political nature of the United States and the USSR.[99]

Churchill's decision to manufacture the hydrogen bomb in 1955 was a continuation of the Attlee Government's decision to manufacture the atomic bomb. Bevan's support of an independent nuclear deterrent at the 1957 Party Conference, where he argued that being without such defences was like sending the foreign secretary "naked into the conference chamber",[100] marked the direction of the right. It also marked the apparently surprising quiescence of the left.[101] Until March 1960, the Labour Party policy was to support an independent nuclear deterrent, but with the cancellation of 'Blue Streak', the British built missile, with the announcement of the American built 'Skybolt' as a replacement, a dilemma emerged. The right had argued that an independent

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[99] Haseler, *The Gaitskellites*, p178
[100] LPCR, (1957), p181
[101] Although Bevan was seen to have been bought by other members of the left; his silence over domestic policy in return for a post on the Parliamentary Committee.

weapon gave Britain a degree of independence from the US. Gaitskell restated Attlee's position when he said:

> The real case for having our own independent nuclear weapons is fear of excessive dependence on the United States. It springs from doubts about the readiness of the United States governments...to wish the destruction of their cities on behalf of Europe. It depends also, I think, on fear that excessive dependence on the United States might force upon us policies with which we did not agree.[102]

The multilateralist position was also a coalition between those, like Gaitskell, who regarded the relationship with the United States as central to British foreign policy and thus needed to be as equal as possible, those who saw it in the wider context of Britain as a global power and finally those who felt an independent nuclear capacity equipped Britain with the ability to counter Soviet posturing. The adoption of unilateralism was therefore considered as not only "surrendering Britain's influence in the world-wide struggle to demilitarise the world",[103] but also depriving Britain of important defences without the security being guaranteed by others. Finally, in terms of Britain's role as head of the Commonwealth, it was deemed a necessary evil to have nuclear weapons. Any moves to abandon such armoury would have to be done through multilateral means.

The unilateralist element within the Party remained small, mainly for these reasons, but with the establishment of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) in 1958, whose remit was the clear demand for the unilateral disarmament for Britain, and the shift in Cold War politics, this

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[102] Hansard (1960) *House of Common Debates*, vol. 231, col. 1136
[103] Noel-Baker, P (1958) *Arms Race*, London: no information

element grew. By 1960, unilateralism was making gains in the Labour Party[104] and the unions, more so with the exposure of the economic costs of the British aspiration to nuclear independence.[105] Union frustration with the Gaitskellite right over Clause Four resulted in less restraint over attacking the leadership at Conference with the result that the multilateralist policy was defeated.[106]

It took until the 1960 Conference before Gaitskell managed to claim success with his 'fight, fight and fight again for the Party I love' speech and winning a reversal of the unilateralist vote, the intervening year having seen a marked coalescing of rightist forces working hard to reverse the previous Conference decision. Gaitskell could be more assured of party loyalty, though even this remained uncertain given the possibility of a volatile Conference. Although Gaitskell managed to reverse the vote, the year had also seen him his morale spiral downwards, increasingly suspicious of his own colleagues and seeing the drifting away of loyalists.[107]

6.4.4 Membership of the EEC

The issue of membership of the EEC emerged in the aftermath of Gaitskell's defeat over Clause Four, his fight over unilateralism and the attempt at conciliation with *Signposts for the Sixties*. When Macmillan announced Britain's membership application to the EEC in the summer of 1961, it provided Gaitskell with the opportunity to make advances against the Conservatives and unite the party. It was a successful strategy in which Gaitskell loyalists rallied

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[104] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p340
[105] Hinton, *Labour and Socialism*, p184
[106] The NUGMW and NUM voted for multilateralism at the 1959 Conference whereas the AEU, USDAW, NUR and TGWU all voted against.
[107] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p342

during 1961-2, mainly through the efforts of the Campaign for Democratic Socialism, to redefine their beliefs in international affairs on defence and the Common Market.[108]

When the Conservatives announced their decision to seek membership of the EEC, the Labour Party had not yet devised a policy towards Europe.[109] Foreign policy had thus far been defined purely in military and defensive terms and the issue of integration interpreted only in these terms. There was continuity in Gaitskell's beliefs. As he commented in 1957: "The European movement may not have made as much headway as its supporters desired, but...the European people today feel closer to one another than ever before." Gaitskell identified the reason: "This would probably not have happened without the basic Atlantic Alliance – NATO". But over the future of integration and Britain's role within that, Gaitskell's attitude was more sceptical:

> I must emphasise the limits of any formal changes. It is most unlikely that any British government will seriously contemplate joining a European political federation. There are deep and profound reasons for this...there are quite reasonable doubts about what exactly is meant about Europe: where does it begin, and where does it end?[110]

Gaitskell later said "that most of us felt ourselves not only European but the centre of the Commonwealth, a Commonwealth including very important Asian and African countries, and that we would not want to go in closer with

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[108] The CDS was a right-wing ginger group who articulated revisionist policies and campaigned against the move to unilateralism. The group consisted of Gaitskell loyalists who would eventually split over the issue of Europe. It closed in 1964 removing an organised voice on the right with which to counter an increasingly vocal left-wing. See: Ramsden, *British Politics*, p195

[109] Morgan, J (ed) (1981) *The Backbench Diaries of Richard Crossman*, London: Hamish Hamilton and Jonathan Cape, p945

[110] Gaitskell, H (1957) *The Challenge of Co-existence: The Godkin Lectures, Harvard*, London: Co-operative Union Ltd. P59, 61

Europe if this meant weakening the Atlantic Alliance...going into a Federation of Europe was absolutely out of the question [unless] we were somehow cut off from the Commonwealth and left on our own".[111] There is evidence that Gaitskell's beliefs remained consistent in the intervening years. As Williams notes, "He never felt himself primarily a European, and that in a world perspective the EEC enthusiasts over-emphasised a 'parochial' problem. The Common Market was a fact but no cause for rejoicing".[112] He would return to his Godkin Lectures of 1957 as proof in 1962 of his consistency of belief but he was equally aware that the world had changed and, although presented consistent beliefs, they were never closed.

The criticism of Britain's world role became open with Dean Acheson's famed speech at West Point Academy in 1962.[113] However, Acheson's speech contained more pertinent points, bruising though they were:

> Britain's attempt to play a separate power role, that is, a role apart from Europe, a role based on a 'special relationship' with the United States, a role based on being the head of a Commonwealth which has no political structure or unity or strength and enjoys a fragile and precarious economic relationship – this role is about to be played out. Great Britain, attempting to work alone and to be a broker between the United States and Russia, has seemed to conduct a policy as weak as its military power.[114]

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[111] Gaitskell summary of trip in *The Manchester Guardian*, 21/01/57, quoted in Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p390

[112] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p390

[113] Macmillan was apparently furious at Acheson's perceived effort to undermine Britain's position in the world. See Chapter Five.

[114] Acheson quoted in Stone, L, 'Britain and the World' in McKie, D and Cook, C (eds.) (1972) *The Decade of Disillusionment*, London: MacMillan, p122

His views were shared at least in part by some in Britain including Healey. He argued in 1961 that nuclear independence was "the virility symbol of the atomic age...Britain and France both clutched at it in the shock of having their military impotence exposed at Suez".[115]

Traditional defence issues offered clearer divisions over moral and political leadership but an integrated Europe was largely uncontested territory having been flatly rejected in the past. It required traditional relations with the Commonwealth and the US to be reconsidered.[116] Crossman observed that during the summer of 1961, the Common Market was beginning to "overshadow" the House of Commons and that fence-sitting may be increasingly difficult to sustain as "slowly, Labour MPs are lining up in new constellations".[117] And although he found it to be largely faithful to the left-right divide, he acknowledged there were some unusual cross-overs. Capturing the enormity of what this meant for perceptions of British identity, he concluded:

> The fact that Britain must now consider entering the market is a demonstration that the attempt to maintain ourselves as an independent Great Power, which all parties have been making since the war, has come unstuck. Even three years ago, no-one was dreaming of such a thing. Everybody, not only underestimated the likelihood of the Common Market coming off, but overestimated our capacity to stay out if it did. In fact, despite all pretensions, for fifteen years we have been going down hill, while France and Germany have been overtaking us and forging ahead. All parties have blinded themselves to this awkward fact.[118]

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[115] Healey quoted in Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p341
[116] Brivati, *Gaitskell*, p404
[117] Morgan, *Backbench Diaries*, p193
[118] Morgan, *Backbench Diaries*, p951

The potential of the EEC to cause further divides within the Party was central to the strategy of non-commitment. Gaitskell kept a low profile during negotiations only, declaring his opinion in September 1962. While Labour had been accused of sitting on the fence, it was felt that they were happy for the Conservatives to have committed themselves. Crossman noted, "Just imagine if for the last two years we had discussed the Common Market as we've been discussing nuclear weapons".[119] Meanwhile Gaitskell commented:

> Macmillan...is a very crafty man. This is one reason why I am determined not to let the Party get committed on the Common Market. If we try to reach a decision ourselves I am pretty certain we would remain hopelessly divided while the Tories reluctantly decide to unite behind whatever Macmillan decides to do.[120]

As Macmillan had made no attempt to make the issue of Common Market entry a bipartisan one, the traditional dividing line between the political camps seemed set.[121]

Despite issues of party strategy, there were clear beliefs held by Healey and Gaitskell which were expressed during negotiations and which challenged the perception of Britain's negotiating power with the Six, the desirability of entry, and Britain's actual ability to enter. Healey, replying to Heath's support for Common Market entry in a foreign affairs debate in 1961, outlined the issues. In assessing the role of the French, he argued "It seems very unlikely that the French Government...will now agree to our doing anything else other than signing the Treaty of Rome as it stands." He called for caution over pleas of special needs and future plans, arguing that "we make a great mistake in over

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[119] Morgan, *Backbench Diaries*, p946
[120] Gaitskell to Solly Pearce, editor of the *Leeds Citizen*, 21/06/61, quoted in Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p391
[121] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p396

dramatising the dangers...from failure to reach a settlement of the Six-Seven problem." Strategically, Healey deplored "the impression [given] that there is no alternative for Britain entering the Common Market and signing the Treaty of Rome" since this meant that "the Common Market countries will be tempted to wait until we are prepared to sign the Treaty of Rome unconditionally".[122]

This was a belief shared by Gaitskell who, as the conditions became clearer during the summer of 1962 foresaw a long set of negotiations leading to an inevitable French veto.[123] He had remained unmoved after a meeting in April 1962 with Monnet, who had sought to explain the philosophy of the EEC while Gaitskell wanted to know about its practical policies towards developing countries, and about the details hampering British entry. The meeting ended with Monnet imploring Gaitskell to have faith, while the latter retorted "I don't believe in faith, I believe in reason, and you have not shown me any".[124]

Gaitskell compiled his own list of five conditions, three of which mirrored those of the Conservatives. These required: first, strong and binding safeguards for the interests of the Commonwealth; second, the right to pursue an

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[122] Hansard, 17/05/61, vol. 640, c.1404-5; although interestingly, Jenkins, an ardent pro-European, offered a different analysis, one which would prove to be more accurate. He argued that the "main point here is that we should accept and make it clearly known that when we talk about going into the European Economic Community we are seeking no special position for ourselves, in the sense that when we come to the end of the day we should be less full members than France, Germany or Italy or any of the other three members of the Community. If we seek that half way position, then we might as well not start the negotiations, because they will not succeed. He went on to argue that the "best thing that we can hope for is to be forgiven for not having gone to the Messina Conference in the summer of 1955. It is a great pity that we did not go, because had we participated in the negotiations we should have been able to shape the Treaty negotiations to some extent ourselves. The best we can hope for is that we should be allowed in now, at this late stage, to a large extent to shape certain aspects of the Treaty to meet our special requirements...but not seek some special position involving less full membership than any of the other participants". Hansard, 17/05/61, vol. 640, c.1439.

[123] Brivati, *Gaitskell*, p410

[124] Brivati, *Hugh Gaitskell*, 412; Williams, *Gaitskell*, p394

independent foreign policy; third, EFTA partners and their interests to be protected if Britain joined; fourth, the right to have a policy of a planned economy; and finally, guarantees to protect British agriculture.[125] The rationale behind the conditions was that, if acceptable to the Six, the list would induce the Community to liberalise their economies and shift towards a more outward looking group.[126] Further, these conditions were to be worked out before joining, not once Britain had joined.[127] It was indicative of a shift towards a more emotional stance, one which was revealed when he eventually chose to reject the terms secured by Macmillan. Williams notes, "His astonishment and resentment were among the reasons for his abandonment of a precise cold-blooded calculating style for opposition with an emotional force and fire which astonished friends and opponents alike".[128] While about the Six, he became convinced that their "political intentions were unacceptable and their economic outlook selfish".[129] He was spurred finally by the Commonwealth Labour Leaders Conference in September 1962 and "While he was never utopian about the Commonwealth, its critical reactions had a profound effect in finally making up his mind".[130]

Although Gaitskell's beliefs had been consistently opposed to British involvement in the Common Market, this new development in rhetoric was increasingly disconcerting to his loyalists. In attempting to address the issue of party management and ensure he swept grassroot support with him, Gaitskell

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[125] Labour Party (1962) *Labour and the Common Market: Text of Speeches made at the 1962 Labour Party Conference*, London: Transport House, p34; Robbins, *The Reluctant Party*, p40
[126] Labour Party, *Labour and the Common Market*, p34
[127] Labour Party, *Labour and the Common Market*, p39
[128] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p397
[129] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p396
[130] Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell*, p397

had alienated himself from his traditional base of support from the right. His stance resulted in Jenkins's resignation from the Shadow Cabinet and a call from members of the Campaign for Democratic Socialism for him to tone down his anti-entry articulations.[131] As the Conference approached however, Gaitskell's attitude hardened, resulting in the famous "A Thousand Years of History" political broadcast on the 21st September[132] and the Conference speech delivered on 3rd October, 1962. In this, he repeated his attack on the Conservatives, pointing out the discrepancies between Macmillan's and Maudling's statements during the late 1950s and their present actions, while implying his own continuity of view.[133] At the same time, he tried to locate a middle ground between the little Englander sentiment expressed by anti-marketeers and entry with full concessions.[134]

Concerned loyalists feared Gaitskell was "isolating himself" from the right. Opinions expressed in his broadcast and conference speeches were noted for being "demagogic with no forward vision". Austen Albu, one of the disconcerted right, concluded that "Gaitskell now appears to have his head in a noose".[135] George Brown, who followed Gaitskell onto the podium, opened his

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[131] Albu: Diary, Europe 1962, 18/09/62, Churchill College Cambridge; Brivati, *Gaitskell*, p411

[132] During which Gaitskell challenged Macmillan that if entry into Europe implied entering a European federation and if so would mean "the end of Britain as an independent nation; we become no more than 'Texas' or 'California' in the United States of Europe. It means the end of a thousand years of history; it means the end of the Commonwealth...[to become] just a province of Europe". Quoted in Williams, *Gaitskell*, p400. It was the popularity of this device which prompted its repetition at the 1962 Party Conference when Gaitskell said: "We must be clear about this: it does mean, if this is the idea, the end of Britain as an independent European state. I make no apology for repeating it. It means the end of a thousand years of history". In: Labour Party, (1962) *Britain and the Common Market: Text of Speeches Made at the 1962 Labour Party Conference*, London: Transport House, p12

[133] LPCR, (1962), pp154-165, p154, 156; Labour Party, *Britain and the Common Market*, p3, 4 8

[134] LPCR, (1962), p154; Labour Party, *Britain and the Common Market*, p3

[135] ALBU: Diary, Europe 1962, 21/09/62, Churchill College, Cambridge. Albu, Jenkins, Strachey, Crosland, Taverne and John Diamond had met some days previously worried about Gaitskell's attitude. They felt that he needed to be 'pestered' through them, the unions and a

speech by acknowledging that he did not hold the same opinion as the leader[136] and received no applause at the end.[137]

This was not a question of principle for Gaitskell but about the nature of the proposed terms. There was no necessity of going in, and no case for Britain being stronger with entry, he claimed. He quoted the Conservative's chief economist, Sir Donald McDougall who had said: "There is no compelling economic argument for Britain joining unless it is thought that, without being exposed to the blast of competition from the Continent, she will never put her house in order".[138]

Arguing the case against Tory economic management and entry as the means of rectifying the damage already done by the 'stop-go' policies of the 1950s, Gaitskell offered a damning critique of the Conservative's case. His case rested mainly on the economic argument, claiming that given there was a shortfall in trade with the EEC compared to the cumulative trade exchanged between Britain, her EFTA partners and the Commonwealth, it was reckless to make such a commitment.[139] Finally he returned to the emotional point of the Commonwealth countries being allies and co-combatants in two world wars.[140]

In political terms, membership was equally problematic. Demonstrating his internationalist beliefs, Gaitskell argued that "if we were presented today

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group of around 20 MPs, mainly new ones, to try and steer his hostility to Europe to more favourable tones.

[136] Labour Party, *Labour and the Common Market*, p24

[137] ALBU: Diary, Europe 1962, 03/10/62, Churchill College, Cambridge

[138] Labour Party, *Britain and the Common Market*, p4

[139] Labour Party, *Britain and the Common Market*, p4-8

[140] Labour Party, *Britain and the Common Market*, p16

with a tremendous choice, whether to go into a world federation under a world government – which alone would finally prevent war – there is not one of us who would say No."[141] In Gaitskell's rhetoric, Europe represented a "narrow nationalism". And, although the cradle of western civilisation, more recent times had revealed "evil features in European history" not only with the totalitarianism of earlier decades, but also with the contemporary intransigence of the French in the UN.[142] Europe, he declared, was Janus faced and thus to lose the nation's independence, a thousand years of history and to "sell the Commonwealth down the river" needed the security of having Britain's five conditions met.[143]

According to the Party's NEC statement on the Common Market, if negotiations failed over the conditions, then so be it and if they did, it was imperative that the government of the day "join the United States in their efforts to negotiate downwards the Common Market's external tariff...[and] propose a conference of Commonwealth and EFTA countries to consider measures to promote their trade and economic development".[144] It was a retreat position which consoled itself with safe but heavily compromised beliefs from the past.

Healey supported Gaitskell's position by denouncing the Conservative policy as driven by "entirely...negative and backward-looking reasons, because it has totally lost confidence in its own ability to solve the economic problems of our own nation". Concluding, he stated "for the Tories the decision to enter Europe is the culmination of a process which started at Suez. The Europeanism

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[141] Labour Party, *Britain and the Common Market*, p9
[142] Labour Party, *Britain and the Common Market*, p10
[143] Labour Party, *Britain and the Common Market*, p10-3
[144] Labour Party, *Labour and the Common Market*, p39-40

of the Conservative Party is nothing but imperialism with an inferiority complex."[145] Echoing Gaitskell, Healey argued that Britain and Europe's problems were global and no regional pact would solve this. The Commonwealth was central as its looseness provided strength rather than did the rigidity of the Common Market.[146] But his was largely a lonely voice from the right.

6.5 Modifications

We earlier outlined the strategies that Gaitskell and Healey deployed to retain key plinths of Labour's foreign policy ideas. For instance, these focused on German rearmament and unilateralism. When the EEC began to show nascent success, Gaitskell in particular used this as a political ploy around which to rally support, falling back on the more firmly established belief in Commonwealth and Empire development.

The dilemma of party management raised two problems for Gaitskell and Healey: the process of redefining an accepted interpretation of Britain's role in the world came under fire while changes in international relations provided a challenge to perceptions of Britain in the world. In this section we examine the ways in which the dilemma of party management prompted Gaitskell and Healey to modify their beliefs about Britain's interests. These changes are then contrasted with ways in which other beliefs were buttressed. Finally we deploy Bulpitt's measurement to gauge the success in establishing political argument hegemony and party management.

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[145] LPCR (1962), p175
[146] LPCR (1962), p175

Party management can be defined as the authoritative control over the Party, careful defence of areas of established belief, and the ability to guide the process of defining emergent and evolved beliefs. Party management affected Gaitskell's ability to present and pursue his beliefs through policy forcing modifications of content and tactical retreats over various areas of his web of beliefs. The dilemma of party management provoked modifications in foreign policy, domestic policy and European policy.

For Healey and Gaitskell, the Party's locus of beliefs on foreign policy, developed under Attlee and Bevin, were sustained and defended. In response to calls for a neutralist stance, Healey attacked the concept as antithetical to understandings of British identity, it being out of step with Britain's responsibilities and a retrograde step akin to appeasement. Healey made clear that Britain's alignment in Cold War politics did not allow for the division of opposition to Communism. The success of this adherence to and elaboration of belief was evident with union backing which served to minimise opposition voices such as Bevan's. The issue of unilateralism proved more problematic in sustaining an agreement on party belief. With the loss of an independent nuclear deterrent, a key part of Labour's foreign policy was undermined. The attempt to establish a multilateral framework for discussions met with broad opposition beyond the party, and defeat within the party over policy. The eventual return to the multilateralist path restored the right's vision of Britain in the world.

In relation to key tenets of revisionist approaches to foreign policy, it restored the status quo. Intimately linked with this approach were the concepts of respectability established under Attlee, and developed under Gaitskell in terms of a socialist foreign policy. It was part of the strategy of maintaining an approach in parallel and sympathy to the party which traditionally dominated in foreign policy, the Conservatives. Gaitskell and Healey's strong defence of these beliefs, despite the temporary reversal of 1960, underscored the attachment to beliefs about Britain's role in the world irrespective of changes that diminished the reality of that role.

Gaitskell's ability to lead the Party over domestic policy reforms was qualified from the start. His beliefs had been established before being elected leader and once elected, adopted a strategy by which to unify the Party over detailing the method of public ownership. This opaque strategy served initially to unify, the policy being accepted at Conference, but its foundations were fragile and later threats to Gaitskell's leadership meant this fragmented, specifically with some of the unions. In a final bid to establish this belief, Gaitskell confronted the dilemma of Party management head-on and failed in rallying enough support to end allegiance to the restrictive nature of Clause Four.

For Healey, modifications of belief occurred over membership of the EEC while Gaitskell retreated from it. This provided the most noticeable split between the two, although Healey loyally supported Gaitskell while many of the right drifted away from the leader. Healey accepted the effect of Acheson's

speech; that the notion of an unchanged role in the world for Britain was untenable. Identifying the impact of Suez on perceptions of British military power made the need for retaining a nuclear presence all the more essential. However, in his beliefs, being a nuclear power did not stand antithetically to membership of the EEC and Healey's opposition to Heath's approach to negotiations was based on style rather than substance. In this sense, Healey and Jenkins were alike, though for different reasons; Healey for the realist implications of negotiating from weakness and Jenkins from the idealist belief in the concept of integration.

Gaitskell's beliefs about foreign policy demonstrated continuity. He restated the 'three circles' concept in 1957, after Suez, although raised concerns about the links Britain had with the Commonwealth. As membership negotiations continued, Gaitskell's expressed beliefs retained continuity, although in private there were doubts. However, we can see in Gaitskell how the needs of party management turned the issue of EEC membership into a pragmatic prop through which to engender internal support. His uncharacteristic emotionalism and fervent little Englander language came once an assessment of the inevitable failure of membership was made in September 1962. The effect was to gain essential unity from the centre, left, unions and the general electorate who opposed entry as it stood contrary to their beliefs about Britain's role in the world.[147] It also meant that within the leadership and the right of the Party, Gaitskell had alienated himself.

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[147] Gaitskell kept the letters he received from the public in support over his stance about the Commonwealth. This amounts to over three boxes of material held at the Library of University College London.

When we assess the success of Gaitskell and Healey in establishing their beliefs and carrying the Party with them, we turn to Bulpitt's measurements of political argument hegemony and party management. As this chapter has been dedicated to the issue of party management as the dilemma, we can identify that this was not established. When it comes to establishing political argument hegemony, the issue of sustaining the right's interpretation of foreign policy came under pressure when a key tenet, the independent nuclear deterrent, was removed. The modification to accepting American nuclear deterrence was a modification reached under the continued importance of the Anglo-American relationship for the right. This was translated with difficulty to party dissidents whose interpretation tapped into wider societal concerns over the direction of the Cold War.

6.6 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to apply Bevir's interpretative theory to the Labour Party of 1955-63. This was done by tracing the conceptual and temporal links that tied Hugh Gaitskell and Denis Healey's beliefs to the tradition of democratic socialism. By outlining the historical context, the dilemma of party management was identified. This dilemma showed that the success experienced in the 1945-51 governments raised an internal struggle over the direction of the Party. These struggles had salient features which we identified as the attempt to establish the revisionist agenda through Clause Four and the retreat to shoring up the traditional beliefs in defence and foreign policy by Gaitskell in 1960-62. Finally, it was argued that the modifications of belief that Gaitskell and Healey made were modest. Both stoutly defended revisionist defence policy against an

attempted return to the anti-militarist strand of thought. Over unilateralism, the basis of Labour's position had been undermined and it became harder for Gaitskell to defend. Neither modified their beliefs about the necessity of Britain's defensive role. Over Europe however, Healey's beliefs softened to allow for the possibility while Gaitskell's expressed beliefs maintained strict adherence to the traditional approach of the Labour Party to the Commonwealth.

Chapter seven

The Labour Party 1963-1975

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we focus on Harold Wilson and Roy Jenkins. These actors have been selected as key players in shaping beliefs on Europe: Wilson for explaining shifts in government policy and Jenkins for remaining faithful to a particular revisionist interpretation of Europe. We begin by tracing their inherited beliefs to the traditions of corporate socialism and democratic socialism respectively. A brief summary of the period provides the historical background impacting on Wilson's leadership.

It is proposed that Wilson and Jenkins accepted the perceived dilemma over the direction of party ideology. It is argued that Wilson modified his beliefs in order to sustain the economic programme which formed the basis of his election manifesto in 1964. In contrast while Jenkins's beliefs remained unmodified, his attempts to remain in the debate resulted in his actions becoming more radicalised. The chapter ends with a measure of the success of Wilson's party management and his ability to sustain political argument hegemony.

7.2 Elite Beliefs

In chapters three and six, we identified that Attlee and Bevin formally rejected the anti-militarist and anti-capitalist strands, rearticulating beliefs about internationalism and Britain's imperial policy. Healey and Gaitskell continued to develop these themes, injecting realist beliefs into the revisionist's view of

British defence policy and responding to emotive calls to honour moral obligations to the Commonwealth. In identifying Wilson and Jenkins's beliefs we trace them to the traditions of corporate socialism and democratic socialism respectively but it is first necessary to trace the transmission of beliefs, identifying both conceptual and temporal links, which tie them to these particular traditions.

7.2.1 Harold Wilson[1]

Wilson's formal political career began in 1945, when he was elected Labour MP for Ormskirk and later for Huyton, 1950-1976. He became Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Works 1945-7, Secretary for Overseas Trade in 1947, and then President of the Board of Trade until 1951. Resigning with Bevan in 1951 and as a signatory of the Keep Left pamphlet, Wilson gained left-wing credibility. However, in 1954 he replaced Bevan on the Party's NEC and was appointed shadow chancellor under Gaitskell. Labour's defeat in the 1959 general election prompted a failed leadership bid. Succeeding Gaitskell as Party leader in 1963, he served as Prime Minister, between 1964 and 1970 and again between 1974 and 1976.[2]

We can trace four links that tie Wilson to the tradition of corporate socialism: his nonconformist origins and early family experience of unemployment; his early interest in liberal-labour ideas in his work with Beveridge on social reform; the impact of his economic training in focusing on

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[1] Sir (James) Harold Wilson, Baron Wilson of Rievaulx, (1916-1995)
[2] Eccleshall and Walker, *British Prime Ministers*, p333

the delivery end of corporate socialism; and his adoption of an approach to foreign policy entirely circumscribed by domestic policy.

First, Wilson came from a lower middle-class nonconformist family near Huddersfield, Yorkshire. He described his childhood as one of "an intense feeling of family loyalty...bred in all of us, reinforced in my young days by regular chapel going and a sense of community which found expression in countless voluntary organisations".[3] Pimlott makes frequent references to Wilson's uniqueness: the hopes pinned on him by ambitious parents, his expectation of praise with achievement, his potential singled out at school, all of which went to cultivate, he claims, an image of Wilson to himself of being special.[4] This formed the basis of his career choice, propelled initially by personal achievement rather than the pursuit of principle. Wilson was to remark that the event which awakened his political consciousness was when his father became unemployed, the status being considered a family disgrace.

Second, displaying little political direction at university, Wilson gained a first from Oxford in 1937. He then worked for William Beveridge until the war catapulted him into government first as a statistician for the Anglo-French Co-ordinating Committee, later to the Economic Section, and then Manpower, before ending the war in Mining Production statistics.[5] This early immersion in central government policy work meant a rapid evolution of beliefs. Wilson adopted the Fabian tradition of rational and fact-based argument "bequeathing a firm

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[3] Wilson, H (1986) *The Making of a Prime Minister: 1916-1964*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, p9

[4] Wilson makes some references to this in his autobiography. See: Wilson, *The Making of a Prime Minister*, p24, 42

[5] Pimlott, *Harold Wilson*, p74; Wilson, *The Making of a Prime Minister*, p56, 57,67

commitment to the socially progressive benefits from rationally designed, statistically grounded policy initiatives; his undoubted desire for change within British society was inseparable from the belief that reform could be administered only from above, by a trained bureaucratic élite".[6]

Third, his commitment to solving Britain's intractable unemployment problem locates his beliefs within the tradition of corporate socialism. The corporate socialist tradition was the modification of labourism and fabianism. It provided a model of state ownership of the means of production through the nationalisation of key industries under the rationale that it would be more equitably run this way.

Wilson's beliefs were balanced by pragmatism. For example, in the 1930s his political allegiance was not defined. His active interest in both the Liberal and Labour Parties may be explained by the diminution of Labour's prospects at that time.[7] By the 1940s, his corporate socialism had been modified to include indirect economic guidance, a modification which reflected sensitivity to public frustration and prompted his 'bonfire of controls' in 1948-9. Yet, "he did not...modify his firmly held belief in the desirability, even the moral correctness, of planning compared with the market system."[8] Rather, he continued to believe some controls were necessary, and viewed them as central to the economy as a means of harnessing capitalism, and not taming or destroying

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[6] Eccleshall and Walker, *British Prime Ministers*, p334
[7] Marquand, *Progressive Dilemma*, p155; Pimlott, *Harold Wilson*, p60-66
[8] Pimlott, *Harold Wilson*, p126

it. Thus, there is no inconsistency in his idea of a National Plan in 1963 which argued for the root and branch application of corporate socialism.[9]

Wilson's outlook was shaped by the currents of debate on corporate socialism during the 1930s but his opportunism meant a divergence from contemporaries, in particular Gaitskell. Initially clashing over devaluation in 1949 and again over rearmament spending in 1951 Wilson resigned, aligning himself with the left.[10] With the failure of Bevan's challenge Wilson modified his rhetoric and presented himself as a centrist, the bridge between left and right. When this position was threatened by defeat in the 1959 election, Wilson went on the offensive to prevent a pre-emptive move by Gaitskell to oust him. It was in his leadership bid that he articulated the antipathy of a large section of the party towards Gaitskell: first, by advancing the need for a compromise defence policy; secondly, by repudiating Gaitskell's 'fight and fight and fight again' speech over unilateralism; thirdly, by advocating that the leader and shadow cabinet needed to be more accountable; and finally, by urging the press to not be so partisan towards the right of the Party.[11]

Fourth, in foreign affairs however, Wilson's views were less clear. As Foote remarks, "[i]t was [his] contempt for theory and public debate which makes it difficult to weigh Wilson's contribution to Labour's political thought. He was too

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[9] Thomas Balogh provided many of the arguments that Wilson used. An Oxford don who later worked with the UN, he was economic advisor to the Wilson Governments, 1964-1970. Foote, *Labour Party*, p231; see PRO: CAB 147 series for Balogh papers.

[10] Few of Bevan's friends believed this however, assuming that Wilson's motivation was self-interest: Wilson assumed the left was on the rise and as the right distrusted him, felt he needed to court the likes of Bevan whom he assumed would become leader. Pimlott, *Harold Wilson*, p161, 169

[11] In part, the antipathy Wilson felt towards Morgan Phillips was that he briefed the press about the right but not the left. Pimlott, *Harold Wilson*, p243

responsive to party and popular moods while in opposition to have many fixed principles".[12] His fondness for the Soviet Union was sparked by initial success in trade talks in the 1940s. It was indicative of a belief in working class solidarity and conviction in the application of state planning. His cautious opposition to the Common Market was based on the Party's conference decision rather than a position of his own. Rather like Bevin before him, Wilson's beliefs about foreign policy were secondary to what foreign policy could deliver for the domestic economy and maintaining full employment. Unlike Bevin, Wilson's approach was not defined by the politics of the Big Three but was more nuanced at a time when the 'three circles' concept was disintegrating.

7.2.2 Roy Jenkins[13]

Roy Jenkins's political career began in 1948. Winning the Central Southwark by-election as Labour candidate he was then elected MP for Birmingham Stetchford from 1950 until his resignation in 1976. PPS to Noel-Baker, the Secretary of State for the Commonwealth in 1949, in opposition, Jenkins was a biographer and political commentator for the 'Spectator'.[14] Writing *Fair Shares for the Rich* in 1951 and *Pursuit of Progress* in 1953, Jenkins was associated with the right of the party.[15] A Gaitskellite, he opposed Wilson's election as leader. In Wilson's government he became Minister for Aviation until December 1965, Home Secretary until 1967 and Chancellor after devaluation

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[12] Foote, *Labour Party*, p230
[13] Roy Harris Jenkins, Baron Jenkins of Hillhead (1920-2003)
[14] Jenkins, R (1948) *Mr Attlee: An Interim Biography*, London: Heinemann; Jenkins, R (1964) *Asquith*, London: Collins; Jenkins, R (1954) *Mr Balfour's Poodle*, London: Heinemann; Jenkins, R (1958) *Sir Charles Dilke*, London: Collins; Jenkins went under the pseudonym of 'Taper' at the Spectator, see Campbell, *Roy Jenkins*, p110
[15] Jenkins, R (1951) *Fair Shares for the Rich*, London: Tribune Publications; Jenkins, R (1953) *In Pursuit of Progress*, London: Heinemann

until June 1970. As Chancellor he instituted a 'hard slog for two years' to tackle the nation's balance of payments difficulties. In 1970 he was elected deputy leader of the Labour Party but resigned from the Shadow Cabinet in April 1972 over European policy. Home Secretary again in 1974 he was appointed President of the Britain in Europe Referendum campaign in January 1975.

We can trace Jenkins's beliefs to the tradition of democratic socialism in four ways: the influence in his family background of democratic socialism; his early understanding of economics; his pro-American outlook and adherence to the revisionists; and his modification of belief over the need for British membership of the EEC.

First, Jenkins was born in Abersychan, Wales, the son of a miner and Labour MP, Arthur Jenkins.[16] His childhood was middle-class but firmly rooted in labour beliefs having been born into the élite of the Labour movement.[17] His father was well connected within the union movement and the Party and later, developed contacts across Europe with other union and socialist groupings. So while Roy Jenkins may have grown up in the valleys, his was a comfortable and cosmopolitan existence with wide intellectual and political horizons. The social distinction instilled a firm belief in Jenkins that the Labour Party was not the exclusive preserve of the working class.

When we locate Jenkins's beliefs we identify strong commitments to ideals of equality but framed within a powerful pragmatism. His politics were not those

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[16] Campbell, J (1983) *Roy Jenkins: A Biography*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, p1
[17] Campbell, *Roy Jenkins*, p1

of the ideologue but rather of seeking practical solutions for the improvement of those worse off. Jenkins's politics were always those of "optimistic humanism", seeking the improvement of society not the perfection of mankind.[18] Jenkins's beliefs echoed the social liberalism of the late nineteenth century: "[h]e grew up with a strong inherited belief in the urgency of progress towards an order of society in which injustice should be mitigated or abolished".[19] Jenkins lived and breathed politics, becoming a 'groupie' who listened to debates from the galleries in the House of Commons, meeting senior Labour Parliamentarians through his father, and later, meeting contemporaries at university equally imbued with political interest.[20] Gaining a first in PPE from Balliol College, Jenkins's contemporaries were Edward Heath, Denis Healey and Tony Crosland. Unlike Wilson, Jenkins was fully immersed in university politics, being an active member of the Oxford Union and the university's Labour Party.[21]

Second, once elected MP, Jenkins delivered his maiden speech in support of Cripps' budget thus voicing an interest in economic affairs. From this sprang his pamphlet *Fair Shares for the Rich* in which he called for the abolition of private incomes facilitated in the meantime by a sliding scale of tax of up to 95%. It indicated a radical belief in redistribution which went further than most democratic socialists.

Third, Jenkins's foreign policy beliefs were framed by realism about Britain's international standing and the role of other states. A brief stint at the

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[18] Campbell, *Roy Jenkins*, p40
[19] Campbell, *Roy Jenkins*, p8
[20] Radice, G (2002) *Friends and Rivals*, London: Little, Brown, p16
[21] Campbell, *Roy Jenkins*, p11

American Embassy in London after graduation marked the beginning of his "strong [belief] in the central importance for Britain of the Atlantic Alliance".[22] A loyalist, Jenkins supported the Party line in opposition to the Schuman Plan in 1950.

When the 1951 party split came and Jenkins aligned with the Gaitskellites, he continued his earlier mainstream loyalism. His views on foreign policy mirrored closely those of Gaitskell and Healey, rejecting the left's call for a socialist foreign policy. This he felt to be based on two delusions; first the outdated view of Britain's importance in the world about which he declared that "the essential foundation of utopianism...[is] a subconscious faith in the omnicompetence of British policy". Secondly, Jenkins was a realist; a British government was not sovereign so had to deal with the world as it was as opposed to how it wanted it to be.[23] Like Healey, Jenkins rejected the call for neutralism favouring a role for Britain commensurate with its world status.[24]

Fourth, the area in which Jenkins's beliefs developed to be most at odds with the leadership was over his appraisal of Britain's power status. Britain, Europe and the Commonwealth formed a set of interconnected beliefs. There was no obligation other than sentimental which accounted for continued relations with the Commonwealth. He dismissed as unrealistic arguments that the Commonwealth was a political or economic alternative to the EEC; neither did Britain have any responsibility to 'lead' the Commonwealth. "The new imperialism of believing that the emergent countries want to be led by us" he

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[22] Campbell, *Roy Jenkins*, p17
[23] Jenkins, R (1953) *Pursuit and Progress*, London: Heinemann, p24
[24] Campbell, *Roy Jenkins*, p39

argued "is only a few steps forward from the old imperialism of believing they want to be dominated by us."[25]

Unsentimental appraisal led Jenkins to the conclusion that "Our neighbours in Europe are roughly our economic and military equals. We would do better to live gracefully with them than to waste our substance by trying unsuccessfully to keep up with the power giants of the modern world".[26] Failure to become involved in Europe would result in a political division with the Continent; for Jenkins, the political dimension of Europe was all important.[27] While these beliefs had been developing throughout the mid to late 1950s, it was Gaitskell's increasingly anti-European stance that led Jenkins to resign from the shadow cabinet and set up the cross party common market campaign group as Macmillan was leading his party into accepting the principle of membership of the Common Market.

Jenkins was not an ideologue; he had never be drawn into the ideological roots of his beliefs. Rather he was essentially an empiricist and pragmatic in his search for progressive solutions. For Jenkins, the point of the Labour Party was to improve the lot of people. It did not need social blueprints or economic structures since gains made in the short-term were as significant and important as those hoped for in the long-term. It was a principle that he practised as Home Secretary by leading significant changes in civil relations. He defended his

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[25] Campbell, *Roy Jenkins*, p52
[26] Crossman, RHS and Janet Morgan (eds.) (1981) *The Backbench Diaries of Richard Crossman*, London: Hamish Hamilton, 14/05/1959, p748
[27] Jenkins, R (1967) *Essays and Speeches*, London: Collins, p221

policies as libertarian, defending the rights of the individual against the state.[28] Again, as Chancellor Jenkins prioritised the export market to maximise the economic gains to be made from devaluation by introducing a credit squeeze and tax rises to curb inflation.[29] Jenkins's rise both saved Wilson's government but threatened his leadership.[30]

We can trace in Wilson and Jenkins beliefs that tie them to the traditions of corporate socialism and democratic socialism respectively. With Wilson, we traced the influence of his non-conformist upbringing and his father's unemployment in providing a clear work ethic with a purpose. His subsequent ideas about social reform were influenced by working with Beveridge and his economic beliefs developed towards delivery end solutions. Finally, he demonstrated an ambivalence about foreign policy beliefs consistent with a tradition which defines itself first by domestic politics.

Jenkins's early democratic socialism was traced to his family background and by early encounters with its leading members such as Attlee and Dalton. These beliefs were reinforced at university where Jenkins rejected radicalism in favour of a moderate approach. At Westminster he was influenced by the redistributive economic approach of Stafford Cripps. Otherwise, Jenkins adopted a loyalist stance in line with revisionist thinking. He switched from believing the American Alliance was central in safeguarding British security to the potential offered in Europe in the early 1950s. In Europe, Jenkins believed Britain could be a decisive player in a new entity powerful enough to rival the superpowers.

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[28] Roy Jenkins obituary, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/980382.stm, accessed 05/10/2004
[29] Jenkins, *Life at the Centre*, p222
[30] Radice, *Friends and Rivals*, p159

7.3 Historical Setting

To understand the circumstances in which Harold Wilson and Roy Jenkins identified the dilemma of the direction of party ideology and the context which defined their articulations of this dilemma, it is necessary to summarise the domestic and international situation. We will examine the economy and Trade Unions in domestic policy and the state of the 'three circles' concept in the international setting particularly in reference to the contraction of Britain's defensive world presence and the state of the 'special relationship'.

7.3.1 Domestic

Labour's electoral appeal in 1964 was based in part on its plans for the economy. The slogan of 'thirteen wasted years' was an effective jibe at the perceived failure of the British economy under the Conservatives to match the economic growth, productivity and capital investment of competitor economies. The incoming Labour Government kept the NEDC established by Macmillan. The NEDC or 'Neddy' was a tripartite body of worker, industry and government representation. Wilson also introduced the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) whose remit was to limit the Treasury's power. The DEA was to plan and modernise the economy to improve efficiency and competitiveness. The DEA became the body through which the National Plan was administered.

The National Plan was published by the Labour Party in September 1965. In it, the Labour Government set ambitious targets for economic growth and development of 4% per year between 1964 and 1970. It used indicative planning in which private companies were given incentives to increase output by an

expansionary economic policy. Almost immediately the Plan came under pressure from balance of payments problems. The first economic act the incoming Labour government instituted was a 15% import surcharge and a £70m export rebate to stave off an impending balance of payments crisis.[31] Then, in December 1964, the government drew a loan of $1 billion from the IMF with a further loan of $1.4 billion in May 1965. Wilson set up a National Board for Prices and Incomes which attempted to smooth out wage control although this would become a political football between the Treasury and DEA on the one hand and the government and the unions on the other.

In early 1966 proposals for industrial reorganisation were formalised in a White Paper. In May, Callaghan introduced the Selective Employment Tax (SET) to shift labour from services to manufacturing. However, pressure on Sterling continued to grow prompting a six-month wage freeze and deflationary measures during the summer of 1966. Finally in November 1967 Sterling was devalued from $2.80 to $2.40, Callaghan resigned as Chancellor and was moved to the Home Office. To sustain devaluation and maximise potential benefits Jenkins, Callaghan's replacement at the Treasury, instituted immediate public expenditure cuts. The Basle Agreement of September 1968 meant Sterling balances were buffered "to offset most of any reduction in their reserves caused by fluctuations in Sterling held both publicly and privately overseas".[32] One threat to Sterling was removed since "[o]verseas Sterling Area (OSA) countries undertook to hold a proportion of their reserves in Sterling. In return, they

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[31] Lapping, B (1970) *The Labour Government 1964-1970*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, p32, 57; Cook and Stevenson, *Britain Since 1945*, p168

[32] Oliver, M.J and Arran Hamilton (2006) 'Downhill from Devaluation: The Battle for Sterling, 1968-1972', *Economic History Review Online*, October 2006, http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1468-0289.2006.00365.x accessed 05/12/2006, p7

obtained a dollar value guarantee covering the greater part of their Sterling holdings".[33]

The weakening of Sterling resulted in planning towards floating the pound which would eventually take place in 1972 once the US abandoned the Bretton Woods system in 1971. More immediate practical concerns were to buttress the position of Sterling by introducing higher taxes and duties in a major deflationary budget package in March 1968 and six months later with a worsening of the trade gap, a credit squeeze. In 1969 and 1970 Jenkins introduced two budgets both of which were aimed at creating a balance of payments surplus rather than pre-election tax cuts.

Economic difficulties were in part defined by relations with organised labour. The shift towards economic planning meant greater trades union involvement in economic policy-making both through the NEDC and the National Plan, while the Prices and Incomes Board became a particular focus of conflict between unions and the Labour government during the late 1960s. A number of high profile strikes indicated antipathy towards this policy, notably the May 1966 National Union of Seamen's strike in London.

In a bid to ease industrial relations, Wilson appointed Barbara Castle to the newly established Department of Employment and Productivity. Castle subsequently published the White Paper *In Place of Strife* which aimed to counter escalating strike action by reforming industrial relations laws. These, she

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[33] Oliver and Hamilton, 'Downhill from Devaluation', p7

proposed, would now be backed by penal sanctions and 'cooling off' periods for unofficial strikes in an attempt to stop wildcat strikes. The paper split the Cabinet and united the unions in their opposition so that it was dropped in favour of the TUC improving its management of strikes.

7.3.2 International

The most significant shift in defence policy came in 1966 with Healey's defence review. It signalled the contraction of British defensive obligations East of Suez and made specific the focus on European defence as the limit of Britain's defence policy. It was a review which had been some two years in the making, since Healey was appointed as Defence Secretary when Wilson was elected, and was intended to provide the redirection of British defence interests and resources to limits which were acceptable in terms of costs.

The terms of the review included needing to cut £400m from the defence budget and the first casualty was the cancellation of the TSR2 strike-reconnaissance aircraft on grounds of costs. Instead, the American F111 was to be ordered although in 1968 this too was cancelled because of costs.[34] The cancellation of the aircraft carrier CVA-01 (on the grounds that it would have only limited use and lacked the manpower to use it East of Suez) also formed part of the decision to slough off the East of Suez role. Yet despite these cancellations almost half of the budget cuts needed to be found.[35] Healey's outlook had always been global, although he preferred cutting NATO troop commitments in favour of a continued presence in the Middle East. The real

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[34] Healey, *Time of My Life*, p271-3
[35] Healey, *Time of My Life*, p279

result was a mixture of withdrawal from Aden and Singapore and a continued international presence where the host country provided the facilities. At home, amalgamations of regiments provided more cuts.[36]

Healey had indicated that future commitments would be reduced too, with a programme running up to 1970. This was accelerated and extended in the wake of the 1967 devaluation. All British bases outside of Europe and the Mediterranean were to be closed by 1971. While remaining a member of SEATO, Britain would not provide any forces to the group. Withdrawal from Malaysia and Singapore was substituted with an integrated air defence system in which commitments were shared with New Zealand and Australia. Finally, the Labour Government, although split over the continued use of a nuclear deterrent, maintained the Polaris commitment undertaken by Macmillan, reducing the fleet by one, to four submarines, one with a specific role East of Suez.[37]

Finally, the Anglo-American relationship came under pressure during the late 1960s as the Vietnam War intensified. British policy had assumed the role of passive spectator during the 1950s. As the Americans took over the French mantle in the conflict from 1964, Wilson resisted pressure from the Johnson administration to commit troops, although was equivocal in his denouncement of the conflict at home. His position became ambiguous since Wilson had sought American support for his position on Rhodesia. Ian Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in November 1965 had been met with an

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[36] Cook and Stevenson, *Britain Since 1945*, p204-5
[37] Healey, *Time of My Life*, p301-5

almost obsessive response by Wilson.[38] American support of a British economic embargo on Rhodesia meant British support of the American presence in Vietnam, and continued presence East of Suez was required in return. The implied continued world presence was welcomed by some in Cabinet although the left and pro-European members were critical of this apparent retrograde step. While it caused anger and demonstrations at home from the autumn of 1967 until at least the summer of 1968 and opposition from the Labour Party Conference, it meant American support was less forthcoming over British Sterling fluctuations.[39]

7.4 Elite Beliefs and Tradition Change

The perceived dilemma of maintaining control over the ideological direction of the Party was accepted by Wilson and Jenkins so prompting a modification of belief about how to secure argument hegemony on Labour Party policy. When Wilson and Jenkins refer to this dilemma, they refer to four facts in particular: the failure of Wilson's national plan at home; the failure of the Commonwealth strategy abroad; the radicalisation of politics; and using Europe as the point around which to rally support. It is argued that the party's failure to engage with the idea of Europe meant it remained a consistently weak and less rooted idea in the Party's beliefs creating an essentially ambivalent attitude and marginalising those who genuinely supported it.

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[38] Gowland and Turner, *Reluctant Europeans*, p155
[39] Wilson, *The Labour Government 1964-1970*, p96-98, 187, 436, 558

7.4.1 Identifying the Dilemma

Wilson faced a dilemma over how to shore up, in the face of economic difficulties, the corporatist socialist model on which he had been elected and more crucially upon which he felt the unity of the Labour Party rested. He eventually rearticulated the position of Europe within the Party through the two-pronged argument of economic gains of the common market and from the advantages such a union had for science and technology. The failure of Wilson's domestic economic policy was mitigated first by the failure of the bid and deflecting this towards French intransigence and second by Jenkins's Chancellorship which eventually restored some economic equilibrium.

Jenkins later experienced his own dilemma over how to shore up the Labour Party's aim of EEC membership in the face of internal division and the radicalisation of the left. He first considered challenging the leadership over Wilson's increased anti-European articulations. Jenkins would not allow a party regrouping through a return to scepticism once Wilson was out of office in 1970. Becoming radicalised himself by the polarisation within the Party, Jenkins defied the Party and led rebels to vote with the government over EEC entry in October 1971. Damaged by this he resigned as deputy leader in April 1972. In opposition the issue of the EEC became the arena over which the left and right within the party fought not only over the principle of membership, but also a proxy battle over the ideological direction of the party's future economic policy.

7.4.1.1 The Failure of the National Plan

Wilson established himself as the bridge between left and right within the Labour Party on a platform of personality and dynamism and a return to the corporate socialism of the 1940s. Changes in relations with the trades unions and the international economy would also impact on the national plan.

Wilson was elected by a party tired of internal fighting; his mission was to restore party unity under the politically neutral banner of science and technology. Wilson had cultivated the credentials of someone able to speak to both left and right. As Robins notes, "[t]he programme appealed to fundamentalists because it involved more planning and public ownership [and] it appealed to the revisionists because it would generate economic growth and efficiency".[40] Further, Wilson had electoral appeal: "what Harold offered was not just an image but to some extent the reality of a modern man, a competent man - none of the old labour business of lumbering along...He was on the move. He knew what the modern world was all about".[41] Wilson's electoral appeal was based also on the contrast to the aged and spent leadership of the Conservatives.

The election platform on which Wilson fought was progressive, energetic, and in sharp contrast to the Conservatives and their "thirteen wasted years". It was a platform specifically based on fighting the balance of payments problems by creating a National Plan under which Britain would rejoin other Western

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[40] Robins, *The Reluctant Party*, p48

[41] Alec Douglas Home quoted in Murphy, D (ed) (2000) *Britain 1914-2000*, London: Collins Education Press, p292

powers whose economic growth was outstripping that of Britain.[42] Labour's programme aimed to rejuvenate the British economy by applying in full the corporate socialist model of planning and nationalisation, first used during the Attlee Governments. It argued that only the root and branch application of planning could deliver the dynamism needed in the economy. It was more than the Attlee governments had hoped to achieve. The National Plan embodied this programme and required a holistic approach to policy implementation which was to emanate from the DEA as an alternative to the orthodoxy of the Treasury.[43] It was a bold and radical plan. Yet as we saw above, it failed.

The National Plan was an ambitious policy almost inevitably doomed to failure given inherited economic difficulties. It came under pressure almost immediately from continued balance of payments deficits; it was the point at which Wilson fully understood the extent to which the difficulties in effecting change at home were dependent on a positive reception from international trading markets.[44] The nail in the coffin came with the Seamen's Strike in May 1966. It lasted nearly two months and provoked a state of emergency, effectively torpedoing the corporate socialist solution to economic problems as it stood. A run on Sterling as a result weakened the economy and only pushed Wilson further on the defensive, eventually leading to devaluation in 1967.[45] Debates over when Wilson should have devalued overlook the beliefs underpinning the reasons why he did not. The theme of respectability which had developed in

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[42] Labour Party Manifesto, 1964, http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/lab64.htm accessed 01/10/2004

[43] Brown, *In My Way*, p97

[44] Radice *Friends and Rivals*, p254

[45] Prior attempts to prop up Sterling to avoid devaluation had resulted in surcharges levied at EFTA imports, straining relations with the members and borrowing almost $2.5 billion from the IMF and a further $3 billion from central banks form 1964-1966.

relation to Labour's economic competence during the 1930s was the feature of the Attlee governments. Even under Attlee devaluation became necessary, undermining claims of competent economic management. The legacy of Labour aside, devaluation challenged the potency of Wilson's programme for growth. The rest of his term in office was characterised by a subtle but absolute shift towards the left, indicative of his weakened status, which culminated in the government back-down over Barbara Castle's White Paper, *In Place of Strife*, on industrial relations reform.

The collapse of the National Plan could have ended Wilson's career and re-opened barely concealed schisms within the party. To prevent the creation of a vacuum in domestic economic policy and foreign policy, Wilson sought to find a response by shifting attention towards EEC membership.[46] From the summer of 1966 until devaluation was no longer avoidable, Wilson's shoring up strategy was to seek entry into the EEC. Entry was used to buttress Wilson's flagging position and to revive the National Plan by rearticulating the technological revolution in terms of economies of scale. Using Europe as the means of reviving a beleaguered set of policies was double-edged. With de Gaulle still President there seemed little chance of success but to deflect the blame for failure on to the French offered an opportunity to avoid a fresh cleavage at home.

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[46] Robins, *Reluctant Party*, p58; Contrasted with successful legislation undertaken by Jenkins at the Home Office on social affairs, including the abolition of the death penalty, the legalisation of homosexuality, and of abortions, reducing the age of voting and later, the age of majority, to eighteen. Further, progressive laws on censorship and equal pay were enacted; divorce law was simplified while partial attempts were taken to tackle race discrimination. See: Cook and Stevenson, *Britain since 1945*, p15-6, 132, 142, 157, 161

7.4.1.2 The Failure of the Commonwealth Strategy

The second part of Wilson's plan was to continue with traditional commercial relations with the Commonwealth but this was challenged, forcing Wilson to modify his beliefs. The failure of the Commonwealth strategy began with recognising that economic figures confirmed the fall in trade, and continued with attempts to link with Europe in rearticulating Britain's international role, to capitalise on a shift in public opinion favourable towards entry and with using Europe as a means of compensating for poor domestic economic performance.

In 1964, the Labour Party manifesto, despite its proclamation of "A New Britain" in domestic policy, and in foreign policy, "A New Role For Britain", it offered no such thing. Instead, it offered the orthodoxy of Labour thinking in foreign affairs, firmly re-established by Gaitskell, of pursuing Commonwealth relations and developing Atlantic relations in terms of defence needs and capabilities. It made no mention of a European policy.[47] By 1966, however, the Labour Party manifesto had included, as one of its central strategies in foreign policy, membership of the EEC.[48]

The shift was twofold. The orthodoxy of the 'three circles' was over. The Commonwealth trade figures showed a steady drift towards the United States away from the UK in both imports and exports, while UK trade with the EEC

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[47] http://www.labour-party.org.uk/manifestos/1964/1964-labour-manifesto.shtml accessed 01/10/2004

[48] http://www.labour-party.org.uk/manifestos/1966/1966-labour-manifesto.shtml accessed 01/10/2004

doubled over the same period, between 1948 and 1967.[49] Basing UK foreign policy on sustaining links with the Commonwealth was proving absurd and economically dangerous in terms of balance of payments. The second reason was a corollary of the first, namely the political dimension of foreign policy. The shift in US foreign policy to involvement in Asia and the Rhodesian crisis in 1964 within the Commonwealth were external changes over which Britain was demonstrably impotent.

By early 1965, "the European issue began creeping into prominence"[50] an initial attempt at reviving the Maudling initiative of 1959 was swiftly rebuffed by the EEC and would be replaced in October 1966 by the proposal to create a free-trade area between the EFTA and EEC countries, a move flatly rejected by the EEC. In October 1966 the strategy shifted to full membership through an investigation conducted by Wilson and Brown in January 1967 into the possibility of opening negotiations, and was formally announced in May 1967.[51] In private, Foreign Office advice had been sceptical of alternatives to membership of the EEC arguing that reformulations of the 'three circles' concept would only see Britain's international voice fatally undermined. It was only through membership that Britain had a positive future.[52] In private Wilson was voicing concerns over making a declaration of intent which accepted the Treaty of Rome.[53] It was a formal acceptance of Britain's changed role in the world.

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[49] Robins, *Reluctant Party*, p58. For trade figures to and from the Commonwealth from 1948 to 1967 and percentages of UK exports to and from the EEC and the Commonwealth over this period, see Kitzinger, *The Second Try*, p334-5

[50] Robins, *The Reluctant Party*, p45

[51] Lord George Brown, (1914-1985) deputy Labour Party leader from 1960 to 1970

[52] PRO: FCO30/154, 'The Political Case for Entry', May 1967

[53] Parr, H (2002) 'Gone Native: the Foreign Office and Harold Wilson's Policy towards the EEC, 1964-7' in Daddow, O. (ed.) *Harold Wilson and European Integration*, London: Cass, pp75-99, p80

In Wilson's European policy there existed a distinct difference in strategic approach. A broad consensus had been reached in industry, the press and civil service and despite some divisions in Cabinet the majority were also in favour of entry. This shift towards favouring entry was helped by the outcome of the Luxembourg Compromise which established the veto over 'important issues', providing members with a safeguard from unwanted majority decisions.[54] Convinced by Foreign Office arguments that an application had to be simplified, worked well with Wilson's own preference for broad agreement.[55] The difficulty was more how to explain the apparent *volte face* of Labour's foreign policy. Furthermore, as Robins argues, "[i]f the EEC was to be reassessed, a new set of beliefs had to be learnt; new beliefs which would result in new attitudes".[56]

Labour needed to believe in entry with the conviction which would help convince the EEC to accept British membership. The Conservative opposition, now led by the pro-European Edward Heath had made Europe central to its foreign policy strategy so Wilson's strategy was to add the technology dimension, which had been successful in unifying the Party and broadening the electoral appeal of the Labour Party during the 1964 and 1966 elections. It had the added value of providing a distinctive difference in approach to the Conservatives thus bringing in those who opposed entry as an extension of opposing the Conservatives. The new intake of MPs in 1966 included many with

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[54] Young, *Britain and European Unity*, p85
[55] For a more detailed analysis of how the Foreign Office came to love Europe, see Parr, 'Gone Native', pp75-99
[56] Robins, *The Reluctant Party*, p46

pro-European sympathies.[57] Finally, the worsening economic situation proved to others the necessity of membership as a remedy.[58]

Yet Wilson's strategy and approach tell us little about his beliefs about Europe. Wilson's conversion to Europe was, according to his Paymaster General George Wigg, not one of conviction but of necessity in finding a solution to domestic economic problems.[59] Having undermined Brown at the DEA, Wilson offered him support over Europe and the post of Foreign Secretary, commensurate with his seniority within the Party. Rearticulating Europe as an extension of the symbolism of technology earlier employed by Wilson and the party provided the possibility of a solution to the economic difficulties. The significance of both of them doing a tour of Europe was a measure to placate the divisions within Cabinet for if Brown alone had gone then anti-marketeers would have disregarded his findings while had Wilson gone alone, the pro-marketeers would have been suspicious.[60]

Wilson's convictions over the issue of Europe have raised speculation that this was a tactical move to manage the party, or a decisive shift in the face of a failing domestic economic situation, or a diversionary tactic to conceal the real plight of the economy. Robins locates the rise and fall of Wilson's Europeanism as intricately linked to the rise and fall of George Brown's political fortunes.[61] Once it became clear that Brown and his faction had won over the majority within the Cabinet it was politically wise for Wilson to remove him as the

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[57] Young, *Britain and European Unity*, p90
[58] Robins, *The Reluctant Party*, p57
[59] Wigg, G. (1972) *George Wigg*, London: Michael Joseph, p338-9
[60] Brown, *In My Way*, p206
[61] Robins, *The Reluctant Party*, p60

government's most ardent advocate of entry. Elsewhere this would seem to be challenged. Parr, for example, argues that Wilson, although behind the Foreign Office curve on accepting the need for membership of the EEC, became convinced of its necessity after the summer of 1966.[62]

There are indications that even after de Gaulle's veto, Wilson continued with efforts to achieve entry. The Harmel Initiative in December 1967 was the Belgian-proposed united front to oppose the French position involving the reinvigoration of WEU and European defence.[63] For Wilson it was a counter-challenge to the French position and involved the propagation of this position in the European press to impress on European opinion that Britain was not about to change and revert back to either a 'little Englander' position or to the Commonwealth. In an interview in the German press Healey argued for a distinctive European identity within NATO which was indicative of this strategy during 1967.[64] The 'Soames Affair' of early 1969 was important in that it represented an attempt by Wilson to present the French in further bad light and galvanise support against them though the proposal of a free trade area between the Six and Seven was what both the Conservatives and Wilson had at one time wanted. Underlying this approach was the belief that there was no alternative except full membership and as long as the Government had nowhere else to go, "it must stick to its guns".[65] Even as de Gaulle resigned, the official advice remained to seek entry, having decided to reject 'going alone' in Cabinet in 1966-7 on the grounds that it would diminish Britain's world voice, the

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[62] Parr, 'Gone Native', p87
[63] PRO: FCO30/395 'Future Policy after the Veto', P.F. Hancock 30/10/68
[64] Robins, *The Reluctant Party*, p78
[65] PRO: FCO30/421 'Study of British European Policy', P.F Hancock, 02/04/69

Government should also recognise that vested interests were so great among the Six that it would weather de Gaulle's intransigence.[66] It was this belief that formed the basis of the revival of negotiations in early 1970 which began under the Conservatives just a fortnight after the British election.

7.4.1.3 Return of Partisanship

The polarisation of politics had its roots in the 1960s and Wilson identified the rise of partisanship by: an increase in radicalism within the Labour Party's ranks; increased radicalism of the Labour Party élite; greater domination by the unions in agenda setting; and the discrediting of the revisionists.

The return to opposition meant a return to internal division. The left found a new champion in Tony Benn who provided establishment credibility to claims of direct action and worker participation. The reaction to the Heath government's Industrial Relations Bill prompted organised dissent in March 1971. The perceived failures of the Wilson Governments' type of corporate socialism meant a reaction against the Labour leadership. The Campaign for Labour Party Democracy (CLPD) was established in 1973 to make the Labour Party more responsive and accountable to the rank-and-file activists.[67] The TUC-Labour Party Liaison Committee was set up in February 1971 to avoid the disruption between the two that had characterised the late 1960s and led to the Alternative Economic Strategy (AES), a six-part programme including the "reflation of

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[66] PRO: FCO30/421 'European Policy', J. Robinson, 28/04/69

[67] The aim of the CLPD was to make mandatory the reselection of Labour MPs to make sure they enacted Conference decision and aimed to make this a condition of the leadership which eventually happened in 1981 creating an electoral college whereby the leader was selected by a combination vote of MPs, Trade Unions and constituency activists. For more information, see: http://home.freeuk.net/clpd/history.htm (accessed 20/12/2006)

demand, a substantial expansion of public ownership, formal and compulsory planning with privately owned firms, price control and industrial democracy".[68] Titled *Labour's Programme 1973* it embodied the beliefs of the newly emboldened left with a call for "a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of the working people."[69] The limits to Wilson's version of corporate socialism had been met.

While the left's demands crept towards a more dominant position, including adopting an overtly negative approach to EEC membership, the right fragmented. Healey had never been supportive of entry and despite a brief change of mind, continued to oppose. Crosland had wavered because of constituency opposition but being overlooked for the Chancellorship in favour of Jenkins brought personal resentment also to bear over the issue. Jenkins remained steadfastly supportive of entry on the grounds that this was the best future direction Britain had available and that to change the agreed policy of the party for partisan gain was reckless and dishonourable. More importantly, however discredited Wilson was over the failings of the 1960s, the old revisionists were seen as more discredited, none more so than the ideological arguments which had been presented by Crosland.

The new battle lines emerging between left and right employed EEC membership as a proxy for the ideological direction of the party and were drawn in 1971 and set by April 1972. Wilson's dilemma was how to maintain the unity of the Labour Party after electoral defeat and the disappointments generated after

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[68] Harmon, M (1998) 'Book Review: Economic Strategy and the Labour Party: Politics and Policy Making 1970-83' in *American Political Science Review*, vol92.4, pp968-9, p968
[69] Laybourne, *A Century of Labour*, p116

six years in office. In an effort to maintain unity he rearticulated his domestic economic outlook and his approach to the EEC. It would lead to accusations of opportunism but Wilson managed to sustain enough support for EEC entry to prevent the issue from being killed off for discussion. He also sustained a strategy of deflection. Throughout the period his speeches were constructed to appeal to unity and consistency of view and to construct during this period in opposition, be it the Conservative Party or the EEC, a low-level threat against which the Party needed to mobilise. It was a strategy which had its merits but inspired hostility.

In January 1971, 132 Labour MPs tabled an anti-EEC motion in what spiralled towards an ever negative position so that by October it was expected that the Conference would vote outright against the EEC. Jenkinsites tabled their own pro-EEC motion in May gathering 100 signatures but it exposed the inherent weakness of the right in the Party where Jenkins was being portrayed as the Bevan of the right.[70]

The slide towards the left continued, highlighted by Callaghan's 'non merci' speech and Wilson's reaction to the perceived threat from Callaghan as pretender to the throne of the centre-left by his anti-EEC position at the Labour Party's special conference in July 1971. At this conference he presented his previous articulations as consistent, arguing that he had only been prepared to enter the EEC if the terms were satisfactory adding "[n]ever have we said— nor is a single word we, or I, have said capable of being construed as meaning— that

[70] Marquand, D (2004) "The Welsh Wrecker" in Adonis, A and Keith Thomas (eds) *Jenkins: A Retrospective*, Oxford: OUP, p115

we have to accept whatever terms emerged. We reserved the right to judge the terms of entry against the potential benefits, and on that test, and on no other, to decide for or against entry, and this we shall do".[71]

It was a carefully constructed speech aimed at channelling fire towards the Conservatives and focused specifically on the perception that Heath, in his enthusiasm for entry, was selling British interests short. Crucially however, Wilson never allowed Conference to vote against the EEC.

As Deputy Leader of the Party, Jenkins was unable to participate in the conference. He articulated his position two days later at a PLP meeting by openly criticising Wilson's equivocation and Callaghan's 'Little Englandism'.[72] For Jenkins, EEC entry was a matter of being open and outward looking rather than narrow, and of maintaining the responsibilities of leadership.[73] He identified the dilemma that party ideology posed with an ascendant left within the Party and formulated his articulations in response to this. The dilemma became acute for Jenkins, revolving around an issue of principle rather than partisan politics. His increasing radicalisation was indicative of this shift.

Jenkins articulated his beliefs about Britain's international status and future global role in a speech in March 1972. Summarising British foreign policy since 1945 as one of over-extension based on traditional precepts, he identified Suez as a critical juncture which continued to define British foreign policy. Britain clung

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[71] http://www.ena.lu?lang=2&doc=17409 Harold Wilson speech to the Special Conference of the Labour Party, 17/07/71, (accessed 20/12/2006)
[72] Marquand, *Jenkins Retrospective*, p116
[73] Marquand, *Jenkins Retrospective*, p120

more closely to her American 'nurse' whereas the French used it to establish an independent presence, away from American post-war patronage of European affairs.[74] Reappraising the three circles, he suggested that the waning of American interest in European affairs meant attempts to retain the Anglo-American Alliance as traditionally formulated were unhelpful for Britain.[75] Britain's future lay in Europe and not in a mid-Atlantic position. The other circle of Commonwealth had been shown to be "without substance" which despite loosening ties had eroded the concept of Britain as a heavy-weight middle ranking power by an inability to achieve results in the Middle East and Vietnam.[76]

Jenkins articulated instead a set of beliefs about how Britain's future interests would be best served and why Britain needed to move towards Europe in a world full of power blocs. He reinterpreted traditional labels of Labour foreign policy. Establishing an equitable partnership between the United States and European Community was essential to British interests, as was the entrenchment of Germany in the EEC. It meant the end of Franco-German rivalry for good in a secure three-way relationship between Britain, Europe and the United States. Jenkins also reinterpreted the notion of duty to Commonwealth countries through the lens of EEC membership. An economically stronger Britain through the EEC could use growth, fortune and resources to help the countries of

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[74] Jenkins, R (1972) *British Foreign Policy Since 1945*, text of a speech made to the Thank-Offering to Britain Fund Lecture, British Academy, March 1972, Oxford: OUP, p8-9
[75] Jenkins, *British Foreign Policy Since 1945*, p9
[76] Jenkins, *British Foreign Policy Since 1945*, p11

the third world. He even used this to link it to the fear of Communism by claiming it could be used as a means of fostering improved East-West relations.[77]

It was a reformulation of traditional Labour Party foreign policy values but with a decidedly regional focus. It was a set of beliefs that took seriously the reality of Britain's declining world role and rearticulated a vision of how Britain could once again provide a credible and powerful voice in the world in partnership with European allies. Jenkins's beliefs were increasingly marginalised within the Party. By October, predictions were borne out with a 5:1 vote against continued EEC membership at the Party Conference. It provided the necessary stand off which meant Jenkins led 69 rebels into the yes lobby when the vote came on 28th October, defying Wilson's three-line whip and leading to accusations of disloyalty and of being a splitter. By the time Jenkins did resign, over the Party's decision to adopt the Referendum as part of their manifesto pledge, the balance had tipped inexorably to the left.

7.4.1.4 Uneasy Peace

The final dilemma Wilson faced was how to win office once again and maintain that unity once elected. He did this in three ways. Having cobbled together a left-wing coalition, Wilson tried to keep them pegged to relatively middle ground. Firstly, he assumed an ambivalent and at times negative attitude to Europe. Secondly, he tied those who threatened his leadership, such as Callaghan, to his political fortunes. Finally, he successfully channelled Party

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[77] Jenkins, *British Foreign Policy Since 1945*, p11-2

debate away from any issue of the principle of membership to one about the terms of entry, something which the left were slow to pick up on.[78]

First, Wilson's articulations over Europe had shifted early on, becoming more negative while not rejecting membership. Speculation at the time of a leadership challenge from Callaghan may have affected Wilson's shift, but the evidence suggests that Callaghan's own increasingly sceptical position was entirely in line with Wilson's, acting more as dutiful lieutenant rather than as a contender.[79] By February 1974, the Labour Party manifesto was able to claim triumphantly that renegotiations for continued membership would start within a matter of weeks, and that "this year, unlike 1961-1963, Britain will be negotiating from a position of economic strength...But it means, too, that if satisfactory terms cannot be secured in the negotiations Britain will be able to stand on her own feet outside the Community".[80] This attitude was reiterated later in the year, in the October 1974 manifesto. Whereas the manifesto remarked that "Britain is a European nation", it would not commit itself to anything more than the nebulous promise of "always seeking a wider cooperation between the European peoples", continuing with its list of necessary changes.[81]

The polarisation of left and right about the principle of membership was articulated as the undemocratic creation of international capitalism, the long-

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[78] Gowland D. and Arthur Turner (2000) *Reluctant Europeans: Britain and European Integration, 1945-1998*, London: Longman, p190
[79] Robins, *The Reluctant Party*, p101
[80] http://www.labour-party.org.uk/manifestos/1964/1964-labour-manifesto.shtml accessed 01/10/2004
[81] http://www.labour-party.org.uk/manifestos/1964/1964-labour-manifesto.shtml accessed 01/10/2004

sovereignty as the means of retaining control over domestic policy. For the right, it was integral to the reformist and social democratic programme. For Jenkins, in particular, it had become an issue of national interest transcending party loyalties.[82] Wilson deflected and defused any attempts to oppose membership on principle, defeating Conference votes on this. By engaging both pro- and anti-marketeers in the fortunes first of renegotiation and then in fighting the referendum he was successful in redirecting attention away from the most divisive issue: the principle of membership.

Second, perhaps Wilson's most successful coup was to tie Callaghan's fortunes to his own. Appointing him as Foreign Secretary meant he was intimately linked with the success or failure of renegotiations and, later, with the referendum. Callaghan posed a greater threat to Wilson in 1974-5 than anyone else. Renegotiation was an oblique term capable of meaning all things to all politicians and despite claims of a fundamental renegotiation, it was understood that discussions would only be held at the margins of the Heath agreement. Wilson had no interest in extending difficulties to EEC partners so the terms of debate were fixed to lie within the treaties.[83]

Third, renegotiations focused on four areas: reform of the CAP; access for products of some Commonwealth states; state aid to industry and the regions; and Britain's budgetary contributions.[84] Despite the overstated nature of Wilson's renegotiation programme there were notable gains, namely a change of attitude towards the ever expansive CAP, and the Lomé Convention in 1975 which

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[82] Gowland and Turner *Reluctant Europeans*, p187
[83] Gowland and Turner *Reluctant Europeans*, p190
[84] Gowland and Turner *Reluctant Europeans*, p191

secured more favourable trade relations for developing countries and a specific deal for Caribbean sugar products. Enough ground moved over New Zealand dairy products to claim success, regional development was regarded as unthreatening, and budgetary talks, although ultimately empty, showed Wilson as a tough negotiator.[85] Both Callaghan and Wilson proposed to the Cabinet and PLP to support the new terms and agree to remain in the EEC. While the Cabinet voted in majority to accept, the PLP and then later the wider party voted against.

Wilson remained undeterred about pursuing the referendum since polling had suggested there was support to remain in the EEC throughout the period of renegotiation.[86] Significantly polling suggested much more divided opinion unless the government provided direction. In late February 1975, a twenty percentage point gap emerged between those in favour of staying in and those against.[87] Callaghan in particular was pressing for a strong majority, arguing that "it is important that we should have...an overwhelming yes majority. In the world as it is now and in the circumstances in which we find ourselves, a no vote would have the most serious consequences".[88] The government provided MPs who supported staying in the EEC with a series of sheets providing rebuttals to anti-EEC claims, mainly over the costs of entry, the costs of staying in and the erosion to sovereignty.

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[85] Gowland and Turner *Reluctant Europeans*, p193-5
[86] PRO: FCO30/3066, polling information from November 1974 to May 1975
[87] PRO: FCO30/3066, Robert Armstrong to Stephen Barratt, European Community poll findings 1975, 11/04/75, polls conducted between January and March 1975 showed a reversal of public opinion from anti-market to pro market, increasing dramatically with government support for staying in.
[88] PRO: FCO 30/3066 Callaghan to all ministers and backbenchers supporting the government, 27/05/75

While the government occupied one position, the issue had cut across both parties and supporters of either side grouped to join either the pro-market Britain in Europe group (BiE) or the anti-market National Referendum Campaign (NRC).[89] The 'yes' campaign was headed by Jenkins and bore all the hallmarks of the responsible, mainstream voice in organising nightly rallies in which equal representation was afforded to all parties. While Heath played an active role in the campaign, and the Conservative political machinery was used for the campaign, both Thatcher as the new leader and Wilson played low-key roles. The more mainstream unions offered support as did the NFU and industry, giving the impression of a comprehensive coverage of support in the nation. In contrast, the NRC was a collection of different groups whose only shared belief was opposition to the EEC. It coalesced around two groupings: the Common Market Safeguard Committee (CMSG) and Get Britain Out. It lacked the finance and therefore was unable to match the professionalism and machinery of the BiE campaign. Of the campaign Jenkins remarked that it was necessary despite always being in sight of winning. Public perception would disagree with his appraisal, shared with Heath, that what fired audiences was the broad discussion about Britain's future foreign policy direction. Rather, it was about how the cost of entry would be felt and it was here that the pro-marketeers gained leverage as EEC food prices dipped below world market prices.[90]

7.5 Modifications

The dilemma of the Labour Party in the late 1960s and during the 1970s was diffuse in its reach but absolute in its meaning. Three phases mark its

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[89] For the detail of these groups' arguments, see Butler, D and Uwe Kitzinger, (1976) *The 1975 Referendum*, London:

[90] Jenkins, *Life at the Centre*, p417; Gowland and Turner *Reluctant Europeans*, p212

passage, each with responses by Wilson and Jenkins. The first phase was marked by the breakdown of the national plan and the failure of the Commonwealth strategy early in Wilson's leadership. The second phase was marked by the adoption of radicalised positions to gain control of the debate over the Party's direction. The third phase was marked by the marginalisation of the right but the directing of the left towards Europe.

We can see how Wilson modified his beliefs about the need to join the EEC when attempts to enact the National Plan came under fire. Wilson's interests were far from European in 1964 and only began turning in this direction as the reality of Britain's economic position became clearer. His move towards the principle of EEC membership remained ambiguous. It was what had reunited the Party under Gaitskell and was a debate with an emotive force within the Party. He arguably modelled himself on Gaitksell's approach of being ambiguous. While Gaitskell had appalled the right with his eventual rejection of Europe, he had remained ambiguous on the subject long enough to, when the time required, reflect the least divisive opinion. Wilson's approach adopted this strategy. We can see in 1966 that he had little emotional attachment to the concept of membership. Wilson's beliefs had been based on support for the Commonwealth and on the development of third world countries, and he had worked on this during the 1950s.

The 1964 manifesto reflected this continued adherence to traditional axioms of Labour internationalism. His first two years in government provided a shift: despite promises to revive Commonwealth trade, the reality was impossible

to achieve and trade continued to grow, in contrast, with EEC countries. Second to Wilson's shift was the ineffectiveness of British action over Rhodesia. The idealised notion of Commonwealth was undermined by apartheid South Africa followed by the UDI of Smith in Rhodesia in 1965. While Wilson may not have lacked the will to resolve Commonwealth issues, he lacked the resources, arriving in office to find an £800m trade deficit. Political and economic schisms continued to grow as the three circles concept unravelled. Wilson began to turn to Europe, which, though lacking the emotional appeal of the Commonwealth, contained economic, and the making of political, coherence. In view of Party opinion, he maintained a qualified support for membership, one based on conditions.

There are competing interpretations of what Wilson's motivations and beliefs about the second application were. Pimlott rejects the argument that Wilson was Machiavellian in seeking to make an application which had no chance of success. It does not explain, he argues, why Wilson then worked closely on it and ran the risk of personal humiliation.[91] We might argue that Wilson's approach was tactical and based on party advantage: it defused the power of the Conservatives' weapon and deflected criticism for not even trying, while closer to home it offered a qualified response to the failings of Wilson's domestic economic policy, especially remaining unmoved on the need for devaluation until it was forced.[92]

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[91] Pimlott, *Harold Wilson*, p438
[92] Gowland and Turner, *Reluctant Europeans*, p163

It was clear that despite understanding the need for change, and that in fact the pace of change was being forced on, rather than led by, the Wilson government, there lacked an emotional dimension to the future direction which manifested itself in Wilson's presentation. By focusing on economic gains, the appeal was muted, reflecting his own mixed response to it as much as fearful of opening old wounds in the party.

Once the Party went into opposition, Wilson was forced to adopt a more proactive position about his beliefs over Britain's membership of the EEC. The Conservatives had been elected on this ticket and again we can see Wilson reprise the role he had in 1966 of becoming more ambiguous about the merits of membership and channelling criticism of Conservative, and in particular Heath's, pro European beliefs. The attack had already pushed Heath into a more defensive public position, a concession to the power of Wilson's argument and the mobilisation of anti-marketeer opinion.

It was the point at which Wilson was at his weakest, unable to prevent the Party from adopting a radical programme of nationalisation. His beliefs about corporate socialism had been undermined completely and he had little alternative to offer. He could not counter the radical calls from the left on this strategy, only to curb and temper their excesses. While his underlying belief remained to sustain party unity, he conceded ground on domestic policy but retained enough input to guide debate on Europe. Accepting the challenge from the left for a referendum on whether Britain should stay in Europe, Wilson attached to it the condition of renegotiation.

For Jenkins, once considered Wilson's successor, the period marked the marginalisation and eventual ostracism of the principled, national-interest driven view which had been the foundation of the social democratic approach since before World War Two. It also marked his eclipse by Callaghan as both potential successor and rival to Wilson. Jenkins modified his beliefs about the Labour Party. Believing the party to be diverting itself from the post-war ground it had occupied towards a more radicalised and sectional programme he fought against it, then decided to fight within it by seeking re-election to the NEC and finally decided to fight for the principle from without the NEC. Once elected again in 1974, Wilson demonstrated Jenkins's lesser value by appointing him Home Secretary rather than Foreign Secretary, a post which went to Callaghan. It signalled the end of Jenkins's hope of the leadership as Callaghan was now perfectly poised to take over and once he did in 1976, Jenkins formalised the split between the right and left within the party by resigning his post, becoming a European Commissioner in Brussels and leading the formation of the Social Democratic Party in 1981.

Jenkins stood on principle against the Party shift towards sectional interests and the apparent opportunism of leadership. Both he and Wilson were forced to modify their positions in a battle which turned tactical over defending ideological ground. In this section we examine the way in which the dilemma of EEC membership prompted Wilson and Jenkins to modify their beliefs about British and party interests. This section deploys Bulpitt's measurements: the success of

establishing political argument hegemony and the effectiveness of party management.

Once Wilson was re-elected his position in some ways became easier despite only commanding a slim majority. Again, Wilson's forte was the deployment of tactical measures rather than ideological messages. To prevent the left from steering the party and the nation out of Europe he had successfully shifted the terms of the debate and tied Callaghan to the European message. Enough concessions were gained in the renegotiations to claim success and both pressed for acceptance. While Wilson expected little change within the Party's attitudes towards staying in the EEC, being focused on the principle, he reached out to the general public who had consistently been supportive of staying in throughout the period of renegotiation and remained so to the vote at the referendum. By taking on the left with their own rules, Wilson hoped to snuff out the power of their argument. In the meantime he had been successful in preventing the party from splitting and keeping Britain in Europe. Marquand claims that Wilson lasted so long because despite occasional cabals against him, "his conservatism his vacillation and his corrupting mixture of left-wing talk and right-wing deeds were also theirs".[93]

We now turn to measurements of the success of Wilson and Jenkins in securing support for their interpretations of foreign policy and the effect of this on Labour's domestic economic policy, beginning with Party management. The PLP, like the Cabinet, was divided in three, with pro-EEC, anti-EEC and

[93] Marquand, *Progressive Dilemma*, p161

undecided groups. The anti-EEC group remained largely impervious to the technology dimension which Wilson introduced to the debate on membership, but until 1970 this group remained largely muted over the issue of entry for four reasons. First, they had failed to prevent the Government pursuing a policy of membership. Second, having failed, they remained largely silent on the issue believing in the likelihood of a second veto from de Gaulle. Third, as there was a number of high profile Cabinet members opposed to entry who did not resign over the issue, this supported their second point. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, they lacked a credible alternative foreign policy.

The pro-EEC group had more success during Wilson's first two terms. Composed mainly of the right wing of the party, former CDS members now created the Labour Committee for Europe (LCE). The LCE's objective was to recruit support and win over uncommitted MPs. Loyalty to the Government in whatever guise its European policy took lent the group greater support from MPs who shied away from controversial policies and total membership of the group peaked at over 100 MPs in March 1967.

Finally, the undecided centre were largely acquiescent in part to avoid unnecessary party rifts and in part because of personal confusion over the initial meaning of Europe defined in contrast to Germany and the Commonwealth, to a new meaning of Europe defined in terms of technological possibilities. This group showed a genuine shift in beliefs towards support of Europe with numbers

doubling from 53 in late 1964 to 104 in March 1967, though this included many new MPs elected in 1966 who were more sympathetic towards Europe.[94]

Both Brown and Douglas Jay[95] made contrasting speeches after Wilson had declared the Government's intention to seek membership of the EEC, leading to censure within the Cabinet and the immediate application of Cabinet collective responsibility. Having at least concealed the majority of differences within the cabinet, Wilson's next strategy was to present a united front with the PLP. To prevent dissent he reapplied stricter discipline and collective responsibility on the issue of Europe to prevent individual MPs from either side voicing a different line from the Government, and if they did, then to discipline them accordingly. When MPs voted in May 1967 over the application to join, fifty-one MPs abstained while thirty-five voted against the Government. Disciplinary action saw seven PPSs dismissed from their roles.[96]

Once in opposition, the Party openly split again over the failures of the past six years. As Robins remarks, "[i]n an atmosphere of increasing partisan cleavage, conflict within the party intensified as the factions revised their goals and drew new lines of conflict. The battleground and the central issue around which all conflicts coalesced, was Labour's policy towards EEC entry".[97] Europe had ceased to be solely an issue of foreign policy; it was now firmly rooted in the domestic policy sphere. It had been linked to Wilson's domestic platform but there was no longer a firm party line as the Conservatives took over negotiations.

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[94] Robins, *The Reluctant Party*, p50
[95] Douglas Jay, (1907-1996) member of Attlee and Wilson's governments. Ostensibly associated with the revisionists, he stoutly opposed EEC membership
[96] Robins, *The Reluctant Party*, p63
[97] Robins, *The Reluctant Party*, p78

In the initial phase of opposition, all factions were clearly staking out their territory in a bid to gain a leading influence in the policy direction of the Party.

Michael Foot represented the old Bevanite left but was unable to present a modification of Wilson's economic strategy, agreeing with the belief that corporate socialism needed to be applied in full. In addition Foot had been one of the Third Force group in the 1940s who were early advocates of unity with Europe.[98] Instead, the left within the PLP were influenced by the rise of the New Left during the late 1950s and it is worth elaborating here the main facets of New Left thinking and their impact upon the PLP since this is of significance to the beliefs expressed over the meaning of membership to the EEC.

The New Left emerged from the section of the left that had been sympathetic to the Soviet Union until the Hungarian Revolution in 1956. Their legacy was felt in three ways. Philosophically, the New Left advocated "libertarian socialism in tune with the traditions of working class radicalism, romantic yet pragmatic in its collective attitudes and actions", aiming to provide a synthesis of communist and social democratic ideals.[99] It drew attention to the democratic forms of government operating in a society that was not democratic. Culturally, this raised the concept of dominators and dominated with social systems created for, not by, the people to mould them into accepting the hierarchical structure of society in which dissent was only manifest through strike action or apathy.[100] Politically, then, the result was to mobilise people into action as a form of direct democracy. The Labour Party had been influenced by

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[98] Foote, *Labour Party Political Thought*, p298
[99] Foote, *Labour Party Political Thought*, p280-1
[100] Foote, *Labour Party Political Thought*, p284-5

ideas such as direct democracy and direct participation which were consistent with corporate socialism.

The left blamed the EEC for all the failings that had happened domestically. This strategy was necessary as otherwise their radical interpretation of corporate socialism which would allow for direct participation would be associated with the failings of Wilson's version of corporate socialism. The external threat of the EEC was thus identified and targeted for its inflationary impact on the domestic economy, for having 'prompted' *In Place of Strife*, and underpinned the Conservative's Industrial Relations Bill.[101] Bowing to Europe was at the cost of the unionised working class.

Throughout 1971, the party moved towards the anti-market faction while the right, pro-market faction waned in significance, failing to find support in their arguments about hypothetical gains as statistics emerged about the prospective slowdown in EEC economic growth. It continued to use the Wilsonian formula based on technological advance created with and by entry but found opposition from newly emerging environmental groups. It failed to convince the party that the terms secured by the Conservatives were of no significant difference from those the Labour Party hoped to achieve and finally was seen as part collaborator, part saboteur; in collusion with the Conservatives while maintaining the rift within the Party.

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[101] Robins, *The Reluctant Party*, p81

The other base of Party support, the trades unions also began to make their position felt as distinct from the flat support they had traditionally offered. Though guarded, unions were generally supportive of EEC entry in 1967 but the rise of the New Left by the late 1960s was also felt here. Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones as leaders of the Engineers' Union and the TGWU were both advocating worker control and a specific rejection of the Labour Party's corporate socialism. The basis of their beliefs rested in recapturing the spirit of syndicalism and guild socialism with workers being equal in the workplace. They also drew from the libertarian strand of socialist thinking to achieve freedom rather than the alleviation of poverty.[102] Participation therefore would not work as this represented the practices of the past which had led them to this point. The polarisation made itself felt through the union sponsorship of MPs with the TGWU, AUEW and NUM retracting automatic sponsorship, instead considering the record of a candidate based on their views towards Europe with support understood as a betrayal of class consciousness.[103] The rise of radicalism clashed with the attempts by the Heath government to curb union power, effectively crippling the latter and leading to the birth of the Social Contract between Labour and the unions. The unions would offer their support again to Labour in return for more radical economic measures.[104]

At the economic level, an alternative argument was provided by Michael Barratt Brown who located the failings of Wilson's corporatist strategy applied to a society still divided by class where the natural fall back was to cut wages to maximise profits. Additionally, he identified the transnational basis of private

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[102] Foote, *Labour Party Political Thought*, p300
[103] Robins, *The Reluctant Party*, p87
[104] Foote, *Labour Party Political Thought*, p307

capital as a threat to national sovereignty, of which the EEC was symptomatic, and at odds with the economically sovereign application of Keynesianism.[105] It was a compelling argument, though highly nationalistic, which was able to identify that the Labour Party had failed to recognise a change in phenomena operating at the international level.

In terms of political argument hegemony the most critical factor is cohesiveness; a united voice is more likely to sway voters behind the argument. The issue of Europe cut across party cohesion with significant numbers of opposing groups on both sides leading to the suspension of collective responsibility by the time of the referendum.

7.6 Conclusion

We have used Bevir's interpretative theory to analyse the Wilson years, 1964-1975. This was done by tracing the conceptual and temporal links that tied Harold Wilson and Roy Jenkins's beliefs to the tradition of corporate socialism on the one hand and democratic socialism on the other. By outlining the historical context, the dilemma of reformulating traditional Labour foreign policy axioms emerged, reviving the need to join the EEC. This dilemma showed that the 'three circles' concept was now redundant as a foreign policy structure thus modifying beliefs about where Britain's interests would be best served in future.

By modifying his position, Wilson had moved towards the ground occupied by many on the right of the Party but his sensitivities were not about a fervent

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[105] Foote, *Labour Party Political Thought*, p304

belief in EEC membership, but only as the means of fulfilling the stronger belief of sustaining the corporate socialist domestic economic policy. Jenkins on the other hand had long supported EEC membership as the means of establishing a more stable and commensurate foreign policy in which to extend revisionist reforms. It was shown that despite sharing the same end of entry, Wilson and Jenkins believed in entry for competing and antithetical ends which although not resulting in a formal break in 1971, paved the way for the split by the 'gang of four' ten years later.

Belief about the EEC and the redirection of British foreign policy became secondary to Wilson's domestic concerns, using the same dilemma of membership to shore up the pursuit of corporate socialism. The focus on tactics and the strategic need to keep Britain in Europe both for reasons of national interest and personal political survival meant a lack of debate over what Europe could mean. In searching for a solution to the here and now, Wilson's legacy was a lack of vision in the future, ground which became occupied by the emotive arguments of the left in the late 1970s.

Chapter Eight

The Conservatives 1964-1975

8.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the beliefs held by Edward Heath as leader of the Conservative Party and his Foreign Secretary, Alec Douglas-Home. These players have been selected as key players in the strategic direction of Britain's foreign policy between 1964 and 1975. We begin by tracing Heath to the progressive tradition and Home to the tradition of the patriotic right. We then provide a historical summary of the period 1964-1975 covering both domestic and international aspects. It is proposed that Heath and Home did not face a dilemma over their beliefs, but rather over securing argument hegemony on the merits of EEC membership. The attempt to establish political argument hegemony focused on three areas: the boundaries of partisanship with Labour; attempts to minimise the controversy of entry; and playing down alternatives as long-term solutions. Heath and Home faced a further difficulty of argument hegemony from within the Party: the right-wing imperialists. These were beginning to modify their position by embracing themes consistent with economic liberalism.

8.2 Elite Beliefs

We have traced the beliefs held by Churchill, Eden, Macmillan and Selwyn Lloyd to the tradition of the patriotic right. Significant modifications to this tradition were made from adopting a muscular stance as a member of one of the Big Three at one end, to accepting the relative decline of international

political authority and economic strength at the other. Actors whose beliefs were consistent with the tradition of the patriotic right were increasingly those with progressive beliefs in domestic policy and this too can be seen as impacting on interpretations of foreign policy. Heath is the first of our actors whose beliefs were consistent with progressivism in both domestic and foreign policy. Home's beliefs were consistent with the progressive-influenced modifications of the patriotic right. It is to tracing these links that we now turn.

8.2.1 Edward Heath[1]

Born in Broadstairs Kent, Heath's father was a carpenter and his mother had been in service. His modest background meant Heath used education as his means of elevation, gaining a scholarship to Chatham House School and later going to Balliol College, Oxford, where he became President of the Union and of the University Conservatives. Serving in the Royal Artillery, Heath then stood as MP for Bexley in 1950. A Whip from 1951 to 1954 and Chief Whip until 1959 Heath then briefly became Minister of Labour before becoming Lord Privy Seal from 1960 to 1963. Over the next two years he served as Secretary of Trade and Industry and Chancellor of the Exchequer and finally, in 1965 won the first election in the Conservative Party for Leader, a position he would retain for almost ten years.

We can trace four conceptual and temporal links that tie Heath to the progressive tradition: the influence of Christian socialism; the One Nation Group

[1] Sir Edward Richard George Heath, (1916-2005)

(ONG); his modernising and technocratic style of leadership; and his long-term support for British involvement in Europe.

First, Heath was influenced by A.D. Lindsay, claiming his Christian socialism served not to convert but to strengthen his innate conservatism.[2] Lindsay furnished Heath's moral code with a greater theoretical content. His code came from his family background where the importance of hard work, service to others, honourable ambition and clean living were stressed.[3] At the time of Lindsay's anti-appeasement by-election candidacy in 1938, Macmillan's letter of support "could not have echoed my own feelings more accurately or potently" when he wrote "the times are too grave and the issue is too vital for progressive Conservative opinion to allow itself to be influenced by Party loyalties or to tolerate the present uncertainties governing our foreign policy".[4]

Heath was also influenced by more progressive thinking while at university, in particular the writing of Keynes, Macmillan's *Third Way*, and the Christian teachings of William Temple.[5] While Lindsay offered a form of Christian socialism in action, Temple offered it in spiritual form. An idealist, Temple believed the good society was built up of morally responsible individuals who recognised their duty to help others. Although sympathetic to Temple's beliefs, Heath was always conscious of the propensity of individuals to use power

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[2] Heath, E (1998) *The Course of My Life*, Coronet Books, p31; A. D. Lindsay, (1879-1952) professor of moral philosophy.
[3] Campbell, J (1993) *Edward Heath: A Biography*, London: Jonathan Cape, p7
[4] Heath, *Course of My Life*, p60
[5] Heath, *Course of My Life*, p33; William Temple (1881-1944), Archbishop of Canterbury

for their own ends and not for the good of all.[6] Heath subscribed to the Conservative tradition of pessimism in man's ability to rise above himself.

Secondly, once elected, Heath followed Butler's style of conservatism and was a founder member of the One Nation Group (ONG).[7] The ONG articulated a moderate and progressive Toryism which aimed to encourage social cohesion. It linked Heath with his earlier beliefs about Macmillan's *Third Way* as "a sound set of answers to our economic and social problems, avoiding the evils of both an unregulated capitalist system and a *dirigiste* socialist approach."[8] Members of the ONG were often "from a less privileged background...with an interest in social policy and reform and often employing a rhetoric of 'meritocracy' and 'classlessness'".[9] The importance of classlessness was particularly acute, reflecting the group's emergence as a response to the inadequacies of the traditional Conservative front-bench response to Labour's social policy agenda. Therefore its genesis was in formulating a new Conservative position on social policy.[10] The ONG articulated the tradition of one nation through traditional totems of Conservatism: tax cuts, competition, private enterprise and initiative. Although a member of the ONG, Heath played only a minor role.[11]

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[6] Heath, *Course of My Life*, p34
[7] RAB Butler, (1902-1982) architect of Conservative social reform policies during the war and immediately after; Founder members of the ONG included Cub Alport, Iain Macleod, Enoch Powell, Edward Heath, Angus Maude, Robert Carr, Gilbert Longden, and John Rodgers.
[8] Heath, *Course of My Life*, p50
[9] Walsha, R (2000) 'The One Nation Group: A Tory Approach to Backbench Politics and Organisation, 1950-55', *Twentieth Century History*, vol.11.2, pp183-214, p186
[10] Walsha, 'The One Nation Group', p188
[11] Walsha, 'One Nation Group', p201

Thirdly, Heath was a Tory reformist in the tradition of Peel and Pitt, where the aim was not to increase state power but to "sweep away whatever was antiquated and inefficient in our public institutions and create a new framework within which the individual could take his [sic] own responsibilities and create his own opportunities".[12] Heath was the moderniser, the first elected leader of the Conservatives and the symbol of a meritocratic society. It was this reformism which propelled Heath's leadership: to modernise British institutions and the government, halt economic decline and redefine a new role for Britain in the world.

Fourth, Heath was "English through and through"[13] and much is made of the location of his birth within view of the French coast. Travels from his early teens exposed Heath to the realities of European politics. The experience convinced him of the inevitability of war, and later, would influence his opinions regarding Germany's future after the war.[14] War service served to strengthen, like many of his generation, the wish to avoid any similar conflict.

His views on European reconstruction and unity were the subject of his maiden speech. In the context of Churchill's own brand of pro-European support, it was not exceptional, remaining faithful to the Party line. Presenting the case for engaging in the Schuman Plan, he articulated a view of the future of Europe between the German aim of restoring relations with France and securing unity

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[12] Douglas Hurd quoted in Eccleshall and Walker, *British Prime Ministers*, p344
[13] Campbell, *Edward Heath*, p4
[14] Campbell, *Edward Heath*, p31

against the threat from the East.[15] The revival of German economic power, Heath concluded, meant Britain had two options: "One is to attempt to prolong control [already dismissed by the Labour Government]. The only other way is to lead Germany in the one way we want her to go, and I believe that these discussions would give us a chance of leading Germany into the way we want her to go".[16]

Heath's beliefs on Europe were distinctive for remaining largely unmodified until he took office. An economically strong Britain in Europe reflected an adherence to a progressive liberalism. Heath recognised early on that greater economic gains might require measures of federalism. This was acceptable to Heath in defence of the principle of European security. After the war, Heath witnessed first hand the devastation caused and was deeply affected. He recognised too that Europe's first task was reconstruction and unity to prevent such destruction from ever happening again.[17]

As Whip and then Chief Whip, Heath's ability and loyalty was noted, particularly over Suez.[18] Macmillan acted as mentor to Heath: both Balliol men, both influenced by Christian socialism and both linked to the anti-appeasement wing in Oxford.[19] Finally, Heath saw in Macmillan someone who, despite his limits, was evidently more pro-European than many within the Conservative Party.[20] Macmillan appointed Heath as Lord Privy Seal, tasked with leading the

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[15] Roth, *Heath and the Heathmen*, p79; Campbell, *Edward Heath*, p74-5; Laing, *Edward Heath: Prime Minister*, p96; see chapter three of this thesis.
[16] Hansard, (1950) *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. 476, cols. 1959-1964, col. 1963
[17] Campbell, *Edward Heath*, p48; Laing, *Edward Heath: Prime Minister*, p62
[18] Heath, *Course of My Life*, pp163-200; Roth, *Heath and the Heathmen*, p106; Campbell, *Edward Heath*, p92-7; Laing, *Edward Heath: Prime Minister*, see chapter 9, esp. p122-3
[19] Laing, *Edward Heath: Prime Minister*, p12-3, 40; Roth, *Heath and the Heathmen*, p114
[20] Campbell, *Edward Heath*, p100; Roth, *Heath and the Heathmen*, p127

negotiations for entry into the EEC. Assent was gained within the Party on economic grounds.[21] In security terms, entry was couched as maintaining a bulwark against communism which appealed to the Party Conference. Despite the veto Heath modified his beliefs about the strategy through which to gain entry, not the merit of entry. If Britain was to gain entry then it had to go to the Community unreservedly and not expect the Community to come to Britain.[22]

8.2.2 Alec Douglas-Home[23]

Home was the eldest son of the Earl of Home and was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. He became MP for South Lanark in 1931 and was elevated to the Lords in 1951 upon inheriting his father's Earldom. Minister of State in the Scottish Office from 1951-1955, then Commonwealth Secretary from 1955-1961 and Foreign Secretary until 1963, Home renounced his peerage and became Prime Minister after Macmillan until defeat in 1964. Home was Heath's Foreign Secretary in 1970 until his retirement from the Commons in 1974.[24]

We can trace four conceptual and temporal links that tie Home to the traditions of the patriotic right: his family heritage influenced his paternalism; strong ties to the Empire, Empire protection and his support of appeasement; his suspicion of indigenous nationalist movements in parts of the Empire; and his virulent anti-Communism.

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[21] Roth, *Heath and the Heathmen*, p157
[22] Campbell, *Edward Heath*, p117
[23] Alec Douglas-Home, Baron Home of the Hirsel (1903-1995)
[24] Eccleshall and Walker, *British Prime Ministers*, p329

Home is an important member of this study for he represents a significant shift in beliefs between classic concepts of the patriotic right and their radical modifications over the twenty year period after the Second World War.

First, Home's birth into the Scottish nobility and the family's strong sense of *noblesse oblige* establish his location within the paternalist wing of the Conservative Party.[25] His mother was identified as holding Whiggish beliefs and voted Labour while Home's siblings also manifested progressive and liberal thinking.[26] Religion was an influence on Home, via an "ethical rather than a speculative or mystical Christianity".[27] It was the Christian code by which he lived, and had been inculcated from an early age and which formed the basis of his schooling.[28] Home's entry into politics was in 1931 on a centrist and constructive platform.[29]

Like Macmillan, Home's interests in the late 1920s and early 1930s were defined by local, domestic politics and not foreign policy. Also like Macmillan, Home's beliefs in domestic policy were formed by the idea of Tory Democracy and influenced by the ideas of Noel Skelton, a reforming Scots MP who coined the notion of a 'property-owning democracy'. It was a Conservative response to the Socialist challenge which did not extend to accepting or supporting Keynesian economics.[30]

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[25] Young, K (1970) *Sir Alec Douglas Home*, London: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd, p1, 4
[26] Home, A.D. (1976) *The Way the Wind Blows*, London: Collins, p45; Eccleshall and Walker, *British Prime Ministers*, p330
[27] Young, *Sir Alec Douglas Home*, p17
[28] Home, *The Way the Wind Blows*, p27
[29] Young, *Sir Alec Douglas Home*, p28
[30] Young, *Sir Alec Douglas Home*, p37

Second, Home was deeply affected by the First World War, stating that "while I revere the patriot, I detest the jingo tub-thumper, the narrow nationalist and the advocates and practitioners of violence".[31] The conciliatory approach was one which Home's father had always advocated and it would inform Home's pragmatic patriotism.

Home entered Parliament on a centrist and protectionist ticket in 1931. Although a keen supporter of Empire free trade and keen to sustain the economic development of Imperial trade, spiralling unemployment forced a change of belief so he supported protectionism in order to safeguard domestic industry. It was on this subject that Home had made his maiden speech. [32]

Third, he was deeply sceptical of indigenous movements for independence, most critically during the 1930s with the rise of Indian nationalism, Home's beliefs were paternalist. They linked him to the Churchill-led opposition to the granting of independence to India in the 1930s. Almost with regret, Home remarked: "From the start of our administration of our overseas territory we had set out to train the native peoples to play their part in administration and government. From the beginning, therefore, the seeds of independence had been sown".[33] Home's beliefs were firmly grounded in the tradition of evolutionary change.

Fourth, Home made the link between nationalist movements and the rise of Communism, stating that it was a "horrible quirk of fortune that [the Russian

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[31] Home, *The Way the Wind Blows*, p43
[32] Home, *The Way the Wind Blows*, p58
[33] Home, *The Way the Wind Blows*, p51; Young, *Sir Alec Douglas Home*, p37

Revolution] came at a time when impatience for the emancipation of colonial territories was in the air. The Communists were thus able to pose as the champions of liberation and that gave a great boost to the militant freedom fighter".[34] Home would remain a vociferous anti-communist. This was the rationale behind his support for appeasement believing it was preferable to have a stronger Germany to act as a bulwark against creeping communism from the East. When war broke out, Home feared a division of Europe afterwards.[35] He was critical of concessions made to the Soviet Union under Yalta[36] and believed that it had only been through American patronage of NATO that Western Europe had resisted a communist take-over.[37] He continued to link the danger of communism to fledgling nationalism, particularly in Africa, a belief he held throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

On Britain's future role, Home recognised that the "regaining of our relationship with the Empire and the Empire's with the world outside will be one of the biggest [problems]". Assuming an increasing level of autonomy by Dominion states, Home concluded that "the answer to a lot would seem to be the closer co-operation with America, but how far can we merge with her without losing our identity and world influence?"[38] He adopted a consistent view on Britain's need for a strong system of security to prevent the weakness revealed at Munich from ever being repeated. To this end, he resisted Britain's financial dependence on America but recognised that no involvement in Europe was possible without full American support. It was therefore essential to maintain

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[34] Home, *The Way the Wind Blows*, p51
[35] Home, *The Way the Wind Blows*, p88
[36] Home, *The Way the Wind Blows*, p91-4
[37] Home, *The Way the Wind Blows*, p62
[38] Letter to J.C. Masterman, Home's old school teacher in Young, *Sir Alec Douglas Home*, p65

"that degree of warmth and intimacy which should always be maintained between the leaders of the greatest English-speaking peoples".[39]

As Commonwealth Secretary Home believed strong ties were important in maintaining the image of a strong Britain, those ties being between themselves as well as with Britain.[40] Supportive of the Suez expedition, Home had defended it as an essential diversionary small-scale war to prevent a wider, more destabilizing war in the Middle East. Equally, he was a keen advocate of Britain's possession of nuclear weapons.[41] However, Home's foreign policy views were very fully defined by an appreciation of 'weakness' and his strong antipathy towards Britain being weak, either perceived or real, matching this with a vision of a strong system of national security.

What makes Home an interesting member of the patriotic right is that unlike some of his contemporaries, who clung to the vestigial Empire or advocated an isolationist stance, he embraced the idea of the EEC. He went further, arguing for a World Government if Communism ended. At the core of this belief was Home's interpretation of sovereignty claiming that "the question of sovereignty should be judged by whether there would be any compensating gain. It is really a question of balance of advantage. We should not make sovereignty into a shibboleth".[42] Home had engaged with the concept of conceding sovereignty at a regional level through the EEC which marked a departure in conventional Conservative thinking. At the root of his support was a

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[39] Home, *The Way the Wind Blows*, p68
[40] Home, *The Way the Wind Blows*, p105, 117
[41] Young, *Sir Alec Douglas Home*, p99
[42] Young, *Sir Alec Douglas Home*, p129

belief that entry would provide the necessary economic salvation by market unity and the potential to mobilize wealth. Importantly, membership of the EEC provided the means of creating security on the continent against Soviet influence.

In contrast to Heath, Home's beliefs were modified over time from a position of being Empire-minded to support for British entry of the EEC. Neither of these beliefs contradicted each other as they were both underscored by a greater, pragmatic belief in the need for a strong, secure and powerful Britain in the world: this identifies Home with a modified form of the traditional patriotic right. For Home, accepting a role in Europe would sustain the Anglo-American relationship which he identified as the key to British strength and security in the world.

In this section we have located the beliefs of Heath and Home in the traditions of progressivism in Heath's case and a modified form of the patriotic right in the case of Home. Despite both being, by 1970, supportive of entry to the EEC, the underlying difference between them, about where Britain's future strength would lie, was clear. Heath's pro-Europeanism was at the expense of the classic concept of the Anglo-American relationship and sought to redirect Britain's strategic future towards a secure and independent European Community. Home was part of a wider tradition which saw Britain's membership as the means of strengthening Britain's hand in relation to world affairs, and in terms of leverage, particularly to the Americans and the Soviet Union.

8.3 Historical Setting

Complicating Heath's quest for entry into the EEC were national and international events which would make his administration appear under siege and lacking control. The domestic context focuses on issues such as a revival of the right within the Conservative Party, economic problems, industrial militancy and violence in Northern Ireland. Internationally, the right continued to express vocal opposition to Heath's foreign policy. The Conservatives reinstituted defence policy East of Suez and Arab nationalism in the form of OPEC added to domestic economic difficulties. Finally, we briefly summarise negotiations for entry into the EEC.

8.3.1 Domestic

Heath's period of opposition lacked a clear policy.[43] Both the 1966 manifesto, *Action not Words*, and the 1970 manifesto, *A Better Tomorrow* demonstrate the continuation of Conservative thinking with references to reforming industrial relations, introducing selectivity to social provision, and immigration control as a more effective means of tackling racial tensions. Efficiency measures in government and a clearer tax system were meant to create expenditure savings and promote individual wealth creation and incentives.[44] In searching to present the Conservatives as a clear, alternative government, Heath presented four themes to make the approach coherent. Tax reforms would reward competitive sectors of society and were coupled with an attack on restrictive practices in both sides of industry to boost the British economy. Selectivity would replace universality in social provision, while underpinning the whole of

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[43] Ramsden, *Winds of Change*, p281

[44] http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/con66.htm and http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/con70.htm

Heath's strategy was entry into the EEC. As Ramsden points out, "[i]n effect, this all came down to the modernisation of British industry and the public sector to allow the country to make the most of the European opportunity".[45]

Underlying economic problems were those of productivity. Despite an overall increase in productivity, pay demands were outstripping the value of increased productivity to the extent that Heath felt the 1967 devaluation under Wilson would hold no value in redressing the market.[46] Heath believed union reform was necessary, and set the tone of his approach in the 1966 General Election campaign: "we need greater prosperity if we are to support those in need, and partnership, not confrontation, in our industries to create that prosperity". An industrial relations bill proposed to give the lead to industry in providing for positive co-operation in the future.[47] Heath also identified the need to improve management in industry.[48] This view was refined in 1968 in a pamphlet entitled *A Fair Deal At Work* which aimed to make both employers and unions corporate legal bodies which would be responsible for making their own legal contracts and for acts committed by members. The aim had been to balance the needs of both parties to make registration in their mutual interests.

In January 1970 at Selsdon Park, these two changes to the post-war Conservative approach to domestic politics were formalised. Within six months of the Selsdon Park meeting, the Conservatives were elected into office and started by scrapping the prices and incomes board. They introduced the Industrial

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[45] Ramsden, "The Prime Minister", p27-8
[46] Heath, *Course of My Life*, p325
[47] Heath, *Course of My Life*, p281
[48] "Action Not Words", Conservative Election Manifesto, 1966
http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/con66.htm accessed 04/04/05

Relations Bill in the same year. Both of these acts, argued Heath, were essential to restore public and international confidence in Britain's economic management.

Finally, Northern Ireland became a deeply problematic issue for Heath. Civil rights demonstrations quickly developed into 'the Troubles' but violence peaked in the first two years of the Heath Government culminating in Bloody Sunday in January 1972. Spiralling violence resulted in the introduction of internment without trial in 1971 and a return to direct rule. In March 1973 a White Paper proposing a 78 member Northern Irish Assembly based on proportional representation was published. The election of a power sharing executive followed. An agreement to set up a Council of Ireland was signed in December 1973 in Sunningdale, but it collapsed in May 1974 after the Ulster Worker's Council called a general strike which lasted two weeks and prompted more rioting and violence.

8.3.2 International

In international affairs, three areas of difficulty would trouble Heath: the Commonwealth and Empire; defence, and the Cold War. First, there was the continued vocal opposition from the right over foreign policy. Secondly, there was a commitment to withdraw military positions East of Suez. Thirdly, there was the oil shortage and relations with OPEC.

The Salisbury-led right-wing revolt over Rhodesia continued under Heath. In January 1966 Angus Maude, Heath's shadow spokesman on Colonial Affairs, was sacked for denouncing party policy. A further 80 Conservative MPs

voted against the Party in a vote over oil sanctions.[49] Enoch Powell would also be sacked as Shadow Defence spokesperson over his 'Rivers of Blood' speech delivered in Birmingham in April 1968. Powell had also been opposed to sanctions on Rhodesia in 1965 and contested the influx of Asians expelled from Kenya in October 1967. Strongly opposed to EEC membership, Powell left the Conservatives in 1974 to become an Ulster Unionist MP and urged the public to vote Labour to secure a referendum on membership. Darling of the right, Powell believed the threat of the Cold War was minimal and urged Britain's independence on the grounds that the EEC was the political wing of NATO and part of US Cold War grand strategy.

The end of Empire meant the official end to military commitments beyond Suez, a policy confirmed by the 1966 defence review. This stated that British policy was no longer to engage in wars outside of Europe without the co-operation of allies. Home however was keen to restore a British role East of Suez, and internal party difficulties militated against a complete break. Conservative policy was to restore an East of Suez presence resulting in ANZUK and preserving a continued military presence in Malaysia and Singapore.

In 1973, Heath faced another crisis over oil supplies. The Arab members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) refused to ship oil to countries that had supported Israel during the Yom Kippur War of October 1973, principally affecting the US and its western allies. The impact of oil price increases coupled with the decision by the National Union of Mineworkers to ban

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[49] Heath, *Course of My Life*, p276-7

overtime in support of a pay claim produced a state of emergency and the three-day week. This in turn prompted Heath to call a snap general election over confidence in his leadership, an election which he lost.

8.3.3 Europe

When de Gaulle left office in April 1969 and was replaced by Pompidou, the European project was given a new lease of life at an EEC summit. Held in The Hague in December 1969, the Six agreed to complete the first stage of economic integration, to proceed with economic and monetary union (EMU) by 1980 and to open negotiations with Britain, Ireland, Denmark and Norway. Labour published a White Paper on EEC membership in February 1970 but before it was put to effect, Heath was elected Prime Minister in June and negotiations began ten days later. Within a year of formal negotiations agreement had been reached. In October 1971 both Houses of Parliament voted in favour of membership. In January 1972, the Treaty of Accession was signed with actual membership beginning in January 1973. Finally, during the referendum campaign in 1975 Heath voted yes and the Conservative's official policy was to remain in the EEC.

Once negotiations began Heath's strategy was one of deferment; entry became the most important achievement coupled with a time lag in which to iron out the details. George notes, "[t]o gain entry, and then sort out any difficulties, was the approach taken by the Heath Government" as a means to overcome the biggest obstacle, the possible application of the veto.[50] As Michael Butler, head

[50] George, *An Awkward Partner*, p56

of the European Integration Department at the Foreign Office attested, "applicant countries don't actually have a negotiating position, except about transitional measures...I [know] Heath's position in the entry negotiations was that he and *his team should get the best deal on offer*".[51]

There were four areas upon which negotiations focused: the Commonwealth, agriculture, budgetary contributions and sterling. The first issue, the Commonwealth, had almost resolved itself since the first attempt to join, as trading patterns had shifted. Outstanding issues were New Zealand dairy products and Caribbean sugar. The government lobbied for these to have direct entry to the Community even though it was in direct competition to European agricultural products, mostly French.

European agriculture now fell under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) which again proved problematic in two ways. It was a system favouring agricultural producers, not net importers of agricultural products, like the UK. In turn, the CAP impacted upon the thorniest of negotiating points, the budgetary contributions. Set up to reflect the interests of the incumbent members, Britain's contributions stood to exceed any gains as a net importer of agricultural goods with a high level of industrial imports. Finally, sterling's role as a reserve currency and sterling balances were considered obstacles to membership by the French as they were not complementary to the aim of European Monetary Union (EMU).

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[51] Michael Butler, interviewed by Dr. Andrew Crozier, conducted 10/08/98, http://wwwarc.iue.it/oh/OralHistory.html p9

In fact, Heath still lobbied for special arrangements to take into consideration Britain's economic situation. Negotiations resulted in a five year period of budgetary contribution increases starting from just under 9 percent to 19 percent of the total. As for the CAP, the best Heath could achieve was a five year transition period to soften the shock of adjustment. The same applied to New Zealand meat and butter and Caribbean sugar.

An impasse the following spring was surmounted in May 1971 through a bilateral summit between Heath and Pompidou. This bilateral meeting, the "most significant meeting [during] the course of the negotiations"[52] had been arranged in great secrecy to avoid the heavily Gaullist Quai D'Orsay's involvement.[53] The final communiqué indicated the two had reached a "complete identity of view on the working and development of the Community", agreeing over monetary union, the progress made so far and that still to be made.[54] Finally, as the EEC attempted to establish EMU, the role of Sterling needed addressing and agreement was reached in the private discussions between Pompidou and Heath which would lead to the running down of Sterling balances by repaying debts accrued during the war in favour of EMU.

Yet, one clear reason for the French interest in Britain's membership came from the development of Germany's economic independence, a direct threat to France, but one which Britain's membership could offset. The German

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[52] O'Neill, C 'Britain's Entry into the European Community, http://www.fco.gov.uk/Files/kfile/2c458d7fudi-2foneillreport,0.pdf

[53] PRO: PREM 15/368-372, January-May, 1971, files associated with negotiations and the meeting set up in private between Heath and Pompidou

[54] Hansard, (1971) *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. 818, cols. 48-9

decision to float the Deutschmark only two weeks before Heath and Pompidou's meeting clearly helped in bringing the two closer to an agreed vision.

Butler argues that the negotiating team, consisting of Con O'Neill, John Robinson, Geoffrey Rippon and Eric Roll achieved the best possible outcome under the circumstances, a claim backed by Roy Denman, for the period of the transition.[55] Hannay added that over the budgetary contributions, the best the negotiations could achieve was adding a clause which could be used later if it could be demonstrated that the contributions proved the initial negotiations to be incorrect, and thus paved the way for Thatcher's Fontainebleau Agreement.[56] Con O'Neill's assessment, now famous, was that Britain had to "swallow the lot, and swallow it now" although he added the essential riders, crucial to the negotiations, that all community decisions were essentially a compromise of interests and exceptions were dangerous for setting a precedent.[57] This was at once the limitation upon, and a tool used by, the British negotiating team. Perversely, it worked against the government over budgetary contributions but was a necessary political sacrifice to maintain New Zealand's dairy trade and thus mollify sections of the British polity too.

8.4 Elite Beliefs and Tradition Change

For Heath and Home there was no dilemma either about the principle of membership or the means of achieving it. There was a dilemma however in

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[55] Butler, http://wwwarc.iue.it/oh/OralHistory.html p10; Roy Denman interviewed by Dr. Ruggero Ranieri, conducted 23/04/98 http://wwwarc.iue.it/oh/OralHistory.html p7

[56] David Hannay, interviewed by Andrew Crozier, 05/09/98, http://wwwarc.iue.it/oh/OralHistory.html p5

[57] O'Neill, C 'Britain's Entry into the European Community, http://www.fco.gov.uk/Files/kfile/2c458d7fudi-2foneillreport,0.pdf

translating that belief into a sustainable and successful argument. Although ultimately successful the strategies they deployed created difficulties in translating 'Europe' as an alternative traditional foreign policy. At the root of this problem were two difficulties: first that Heath and Home had differing interpretations over what EEC membership meant and secondly, by focusing on the political opportunities to recraft foreign policy afforded by entry, Heath was behind the *zeitgeist* which had developed a domestic and economic set of beliefs surrounding entry.

Heath and Home supported EEC membership for different reasons. Heath was in the progressive and Europhile tradition and Home remained essentially an Atlanticist. Both agreed about the necessity of membership and pursued it in four ways. The first was by differentiating the Conservative case once Labour adopted entry as a foreign policy goal. The second was playing down the controversial aspects of membership once membership became a possibility. The third was by rearticulating a set of priorities for Britain which played down alternatives to the EEC. The fourth was marginalising the imperialist right-wing and other opponents within the Conservative Party.

8.4.1 Differentiating the Conservative Case

When the Labour Government announced that it too was seeking entry to the EEC in 1966, Heath set about differentiating the Conservative case. First, Heath sought to gain the advantage by presenting the Conservative approach as the natural approach. Pressing for a more 'responsible' approach to membership, Heath argued that circumstances were imperfect for British entry in 1967. In

private, he urged the Conservatives to present themselves as more positive and progressive in their attitude than the Labour Government until the circumstances improved.[58] Heath's argument rested on the importance of the Conservatives' leading that change.[59] It also preserved entry as the central pillar of Conservative foreign policy. Labour success would remove this policy established since 1961 and fatally undermine Heath's leadership.

Second, Heath responded to Wilson's attempts to restrict the debate to economic terms only. Heath's critique of Labour's approach to the issue of EEC entry rested on their failure to link the economic impact to the wider political implications.[60] Heath deployed a counter-strategy to bring in the political dimension. Heath's strategy was to elevate the debate about EEC entry back to an area of high politics and use it to frame the more charged economic debate.[61] As part of this strategy Heath adopted a position above the fray so as to remain relatively untouched by the arguments over Europe.[62] Resistance to this strategy resulted in Heath appearing lofty and limited the success of elevating the subject matter above the "cost of butter".[63]

Heath had articulated his view of British foreign policy in his 1967 Godkin lectures. He recognised that a Britain out of Europe carried an

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[58] Heath, *Course of my Life*, p355
[59] Heath, *Course of my Life*, p356
[60] Lord, C (1993) British Entry to the European Community under the Heath Government of 1970-4, Aldershot: Dartmouth, p105
[61] Karvounis, A (1999) *A Critical Analysis of the Labour Party's Discourse on Europe, 1961-2*, unpublished Mphil, University of Newcastle. Karvounis argues that Gaitskell's stout defence of the Commonwealth and traditional British approach to foreign policy removed Europe from the area of high politics to low politics.
[62] PRO: PREM15/372, Michael Wolff to Edward Heath, 10/05/71; PREM15/371, Douglas Hurd to Heath, 07/05/71 and 22/04/71
[63] Heath, *Course of my Life*, p361

increasingly weak voice with the Americans. He also recognised the limit of the Commonwealth to be one of emotional attachment. The 'three circles' in this sense were over. Instead, he believed Britain had a role to play within the EEC in relation to the Commonwealth and America. He hoped Europe would become equipped to play a more worthwhile role in international relations from which would spring greater political and economic stability beyond the frontiers of the EEC.[64]

Thirdly, by championing the public right to debate and targeting the youth vote, Heath attempted to broaden the appeal of the Conservative case. Heath claimed ground by arguing that, unlike in 1960 and 1963, the lack of a thorough debate deprived people of understanding the issues. He then expanded the Conservative claim to guide EEC entry by linking it to traditional totems of foreign policy and by appealing to youthful idealism. Reminding MPs that the young were looking for leadership from Parliament in breaking down artificial barriers, Heath said "[i]n Europe today is the opportunity of breaking down those barriers in the relations not only between Europeans but between Europe and the countries of Africa, Asia and the West Indies. This is why, as an internationalist, I feel so deeply about working for a wider Europe and European Community."[65]

Again, Heath returned to trying to establish the Conservative case for entry as the natural case. By linking EEC membership with a continuation of Britain's traditional outward-looking global role and with patriotism, he

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[64] Heath, E (1970) *Old World, New Horizons: Britain, the Common Market and the Atlantic Alliance*, London: OUP, p7

[65] Hansard Parliamentary Debates, Fifth Series, Vol.796, col.1216-7, Edward Heath, 25th February 1970

continued: "[I] believe in this policy, perhaps more so because I am a patriot. I know Britain can contribute to this movement for wider unity in our own continent because of our history, our parliamentary institutions, our traditions and our skills".[66]

Finally, Heath's attempts to differentiate the Conservative case were also aimed at the Six. The success of the Treaty of Rome challenged the 'three circles' axiom that France and Germany would never achieve enough agreement to make 'Europe' work.[67] Heath also recognised that Britain had a long way to go in influencing EEC foreign and defence policy as it was the stronghold of the French.[68] Between 1963 and 1970 two key understandings became clear to Heath: the first was that it was impossible to negotiate to keep existing trading patterns since patterns change all the time, so 'satisfactory terms' for the future were impossible as there were too many variables subject to change.[69] This informed his downplaying of the economic argument and signalled to the Six that he was a serious candidate for negotiations.

Heath also believed that there was little advantage in irritating the French in negotiations since Britain had more to lose.[70] This challenged conventional Conservative thinking in which Britain would join to reshape the EEC to meet Britain's needs. It now had to accept that the EEC was designed to suit the interests of its members who were all deeply committed to its success. The key

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[66] Hansard, Fifth Series, Vol.796, col.1217, Edward Heath, 25th February 1970
[67] Lord, C (1993) *British Entry into the European Communities Under the Heath Government of 1970-1974*, Aldershot: Dartmouth, p11
[68] Heath, *Old World, New Horizons*, p15, 54, 58, 70
[69] Heath, *Old World, New Horizons*, p28
[70] Heath, *Old World, New Horizons*, p3, 32

was to adapt, allowing Heath to turn the question around so that "prospective members need to ask, is this the sort of community we want to join?"[71]

For Heath entry was a zero-sum game. Either Britain wanted membership or not. Debating the conditions of entry was futile since change could be sought once Britain was a member. He also queried the implied negativity of the Soames Affair in which apparent French duplicity was exposed by the Wilson Government as a means of securing support for the British position against the French.[72] Heath instead urged working with the French rather than against them. These were controversial arguments when the Labour Party were still debating the merits of the EEC conditions and it left Heath open to the criticism that he was happy to accept entry at any cost.[73] It was an argument that forced Heath onto the defensive to accepting a position where in 1970 he argued for negotiation only, a point highlighted in the election manifesto.[74]

Heath achieved predominance in the debate about joining Europe by being seen as the torchbearer of the shift in policy. By advocating and sustaining a policy of membership throughout the 1960s, the Labour Party appeared late to convert. Critics however point to Heath's lack of movement over Conservative European policy as indicative of a traditionalist position particularly at a time

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[71] Heath, *Old World, New Horizons*, p30

[72] Christopher Soames was the British Ambassador in Paris. The Soames Affair of 1969 came in the wake of the France's second veto of British entry to the EEC and general French intransigence towards integration measures between the Six. The Wilson Government leaked a French proposal to link EFTA and the EEC in a free trade grouping, which Britain had long hoped for. Fearing it was a set-up to show that Britain was not as European as it claimed, the proposal was leaked and prompted a French outcry of betrayal. It backfired on Wilson for its divisive effect between the Six. Within months de Gaulle had resigned and Britain's entry into the EEC regained momentum.

[73] Gowland and Turner, *Britain and European Integration*, p127-8

[74] http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/con70.htm ; See also Hansard, vol. 796, cols 1216-1239

when the landscape of British foreign policy was undergoing significant change.[75] The implication was that attempts to differentiate the Conservative case were set on untenable ground.

8.4.2 Playing Down the Controversies

Differentiating the Conservative case was complemented by a strategy of downplaying the controversies over entry. The key areas of controversy were budget contributions, the CAP, the end of Sterling as a reserve currency and the loss of sovereignty. Focusing attention on the budget and CAP which were obvious problems deflected attention from the weakening of sterling's traditional role and the loss of sovereignty.

Before being elected Prime Minister, Heath was already forced onto the defensive. The 1970 Conservative manifesto reiterated the core aim of British foreign policy being entry into the EEC, but a change in language over four years revealed it was no longer on 'favourable' terms, but on 'the right terms'. It was an ambiguous difference reflecting the greater politicisation of Europe in Britain after the second veto. A further change in language revealed only a commitment to negotiate rather than the enthusiastic support for entry in 1966. Finally, the manifesto recognised explicit problems that would result from negotiation and possible entry. "There would be short-term disadvantages in Britain going into the European Economic Community which must be weighed against the long-term benefits. Obviously there is a price we would not be prepared to pay. Only

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[75] Smith, Smith and White, *British Foreign Policy*, p32; Lord, *British Entry Under Heath*, p13

when we negotiate will it be possible to determine whether the balance is a fair one, and in the interests of Britain.[76]

Once Heath was elected Prime Minister, his strategy continued to be to raise the Conservative approach above the party fray and diminish areas of controversy. Heath placed pressure on media outlets to give favourable coverage to the issue of entry.[77] Heath's strategy targeted opinion formers and wooed public opinion with the added support of pro-Europe opinion formers.[78] These opinion formers were heads of BBC and ITV news programmes, including radio, and these were invited to regular private meetings at which attempts were made to court programming towards a more favourable outlook on negotiations.[79] Arguably, the effect was of supplying inside information and exclusive data which then went on to skew the agenda. With letters sent to the press from favourable sources, or written by the civil service for MPs who would then send them under their own names, there was a concerted effort to make as positive and as broad as possible the press coverage of Europe.[80] While elsewhere, attempts to diminish the coverage opponents of entry might get meant that the idea of regular 'progress reports' on membership was floated, and meant also the briefing of participants in discussion programmes on the progress of negotiations in favour of membership.

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[76] http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/con70.htm
[77] Gliddon, P (2006), 'Programmes Subjected to Interference: The Heath Government, Broadcasting and the European Community, 1970-1', *History*, vol. 91, issue 303, pp401-424; This seems to contradict earlier research which indicated low-levels of interest by Heath in using the media. Kavanagh, D and A Seldon (1999) *The Powers Behind the Prime Minister: The Hidden Influence of Number Ten*, London: Harper Collins, p83
[78] Gliddon, 'Programmes Subjected to Interference', p406; PRO: PREM15/368, February 1971
[79] Gliddon, 'Programmes Subjected to Interference', p409-12
[80] For more detailed arguments on this see: Evans, (1975) *While Britain Slept*, Kitzinger, *Diplomacy and Persuasion*,

Assurances that the negotiations did not mean a loss of sovereignty were buttressed by the existence of the Luxembourg Compromise of 1966.[81] To deflect attention away from the issue of sovereignty, emphasis was placed heavily on expected economic gains, presenting the EEC as the answer to Britain's declining industrial sector; injecting competition to force domestic industries to invest in capital and improve their productivity. Heath had relied implicitly on the support of industry in making his argument.[82] A budget designed to enter the EEC with an expanding economy was threatened with derailment by an NUM pay award of 27 percent. Poor labour relations between the unions and government, exacerbated by the Industrial Relations Bill, were soured further with Heath's renunciation of a promise not to freeze statutory pay and prices.

Heath's ability to play down these controversies was made difficult by the return to partisanship of the Labour opposition on Europe and by Heath's small majority of 30.[83] Controversy remained however for one simple reason: Heath's vulnerability in office. When negotiations were complete, Heath needed the support of pro-EEC Labour MPs to win the House of Commons vote on British entry into the EEC in October 1971. Heath could not rely on more radical sectors of his Party for their support. With this precarious balance of support in the Commons, Heath came under attack for not allowing the people of the country a greater say, specifically since he had stated in the Conservative's general election manifesto of 1970 that the "Community could not be enlarged without the 'full-

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[81] The Luxembourg Compromise meant member states effectively retained a veto over decisions which they felt threatened important national interests.
[82] PRO: PREM15/368, CBI meeting with Heath, 08/03/71
[83] Cook and Stevenson, *Britain Since 1945*, p59

hearted' consent of the peoples and parliaments of the nations involved".[84] Without the full-hearted consent of Parliament, the argument for a referendum grew.

The Heath government therefore employed specific strategies to minimise controversy surrounding negotiations. Downplaying the negatives of entry, namely the cost of entry and adherence to the CAP, and highlighting the idealism of a wider, peaceful Europe coupled with the economic gains to be made from a new large market only went so far. Strategies to guide public opinion included making the argument about the everyday prices and for Heath to adopt a statesman-like position, drawing attention to EEC entry as part of a global policy and appealing directly to the youth vote.[85] This was supplemented by targeting opinion formers over specific aspects of negotiations such as New Zealand butter and the budget. Finally, feeding information to media outlets set the agenda of debates around negotiations. This was especially so of those outlets identified as favourable to the Government's policies. Despite this, the Labour opposition retained the case for renegotiating the terms and calling for a referendum which show only limited success in this strategy.

8.4.3 The EEC as the only alternative

Heath had been consistent in his beliefs about the strategic needs of Britain. His Godkin lectures testify to this, as do the phrasing of the 1966 and 1970 Conservative manifestoes, and articles written after entry. David Hannay, part of the negotiation team for entry stated:

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[84] Heath, *Course of my Life*, p362; *A Better Tomorrow*, Conservative Party Manifesto, 1970
[85] PRO: PREM 15/372, Wolff to Heath, 10/05/71; PREM 15/371 Hurd to Heath, 07/05/71

> [Heath] certainly thought that the strategic decision to enter the European Community was a fundamental one for Britain and one which he was convinced, and had always been convinced from when he first got into Parliament, was the right one for Britain, and that did not mean that he simply ignored the costs or the terms but he believed the costs and terms had to be situated within an overall framework which took the strategic direction of Britain joining the European Community.[86]

Presenting the EEC as the only alternative meant rearticulating Britain as able to protect its traditional interests from within the organisation.

First, Heath addressed concerns within the Party's policy group. Discussions in the Conservative Research Department (CRD) in which Heath was intimately involved, recognised that "Britain had few trumps, France few weaknesses" and while Britain had an edge over France in some wider economic areas, the Party "should espouse the cause of Europeanism with far more gusto than the Six themselves, and provide a focus for more integration as a rival to that of independent nationalism offered by the French". In the meantime it was decided to seek interim solutions until membership was possible.[87] These included the idea of Association or returning to EFTA. The latter course was considered by the CRD after the Kennedy Round of GATT reduced tariff discrimination so as to make entry unnecessary. Yet the speculative EFTA envisaged was one now including the United States and the Commonwealth.[88]

By April 1968, a memo by David Howell identified two paths for Britain's European policy, to keep trying or to find an alternative. His own view was for

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[86] David Hannay, interviewed by Andrew Crozier, 05/09/98, http://wwwarc.iue.it/oh/OralHistory.html p4

[87] Sandys, D, *The Conservative Party and European Integration*, DSND 9/6/6/, '1968: Post Second Veto Proposals', 21/12/1967, Churchill College Archives, Cambridge

[88] DSND 9/6/6, 7/2/1968, Churchill College Archives, Cambridge

the alternative, arguing that the EEC was stagnating and that persuading de Gaulle was fruitless. The only alternative was to persuade the Germans or to isolate France to gain leverage with the Five.[89]

It took six months before the idea was definitively snuffed out by Heath who argued that joint action with the Five was unlikely given Germany's past record of support for France, while without France or Germany, Britain's action was useless. "My own feeling is that the British Government should look at proposals for joint action strictly on their merits as they affect British interests. We should not go into joint projects with the Five simply to prove ourselves European; we passed that particular test some time ago".[90]

Once agreement was reached in private, Heath addressed criticisms of entry based on previous vetoes. He downplayed the criticisms of the first negotiation as being bogged down in economic detail, claiming the main purpose was political.[91] This was the spur to making simple the economic case for entry in 1970 and reducing the membership bill to a mere twelve clauses. The end of the 'three circles' signalled the need for a new vision of Britain's world role which was sustained by focusing on the political potential of entry rather than solely on its on economic benefits.

He then articulated the way in which Britain's world role would be maintained. His rhetoric changed to meet the shift in circumstances, arguing that the old world must be brought together to redress the balance of the new. He

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[89] DSND 9/6/6, April 1968, Churchill College Archives, Cambridge
[90] Heath to Sandys, 8/10/1968, DSND 9/6/6, Churchill College Archives, Cambridge
[91] Heath, *Old World, New Horizons*, p26

identified three ways in which to do this: the end of nationalist rivalry and warfare, realising that what unites is greater than what divides, and the economic benefits of a greater market.[92] It was a rearticulation of Conservative foreign policy themes at a regional and middle-ranking level.

Heath then projected outwards from this new regional basis a powerful conception of Britain in the world. He declared, "Britain must be part of a wider grouping if she is to exert her full influence in the world…A strong Britain can provide a powerful trading partner, and a growing source of skill, knowledge and capital, for the other members of the Commonwealth. This way also lies the best chance of Britain helping the developing countries".[93] The success of Britain's international status was thus made synonymous with entry into the EEC while links of duty to the Commonwealth were safeguarded.

The change in emphasis redefined the relations between Britain and the Commonwealth, as a competitive trading partner to the industrialised members and as paternalist benefactor to the developing countries. It was similar to Britain's previous approach, but subtle changes register the shift in balance between the industrialised and predominantly white countries of the Commonwealth seeking their own competitive trading relationships without necessarily being bound by historical links. Further, the continued link with developing countries was a necessity for the trade in some raw materials, was a pre-emptive measure recognising that this was the direction in which the EEC

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[92] Heath, *Old World, New Horizons*, p11-12
[93] http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/con66.htm

was heading, and was a modified form of continued sentimentality felt within the UK to the former Empire.[94]

Heath and Home diverged most over the vision of Britain's future in Europe. Heath's vision encompassed redressing of the European-American balance by using America as a template for the potential success of an integrated Europe.[95] Unlike previous Conservative leaders who coveted the 'special relationship' Heath's views reflected a dispassionate stance, even including a mild jibe, at the United States's open discussion of policy which could have the equal effect of openly sidelining allies.[96] This was a strategic distancing from the 'special relationship', a term which he avoided using.[97]

8.4.4 Marginalising internal dissent

The issue of EEC entry prompted two problems of party management for Heath by reigniting right-wing dissent and highlighting issues of leadership. Three clear but mutually sympathetic groupings were emerging critical of Heath's brand of Conservatism. These were: the reformed old right wing; the maverick Enoch Powell; and the emergent new right.

The old imperialist right-wing had developed into the Monday Club at the time of the first application, establishing a base outside of Westminster at this time. It counted eleven MPs as its members in 1962, including 'Bobbety'

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[94] The EC's Lomé Convention of 1975 contained much the same approach.
[95] Heath, *Old World, New Horizons*, p48
[96] Heath, *Old World, New Horizons*, p67
[97] Hill, C and C Lord, (1996) 'The Foreign Policy of the Heath Government' in Ball and Seldon, (eds.) *The Heath Government*, p306

Salisbury and Alan Lennox-Boyd.[98] By 1970 it counted 35 MPs and 35 peers as members, six of whom held government posts, including Geoffrey Rippon, chief negotiator on membership.[99] By 1971 it had eclipsed the Bow group as the influential pressure group within the Parliamentary Conservative Party.[100] It was a pressure group which claimed it represented traditional Conservative values and beliefs. Their constitution pledged to defend the crown and the nation and uphold the sovereignty of Parliament, protect the liberty of the individual and sanctity of the family in line with traditional values while upholding British law, constitution and national heritage.[101]

The growth in the influence of the Monday Club was clearly dangerous to Heath. In 1967 the Club became more proactive in organising opposition to Conservative policies that it considered to be neo-socialist.[102] While the Monday Club was officially opposed to EEC entry, their criticism was more widespread. They organised opposition to the dissolution of the Stormont Assembly and the imposition of direct rule, being the standard bearers of Conservative unionism. On the mainland, they organised opposition to the Race Relations Act of 1968, which aimed to make harmonious community relations and make overt racial discrimination unlawful. The Monday Club's policy was one of repatriation. Withdrawal East of Suez was seen as the second part of the 'great betrayal'

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[98] Alan Tindal Lennox-Boyd, (1904-1983) minister in Churchill and Macmillan governments
[99] Messina, A (1989) *Race and Party Competition in Britain*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, p138; Copping, R (1972) *The Story of the Monday Club: The First Decade*, Ilford: Current Affairs Information Service, p14
[100] Copping, *The Story of the Monday Club*, p14; The Monday Club had established a number of outposts in universities and constituencies to increase their support base.
[101] Copping, *The Story of the Monday Club*, piv
[102] Copping, *The Story of the Monday Club*, p11

although this support of a continued British presence overseas focused itself on white minority rule in Rhodesia.

The second problem for Heath's party management came from the maverick MP Enoch Powell.[103] Powell's power arguably rested on his role as an ideologue to Heath's more managerial approach. His drift from the Party in 1963 was based on a belief that the Conservatives needed to distinguish themselves more clearly from Labour; his vision was of a "post-imperial, nationally-minded, High Tory and economically liberal, party".[104] Powell's beliefs developed during the war in which he became convinced that the United States aimed to destroy the British Empire.[105] A member of the initial Suez Group, he opposed activity in 1956 on the basis that Britain no longer had the resources to continue pretending such a world role. Heath appointed him shadow Defence Secretary but he became highly critical of Britain's dependence on America.[106] His sacking from the shadow cabinet for his 'Rivers of Blood'[107] speech only made his public popularity increase, but above all had brought enough attention and support to his vision of Conservatism. A consistent supporter, though not a member, of the Monday Club, Powell's beliefs overlapped over Northern Ireland, repatriation of immigrants and the EEC.

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[103] John Enoch Powell (1912-1998) considered himself a High Tory with liberal economic beliefs. He supported Burke's conception of the evolutionary society, but that society was founded on competitive capitalism.
[104] Shepherd, R (1996) *Enoch Powell: A Biography*, London: Pimlico, p269
[105] Heffer, S (1999) *Like the Roman: The Life of Enoch Powell*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, p75
[106] Heffer, *Like the Roman*, p431
[107] Powell delivered this speech in Birmingham, April 1968.

After Heath's dismissal of Powell, he continued to garner public support and became a focal point for anti-EEC beliefs. For Powell, the EEC was a sham organisation. First, it was a sham organisation since the Cold War was a sham conflict given the dependence of the USSR on cheap grain subsidies from the US and Europe. Second, the EEC was seen by Powell as the political arm of NATO and therefore fitted within their grand strategy of directing European security and politics. In doing so, this undermined the UK and elevated the Americans' world role. Powell reversed the classic post-war Conservative view, claiming that Britain and Russia were more natural allies in establishing a European balance of power than with the US whom he classed as the enemy. For Powell, the focal point remained the nation-state and he advocated an independent international position which did not support the essentially emotional link with the Commonwealth since these states were no longer Britain's responsibility.

Powell is also associated with the new right for his work with Keith Joseph, Conservative Party architect of Thatcherism. Powell and Joseph articulated a vein of conservative thinking which had lain relatively dormant for almost twenty years, with a firm belief in economic liberalism which found renewed force from Milton Friedman's works on monetarism and the Hayek-inspired Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA). Joseph's first challenge to the economic doctrines of One Nation conservatism came in 1967. He questioned the assumption that public provision was better than private and from this developed a serious political platform encapsulating the nascent beliefs of neo-liberals.[108]

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[108] Halcrow, M (1989) *Keith Joseph: A Single Mind*, London: Macmillan, p115

Joseph also spearheaded the Selsdon programme but Heath's return to Macmillanite corporatism in 1972 created widespread disillusionment. Significantly however, this disaffection happened too late to affect beliefs about Europe. While Powell and Joseph may have shared many beliefs about applying economic liberalism, their beliefs diverged over Europe. Powell's anti-Europeanism stemmed from his romanticism about the nation-state, Joseph's liberalism welcomed the potential of Europe to liberalise trade.[109] Joseph saw in Europe the means to "breaking down...artificial barriers to trade, which had always been central to his beliefs...'Europe' appealed to the romantic in him".[110]

The groupings that were emerging on the right by 1970 posed a challenge to Heath. Having risen from relative obscurity to lead the Party, Heath cemented his position in three ways: his own dominant personality, the eclipse of those who posed a threat and the lack of other political heavyweights who might challenge him. Yet his dominance resulted in his detachment from the rest of the Party and provoked a lack of communication between government and electorate from which it is argued the Heath administration never fully recovered.[111]

Kavanagh and Butler were clear in 1974 that "in public and in private, it was a Heath Government throughout".[112] Heath's domination of his party began when Home was Prime Minister, involved in the Party's Advisory Committee on Policy (ACP) and the Conservative Research Department (CRD), his influence pervading the 1966 Conservative Manifesto, *Action not Words*, which contained

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[109] As the descendent of German Jewish émigrés, Joseph was repelled by Powell's jingoism.
[110] Halcrow, *Keith Joseph*, p114
[111] Ramsden, *Winds of Change*, p319, 322
[112] Butler, D and D Kavanagh, (1974) *The British General Election of 1974*, London: Macmillan, p25

all the policy initiatives of the previous two years, and was "in effect the core of the programme with which the Conservatives entered government in 1970".[113]

The Conservative manifestoes of 1966 and 1970 contained the policy manifestations of Heath's particular brand of One Nation Toryism. It was a continuation of much of the Conservatives' progressive approach, but enacted much of the One Nation criticisms of the socio-economic changes brought about by Labour. However, there were some who felt the changes were too subtle. Powell's own modification of One Nation conservatism reflects this, and during the election campaign there were plans to find a replacement if defeat ensued.[114]

The problem with such an approach, it is argued, is that it did not allow for changes that were taking place in political relationships, most notably between the government and trade unions, so that by the time the Selsdon Conference took place in 1970 the details were already concluded, the decision being only about priorities.[115] Others are more forthright in their assessment, claiming that "with the single exception of 'taking the country into Europe' Edward Heath did not really have the slightest idea of what he wanted to do".[116]

Once elected Prime Minister, Heath's internal management of the Conservative government was divided between the absolute loyalty he had from the Cabinet and the growing fractiousness of the backbenches. Heath's party management was affected by two issues of personality: his style of leadership and

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[113] Ramsden, "The Prime Minister" in Ball and Seldon, *The Heath Government*, p24
[114] Clark, *The Tories*, p410; The result was an overall majority of thirty for the Conservatives, with a 4.5% increase in the share of the vote. See Cook and Stevenson, *Britain Since 1945*, p59
[115] Clark, A (1998) *The Tories*, London: Phoenix, p411, 412
[116] Clark, *The Tories*, p411

his priority of electoral rather than ideological concerns. Heath could only claim limited success in Party management for even while he maintained Cabinet loyalty, once he failed at two general elections in 1974, Margaret Thatcher announced her intention to stand against him for the leadership. An essential dimension of success was his ability to present the Conservatives as more united over Europe than Labour; this reaped gains in the referendum.

Heath's personality was abrasive, creating tensions with his style of leadership and the conduct of the policy review where "the electoral rather than the philosophical...was central to it from the start".[117] Whereas the philosophy was assumed, the detail focused on methods of modernisation, efficiency and progress, embodied in the 1965 document, *Putting Britain Right Ahead.*[118] Central to achieving these essentially domestic policies was entry into the EEC, so that entry was now the core aim of both domestic and foreign policy.

Despite Heath's background as a party whip, as leader it became clear that he would not operate the traditional strategy of mollifying backbenchers, either through charm or inducement, to achieve party political ends. For instance, his restoration of political honours which had been stopped by the Wilson Government was criticised for its sparing use in awarding only 34 to backbenchers in his time as Prime Minister when Wilson and Callaghan would grant 144 over the next five years.[119] Additionally, Heath's relationship with Edward du Cann, leader of the 1922 Group was also sour. Having sacked du

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[117] Ramsden, *The Winds of Change*, p253
[118] Conservative Party (1965) *Putting Britain Right Ahead: A Statement of Conservative Aims*, London: Conservative Central Office.
[119] Heath, *Course of my Life*, p324

Cann as Party Chairman in 1966, the friction between party leader and leader of the backbenchers was considerable.[120]

The significant shift from the first attempt to join the EEC and Heath's attempt was the formal acceptance of Britain's changed world status, and was a radical reworking of the traditional foreign policy calculation on how best to "manipulate multilateral and bilateral contacts to achieve maximal influence and manoeuvre for the British state".[121] In effect, this created a new dilemma of how Britain could lead Europe or adapt to Europe which had shifted from the dilemma of whether Britain should lead Europe or keep out. This inherent tension was minimised with the promise of regaining the initiative that it was assumed entry would provide, while aspects of membership which had proved unappealing in the past were simply deflected in favour of a definition of the EEC as a conventional model of international organisation.

8.5 Conclusion

In all previous chapters there has been a marked dilemma which has provoked a response in beliefs. Here we argue that Heath and Home offered no change in their beliefs and only modified their strategy at the margins to attain the end product of entry into the EEC.

As entry to the EEC was the centrepiece of the Heath Government's political strategy, it also provided a point of polarisation. Some areas of conservative legislation provoked critical responses which spilled over into the

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[120] 'Edward Heath', TV documentary aired July 2005
[121] Lord, *British Entry*, p14

issue of EEC entry. The government's Immigration Act of 1971 enacted much of the Party's policies established by 1968 but was met with opposition on three fronts; from anti-Common Marketeers, Powellites and the Monday Club. Immigration and the EEC highlighted a growing split over interpretations of British nationalism. The Industrial Relations Act of 1971 created a neat divide between the government and its aims to modernise industry and curb union power with a view to economic expansion in Europe while unions fought to retain their status by sabotaging the Act and deploying anti-European rhetoric. Further, as divisions grew more acute as the objective of entry came closer to realisation, some anti-Europeans within the PCP sought to use the small majority to their advantage while at constituency level there was greater support for the government policy over MP's personal positions.[122]

It cannot be argued that Heath and Home established an easy predominance in the debate about EEC membership. The attempt to establish EEC entry as an issue of high politics failed. Focusing on the political potential of entry as the base for Britain to be a significant world player failed to provide a coherent vision of Europe. Finally, by focusing on the political, Heath and Home failed to articulate a clear domestic and economic vision. Where Heath and Home benefited was from divisions elsewhere, the marginalisation of internal dissent and the public appearance of greater unity than the Labour Party. Crucially this meant the passage of the European Communities Bill was successful in all its 104 votes.

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[122] Ramsden, *Winds of Change*, p336

There are perhaps two further things to remark on here. First, EEC membership happened against a backdrop of internal unrest, both industrial and political which left the Heath government under siege in several areas. This affected the negotiations in that they had to be successful since a further failure in the context of Heath government's difficulties would be disastrous. While there was a personal spur for Heath, this extended to his political survival as well. Second, while Christopher Lord and David Hannay contend that negotiations effected the blurring of traditional foreign policy boundaries they also signalled an effort to appeal in political argument hegemony terms to the Six as much as at home. Interpretations of the effectiveness and success of the Heath Government are varied and reflect debates around whether the decision to join the EEC was right at that time, whether the Government reneged on its nascent new right promise or whether the conditions it faced were inexorable thus forcing a retreat in policy.[123] On his ability to articulate a vision of EEC membership, it was clear that Heath's success was qualified and relied on a display of unity rather than a decisive argument.

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[123] Seldon, A "The Heath Government in History", pp1-19, in Ball, S and A. Seldon, (1996) *The Heath Government 1970-1974: A Reappraisal*, London: Longman, p1-2; Ramsden, J (1996) "The Prime Minister and the Making of Policy", pp21-46 in Ball and Seldon, *The Heath Government*, p21

Chapter 9

Conclusion

To understand a man one has to know what was happening in the world when he was twenty.[1]

9.1. Introduction

This thesis set itself an ambitious and complex task: using Mark Bevir's interpretative theory to study the extent to which the issue of European integration, from 1945 to 1975, prompted changes within Conservative and Labour Party traditions of thought. The thesis has aimed to assess the explanatory power of Bevir's theory when accounting for ideational change over this period. This has not been a straightforward endeavour; as the chapters of this study show, it has been necessary to resolve a number of methodological and theoretical issues. Before we arrive at any conclusions about Bevir's theory, a summary of the limitations and shortcomings of this study is necessary.

9.2 Limitations and Shortcomings

A number of limitations and shortcomings arising from the research design of the thesis were noted in chapters one and two. Some of these limits were self-imposed. For instance, this study has self-consciously placed itself in the post-revisionist school identified by Daddow in chapter one. This study has not engaged in the debate about the rights or wrongs of the timing of Britain's entry into the EEC. It has used many of the same or similar sources as other revisionist and post-revisionist studies. Nevertheless, it has attempted to

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[1] Attributed to Napoleon Bonaparte.

contribute to the post-revisionist school, a theoretical perspective absent from both the orthodox and revisionist schools.

Another example is the time frame purposefully selected to examine the change in beliefs about Europe over time. The shortcoming of a study of this nature is the inability to allow for as much detail as in a study which concentrates on a shorter period of time. The sheer scale of examining two political parties over a thirty year period necessitated a selective approach. By examining popularisers, namely the leadership élite of both parties, this study has focused on only one part of a complex picture.

By focusing only on two individuals in each case, this study only provides a partial explanation of broader trends in belief change. Also, using two actors as popularisers of ideas and concepts does not always work as effectively as we might hope. For instance, although Healey offers clear articulations on defence policy, his role in defining European policy is less evident. Again, although Selwyn Lloyd does not fit the mould of populariser, he does make important contributions towards belief change on European policy. Although these are shortcomings of this study, they do reveal important gaps which still exist in our understanding of post-war British political figures. They may be at the heart of the political process and yet may not necessarily make a great impact.

One final limitation of the focus on actors is the problem of isolating actors from the structures and organisations in which they are embedded. This

has only partially been addressed by invoking concepts such as political argument hegemony and party management. By using two actors from the political élite, the range of suitable data was identified as the statements and documents produced by the popularisers to assist the tracing of élite articulations. These limits preclude the possibility of drawing conclusions about other political parties, industrial or labour groups and, in fact, the grassroots of the two main parties during this time.

9.3 Theoretical Concerns: Bevir's approach

The ambitious scope of the thesis has generated theoretical concerns. Bevir's interpretative approach has been reviewed in depth in chapter two. Here, however, we should re-acquaint ourselves with the hypothesis this theory proposed and the potential problems it raised. Bevir claims individuals develop their beliefs against a backdrop of inherited traditions which are relayed through narratives. New beliefs can force a dilemma which is resolved for the sake of coherence. Traditions are constitutive of shared beliefs and so equally, change their content over time. Bevir responded to criticisms that he collapsed meaning and intention by highlighting the role of the historian in locating an author's intended meanings. He responded to criticism that he presumed beliefs to be sincere and rational by stating that individuals seek internal coherence in their beliefs. Finally he responded to claims that he made the concept of traditions relative by implicitly accepting the criticism in using shorthand for their existence.

This study supports some of the criticisms made about Bevir's approach, in particular over its application. Given that Bevir argues that the content of belief webs and traditions can change over time, it is logically consistent to suggest his theory may do so also. In chapter two we proposed to examine the role of popularisers and this was defended as being in line with the general principle of Bevir's theory. The potential difficulty of measuring whether belief change for our actors was translated into a significant change for their audience was met with the concepts, taken from statecraft theory, of political argument hegemony and party management. Further criticisms from Bevir's theory emerge as we draw some tentative conclusions about its application. To illustrate these we ask a series of questions related to the concepts he proposes. What narrative emerges from this thesis? Does Bevir's theory help us to trace beliefs and belief change? Does Bevir's theory help us to trace tradition change? Finally, what is our overall assessment of Bevir's theory in practice?

9.4 Applying Bevir's approach

Bevir defined a narrative as the telling of a story by postulating links between entities and events by using conditional and volitional connections. The principal finding in this study is that there are three narrative shifts in the story of Britain's relationship with Europe as it was articulated by popularisers in the Labour and Conservative parties. Broadly corresponding to ten year intervals, these begin by articulating a period of foreign policy confidence defined by the 'three circles' concept. This was followed by a period of uncertainty and ends with a period of reformulation and consolidation.

For instance, for both parties the period 1945-1955 indicates the recognition of changed circumstances but with a strong desire to shore-up existing practices, methods of operating in international relations and the image of Britain in international affairs. In the narratives of chapters three and four, we can trace self-confidence about the pursuit of British foreign policy. While Attlee and Bevin make assertive pronouncements about Britain's foreign policy, Churchill and Eden are both more muscular and assured in their assumptions about its direction. We can attribute to this confidence the ability of our actors to establish the narrative of British foreign policy which dominated the élite account of both leading parties.

The period 1955-1965 indicates a shift in narrative state, reflective of a gradual but disparate awareness of the inability to shore up existing practices, methods of operating and retaining intact the desired image of Britain in international affairs. We can identify this by the rapid retelling of the foreign policy narrative and the rise of alternative narratives. In chapter five Macmillan and Lloyd increasingly articulated a foreign policy narrative of the end of Empire and the turn towards Europe. In contrast, a significant group within the Conservative party did not understand Suez as representing a dilemma of traditional foreign policy axioms and issued their own counter narrative.

Again, in chapter six we also see Gaitskell and Healey respond to challenges to the traditional foreign policy narrative by rallying support coupled with an articulation of moral obligation. This period brings significant changes to ideas of foreign policy definitions as economic considerations challenge the

boundaries between foreign and domestic policy. The foreign policy narrative was scrutinised in search of answers for the relative failure of the domestic economy. In chapter five we see Macmillan articulate the economic aspects of EEC membership, moving away from the political narrative of Churchill and Eden about Europe. In chapter six we see Gaitskell link the economic and moral well-being of the Commonwealth with Britain's own economic future.

The final period, 1965-1975 represents the consolidation of a number of different and competing narratives. In chapter seven, we can locate the growing division in the Labour party between pro- and anti-Europeans. Wilson reacted to pressures about Europe from the Bennite left while Jenkins stoutly defended a rearticulation of Britain in the EEC. In chapter eight, Heath's unquestioning faith in joining the EEC limited debate within the party. He also marginalised the opposing narrative that was gaining coherence on the right. Perhaps because of this, Heath and Home were unable to gain complete political argument hegemony around a positive narrative for membership.

We may conclude that during the period, the leadership of both parties experienced a significant shift in its ability and confidence to narrate Britain's international role. While it began on a series of shared assumptions which had been carried over from before the war, both parties stressed different dimensions of that role such as a robust role as defender of three intersected interests or to align Britain's international prestige with newly founded international organisations. As that joint narrative unravelled, both parties claimed different emphases creating a number of different and competing narratives.

9.5 Beliefs and Belief Change

A second question which the thesis can address is does Bevir's theory help us to trace beliefs and belief change?

Bevir urges historians to trace beliefs by locating temporal and conceptual links that tie the beliefs of an individual to a tradition or set of traditions of thought. When we seek to do this we encounter some difficulties which were anticipated in chapter two. How would we know, as historians seeking to recover the meaning from the past, which were the links most pertinent for our actors when we seek to understand their beliefs?

Bevir's theory does not work as a form of shorthand. If we seek to use it to indicate an actors' past, it resembles a standard biography. We can trace an actor's social class, religious beliefs, type of schooling and level of education which they received. If we look to the past of an individual for conceptual clues to their beliefs, we can identify what they point to as significant in their autobiographies but in the absence of personal memoir, we rely on the works of biographers. Unless we are prepared to make a detailed study of the individuals' beliefs from the earliest record to the point of interest, we need to accept that we will present what is essentially a conventional biography of our actors.

One further criticism of Bevir's theory which this study suggests is its binary character. Either an individual changes or retains unchanged their belief set when confronted with a new one. This form of logic gate can readily explain

incremental belief states at a micro level but it remains difficult to understand how we might make sense of these changes. In short, Bevir, by limiting these states to just two, does not offer a sense of perspective on belief change. In contrast, Jervis presents four states of belief of which three indicate at least an acknowledgement of alternative beliefs. What Jervis indicates is that belief change is actually more conservative than Bevir would credit. We might draw a tentative conclusion that we are less inclined to change our beliefs unless it is proved to us that it is absolutely necessary in order to retain coherence.

One significant finding which has emerged is the importance of early adulthood experiences. While this is remarked upon in Jervis and other texts that use psychological methods, Bevir is quiet about whether points in an individual's life are more momentous than others. The majority of our actors have expressed references to and draw upon symbols which hark back to their early twenties. For instance, Heath identified his experiences travelling in Europe during the 1930s as significant for beliefs he subsequently developed about European integration. Attlee meanwhile reached adulthood at the turn of the twentieth century and the peak of the Empire and expressed beliefs about foreign policy which reflected a role separate from Europe.

A further tentative conclusion drawn from the analysis in this study is that with an average of thirty years between important early adult experiences and achieving high office, contemporary events may be interpreted through beliefs formed some three decades earlier. While this does not preclude individuals revising their early adulthood beliefs significantly, as Jenkins did

with his later support for the EEC, the trend has nevertheless been that early adulthood beliefs typically are consistently held by political actors throughout their careers. While we might accept Bevir's claim that there are no core beliefs, it is clear that some beliefs are more entrenched and less open to modification than others.

Where Bevir's theory works well is when we examine a discrete period of time in which small but relevant changes occur. Points of novelty have emerged such as in chapter three, where Attlee's plea to Congress resulted in the significant re-articulation of beliefs about anti-capitalism. Chapter four demonstrated the sidelining of Churchill as his beliefs became unable to narrate a feasible foreign policy direction. In chapter five, Selwyn Lloyd is shown to articulate ideas about Britain in Europe which were ahead of their time and undoubtedly facilitated Macmillan's shift towards entry. Chapter seven shows that Wilson's apparent ambivalence about EEC membership was coupled with tying opponents of the policy to its success.

Three further conclusions may be drawn about beliefs and belief change in this study; the role of fear, the economy, and Europe as a collective dilemma. One key underlying belief state for all our actors except Jenkins and Heath has been of fear which we might attribute to the scar of Munich. This was articulated in terms of a German resurgence, French political weakness, encroaching communism in the East from the Soviet Union, and scepticism of the ability of unstable European states to launch successful economic co-operation. These fears were based on the greater fear that if true, Britain would have to engage

militarily with Europe again. The spectre of war loomed large in the beliefs of our actors and explained in part corresponding beliefs about the need for a continued American presence in European defence. While fears of the economic impact of the EEC resulted in articulations about the political dangers of integration, such as federalism, these fears were significantly downplayed once membership became imperative for economic reasons.

The economy features immediately in the narrative of the actors about Britain's international position, although it does not occupy the same position in public debates until the 1960s. Attlee and Bevin's narrative about British economic difficulties impacted upon decisions about accepting the Washington Loan, Marshall Aid and devaluation. Churchill and Eden, although aware of economic constraints, were less impacted by them until too late, arguably leading to the collapse of Eden's Suez adventure. Equally, while in opposition Gaitskell and Healey expressed preferences over the direction of foreign policy that, once Wilson and Jenkins were in office, became challenged by economic constraints and the reality of the trade figures, forcing their abandonment. Those realities had been experienced by Macmillan and Lloyd, although the incremental steps towards moving foreign policy to address economic concerns was initially conservative. Heath's experience provided the continuity over appraising the economic benefits of membership which led to his success in achieving it.

Finally, while we might have expected the idea of entry into the EEC to loom more as a collective dilemma, it did not. It became manufactured as a

collective dilemma for reasons of party politics, but for the actors involved, the slow and uneven process of responding to the dilemma of how to maintain Britain as a relevant international player led to only one ending, resolving the relative decline of economic competitiveness.

9.6 Tradition Change

Our third question is does Bevir's theory help us to trace tradition change?

Bevir defines a tradition as the unit of shared understandings into which individuals are socialised and with which they can interact, accepting, modifying or rejecting aspects of it. Traditions have no immutable core and are contingent entities produced by the activities of individuals. This study finds that Bevir provides us with a method of establishing a narrative of tradition change over the period concerned. However, this study first finds three significant criticisms of Bevir's conception of traditions.

Bevir offers little guidance on the operative method for retrieving a narrative of tradition change. The principal stumbling block is his adherence to a relativism which has theoretical explanatory purchase but which suffers in practical application. To retain flexibility, Bevir contests the idea of fixing traditions in any way, but this renders them almost meaningless. In chapter two it was shown that Bevir used shorthand to label Thatcherism and its constitutive traditions. It assumed that we understand what is meant by such traditions, which seems at odds with the theoretical bottom-up approach he proposes.

A second criticism was that traditions were not treated as entities in their own right and his ambiguous use of short-hand for the existence of traditions adds confusion here. Frohnen challenged this precisely because traditions require significant levels of acceptance between individuals to be coherent. This study posits further that while a tradition need not have an immutable core, there are a series of socially accepted checks and balances as to the shared meaning of a tradition which makes changes to that tradition a slow process. The findings of this study indicate an inherent conservatism when seeking to modify composite parts of shared traditions.

Finally, while tradition change is to be measured through changes in individuals' beliefs, this offers us little perspective. To provide a guide to the limits of tradition change beyond the individual concerned, we have employed from statecraft theory the concepts of political argument hegemony and party management; the first establishes an easy domination of the political debate, the second secures unity within the party. Using these concepts meant we could measure the general acceptance of statements by actors and the degree of party cohesion behind the leader. It was proposed that the transmission of belief change and subsequent alteration of shared traditions required success in these fields.

9.7 The narrative of tradition change

The above considerations aside, this study has a narrative of tradition change for both parties. Two dominant traditions have emerged for each party in this study: the traditions of democratic socialism and corporate socialism for

Labour and of the patriotic right and progressive for the Conservatives. These traditions have all demonstrated significant changes during the period of the study.

In chapter two, four themes constitutive of the Labour Party's foreign policy tradition were identified: internationalism, international working class solidarity, anti-militarism and anti-capitalism. In chapter three it was shown that Attlee was significant in rearticulating key parts of these themes in relation to the tradition of democratic socialism. In the 1930s his strong rebuttal of anti-militarism was based on opposing appeasement and the need for rearmament. After 1945, he rebutted anti-capitalism by securing the Washington Loan and seeking the approval of Congress. While rejecting these two plinths, Attlee boosted the tradition of internationalism by securing material changes within a global structure. For instance, support for the UN was coupled with pressing for the pooling of nuclear weaponry. Underlying Attlee's re-articulations was a strong belief in patriotism, the importance of governing respectability, and a guiding moral code to international affairs.

Continuities were evident in both Gaitskell and Healey's articulations, establishing longer-term themes of a strong international presence and identifying a patriotic outlook. Healey's rejection of neutralism by retaining a nuclear defence was a further rejection of anti-militarism although rooted in a morally superior policy of disarmament, as was support by Gaitskell and Healey for German rearmament. While the social democratic tradition had been global in outlook, Gaitskell attempted to link the tradition's hitherto negligent interest

in international working class solidarity with the moral obligations of internationalism in the defence of Empire over Europe. This attempt was poorly defined and lacked purchase but a split in the social democratic tradition ensued over foreign policy. Healey for instance remained an exponent of the traditional unmodified outlook. Jenkins articulated all three traditional areas of democratic socialism in terms of entry: the defensive power of a united Europe, the potential of its economic reach, and its nascent defence of internationalism through such arrangements as Yaoundé.

Corporate socialism was defined by its domestic agenda and adhered to by Bevin and Wilson. This study shows that its foreign policy outlook has been less consistent, responding primarily to domestic concerns. Bevin broke with Attlee over the themes of anti-militarism and anti-capitalism. His defence of rearmament was couched in terms of domestic priorities but after 1945 his initial resistance to rejecting anti-capitalism was modified in part by necessity and by engaging with structuring that relationship. He rejected the third force idea on balance, rather than in principle, and came to understand the pursuit of a conventional foreign policy as a secure means of defending British labour interests. Unlike Attlee, Bevin was interested in establishing international working class solidarity but believed this would amount to nothing unless domestic working class solidarity was secure and to this end established modest changes by instituting labour attachés in UK embassies. Also unlike Attlee, Bevin countered his critics by emotional appeals to loyalty which ultimately marginalised his long-term success with backbench corporate socialists.

The 1950s marked a return to anti-militarism through neutralism, and an increasing revival of anti-capitalism resurfaced, triggered by the dilemma presented by Korea and budgetary constraints. Again the internationalist tradition determined the limits of the corporate socialists, rallying around to sustain the Commonwealth link on moral and humanitarian grounds and rejecting Europe as a capitalist construct. While Wilson was sympathetic to this view, economic appraisal shifted him towards Europe but his ambiguity was significant for leaving intact the inherent antagonisms of the corporate socialist strand towards Europe. He presented the case for Europe on a basis of technological advantage, the same basis of his domestic corporate socialism. With rejection and increased domestic difficulties, Wilson claimed Europe needed to submit to five conditions. While largely for show, the idea was to indicate that working class solidarity did not simply accede to the demands of capitalists, replicating a worker-employer dynamic that formed the basis of the corporate socialist tradition in domestic politics. Wilson had navigated the party into Europe while allowing them to always question the merits of that move.

The Conservative Party was dominated by two traditions over the period of this study; the patriotic right and the emergent progressive tradition. In chapter two we identified four themes constitutive of the Conservatives' foreign policy tradition: the strong state; the historic link of the strong state with Empire; patriotism, with its emphasis on loyalty and tradition; and the idea of a civilizing mission in the world.

We saw that Churchill and Eden were stalwarts of the tradition of the patriotic right. Churchill remained an unmodified member of this tradition; his concessions were on costs, as in the case of granting India independence. His beliefs were frequently couched in terms of Britain's leadership role, indicative of the missionary tradition. Eden was a more emollient member of the patriotic right, less romantic than Churchill and concerned to establish a sustainable basis for Britain's international position but one which became different from a rump of unmodified patriotic right MPs. While those MPs were concerned solely with sustaining the image of a potent and imperial Britain, any concessions on these grounds, despite the realities of costs, became problematic. Churchill and Eden shared the belief that Britain's continued international standing rested on American support, fearful of repeating the interwar abandonment. This fear manifested itself in the desire to lead Europe and to chastise it when it sought to lead itself. Fear also informed a continued scepticism about the eventual outcome of attempts at integration.

The nascent progressive tradition was first articulated by Macmillan, Selwyn Lloyd and Heath and to a lesser extent, Home. It seems that a progressive outlook in domestic politics was helpful in adopting a more flexible approach to interpreting the beliefs of the patriotic right in foreign policy. All four were important in redirecting beliefs about Conservative foreign policy. Macmillan and Home were more conventional in their outlook, seeking to rearticulate a shift towards Europe while sustaining the belief in Britain as a powerful actor and cementing her post-war role of acting as broker between Europe and America. It was a re-articulation of the 'strong state' tradition and

contained an implied leadership ideal about Britain's role in Europe to compensate for the loss of that role in Empire. Significantly it offered an alternative direction for foreign policy which the unmodified tradition of the patriotic right was unable to do. Heath's progressivism went further, identifying Britain in Europe as essential to sustaining her own international power and presence by acting in unity and specifically not seeking to act as a power broker. Either way, the articulations of Britain in Europe came to assume the important message that Britain would be more powerful inside Europe than out.

9.8 Applying Bevir's Theory: overall findings

Our final question is what are our overall findings in applying Bevir's theory?

Bevir's theory offers the historian of ideas a series of tools and methods with which to retrieve information from the past. This study has shown that by adopting Bevir's four conceptual elements, we have a narrative from our actors which has shifted from a point of confidence to one of uncertainty and to a point of change and consolidation. This study has also shown that the belief changes of our actors can be dynamic and this is best seen when analysed over short periods of time. The traditions of thought in this thesis have undergone some change, with the social democratic and progressive conservative traditions presenting as the most dynamic ones. These have been based on the success of the popularisers associated with them.

There are also significant shortcomings in Bevir's theory. It cannot effectively be used for the shorthand assumptions of beliefs. It fails to register

that some beliefs may be less open for modification than others. This would seem to imply that his 'web' concept is not a useful tool for the historian of ideas. Bevir offers little practical guidance on tracing traditions, using shorthand assumptions for their existence. Further work needs to be done on this area. In the meantime, traditions could be viewed as requiring large areas of agreement in order for their existence to be coherent which goes some way in answering this weakness of Bevir's theory. Finally, Bevir's emphasis on the individual makes it difficult for the historian of ideas to recover the impact of diachronic tradition change and this has led in this study to the supplementary use of criteria from statecraft theory.

Such a conclusion remains highly tentative. Nevertheless, it is hoped that this thesis has demonstrated the explanatory power of an interpretative approach to explaining belief change and its impact on the traditions which inform political parties. It is also hoped that this study encourages others to contribute to and extend our knowledge of the Conservative and Labour Parties and their political beliefs. There are three areas which would seem appropriate areas of further research by applying this approach.

Firstly, actors who have held consistently unmodified beliefs about Britain's foreign policy throughout the period, more commonly found within the tradition of the patriotic right in the Conservative Party and the Corporate socialists in the Labour Party are worthy of examination to search for clues about this resistance and to test further the effectiveness of Bevir's theory.

Secondly, while this study has limited itself to ideas relating to European policy, a study which emphasised other dimensions of post-war foreign policy, such as ideas relating to defence policy or imperial policy would provide a more rounded account of the period.

Finally, this study may aid our understanding of the period 1975 to the present by highlighting themes which still retain currency in beliefs and articulations about Britain's place in the world. For instance, we might consider beliefs held by Margaret Thatcher about foreign policy to be consistent with themes of the patriotic right and that her foreign policy articulations during her first term in office were attempts to reassert a strong international presence, reinvigorate ideas of patriotism and to impose a leadership attitude towards Europe, reminiscent of beliefs held by Churchill and Eden. Or we could consider humanitarian interventionist beliefs held by Tony Blair to be a continuation of democratic socialist themes of a strong international presence coupled with a moral dimension.

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