

**T.C.
MARMARA ÜNİVERSİTESİ
AVRUPA BİRLİĞİ ENSTİTÜSÜ**

**AVRUPA BİRLİĞİ SİYASETİ VE ULUSLARARASI İLİŞKİLER ANABİLİM
DALI**

**EUROPEANISATION OF BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY UNDER
NEW LABOUR (1997-2007)**

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

İsmail KARAMIK

İstanbul – 2010

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ÖZET

Bu tez, Blair hükümetlerinin ilk başlarda Avrupa yanlısı görünen söyleminin AB dinamikleri göz önünde bulundurulduğunda İngiltere dış politikasında yüksek düzeyde bir Avrupalılaşma yolunda bir dönüşüme yol açıp yol açmadığının belirlenmesi doğrultusunda New Labour (1997-2007 arası dönem) döneminde İngiliz dış politikasını ele almaktadır. Avrupalılaşma açısından dış politika özellikle seçilmiştir çünkü dış politika, geleneksel olarak ulus devletlerin egemenliklerinin tezahür ettiği başlıca alanlardandır. Tezin iki ana argümanı vardır. Bunlardan ilki, ilk zamanlardaki İngiltere'yi “Avrupa'nın kalbine yerleştirme” kararlılığına rağmen New Labour döneminde İngiltere dış politikasında Avrupalılaşma kısıtlı düzeyde gerçekleşmiştir. İkincisi ise, İngiltere örneğindeki yüksek düzeydeki “uploading”, Avrupalılaşma açısından yeterli bir gösterge oluşturmamaktadır. Bu argümanların savunulmasına yönelik, tezde ilk olarak Avrupalılaşma kavramı üzerine durulmaktadır. Böylece tezde kullanılacak tanım belirlenmektedir. 1945-1947 yılları arası dönemde İngiltere'de dış politika yaklaşımları, aktörler, bağlamlar, politika yapma süreçleri, politika araçları ve olanaklarının analizi üyelik öncesi ve sonrası dönemlere ayrılmak suretiyle gerçekleştirilmektedir. Aynı noktalar, New Labour dönemine istinaden de ele alınmaktadır. ABD ile olan “özel ilişki”deki konumu ve Avrupa'daki “iğreti/gönülsüz ortak” özelliği arasındaki dengeler ve bunların İngiliz dış politikasının nispi Avrupalılaşmasındaki rolleri irdelenmektedir.

ABSTRACT

This thesis addresses the Europeanisation of British foreign policy under New Labour (1997-2007) in order to determine whether the initially pro-European stance of the Blair governments resulted in a corresponding high degree of reorientation of domestic foreign policy in consideration of EU dynamics. The Europeanisation of foreign policy is selected because of its traditional definition as an arena in which the nation-state exercises its sovereignty the most. The thesis has two major arguments first of which is, despite an initial commitment to "Britain at the heart of Europe", Europeanisation of foreign policy under New Labour was limited. Second, despite a considerable degree of uploading in the British case, this is not a sufficient indicator of Europeanisation. In order to defend these arguments initially the concept of Europeanisation is examined, establishing a definition for use in the thesis. An analysis of the actors, contexts, policy making processes, instruments and capabilities, and foreign policy approaches during the period 1945-1997 is made, looking separately at the pre- and post-Community membership periods. These same topics are then addressed with respect to the New Labour period. Balances between Britain's being one half of a "special relationship" with the US and its place as the "awkward partner" of Europe are considered and their relationship to the relative Europeanisation of British foreign policy addressed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to Professor David Allen and Dr Oliver Daddow, both of Loughborough University, for kindly granting me permission to quote from their draft papers

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ABBREVIATIONS

CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
COES	Cabinet Office European Secretariat
COREPER	Permanent Representatives Committee
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
DfID	Department for International Development
EAD	External Affairs Division (Scottish Executive)
EC	European Community
ECJ	European Court of Justice
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EDC	European Defence Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EFT	European Funds Division (Scottish Executive)
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EP	European Parliament
EPC	European Political Cooperation
ESCU	European Central Support Unit (Scottish Executive)
ESDI	European Security and Defence Identity
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union
EURATOM	European Atomic Energy Community
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office

FYROM	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
ICG	International Crisis Group
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
ODA	Overseas Development Administration
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEEC	Organisation for European Economic Cooperation
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PUS	permanent under-secretary (to FCO)
QMV	qualified majority voting
SEA	Single European Act
SEM	Single European Market
SFOR	Stabilisation Force (in Bosnia and Herzegovina)
TEU	Treaty on the European Union
UKREP	UK permanent representation to the European Communities
UN	United Nations
WEU	Western European Union
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

INTRODUCTION

Britain's role on the European and global stages is an undeniably significant one. As a key member of the EU, NATO and the UN Security Council, Britain's foreign policy has global implications. However, the relationship between Britain and Europe has rarely been an easy one, even before the first steps were taken towards what would eventually become the European Union. Britain joined what was then the European Economic Community in 1973, but despite her new "European" identity, the country has often seemed reluctant to let go of the "three circles" view of her position in the world, as first put forward by Winston Churchill.

It is Britain's role as an EU member state that is the focus of this thesis; more specifically its foreign policy. British domestic foreign policy during the period of New Labour (1997-2007) has been singled out for more detailed study due to the numerous developments in EU foreign policy in this period (perhaps most notably with regards to the security/defence aspect of foreign policy) as well as the numerous and sometimes opposing demands made of Britain in the various roles outlined above. In the decade spanned by the New Labour government in Britain (1997-2007) many changes were witnessed within the EU; the introduction of the single currency across the Eurozone, the large scale enlargement of EU and the formation of a new EU security force. During this period Britain did not always act in harmony with the other EU Member States, most notably on the Iraq issue. The decision to participate in this conflict became a defining feature of Tony Blair's New Labour government and the focus of much criticism. At the root of this criticism lay Britain's apparently close links to the Bush administration.

The Europeanisation of foreign policy is of particular interest as it has traditionally been an arena in which a nation-state's sovereignty is paramount, thereby suggesting that Europeanisation would be resisted to a greater extent than it would be in, for example, agricultural policy. This is especially true of a politically "strong" country

such as Britain, which should, in theory be able to exercise some influence on member states rather than vice versa. The issue is made more compelling by Britain's much-noted position as the "awkward partner" in Europe and her strong transatlantic ties.

The New Labour period has now ended, making it an appropriate time for this study. Added to this is the fact that explorations of Europeanisation of foreign policy are fairly rare, and those looking specifically at one country are also uncommon. Thus this thesis attempts to provide a useful consolidation of the current thought on Europeanisation, together with an assessment of a policy area often neglected in Europeanisation studies for a country that is unquestionably an important player in European security and defence.

This thesis is largely the product of an analytical literature review, looking at empirical evidence as well as current theory in order to assess the processes at work in terms of British foreign policy and its Europeanisation. By examining policy making processes, instruments and capabilities as well as the main approaches, players and structures involved in the time span in question (1997-2007), as well as the preceding periods, a greater understanding of British foreign policy within a European context is aimed to be obtained. As a further outcome, the balance between Britain's role as one half of a "special relationship" with the US and its place as the "awkward partner" of Europe is also considered within this framework.

The thesis consists of two major arguments. The first is that despite an initial commitment to "Britain at the heart of Europe", the Europeanisation of foreign policy under New Labour was limited. When stating this, secondly, it is also argued that although there is a considerable degree of uploading in the British case, this does not suffice to prove Europeanisation. This is because downloading was limited and, in the case of such a prominent player, uploading is the expected outcome of interactions with member states and the EU and thus cannot be taken as a reliable/sufficient indicator of Europeanisation without adequate downloading accompanying it.

In order to test these arguments, the first chapter forms an exploration of the concept of Europeanisation itself, followed by a more specific investigation of the Europeanisation of foreign policy. Thereafter a brief examination of the Europeanisation of domestic foreign policy of a number of member states is made. The chapter, building upon the definition proposed by Ladrech (1994:69), defines Europeanisation (as understood in this thesis) as follows: The reorientation of policy to the degree that EU dynamics become part of the organisational logic of national policy-making. It should be noted that in Britain's case this definition is taken to focus largely on the processes of "downloading" policy from the EU to the national level. As it is claimed that the "uploading" of national preferences to the EU agenda is an unavoidable consequence of Britain's size, power and decision making rights, uploading, by itself alone, is not taken as an indicator of Europeanisation.

Following on from this, the second chapter examines foreign policy in post-war 20th century Britain (1945-1997). This chapter has two purposes: to establish the background to subsequent developments in foreign policy and to explore British foreign policy approaches in context so as to better understand their origins as well as their application in the period focussed on in chapter III (1997-2007). This is particularly important in determining Britain's role as a major player on the European stage. This last point illustrates why it is that Britain's uploading of its own foreign policy preferences to the European agenda is not necessarily an indicator of Europeanisation of British foreign policy. This chapter is split into two halves, pre- and post-Community membership. In both sections the major actors and contexts are discussed, followed by a consideration of the policy making processes, instruments and capabilities of the times in question. Each half of the chapter examines the differing foreign policy approaches witnessed during the periods in question. The bulk of the chapter deals with an examination of British foreign policy between 1961, when the UK first applied for Community membership, and New Labour's ascent to power in 1997. The approaches studied include Churchill's three circles, Atlanticism, the 'special relationship' with the US and Euroscepticism,

major foreign approaches throughout recent British history, and ones which are also observed in the period examined in chapter III (1997-2007). As noted, the foreign policy continuum is explored in this chapter, allowing the processes and approaches which have a basis and roots in the periods covered in this chapter but which are also examined in the subsequent chapter to be fully understood. Consideration is also given to the level of Europeanisation displayed in British foreign policy during this period.

The third and final chapter builds upon the concepts and contexts explored in chapter II to look at British foreign policy during the New Labour governments (1997-2007) and examines the changes in approach during this time and the level of Europeanisation displayed. As noted, in the case of Britain, uploading of national preferences to the EU agenda is not regarded as a strong indicator of Europeanisation, due to the relative size and strength of Britain in relation to many other member states. As in the previous chapter, the major actors and context is discussed, followed by a consideration of policy making processes, instruments and capabilities. Subsequently the differing foreign policy approaches witnessed during the New Labour governments are examined on a chronological basis. Like his predecessor, John Major, Tony Blair expressed a strong commitment to Britain “at the heart of Europe”. This chapter examines the foreign policy of a party – and prime minister – committed to Europe on paper, but strongly tied to America in reality. The Europeanisation of British foreign policy (and the related area of defence) in the decade covered by the New Labour governments is investigated and assessed in order to ascertain whether the policy made matched the initial declaration to position the UK at the centre of Europe; that is, whether this pro-European stance was matched by an associated Europeanisation of foreign policy.

I EUROPEANISATION AND EUROPEANISATION OF FOREIGN POLICIES

The process of Europeanisation is a controversial one and requires both exploration and explanation before it can be examined. This section explores the concept of Europeanisation through a review of literature on the subject, as well as exploring the definition of the term.

1.1 Definition of Europeanisation

Before exploring the concept of Europeanisation, it is vital that a definition of Europeanisation itself be established. Subsequent sections of this chapter address the various definitions of the term, however, within this thesis the following definition proposed by Ladrech (1994:69) is used: the reorientation of member state policy to the degree that EU dynamics become part of the organisational logic of national policy-making. While determining a definition for Europeanisation is of course essential in order for the term to be used as an analytical tool in the examination of the arguments contained within this thesis, the literature itself is greatly divided as to what this term encapsulates.

Olson (2002) explores the “many faces of Europeanisation”, a point returned to shortly, defining them as follows: changes in territorial boundaries; development of institutions at the European level; central penetration of national systems of governance; export of forms of political organisation and governance and the political project for a stronger and unified Europe. This goes some way towards understanding what is involved in Europeanisation, “[b]ut the literature is somewhat reluctant to tell us what falls outside Europeanisation” (Radaelli, 2003:32). Some authors have even gone so far as to question whether Europeanization is “simply a regional variety of globalization” (Pirro and Zeff, 2005:211). Meanwhile White (2001), for example, avoids an implicit focus on the EU when using the term, an approach that is rejected in this thesis. On the other hand, even studies that purport to demonstrate a process of “Europeanization

without the EU” ultimately concede that further developments in EU-level legislation ultimately lead to “spectacular progress” in the Europeanisation process (Irdelle, 2003).

It can therefore be said with confidence that the EU is a key factor in the process of Europeanisation, however, the concept itself still needs to be constrained and defined; there is a need for what Smith terms “conceptual clarity” (2003:333). As Sartori stressed in his seminal paper on concept misinformation in comparative politics, “[w]e cannot measure unless we first know what it is that we are measuring” (Buller and Gamble, 2002:1)¹. In the same paper Sartori cautioned against “concept stretching”, that is adapting existing terms to “new situations for which they were not designed or suited” (Buller and Gamble, 2002:2).

Although a definition of Europeanisation of foreign policy is given in this thesis, this chapter also includes an exploration of the other definitions featured in the literature. Some disagreement on a semantic basis is observed, if nothing else, perhaps due in part to the fact that “the suffix ‘-ation’ can describe both an evolutionary process as well as a given result or status quo” (Lüddecke, 2004:5). Thus it is that definitions encompass processes, their effects and a combination of the two (not to mention the reciprocal consequences of such changes). Lawton even goes so far (with reference to a term used by Andersen and Eliassen, 1993) as to incorporate separate definitions of “Europification” – as the *de facto* sharing of power between national governments and the EU – contrasting it with Europeanisation, which he refers to as the *de jure* transfer of sovereignty to the EU level (Lawton, 1999). This does little to illuminate matters, thus within the frame of reference of this thesis, solely Europeanisation, with a strong

¹ Quoting Sartori, G. (1970). Concept Misinformation in Comparative Politics. *American Political Science Review*, LXIV, pp. 1033-1053 (p. 1038).

emphasis on the role played by the EU, is considered.

A common factor in studies of Europeanisation is the acceptance that the country in question's resemblance (or acquired/ acquirement of resemblance) to the EU is key. An early approach based on this was the "goodness of fit" model (Duina, 1999). This posits that "when a law 'fits' the existing institutional landscape (legal traditions, administrative practices, and the distribution of power among organized interest groups) of a country, it is likely to be properly implemented. If it does not fit, it is likely to be ignored" (Duina, 2007:1). Alternatively, as Risse *et al* put it, "the degree of adaptational pressures determines the extent to which domestic institutions would have to change in order to comply with European rules and policies" (2001:7), stressing that the greater the adaptational pressure, the lower the likelihood of change. In this model ultimately the result, regardless of "fit" is the much same: little change. Indeed Howell suggests that "there has been no misfit at the domestic level if change has failed to occur and Europeanization has not taken place" (2004:5).

However this approach fails to take into account the fact that countries may align to EU norms under adaptational pressure (despite the associated costs, whether in financial or other terms) provided the outcome is sufficiently desirable – such as the reforms undertaken in public finances by Italy in order to qualify for the euro (Risse *et al*, 2001:9). Bulmer and Radaelli also criticise the assumption made in the goodness of fit model, that it "assumes a clear, vertical chain-of-command, in which EU policy descends from Brussels into the member states" (2004:9). However, as noted above there are "cases in which EU policy has been an absolute innovation for domestic institutions" (*ibid.*).

The growing convergence in formal and informal institutional structures commonly associated with definitions of Europeanisation has been termed "structural isomorphism" by a number of authors (e.g. Risse, 2001), which DiMaggio and Powell attribute to what they term coercive, mimetic and normative processes (1991:74-77).

Kohler-Koch also focuses on the convergence process, noting the influence of key governing concepts, such as regulations or court directives, on domestic actors (1996). Radaelli, however, disregards drawing a direct parallel between Europeanization and convergence, stating bluntly that while it can be a consequence of Europeanisation, “Convergence is not Europeanization because there is a difference between a process and its consequences” (2003:33). In a similar vein Montpetit states that “Europeanization does not necessarily accord with harmonization” (2000:590).

Thus it can be said, in accordance with much of the existing literature, that Europeanization is a *process*, not an outcome. Indeed, Radaelli also excludes political integration as a definition (2003:33). And again with reference to European integration, Börzel defines Europeanisation as a “process by which domestic policy areas become increasingly subject to European policy making” (1999:574). She later expands on this, describing Europeanisation as “a two-way process” involving “a ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ dimension” (Börzel, 2001:1), the former being more typical of earlier analysis of Europeanisation, and the latter representing a view of “national governments as both shapers and takers of EU policies” (Börzel, 2003:1). This last point is a significant one and is further analysed in this chapter below.

The mediating factors involved in the Europeanisation process should also be considered (these may interact with one another and at a variety of levels – polity, policy, politics – as well as variously exerting constructive or contrary forces on the process). Risse *et al* (2001) suggest the following to be taken into consideration: multiple veto points; mediating formal institutions; political and organisational cultures; differential empowerment of actors and “learning”.

The concepts and current theory behind Europeanisation have now been assessed in brief, and it is perhaps appropriate to return to the definition itself. Broadly speaking, there is some consensus regarding common themes of what Lüddecke terms “receptive” processes, that is changing domestic structures according to the EU’s “organisational

logic” (2004:27). Some also incorporate “projective” processes, that is, a country’s asserting national interests and exerting additional influence (*ibid.*)

Risse *et al* put forward the following definition of Europeanisation: “[T]he emergence and development at the European level of distinct structures of governance, that is, of political, legal, and social institutions associated with political problem-solving that formalize interactions among the actors and of policy networks specializing in the creation of authoritative European rules” (2001:3). This broad-reaching definition encompasses changes in the country in question at levels of polity, policy and politics. This is a useful approach for a more general study of the process, but is too broad reaching for one that aims to concentrate on policy alone (albeit bearing in mind the interactions among all three).

Meanwhile Radaelli (2003:30) takes a more process-focussed approach, citing:

(a) construction, (b) diffusion, and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, ‘ways of doing things’, and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures, and public policies.

The advantage of this approach is the stronger element of causality it introduces to the assessment of the process itself, subdividing it beyond “emergence and development” (Risse *et al*, 2001:3). Again though, the multi-level scope of this definition makes it too broad to be applied solely to the study of Europeanisation of policy, although its consideration of separate mechanisms is a useful one.

For the purposes of this thesis, the definition of Europeanisation most suited to adaptation and usage is that proposed by Ladrech: “[An] incremental process re-orienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC [*sic.*] political and economic dynamics become part of the organizational logic of national politics and

policy-making” (1994:69). This also broadly relates to the third “face of Europeanisation” mentioned by Olson (2002): central penetration of national systems of governance. For the purposes of this thesis, since it is to deal solely with the Europeanisation of foreign policy of one country (Britain) it should be further constrained as follows: The reorientation of member state policy to the degree that EU dynamics become part of the organisational logic of national policy making.

A more constrained definition of Europeanisation is justifiable not only because of the limited scope of the study, but also because, as Risse notes, it “implies different things depending on whether national legislation is already in line with European policy, whether such legislation departs radically from the European norm, or whether none exists at all” (2001:18). This was also underlined by Rometsch and Wessels (1996), who stressed that Europeanisation produces different responses across member states. Thus by extension, if the implications of Europeanisation can vary by country, the area of Europeanisation that can be focussed on may also vary.

Having decided upon a definition of Europeanisation, it is now appropriate to consider the Europeanisation of foreign policy, but before doing so there are two caveats that should be borne in mind. The first is to note that “ultimately the causal processes [of Europeanisation] go both ways – activities at the domestic level affect the European level and vice versa” (Risse, 2001:4). Or to put it another way, “neither the EU nor the member states are static, so Europeanisation is a matter of reciprocity between moving features” (Bulmer and Radaelli, 2004:3). That is, when analysing Europeanisation, it is important not to regard it as a “one-way street”; many of the processes involved are, at least to some extent, reciprocal.

The second caveat regards the EU itself rather than assumptions about the process of Europeanisation: Radaelli urges one to beware assuming that there is “a coherent, rational layer of ‘EU decisions’ from which Europeanization descends” (2003:31). This relates back to two points previously made: both the “feedback” process outlined

immediately above and Caporaso's rejection of the description of the EU as a state-like body due to its limited authority over member states (1996). This limited authority can, by extension, be regarded as the lack of a discrete decision-making centre (or as Radaelli has it, layer).

1.2 Europeanisation of foreign policy

This section builds on the preceding exploration of Europeanisation to examine the issue of Europeanisation of national foreign policy. This section first deals briefly with European foreign policy, before exploring the Europeanisation of foreign policy, later with reference to a number of member states. In this way insight is gained into the processes involved in Europeanisation of national foreign policy, an area in which "relatively little research has been conducted" (Osswald, 2005:4) as well as laying the foundations for the coming chapter, which is to deal with the Europeanisation of British foreign policy prior to New Labour.

Fortunately, the matter of defining foreign policy is considerably less controversial than that of Europe or Europeanisation. Indeed, as Carlsnaes notes, there is "relatively stable consensus" where the subject of foreign policy analysis is concerned (2002:335). A number of studies (for example Mahncke, 2004; Bátorá, 2005; and Strang 2007) agree on the broad definition of foreign policy as the external activities and relations of a sovereign state with other states in pursuance of its objectives in the international community. That is "actions [...] taken by governments which are directed at the environment external to their state with the objective of sustaining or changing that environment in some way" (White, 2004:11).

It is also important to note that foreign policy making is not a purely top-down and centrally coordinated process, it takes place and is influenced-influential at three levels: polity, policies and politics (Börzel and Risse, 2000; Bulmer and Burch, 2000). The other important matter to note is that, largely as a consequence of its role in dictating a

country's interactions with the outside world, foreign policy is a fundamental element of security policy (and arguably vice versa). The two terms may not be used interchangeably, of course, but this interconnectedness is of great importance when the influential factors on foreign policy are considered.

European foreign policy (in as much as the term can be used to describe common policy not enforced at a supranational level) has been described by some commentators as an “ongoing puzzle” (Tonra and Christensen, 2004:1). Foreign policy shared (but not enforced) at the Community level came into existence in 1970 in the form of “the informal coordination of the foreign policies of member states in the process called European Political Cooperation (EPC)” (Carlsnaes, 2002:499). EPC remained outside the scope of formal Community legislation; indeed “[u]ntil the 1986 Single European Act (SEA), EPC operated without any legal basis at all” (White, 2001:74). The SEA provided a legal basis for the EPC, giving it treaty status, but did little more than codify already established procedures. The natural extension of the EPC came in the form of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) introduced by the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) in 1993. This second pillar was largely intergovernmental in nature, “but it was envisaged that CFSP would be integrated into other Union activities” (White, 2001:94).

As Duke noted, “CFSP went beyond the confines of the EPC to include all aspects of security policy with the addition of the European Security and Defense Identity” (1996:172). With the qualified majority voting (QMV) system applied in CFSP on matters such as “foreign policy [...] a rejectionist position can be undertaken because all governments' agreement is needed for a decision to be taken. The domestic political logic may prevail over that of the EU, at least in the short term and if the tactic is not over-used” (Bulmer and Burch, 2000:5). In 2003 the Nice Treaty extended the application of QMV to include the appointment of special representative and for the implementation of a joint action or common position. As can be seen from the “story so far” the EU style of policy making remains in an “evolving process of institutionalism”

identified by Bulmer and Burch (2000:3). Accordingly EU foreign policy is “best understood as an arena rather than an actor” (Goetz, 2002:4).

From European foreign policy to the Europeanisation of national foreign policy: As noted by Featherstone, Keatinge was “one of the first authors to refer to the ‘Europeanisation of foreign policy’” (2003:10)². The study of foreign policy in a Europeanisation context was relatively late to emerge, largely due to the “particular intricacies” it involves (Mahncke, 2004:27). The single key factor that makes the Europeanisation of foreign policy relatively mysterious lies within the oxymoronic nature of the term: foreign policy has always been the key sovereignty domain of nation states (Hill, 2003:30-31). Or as Wong puts it, “the *domaine reserve* of sovereign governments and therefore exclusive to states” (2005:140). This sentiment is echoed by Manners and Whitman, who describe foreign policy as a “ring fenced” domain that states do not want to see touched upon or affected by the characteristics of Europeanisation (2000) and Sjurksen, who terms it impenetrable and forbidden to supranational influences (2003).

The aforementioned notwithstanding, there is still “a case for studying the Europeanisation of foreign policy, despite the fact that this policy remains, by and large, at the national governments’ hands” (Fanés, 2001). As Wong states, “foreign policy is *not* a special case immune to Europeanization pressures” (2005:137). This is echoed by Strang, who notes that despite foreign policy’s “being the key sovereignty domain of nation-states, is not immune to the multi-faceted and imprecise concept of Europeanization” (2007:19). This change was even acknowledged by former UN General Secretary Boutros Boutros-Ghali: “The time for absolute and exclusive

² Quoting: Keatinge: (1983). European Political Cooperation: Towards a Foreign Policy for Europe. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 21 (p. 138).

sovereignty ... has passed” (speaking in 1992 and quoted in Jackson and Sørensen, 2003:281). This has resulted in a transformation of the conduct of foreign policy away from the old nation-state sovereignty model towards a form of high-level networking of greater potential (Hill, 2003), despite the fact that member states will not readily agree to a transfer of competencies and, thereby, sovereignty to Brussels in this prestigious domain (Sjursen, 2003).

Despite this intriguing paradox – an arena at once “immune” to and yet at the same time by necessity subject to pressure of Europeanisation – “relatively little research has been conducted on the Europeanization of national foreign policy” (Osswald, 2005:4). This could be in part due to the fact that isolating the so-called “EU effect” complicates the study of a policy’s Europeanisation (Fanés, 2001). That is to say, simply attributing changes within member states that take place subsequent to EU membership does not significantly explore the impact of EU membership itself. It is important to isolate cause and effect. Major and Pomorska, note that: “[F]oreign policies of EU Member States are subject to a number of pressures and incentives for change which act at the same time as Europeanisation, sometimes in similar directions, sometimes in completely opposite... We should avoid attributing any detected policy change to a vague idea of ‘Europeanisation’” (2005:2).

Torreblanca’s work on the Europeanisation of Spanish foreign policy details four “traditional assumptions” frequently made in the field of studies of European foreign policy. These are also relevant within the scope of this thesis: an exclusive focus on the intergovernmental level and nature of EFP/CFSP activities; the regarding of EFP/CFSP as only a voluntary and non-binding forum for foreign policy consultation with minimum obligations for participants (confidentiality and consultation only) and no enforcement mechanisms or sanctions; independence and autonomy of action by member states due to the exclusion of the European Court of Justice (ECJ), weak association of the Commission and limited role of the European Parliament (EP); member states’ preferences being dictated by the position of the country in the

international or European system, not domestic factors, and therefore remaining quite stable (Torreblanca, 2001:19).

It should be noted, as Lüddecke does, that the evolution of EPC, the existence and development of the CFSP and new decision making structures in Brussels contradict many of the four traditional assumptions listed above (2004:9). The establishment and development of foreign policy institutions within the EC/EU have had an undeniable impact, indeed “there is substantial evidence to show that EU membership in general and CFSP membership in particular influence the way individual member states organize their pursuit of foreign policy” (Smith, 2000:619).

While Bulmer and Radaelli assert that “the CFSP shows that member governments are very reluctant to forego their own powers” (2004:12) it should also be noted that the very inflexibility of states when it comes to their “sovereign domain” also opens up avenues for “uploading” of national preferences to Europe. Hence, as, was the case for the Netherlands and Austria in terms of their “uploaded” positions on human rights (Manners and Whitman, 2000), “[u]ploading’ national preferences on the European agenda on the one hand and influencing European foreign policy making on the other, are further opportunities for the pursuit of national foreign policies through the CFSP” (Lüddecke, 2004:20). Indeed, “facilitated coordination” at an intergovernmental level “relates to those policy areas where the national governments are the key actors”, among which foreign policy is at the forefront (Bulmer and Radaelli, 2004:7). The “governance by negotiation” that this represents, relates to Europeanisation in as much the “European policy does not emerge from thin air but derives from a process, namely that of negotiation” (Bulmer and Radaelli, 2004:4). Nonetheless, the larger and more complex Europe becomes, the harder it will be for states to project their national foreign policy objectives. Those with a strong tradition of defence of national interests within this sphere, as well as a significant circle of interest, are likely to be able to continue to make their voices heard, however. A typical example of this is Britain, a country with a long history of extensive foreign policy influence (although this decreased after the Second

World War) and one which continued to exert this influence as a Community member.

In light of the definition of Europeanisation selected for this thesis (the reorientation of member state policy to the degree that EU dynamics become part of the organisational logic of national policy-making) the “feedback” or “uploading” processes discussed above are an important process within the evolution of European policy. This refers to the development of policy at a supranational level. However, this thesis also argues that reciprocal processes do not constitute a significant part of the Europeanisation of British foreign policy due to such uploading being an unavoidable consequence of British influence within the EU, caused by its size, power and decision-making rights.

The CFSP remains the primary influence on member states’ foreign policies in terms of Europeanisation and its impact “on the level of national foreign policies [...] is shown by the extensive coordination of nation foreign policy issues, the dealing with common foreign policy topics and [...] growing political convergence” (Lüddecke, 2004:18). Within the current CFSP framework, “Europeanisation in foreign and security policy operates through a voluntary horizontal process of change. It appears as a learning process about good policy practice for elites for which the EU sets the scene, offering a ‘forum for discussion and a platform for policy transfer’” (Major and Pomorska, 2005:3). However, the CFSP is far from being the sole influence on the foreign policy of member states.

In addition, as noted by Alecu de Flers (2005:13)³:

³ Quoting: Bulmer, S. and Radaelli, C.M. (2004). *The Europeanisation of National Policy?* Queen’s Papers on Europeanisation No 1/2004 (p. 9).

[T]he mode of policy-making within the CFSP is still fundamentally different from most policy fields that have been at the centre of attention of Europeanisation studies so far [...] there usually exists no ‘clear, vertical chain-of-command, in which EU policy descends from Brussels into the member states’. Thus, it seems that the ‘goodness of fit’ explanation of Europeanisation is not as suitable.

She also notes that within a CFSP framework, “Europeanisation may also take place on a more horizontal basis and in a less linear and automatic fashion” (*ibid.*). Models of Europeanisation of foreign policy as outlined by Alecu de Flers (2005) are illustrated in Figure 1.

Two dimensions of Europeanisation of national foreign policy

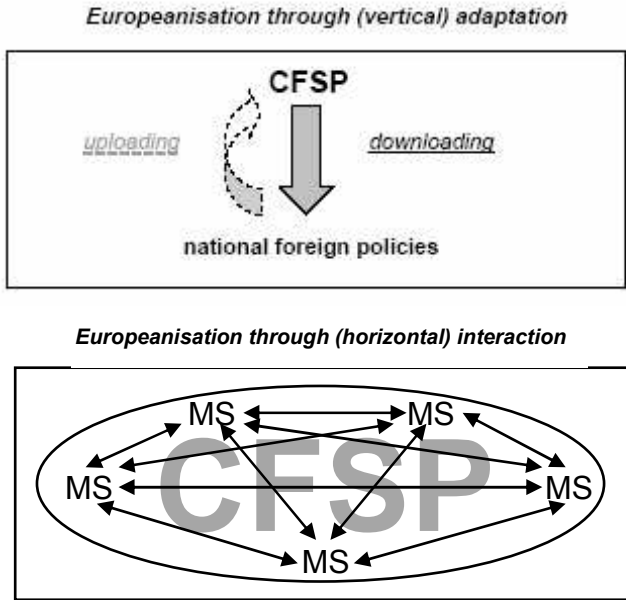


Figure 1: Models of Europeanisation suggested by Alecu de Flers, 2005

Torreblanca also draws attention to the positive feedback explored by Goldstein and Keohane, whereby if Europeanization pressures “resonate with the identities of national actors, they can lead to the institutionalization of national interests at the European level and a strengthening of European foreign policy capacity [...] they can also institutionalize themselves and condition subsequent actor’s strategies” (Torreblanca,

2001:30)⁴. That is, the completion of the downloading-uploading cycle of a country's response to EU pressures.

Thus the Europeanisation of member states foreign policies can be described as follows: the reorientation of member state national foreign policy to the degree that EU dynamics become part of the organisational logic of national foreign policy-making. The processes involved in this are adaptational, as described in the upper diagram of Figure 1. This is not to say that horizontal interactions between member states (lower diagram of Figure 1) do not occur, but it should be noted that these are not regarded as significant within the scope of Europeanisation as defined within this thesis.

1.3 Europeanisation of foreign policy in member states

Here follows a number of examples of the Europeanisation of member states' foreign policies, drawing on a number of case studies for reference. As Wong notes, the "key proposition of Europeanisation is that membership in the European Union has an important impact on each member state's foreign policy and that this impact is increasing in salience" (Wong, 2005:152). One of the key processes within the process of Europeanisation of foreign policy, as Smith notes, is institution building, with the key, but not the sole, factor in this process being the CFSP and its influence. Thus member states have been able "to bridge many of their differences over foreign policy by engaging in a constant process of institution-building... most of this has taken place at the EU level" (Smith, 2000:628). A brief exploration of this process in other member states helps to "capture the ongoing interaction of EU and national levels, to assess the changing role of the nation state on account of the growing interwovenness of national and European spheres and to reveal the underlying mechanisms of this change" (Major,

⁴ Quoting: Goldstein, J. and Keohane R. O. (1993). *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press (p. 8).

2005:187). Thus brief case studies are made here, looking at the Europeanisation of national foreign policies of member states: France, Germany, Spain, Portugal and Greece. The similarities and differences in EU influence on foreign policy in member states and in candidate countries are also analysed here, looking at EU candidate Turkey and its relations with its EU neighbour, Greece.

The first country to consider is France, a regional power with an imperial past and strong military tradition – just like Britain. Indeed, France is second to Britain in the EU in its military spending, whether it be on equipment or research and development, and it has the highest number of military personnel of any EU member state (2007 figures⁵). As Clarke notes, France’s security policy is known for its strategic vision, a medium to long-term perspective reinforced by the confidence in its national role (2000:729).

On the basis of Europeanisation representing a challenge to national sovereignty, therefore, the assumption could be made that a country with such a “strategic vision” would be more resistant to influence by the EU. However, on the contrary, French foreign policy “seems to have been somewhat modified by influence from the EU” (Rieker, 2006:524-525). Despite the high levels of military spending in France, Rieker’s study still found that the French approach to European defence seems “to have been oriented away from a more military and offensive approach” and that “the political leaders of France appear to have recognized a comprehensive security approach as the guiding principle for EU security policy” (2006:525). Since these changes occurred shortly after significant changes in the EU, largely those brought about through Maastricht and subsequent treaties, Rieker argues that the changes in France may therefore be interpreted as a result of a “process of adaptation and learning” by the French, within the EU framework and precipitated by developments within it (*ibid.*), such as the introduction and subsequent development of CFSP. That is, a considerable

⁵ Source: <http://www.eda.europa.eu/defencefacts/> (accessed 15 December 2009)

level of Europeanisation by downloading has occurred. Typical of this is the “shift in the French discourse since the incorporation of the Petersberg tasks in the Treaty, towards an increased focus on comprehensive crisis management,” a change in discourse that Rieker notes “indicates a more profound change in French security policy, which may be referred to as the beginning of a Europeanization process” (2006:523).

While these changes were initially limited to the realm of “national discourse in the early 1990s and in the aftermath of the Amsterdam Treaty” (*ibid.*), later changes have been backed by concrete comprehensive security proposals, such as the proactive French role in missions to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, signalling an “increasing institutionalization of a comprehensive [European] security policy” (*ibid.*). It should however be noted, that such a role by France is also in line with its existing commitments as a former colonial power and can be considered to include an element of uploading, as would be expected from such a powerful state.

From one major European player to another: Germany. Like France, Germany has a dominant presence in the Union, though it has lower levels of military personnel and spending (2007 figures⁶). However, when France and Germany are considered, stark contrasts emerge. While France shows Europeanisation beyond the discourse and CFSP level, Gross found that although “considerations of Europeanization applied with respect to the CFSP” (2007:516) they “did not apply when it came to military operations”. Gross’s study found this to be the case in both a “systemic crisis (Afghanistan)” and a “regional crisis (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)”.

As Gross rightly notes, these decisions show a marked contrast with Germany’s “Europeanized rhetoric”. Rather than the EU axis, alignment regarding the application of military force followed transatlantic considerations and domestic preferences and

⁶ Source: <http://www.eda.europa.eu/defencefacts/> (accessed 15 December 2009)

priorities (Gross, 2007). This is a trend also observed in British foreign policy. Despite Germany's previous resistance to following the European line, however, Gross proposed that that the "growing role of the ESDP in civilian and military crisis management [...] indicates that policy-makers will have to take the development and application of ESDP instruments into greater consideration [...] thereby increasing (in)direct Europeanization pressures in decisions that concern the use of force" (2007:517).

Indeed, German resistance to Europeanisation of foreign and defence policy at the deployment level shows signs of waning in the face of increased pressure from reinforced European structures. Gross cites the French-driven mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2006 as a case, whereby "Germany acquiesced to another EU member state's pressure, indicating growing adaptational pressures in the case of EU military operations in addition to opportunities for policy projection inherent in the CFSP and ESDP platform" (*ibid.*).

Thus it can be seen that in the German case, while initially the process of Europeanisation of foreign and defence policy within the CFSP framework was somewhat limited to a top-down process stemming from Brussels and thus inherently limited by Germany's relatively prominent role on the international stage, ultimately further Europeanisation has commenced through horizontal or intergovernmental processes between Germany and other (more Europeanised) member states.

Spain lies outside the original six founding members of the Community. As noted in the previous section, the Europeanisation of Spanish foreign policy was examined by Torreblanca in a 2001 study, and he states with some confidence that "EU membership has left a very visible imprint on Spanish foreign policy" (2001:1). However, the manner in which this imprint has been made, and the concerns behind it are significantly different from those that have been considered previously.

As a latecomer to the Community, for Spain one of the main forces behind policy convergence was recognition as a full and loyal member; however, its "rationale of

policy transfer has been to take advantage of EU membership to promote very specific national interests in Latin America and the Mediterranean” – for example Morocco (Torreblanca, 2001:1). Despite these two, varying, ambitions, Spain has successfully “gained substantial material benefits from the Europeanization of its foreign policy” (*ibid.*)

Torreblanca’s further findings with regard to the impact of Europeanisation relate to both the uploading (potentially an indicator of Europeanisation in less powerful member states) and horizontal or intergovernmental level of interaction. As he notes, “under certain domestic conditions, even the supposedly weak European foreign policy intergovernmental institutions can have a decisive impact on governments’ preferences” (2001:2). Torreblanca (2001:29) also states:

[B]eliefs about Europe held by domestic political forces, and the need to gain recognition, can be crucial to explain why some European countries are willing to align their foreign policies faster than others and also to explain why some domestic political forces may be willing to lose autonomy and control over large parts of their national agenda.

This last point is of particular interest as it provides one example of the kind of incentive that may be used to overcome domestic reluctance to bow to (costly) adaptational pressure.

Portugal has been described as the “good pupil of Europe” (Koukis, 2001:3, quoting former President of the European Commission Jacques Delors). Like Spain, it joined the Community in 1986, but unlike its neighbour to the east and the two examples considered previously it is a peripheral member state, located at the western extremity of the European continent. However, this position can be (and was) viewed in a positive manner as a reflection of a multidimensional foreign policy and an asset capable of enhancing the external image of Portugal as a multilateral actor linking the Union with the global community (Vasconcelos, 2000).

Like Spain, as a newcomer to the Community, Portugal had a lot to prove, and used the opportunities afforded by its two turns heading the Presidency of the Council (in 1992 and 2000) to drive Europeanisation, notably in the foreign policy arena, largely through a process of “institutional adaptation” required for the “responsibility of handling the tasks of the Presidency” (Koukis, 2001:7) as well as “socialisation”, or increasing familiarity with the issues. As Koukis notes, since the first time Portugal assumed the Presidency was some eight years after it joined the Union, and the second time almost 15 years later, it might be expected that the need for such adaptation would be slight (*ibid.*). However, as already noted, the foreign policy of the Community-Union has been far from static “and the introduction of new practices, rules and structures exacerbated the need for a process of adaptation and familiarisation with the new instruments and procedures” (*ibid.*).

The Europeanisation of Portuguese foreign policy extended to the sphere of politics; by the end of the process of preparation for the second presidency, “there was practically ‘not a single department that was not dealing with European affairs in one way or another’” (Koukis, 2001:10). This was most notable in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which “had specific European units in all the secretariats and in all the institutions that were organically part of the Ministry” (*ibid.*).

Thus the Presidency represents an epitome of the Europeanisation process, by both raising adaptation pressure on the member state (but in such a way as to make the Europeanisation response inevitable, such are the associated benefits) as well as offering an ideal forum for “the management and promotion of European external relations” (Koukis, 2001:39). As noted by Vasconcelos ahead of the second Portuguese Presidency, the country was “determined to take a more pro-active approach to European integration” (2000:26). The Portuguese example demonstrates the catalytic effect of the Presidency on the already strong influence exerted by the modifications to the evolving Community foreign policy following the SEA.

Greece is another peripheral member. Attaining membership in 1981, initial reservations regarding Greek membership were largely economic in nature. However, when tensions in the Balkans finally broke out in the 1990s, it was Greek foreign and security policy that came under scrutiny and was (initially at least) found lacking. As Tsakolayannis notes, “Greece’s record in the EC has been saddled by gross misunderstandings and inflated expectations, not least on political-security matters” (1996:200).

While in the case of the FYROM, Greek acceptance ultimately came through *fait accompli*; Greek ambitions for greater inclusion in Europe centred on its position in the foreign policy framework living up to the “glittering prize” that Maastricht had at first appeared to be (*ibid.*). An example of the desire to fit in is the “downloading of the EU rhetoric of good neighbourly relations and peaceful resolution of disputes by both member and candidate countries in their relations with their neighbours” (Terzi, 2005:121). As Terzi notes, encouraged by Turkey’s mutual commitment – as a candidate country – to good neighbourly relations, Greece has adopted this rhetoric in its relations with Turkey, to great effect.

The ultimate assimilation of EU policy on neighbourly relations, and of cooperation and dialogue has been well illustrated in Greece’s recent past with Turkey, changing its policy “from foot-dragging on improvement of EU-Turkish relations to one that sets the pace” (Terzi, 2005:133). In this way not only is the downloading of EU policy to the national level illustrated, but also the horizontal processes of inter-governmental influence (despite one half of the relationship being a non-member state).

Conclusion

This chapter set out a definition of Europeanisation of foreign policy; in addition the various alternative definitions of Europeanisation in the literature were explored. One of the key issues in the Europeanisation of foreign policy is that Europeanisation of this

policy area effectively infringes on what has traditionally been viewed as a key area of national sovereignty. As a reflection of this issue, the concept of a European foreign policy also contains some elements of uncertainty as a consequence of the EU's continued lack of absolute supranational authority over member states. Nonetheless, with the evolution of the EC-EU there has been considerable Europeanisation of foreign policies in member states, as has been evidenced through a series of case studies. In the specific case of Britain the understanding of Europeanisation focuses on the process of downloading policy from the EU level to the member state. This is due to the unreliability of uploading of national preferences to the European agenda as a true indicator of the extent of Europeanisation in the case of a large and powerful member state with extensive decision-making rights, like Britain. The country's situation in this context is examined in the subsequent chapters focussing on the post-war period up to 1997 (Chapter II) and the New Labour governments of 1997-2007 (Chapter III).

II BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY (1945-1997)

This chapter examines British foreign policy before and after Community membership up until the New Labour period. There are two purposes to this chapter: to establish the background to subsequent developments in foreign policy and to explore British foreign policy approaches in context so as to better understand their origins and their application in the period focussed on in chapter III (1997-2007). The chapter begins with a study of post-war British foreign policy until its first application for Community membership (1945-1961). This period is important in understanding Britain's role as a major player on the European stage, even before it became a Community member. This is followed by an examination of this policy area in the period between 1961, when the UK first applied for Community membership, and 1997. In this way the foreign policy continuum can be more fully appreciated.

During both timeframes explored, consideration is first given to the context and actors involved in foreign policy, followed by details of policy making processes, instruments and capabilities. Then comes an examination of the main approaches in British foreign policy, which span a variety of stances on Europe from the Antlanticism of Churchill's 'three circles' to the pro-European approach of Heath and the Euroscepticism of Thatcher. Many of these major foreign approaches are also observed in the period examined in chapter III (1997-2007). Thus this chapter allows the processes and approaches that are rooted in the period covered in this chapter but which are also examined in the subsequent chapter to be fully understood. No policy, least of all foreign policy, exists in a vacuum, and in order to make as comprehensive a study of the Europeanisation of this policy are as possible in chapter III, it is vital to first lay a foundation upon which to build.

2.1 British foreign policy before Community membership (1945-1961)

Britain is an island nation, but one with an influential history that stretches far

beyond its borders. At one time it headed the largest empire the world has ever seen, and although the demise of Britain's imperial identity was imminent by the conclusion of the Second World War, Britons' sense of their place in the world, and more pertinently, Britain's foreign policy and international connections, were still deeply influenced by, and continued to benefit from, the country's auspicious past.

This colonial past, ongoing strong ties to (and wartime financial dependence on) the US, a realisation of both the growing importance of Europe and the nascent Soviet threat all shaped British foreign policy as the country entered the second half of the 20th century. The coming section looks in more detail at British foreign policy between 1945 and 1961.

2.1.1. Context and actors

In terms of Britain's prominence in the world, and thus the successfulness of its foreign policy, the period covered in this section (1945 to Britain's first application for Community membership in 1961) can be viewed as something of a curve going up and later down, improving after the low of India's loss, lifted by victory in the Second World War, but ultimately reversing, with the Suez crisis of 1956 representing the turning point (George, 1991:100). Preceding this period, although rocked by a series of balance of payments crises "British rates of growth [...] were extremely high by historical standards, but the sense of well-being that this generated was gradually undermined by the realization that other European states were performing better" (*ibid.*).

While the independence of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) in 1980 and Belize in 1981 marked the practical end of the British Empire, the real blow truly came in 1947, with the independence of India. It was at this point that the Latin term *imperator* (emperor) was removed from the king's title on the currency, for example. Though no subsequent loss could be worse than that of India, "it was not until the late 1950s – when Macmillan's 'wind of change' brought a second and more far-reaching wave of decolonisation – that the retreat from Empire really gained momentum" (Sanders, 1990:1).

Upon independence, India became a dominion (just as Australia, Canada and Ireland had before it) and thus entered the Commonwealth. Ireland shared this status until its declaration as a republic in 1950, at which time it lost dominion status (in accordance with the law at the time). By the time of the declaration of the Republic of India, this law had been changed, and India remained within the Commonwealth. A similar route was open to all former colonies, and the majority chose to seize the opportunity thus presented.

The purpose of the Commonwealth was to unite the former counties of the British Empire in such a way that they were, according to the Balfour Declaration of 1926⁷, “equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations”. In its initial incarnation the Commonwealth offered members the benefit of lucrative trade ties echoing those of colonial days, but to mutual benefit. It also made allies of the members in times of conflict. Beneficial though it was to member states, from Britain’s perspective this “surrogate Empire” (Sanders, 1990:102) was no substitute for the real thing.

In terms of managing its foreign relations, during the period covered in this section, Britain divided matters according to its level of involvement-control in the countries in question. At the end of the Second World War, alongside the Foreign Office stood the Colonial Office, the Dominions Office (which had itself split from the Colonial Office in 1925) and the India Office. These latter two merged in 1947 to form the Commonwealth Relations Office. The representative of this body was the Secretary of

⁷ Source: “The Balfour Declaration”,
<http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/191086/34493/140633/timeline/> (accessed 25 November 2009)

State for Commonwealth Relations, a Cabinet post that existed between 1947 and 1966.

As may be expected from a country that places such importance on the military sphere, the Ministry of Defence also played a key role in determining foreign policy. The Minister of Defence was a Cabinet post created during the Second World War for the purpose of coordinating the war effort. In peacetime this role developed into participation in the coordination of defence and diplomatic policy (largely through the National Security Council) and of the Admiralty, War Office and Air Ministry. In 1964 the role of Defence Minister was replaced by that of Secretary of State for Defence, while by 1971 the ministry had incorporated Admiralty, War Office and Air Ministry. The close coordination at the Cabinet level continued.

Other key figures in the determination of British foreign policy were the foreign minister and prime minister (indeed a number of foreign ministers later ascended to the premiership, among them Anthony Eden). These roles were both highly influential, as was (and is) that of the government in general. As Grantham and George (1988:32) note:

Since the nineteenth century, Parliament has been – and remains – a limited actor in the policy cycle in Britain. Factors peculiar to foreign affairs have made it especially marginal in that sector of Government responsibility. It has lacked the political will and the institutional capacity to overcome the Government’s entrenched position.

In terms of advising ministries and ministers on foreign policy, the established process was via “select committees” comprising members of parliament. Deep-rooted though this process may be, it is not always efficient, as Grantham and George put it: “since at least the sixteenth century, Select Committees have considered issues such as overseas trade, treaties, diplomatic relations [...] but rarely in a systematic manner” (1988:10).

In addition to facing the loss of the “Pearl” of its overseas territories, India, Britain

also emerged from the Second World War in serious financial distress. Having made a disproportionately larger sacrifice than the other Allies in economic terms, and with the wartime lend-lease arrangement with the US abruptly terminated, the UK was on the cusp of bankruptcy (Marr, 2007:11). From an economic perspective Britain was far from “great” and could not afford to remain in the state of “splendid isolation” pursued at the end of the 19th century. The famous economist John Maynard Keynes was sent to the US by British Prime Minister Clement Attlee to secure US aid. Ultimately he was able to secure a much needed, though far from sufficient, \$3.75 billion loan (at 2 percent interest and with a 50-year term). This was done at the cost of the pound sterling becoming freely exchangeable against the dollar, “placing the country firmly under the economic control of the United States” (Marr, 2007:12-13). This loan was ultimately paid off more than 60 years later, during the Blair premiership, in 2006.

Meanwhile the empire was being taken to pieces before it fell apart. Britain in the late 1940s was an inward looking country, struggling to regain stability and maintain its pride. Continental European powers, on the other hand, were also recovering and beginning to look at how to prevent war on such a grand scale ever recurring on the continent. As noted in the previous chapter, this was the process that ultimately gave birth to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) with the Treaty of Paris in 1951, this union soon expanded from its initial scope to form the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) with the Treaties of Rome in 1957. The nuclear deterrent, especially with regard to the two major power blocs of the time, was a key factor in foreign relations of the time. However, despite Britain’s still considerable international influence at this stage, its imperial status still in the recent past, it rejected involvement in this endeavour, preferring to concentrate on military rather than diplomatic interaction with Europe.

In this respect Britain was far from inactive internationally; in 1945 it became one of the founding members of the United Nations and secured itself a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. And together with France it “set the example of a European

defence alliance by signing the Dunkirk Treaty” (Bloed and Wessel, 1994:xiii) in 1947. These two were soon joined by the Benelux countries in 1948 in the signing of the Brussels Treaty, an intergovernmental self-defence treaty also featuring elements of economic, cultural and social collaboration. Subsequent to this development, as a separate suggestion to ECSC, a French minister also put forward plans for a European Defence Community (EDC) in 1950. A treaty was signed in 1952 by the ECSC members but the plan ultimately failed after France chose not to ratify the treaty. Subsequently the Brussels Treaty signatories, gathered together, along with Canada, the US, Italy and West Germany in 1954, and at a conference held in London agreed to invite Italy and West Germany to participate in the treaty. With the “Protocol Modifying and Completing the Brussels Treaty”, which came into effect in 1955 the Western European Union (WEU) was formed, binding the UK, France, the Benelux countries, Italy and West Germany. Interestingly this was not purely a defence-oriented intergovernmental effort. Despite the intention for the treaty “to deal with almost aspects of European integration at the same time, the defence aspect of WEU is the only side which has not been abandoned during the past decades” (Bloed and Wessel, 1994:xv). This was largely a by-product of the increasingly close economic cooperation between EEC members in subsequent years.

Alongside the Brussels Treaty process, Britain was also a founding member of NATO in 1949, a role that played increasing importance during the years when the Cold War held centre stage in international relations. This importance was first stressed by the Korean War – also the first real test of the UN – which emphasised the “red menace”. Britain participated in the war, playing “an important if subsidiary role” and fighting alongside not only UN but Commonwealth allies as the Commonwealth Brigade, suffering more than a thousand dead (Marr, 2007:101).

By comparison, the WEU requested a far greater commitment from its members in mutual defence than the North Atlantic Treaty. WEU members were “committed to afford ‘all the military and other aid and assistance in their power’ in case of an armed

attack”, meanwhile NATO member states “agreed that ‘if such an armed attack occurs, each of them [...] will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force’” (Bloed and Wessel, 1994:xvi). However, since all WEU members were also NATO members, it proved to be the case that it was through this latter framework that they most commonly acted, leaving the WEU somewhat redundant. This was particularly true given the nature of the defensive, rather than offensive, role the “Soviet threat” necessitated. Vigilance and protection rather than aggression were favoured, and the opt-in nature of NATO proved more digestible to most members. The WEU was not ultimately without purpose, however, as is discussed in the second part of this chapter.

It should also be noted that it was not solely overseas that the UK was fighting the Communist threat; the '50s also saw the uncovering of the Cambridge Five – Britons who spied for Russia during the Second World War. Two of the spies, British members of the diplomatic service who spied for Soviet Russia, fled the UK in 1951, and reappeared in the USSR in 1956. This did little to help concerns at home with regard to the Soviet threat, despite the fact that at least two members of the spy group remained in Britain, their anonymity preserved by their confessions (Marr, 2007:140-141). Events such as this did much to bolster public support for offensives such as the Korean War.

The same cannot be said, however, for what was perhaps the defining event of the era: the Suez crisis. This was a conflict born out of residual imperial pride, a “confrontation between old colonial power and the new Arab nationalism” (Marr, 2007:149). Unfortunately for Britain, it was to learn its place in the new world order the hard way. Confronted by plans for the nationalisation of the Suez Canal, a major shipping route, led by Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, Britain, under Prime Minister Anthony Eden (interestingly himself a former foreign minister), chose to adopt a bellicose stance, rather than the “patient diplomacy” it had practiced in the '20s when a not dissimilar chain of events had taken place in Turkey (Sanders, 1990:96).

Outraged by Nasser's plans, Britain met in secret with France and Israel to plan the retaking of the canal by force. From a military perspective their plans were not unsuccessful, but they had counted on US support (taken as a given, based on Washington's frustration with Egyptian recognition of the People's Republic of China and subsequent withdrawal of US funding for the Aswan Dam). On the contrary, not only was US support absent, the US in effect forced a cease-fire on participants. To achieve this it used not only its key role in the UN for leverage – although it was not alone in its stance: votes in favour of a cease-fire were 64 for, five against (Marr, 2007:159) – but also used its economic hold over Britain, both threatening a sell-off of its Sterling Bond holdings, and refusing aid to the overstretched British Treasury.

Although not immediately felt in Britain, the effects of Suez were wide-ranging. As Sanders notes: “After Suez, though not necessarily because of it, the balance between British capacity and nationalist pressures was to be quickly reversed and, in consequence [...] substantial changes to the *status quo* were to be rapidly introduced” (1990:75). International outrage was widespread, particularly among members of the Commonwealth – India in particular – and perhaps irreversible damage was dealt to perceptions of Britain, both as a military power and as a “champion of international morality” (Sanders, 1990:102), vastly reducing its soft power as well as the strength of its hard power.

Two other international organisations with an impact on British foreign policy considerations should also be mentioned. The first of these was at the time an almost direct response to the EEC and Common Market on the part of states less keen on the greater degree of union required by the EEC but none the less willing to develop closer trade ties: Britain joined Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland to form the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1960. While the EFTA, like the EEC, was undoubtedly effective in the promotion of trade between its members – it was observed that trade levels between members more than doubled within the first seven years of its establishment – in this respect it remained inferior to the success enjoyed by

the EEC. Thus the EFTA could well be regarded more as a “diversion which London was content to pursue until the time was ripe for a closer British relationship with the EEC Six” (Sanders, 1990:138). Britain duly filed its first application for membership in the EEC just one year after the EFTA came in to being.

The last to be considered in this section has limited impact but nonetheless worthy of note: the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), established between European states in 1947 as part of the US and Canadian funded Marshall Plan for the rebuilding of Europe and resistance of Communism, through which billions of dollars of economic and technical assistance was channelled to European countries. The OEEC was succeeded by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1961 in reflection of a growing membership and broadened scope. The Convention establishing the OECD states the following aims: to achieve the highest sustainable economic growth and employment and a rising standard of living in Member countries, while maintaining financial stability (thus contributing to the development of the world economy); to contribute to sound economic expansion in member and non-member countries in the process of economic development; and to contribute to the expansion of world trade on a multilateral, non-discriminatory basis in accordance with international obligations⁸. Britain’s membership in the OEEC was complementary to its role in NATO. In addition to providing a further forum in which Britain could interact with other nation-states, potentially for the promotion of its own foreign policy agenda as well as its own development. The role also went well with Britain’s position as a former colonial power, with the responsibility of providing continued support to its one-time colonies (already supported through the Commonwealth framework).

⁸ Source: http://www.oecd.org/document/7/0,3343,en_2649_201185_1915847_1_1_1_1,00.html
(accessed 25 November 2009)

2.1.2 Policy making processes, instruments and capabilities

As is apparent from the preceding section, Britain's foreign policy following the Second World War had a strong defence element, despite its significantly reduced capabilities and the reductions in particularly its military capabilities that this necessitated. Its stance largely flew in the face of these constraints, however, as Sanders notes, "Britain's foreign policy strategy in the period after the war remained fundamentally overextended" (1990:74).

The key players in the foreign policy making process are the prime minister and Cabinet, who "set the general direction of foreign policy and co-ordinate the different branches of government" (Clarke, 1988:71), together with the Colonial Office, Commonwealth Relations Office, Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence, they formed what could be regarded as the core of the process. Around this are grouped ministries involved in but not primarily responsible for foreign policy, such as the Treasury or Department of Trade and Industry (*ibid.*).

As noted in the previous chapter, foreign policy is a domain over which the nation-state does its utmost to retain sovereignty; as the monarch's representative, the executive wields this power on their behalf. As Clarke (1988:72) notes:

The most obviously unchanging reality which persists over the years is the fact of executive dominance in the foreign policy process. More than any other policy area, foreign policy is identified as that which must be conducted by the executive; it is concerned with the exercise of sovereignty in relations with the outside world. [...] Indeed it remains the policy area in which the monarch's practical involvement – to give advice, to help build good relations, to provide continuity to the external world between a series of governments – is probably at its greatest.

And as noted in the preceding section, the prime minister and foreign minister (as well as the secretaries of state for commonwealth relations and for the colonies) played a key role in determining foreign policy, though within what Clarke termed a "curiously

informal” decision-making system (*ibid.*). The result of this situation depends largely on two factors: First, the relative interest the prime minister takes in foreign affairs (Churchill and Eden were both very involved in their premierships in this respect), and second the premier’s selection of foreign-policy related ministers with whom they had a good relationship (not unusual in the exclusive atmosphere that prevailed in the Cabinets of the first half of the 20th century). In the latter case, the Cabinet minister is often given far more room for manoeuvre in the decision-making process by the prime minister, in the knowledge that their views are in alignment.

An example of this last case is that of the Attlee administration, in which the prime minister himself had relatively little interest in foreign affairs (despite the fact that the seismic shock of the loss of India occurred during his premiership). Accordingly his foreign minister, “Ernest Bevin [...] undoubtedly benefitted in Cabinet from the close personal friendship and the support of the Prime Minister” (Callaghan, 1988:2). One example of Bevin’s influence is the strategy of “power-by-proxy” employed during his time in office. “The idea of using American power ‘for purposes which we regard as good’, as the Foreign Office put it in 1944, [was] [...] a feature of British foreign policy during the life of the 1945-51 Labour administrations” (Ruane and Ellison, 2005:148). Goals achieved through this strategy included gaining US commitment to the protection of Western Europe and in handing over responsibility for funding the anti-Communist forces in Greece.

Of course, in cases where the prime minister took a strong interest in foreign affairs, it, on occasion, left the ministries little room for manoeuvre or opportunity for influence, as was the case of Eden’s insistence on the military option in the “resolution” of the Suez Canal issue. “The Foreign Office was well aware of the depth of feeling in the Arab world generally about the importance of Egyptian control of the canal; and it advised Cabinet accordingly” (Sanders, 1990:96), but Eden – to Britain’s detriment – chose not to heed their advice, despite his own considerable Foreign Office experience.

The world was a very different place before and after the Second World War, not only because of the war itself, but also due to the fact that with the advent of nuclear weaponry, warfare itself had been changed forever. Some even argues that this development had in effect paralysed the development of foreign policy. Martin and Garnett (1997:12) quote Medlicott on the subject, noting that after 1945 “no major power had any foreign policy worth of the name [because] by the end of the fifties the nuclear deadlock meant that organisation of defence against any form of military and political aggression between the two great power blocs had become so complete as to virtually paralyse all major initiatives in world affairs” (1968:331). Alarmed at the imbalance of power represented by the nuclear military capacity of the US and Russia, and the withdrawal of a US agreement to share nuclear technologies following the Second World War (Marr, 2007:32), Britain endeavoured to develop its own nuclear capabilities and experienced limited, but costly, success. However, due to the long mobilisation time for the weapons systems developed at Aldermaston, in 1958 an agreement was reached to allow the storage of more rapidly deployable US missiles in the UK. Originally envisaged as a “stop gap” arrangement, this ultimately marked the beginning of the end for an independent British nuclear capability (Marr, 2007:127-128). Thus while the British nuclear deterrent was a key element of its hard power in its dealings with other nations, be they friend or enemy, it was also another factor reducing British independence from the US and increasing the power of transatlantic leverage.

That is not to suggest that the nuclear armaments marked an end to the role of the conventional army. Although a significant of demobilisation was necessary at the end of the Second World War, Britain’s military focus in its foreign policy approach necessitate that she maintained a significant armed presence. Not only that, the cost of the power-by-proxy approach was also paid in part by increased military commitment in other areas. For example, the result of heavy US commitment to NATO in the ’50s meant that for the UK “[o]ver 50,000 combat personnel [...] were to be assigned to the defence of continental Europe for the indefinite future. The open-ended commitment

thus engendered was to contribute significantly to the military overextension that was to plague successive British governments for the next 25 years” (Sanders, 1990:65).

Of course, Britain did not limit its interactions with the world beyond its borders to the military sphere. International aid and, as might also be expected from a former colonial power, trade, were also areas of significant activity. As Mosley (1987:21) notes, the expression “overseas aid” is a neologism coined only after the Second World War. He also makes the observations that such aid is a “by-product of decolonialisation” (*ibid.*), in as much as it frequently came following imperial withdrawal, as was the case in Britain’s former African colonies, where aid was necessary to promote and support continuing development following independence. Unsurprisingly this financial support also provided a measure of leverage for the donor. In the Cold War era aid was also used as a strategy in reinforcing poorer nations’ positive view of capitalism, in an effort to lessen the lure of communism (a tactic employed by the US in particular). This post-colonial aspect of aid was not to continue indefinitely of course: with the evolution of bodies like the OECD and increasing economic ties between European states, aid efforts became more focussed, while economic recovery in general led to a proliferation of donors, meaning a reduction in leverage and a corresponding focus on the development aspect of aid (Mosley, 1987:25).

Within the limits of its relatively reduced economic circumstances, Britain also had active trade ties, both with its former and current colonies and much of the rest of the world, as well as through the EFTA. These kinds of ties can be used to exert influence on the other party through their expansion or withdrawal. The EFTA is an example of this expansion of trade, while the reduced/terminated trade between Britain and communist states represents the other end of the scale.

2.1.3 Main approaches

During the preceding sections a brief examination of British foreign policy and major related actors for the period 1945-61 has been made, next to be considered is the

approaches followed within the policy itself. Before looking at these in more detail, an interesting observation should be considered: Martin and Garnett contend that a “commonly voiced criticism of British foreign policy since the Second World War is that it has been almost entirely reactive” (1997:12). As is seen upon analysis, this is perhaps too harsh a judgement. A defence-oriented foreign policy, is generally by necessity a reactive one, responding to changing circumstances and requirements; one that should certainly have the capacity to anticipate coming events to some extent.

The following two sections address approaches that are also relevant to subsequent sections, and chapter III in particular: the ‘three circles’ philosophy outlined by Winston Churchill, and Atlanticism, or the ‘special relationship’ with the US. Both are widespread throughout the literature and return time and again in analysis of British foreign policy, both contemporary and retrospective.

2.1.3.1 Churchill's three circles

In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, then-Prime Minister Winston Churchill assessed British overseas interests represented three interlocking ‘circles’ – Europe, Empire and the US – at the centre of which lay Great Britain. As Sanders notes, “[f]or over two decades after 1945, successive British governments pursued a foreign policy strategy which sought to preserve their power and influence in all of these ‘circles’” (1990:1). Regardless of the situation on the ground, as it were, and the realities of Britain’s role in the new post-war world order, the “metaphor of the ‘three overlapping circles’ is generally acknowledged to be an accurate description of British foreign policy after the war, and it is one which conveys the worldwide range of British interests and commitments” (Martin and Garnett, 1997:11).

In terms of its interactions with each of these circles, Britain’s stance varied considerably. Certainly in terms of Europe, while Britain “flirted” economically and politically, it “concentrated most of its European efforts in the *military* sphere: in the Brussels Pact and NATO, where the European and Atlantic ‘circles’ overlapped”

(Sanders, 1990:73). This defence-oriented approach was not embarked upon purely to re-enact a glorious past; it was seen as a realist response to the threat of Communism and a reaction to the recent past. As Hill notes, “British policy-makers were neither so blind nor so unsophisticated as to launch wars and commit billions of pounds out of a mere sentimental desire to prolong the conditions of their youth” (Hill, 1988:26).

However, while Britain’s budget was limited, her military and diplomatic heritage was unrivalled, and thus it was that, in the WEU, at least, a role of first among equals was assumed. This was far from the case in relations with the US, however, particularly after dreams of an independent and domestically developed nuclear capacity evaporated in the late ’50s. Already economically dependent on US aid, Britain’s additional dependence on the US in this sphere put an effective end to more Bevin-style power-by-proxy manipulation of the ‘special relationship’ referred to by Churchill.

As for the remaining circle, the Empire, even by the time Churchill’s words were uttered, had already begun its transformation into the Commonwealth. Although, as already noted, this was no substitute for the Empire itself, it was certainly a fruitful initiative for Britain at first. However, relations with many former colonies soon began to sour, especially in the aftermath of the Suez crisis, with Eden’s actions seen by many as a strike against independence in former colonies. Thus it was that “[d]uring the 1960s the Commonwealth increasingly provided little more than a forum in which ex-colonial states could express their disapproval of the British government’s domestic and foreign policies and at the same time see to secure special concessions from Britain’s overseas aid budget” (Sanders, 1990:103).

At this stage, the criticism of Britain’s “reactive” foreign policy should be borne in mind. For, although among these “three distinct ‘circles’ of influence, two [...] the ‘special relationship’ with the USA and the evolving links with the post-imperial Commonwealth, took precedence over the third, European, dimension” (Allen, 1988:169) initially, changing circumstances precipitated a change in this balance. The

first two circles progressively:

[L]ost their credibility as foundations of British foreign policy during the 1950s (highlighted in most people's minds by the Suez debacle and Macmillan's recognition of the 'wind of change' in Africa), and as rapidly diminishing resources forced a reduction in commitments, so Britain found itself, more by a process of elimination than one of choice, turning towards Western Europe" (*ibid.*).

This change in orientation, and its consequences, are addressed below.

2.1.3.2 Atlanticism and the 'special relationship'

Speaking in 1946, Churchill also coined another phrase that has come to be even more widespread in the literature regarding British foreign policy: "the special relationship between the British Commonwealth and Empire and the United States" (Ashton, 2002:5). "When it comes to post-1941 British foreign policy there is perhaps no more well-worn subject than Anglo-American relations" than the 'special relationship' (Ruane and Ellison, 2005:147), a term which, as Ashton notes, "can hardly appear in public unless wrapped in inverted commas and accompanied by a question mark" (2002:7). Despite what might be justifiably called the overuse of this term, even up to the current day it remains a useful one. Certainly, in recent years an uninformed observer might easily believe that such a term originated in the relationship between Blair and Bush, but as is shown, its roots lie far deeper.

Alongside this relationship is another concept worthy of consideration: Atlanticism, and one which has an equally long history. "Atlanticists saw the place of a united Western Europe at the side of the United States, as an equal power in a strong Atlantic alliance, in opposition to the Soviet Union" (Overbeek, 1993:111). This was a view common in many Western European countries of the time, and indeed is reflected in NATO's introduction and development, a point elaborated upon below. The key difference between the views of the Atlanticist and "Churchillian" approaches to US

relations lies not in the degree of recognition of US strength and importance, but in the way in which this was utilised. Those seeking a ‘special relationship’ with the US sought to use Transatlantic influence to secure Britain a prominent place in the new world order.

To return to the ‘special relationship’: While of course the wartime circumstances and relationship between Britain and the US and the post-war environment were not identical, this prioritisation of relations with the US, over those with Europe if necessary, were reflected in Churchill’s words to de Gaulle during the Second World War: “Each time I must choose between you and Roosevelt I shall always choose Roosevelt” (quoted in Martin and Garnett, 1997:11). As shall be seen below, de Gaulle was not quick to forget this attitude.

The fact remains, however, that perceptions of this special relationship were not entirely requited. The US response to the Suez crisis was a sore disappointment for Britain, to put it mildly, and would not be the last time that the relationship fell short of reciprocity. As Jowell and Hoinville (1976:8) put it, by 1960, “the ‘special relationship’ between the USA and Britain was no longer very special”. It is at this point, when relations with the US were falling short of expectations and the Commonwealth was already failing to substitute for the power and glory of empire, that a re-evaluation of Britain’s role in Europe started to take place, and it is with developments in this context that the next section of this chapter deals.

2.2 British foreign policy from Macmillan to Major (1961-1997)

Despite an initial resistance to cooperation with Europe in spheres other than that of defence, by the early ’60s Britain’s options were becoming increasingly limited. With two of the three ‘circles’ falling short of expectations, the only one remaining was the one towards which it had shown the least enthusiasm: Europe. After a troubled start to its membership ambitions, Britain was ultimately successful in joining the Community

in 1973 and thus began its European journey.

This section deals with British foreign policy in the period spanning the first British application for membership in the Community to the New Labour government, that is, 1961 to 1997. By giving an overview of the factors involved in British foreign policy in this period, further detail is gained into the same policy area and its Europeanisation. Thus this second section serves to set the scene for chapter III, in which the Europeanisation of British foreign policy under New Labour will be examined.

2.2.1 Context and actors

Britain's strong commitment to maintaining a 'special relationship' with the US, while perceived domestically as essential to maintaining Britain's status internationally, had quite the opposite effect in some circles on the 'continent'. The proximity of the UK to the US hinted at future plans for domination of the Community and its being shifted into the US bloc, or at least so thought French President Charles de Gaulle. Such an interpretation was all too easy when faced with acts such as the Macmillan government's negotiation of the purchase of nuclear missiles from the US in late 1962, immediately before the first French veto of British membership (Jowell and Hoinville, 1976:9). During the subsequent Wilson government, a second application was made, and despite its being approved by five of the six Community members, the "non" from France was enough to exclude Britain (Geddes, 2004:67).

Finally, under the Heath government a third application was made, with negotiations commencing in 1970. It should be noted that Britain's extensive trade links and comparatively efficient agricultural system meant that joining the Community would leave Britain doubly disadvantaged, relatively speaking (Geddes, 2004:70). In relation to this, a White Paper was published in 1971 that detailed some of the negative aspects of membership, including an estimated 15 percent increase in food prices over six years, as a result of restrictions on food imports due to the CAP; a related 3 percent increase in the cost of living over the same period; and annual contributions to Community budget

of GBP300 million, second only to West Germany (*ibid.*). The magnitude of these contributions was something only addressed years after Britain's accession, by the well-known Eurosceptic, Margaret Thatcher.

As Geddes also notes, interestingly, when still only an MP, Heath was already ardently pro-European, even using his maiden speech to urge the house to support ECSC membership (*ibid.*). Britain's 1971 application to the Community can be interpreted, therefore, as not only being the continuation of established policy, but also as – not for the first time – the realisation of the prime minister's personal foreign policy goals. Indeed, as the leading official negotiator for Britain put it: “None of its policies were essential to us. Many of them were objectionable” (Hannay, 2000:355). This negative approach to Community membership has subsequently rarely been absent from the agenda either in British politics or amongst the British polity.

Nonetheless, with the absence of de Gaulle, long suspicious of Britain's being a “Trojan Horse” carrying US interests into Europe (Allen, 2008:22), Britain's third application to the Community proved successful. Despite this change in stance on the French side, Britain remained strongly focussed on the goal of securing its own interests, rather than the French vision of Europe as a counterbalance to the Soviet and US blocs (*ibid.*). Britain did not show regret at giving up membership in the EFTA upon accession to the Community. Similarly, while Britain retained a strong resistance to the potentially supranational scope of the Community, the more intergovernmental nature of the then newly established EPC complemented British goals. As Allen notes, EPC represented the “acceptable face of European integration” (2008:23).

During this same period, a number of changes were also under way in the structural organisation of British foreign policy. In terms of the actors in British Foreign Policy, these changes were first reflected in the merger of the Commonwealth Relations Office and the Dominions Office into the Commonwealth Office in 1966. However, the diminished status of the Commonwealth was perhaps reflected in the short life of this

new office: just two years later it was merged with the long-standing Foreign Office to form the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). In addition, in 1965, many of the responsibilities of the Commonwealth Relations Office were transferred to the Commonwealth Secretariat, granted the status of a “body corporate” and immunity the following year in the Commonwealth Secretariat Act⁹. Thus, much of the intra-Commonwealth coordinating role taken was from FCO responsibility, and given to the new secretariat, which was also granted observer status in the UN.

As can be observed from the evolution of the FCO itself, its organisation at a smaller scale reflects the same geographical focus. An approach of division along the lines of country desks and on a geographical basis, together with the FCO insistence on “preserving the pivotal role of the ambassador in overseas posts” (Allen, 2008:15) as well as on remaining the first contact point (as opposed to their “home” departments) for domestic specialists working abroad, has done much to maintain the powerful position of the FCO. Indeed, from the very beginnings of Britain’s Community journey, the FCO has endeavoured to play a “gatekeeper” role at the bureaucratic level in terms of relations with Europe (White, 2001:123), that is “a body through which all contact with the outside world must flow” (Allen, 2008:17). Indeed, “in the name of coherence and consistency [it] [...] has successfully defended some sort of ‘gatekeeper’ role both at home and abroad, even though the participants in the foreign policy process are increasingly drawn from a number of non-FCO sources” (Allen and Oliver, 2004:18).

Alongside the changes resulting in the FCO and in its subsequent evolution, the administration of aid, previously overseen by the Foreign Office, was transferred to a

⁹ Source:

<http://www.statutelaw.gov.uk/content.aspx?LegType=All+PrimaryandPageNumber=64andNavFrom=2andparentActiveTextDocId=1182972andActiveTextDocId=1182972andfilesize=8215> (accessed 01

December 2009)

new body in 1964, the Ministry of Overseas Development, headed by a Cabinet minister. This pattern was followed by subsequent Labour governments (1964-1970 and 1974-1979), while Conservative governments (1970-1974 and 1979-1997) chose to designate the role to the Overseas Development Administration (ODA), subordinate to the FCO (Allen and Oliver, 2004:4). Besides the foreign minister (one of the most important Cabinet posts) the FCO (and before it the Foreign Office) has long been led by a permanent under-secretary (PUS) “responsible both for the administration of the FCO and the work of overseas posts through a Board of Management and for strategic policy advice to ministers through a Policy Advisory Board” (Allen, 2008:5).

Regarding the FCO and the EU, and more specifically Britain’s successful accession to the Community, Sir O’Neill described “the organisation adopted for this purpose in the Foreign Office” as follows (Hannay, 2000:42):

It was a fairly simple and economical organisation. Until 1971, a single Department dealt with all aspects of our relations with the Community including the negotiations – the European Integration Department. It was responsible for questions concerning political integration in the Community as well as those concerning economic integration, and thus handled in addition to the negotiations the work deriving from paragraph 15 of The Hague Communiqué.

This development could be regarded as the first major example of the active Europeanisation of the FCO at an institutional level, though a short-term one.

It should also be noted that the foreign minister continued to maintain their status as a key figure in overseas relations, extending even to the negotiations with the Community itself. As former Prime Minister James Callaghan notes: “The Foreign Secretary may also be given prime responsibility for the conduct of overseas negotiations. This was certainly my own experience as Foreign Secretary during [...] renegotiation of British membership of the European Community” (1988:2).

While a separate ministry dealing with the Community has been proposed on more

than one occasion, even today EU matters continue to be dealt with within the FCO. The first Cabinet minister for Europe, as it were (a role designed to support the foreign minister), was created during the accession process under the 1970-74 Conservative government, but the post was abolished soon after (Allen and Oliver, 2004:13). As the EU has become increasingly important with time, subsequent foreign secretaries have proved unsurprisingly reluctant to lose the power and influence that EU responsibilities convey on the post.

The impact of EU membership has been to challenge the dominant role of the FCO on almost every front, with the push towards the supranational influences on the foreign policy structure and the possibility of a separate “Ministry for European Affairs”, but these are pressures that the FCO strived to resist during much of the period in question, as noted previously, through an approach of fiercely guarding its gatekeeper role. This changed during the New Labour period (as explored in chapter III) with the FCO facing significant compromises in its one-time exclusive domain. That is not to say that change did not take place within the FCO in the preceding period. As Allen and Oliver note: “the FCO has undoubtedly proved itself to be a foreign ministry capable of both responsiveness and flexibility” (2004:27). But it should be remembered that, as Forster says, Britain has always favoured intergovernmental lines within a framework of informal cooperation and eluded institutionalising of this policy sector through treaty amendments (2000:45).

It is time to move on from the FCO to another significant figure in British foreign policy, the prime minister. The premier’s role in foreign policy, already influential, has been enhanced as an “external policy leadership and coordinating role [...] [by] the expansion of the power of the European Council” (Allen and Oliver, 2004:4-5). The further development of the role of Downing Street in British foreign policy is examined in the following chapter, due to the changes it underwent under the Blair governments. As expanded upon in the earlier section, the prime minister has traditionally had the opportunity, should they wish to do so, to play a prominent role in foreign policy.

Indeed, in many cases premiers have themselves been a former foreign minister. A sufficiently interested prime minister can essentially command the country's foreign policy, as illustrated by examples spanning Eden's crucial role in Suez to Blair's stance on Iraq.

Completing a highly influential trilogy, and added to the FCO and Number 10, is a third member of an "informal yet powerful elite", the UK permanent representation to the European Communities (UKREP) (Marsh *et al*, 2001:214). UKREP was established as part of the necessary adjustments for accession in 1973 and takes instruction from the FCO. The representative themselves holds a Brussels-based ambassadorial role. Allen and Oliver stress that while UKREP is "an exceptional external representation [...] its role as a kind of mini-Whitehall is to be found to a lesser extent in a number of UK embassies abroad and not just in those in other EU member states" (2004:2). That is, although the development of UKREP can naturally be seen as direct evidence of Europeanisation of British foreign policy structures (if not policy itself), its significance should not be overstated. As already suggested, changes within the FCO have been relatively limited, and "the patterns of adaptation shown by the FCO have been in line with the wider patterns of change shown throughout Whitehall, i.e. major change has been kept to a minimum with an emphasis on adaptation of existing procedures" (Allen, 2008:3). This response is typical of what might be expected from a member state originally so reluctant with regards to European integration and one that has continuously resisted the imposition of supranational control or structures. Adaptation rather than change might well be considered the basis of Whitehall, and the FCO in particular, throughout Britain's history as a Community member.

In terms of the context within which British foreign policy evolved, especially after Community accession, another matter was also of crucial significance. In British foreign policy (and indeed that of a great many countries) for the majority of the period of time considered within this chapter: the Cold War. While the EU was born out of a wish never to see major conflict on the European continent again, NATO – a major foreign

policy commitment by Britain that predated its Community membership by more than two decades – was more concerned with the threat of Communism. A second organisation, this time targeting rapprochement and communication rather than defence, came into being in the '70s in the form of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The first meeting toward the official establishment of this body was held in Helsinki in 1973, at a meeting attended by representatives of 35 states. In 1975 the Helsinki Act was signed by the heads of state of these same 35 countries, officially bringing the CSCE into being. The second Helsinki summit in 1975 also represented the first time that EEC members acted together as a bloc in an external vote. This development is relevant in that it represented an alternative to military might in the pursuit of a united stance against Communism and a more neutral forum via which the relevant parties could engage. Britain had long held diplomatic as well as military power, and thus the CSCE was an opportunity to focus on this rather than the defence angle with regards to the Cold War.

The CSCE had three dimensions: politico-military (by far the largest dimension), economic and environmental, and human. Although non-bonding in its conclusions, the CSCE provided its members (which included all the members of the EEC as well as both the USSR and the US) with a forum for discussion of topics as diverse as nuclear proliferation and people trafficking. Meetings were (and are) held on an *ad hoc* basis, that is, as required, rather than at pre-arranged intervals. The opportunity for an opening with the Soviet bloc presented by the CSCE, and the flexibility of the process for the evolution of an improved cooperation it provided, is assessed by many sources with contributing to the ultimate ending of the Cold War. In 1993 the CSCE was recognised as "a regional arrangement in the sense of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations" and the same year the UN granted the CSCE observer status¹⁰. Two years later the CSCE changed its name to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

¹⁰ Source: <http://www.osce.org/ec/13063.html> (accessed 01 December 2009)

Both these changes recognised the role of the CSCE/OSCE in a post-Cold War world.

Another actor to consider in analysis of British foreign policy within the period in question is the UN. As a founding member of this organisation, and as one possessing a permanent seat on the UN Security Council – transatlantic considerations aside – Britain was in many ways without commitments in terms of voting in the assembly during the early years, but membership in the Community necessitated a more “collective” mindset. As noted earlier in this section, the CSCE Helsinki Summit may have been the first instance of Community members voting as a bloc, but it was far from the last. During the ’50s British voting at the UN closely followed the French line, although it has also often been among those most closely aligned with the US. The same French-aligned trend was true of British voting from 1981 and onwards. However Britain has “always favored its European partners on social issues, the codification of International Law, the Middle East and the UN budget” (Marín-Bosch, 1998:135). Again, the influence of Community membership on UK foreign policy is clear, whether originating from genuine common interests or from Community pressure on the UK to conform.

The definitive organisation in the West in terms of an international response to the Soviet bloc was of course, as mentioned in the first half of this chapter, NATO. Through the years NATO has also represented a major channel for the expression of British commitment to the ‘special relationship’ with the US. The British acquiescence on the subject of nuclear armament (abandoning its own ‘Blue Streak’ programme in favour of the US ‘Polaris’ scheme). As Greenwood noted, British commitment to NATO has, through the years, been as much about maintaining a “club subscription” – via wide-reaching involvement, in all three elements of the NATO forces and contributions to NATO battles at sea on land and in the air, despite an overstretched budget – as it has been to the commitment to the defence of Western Europe (2004:281). That is to say, British membership in NATO has frequently been more to do with Britain and its place in the world (and the pre-eminence of that role) and commitment to strong US ties (also a *sine qua non* for a strong international standing) as a genuine stance of solidarity

against the threat of the Soviet bloc.

Indeed, this has been borne out, to a certain extent, by a continuing commitment to NATO on the part of Britain following the collapse of Communism (although there can be no doubt that the end of the Cold War did reduce NATO's stature). An apt example of this is the first Gulf War in 2001, when "disturbing deficiencies in the nation's forces were exposed" (Greenwood, 2004:282). That said, the influence of NATO on the foreign policy of not just Britain but Western Europe collectively during the Cold War should not be disregarded: "European security integration has possessed a strong Atlanticist element provided by the US-led NATO. The USA provided the security umbrella for the liberal democracies of Western Europe during the Cold War" (Geddes, 2004:37). A gratitude that manifested itself as Atlanticism in greater Europe was again channelled through the 'special relationship' in the UK, a matter that is referred to in more detail in the final section of this chapter. Suffice to say at this point that the influence of NATO, as that of America, can be described as omnipresent throughout the period under examination in this section. As is shown in the subsequent chapter, while NATO's significance may have declined somewhat, relations with the US retained the key importance for Britain they had held throughout the period examined thus far.

One point to note on the above matter, however, is that – although it may be obliging in terms of support for US foreign policy and military objectives – Britain's forces were noticeably absent from the US military force in Vietnam. This was despite the commitment by Australia (a Commonwealth ally) of a Battalion (Marr, 2007:292). Ironically, then-Prime Minister Harold Wilson's attempt to calm the Americans with "words of support and stabs at a diplomatic solution" (Marr, 2007:293) – all the while simultaneously carefully avoiding British military commitment in Vietnam – led to his being branded a "murderer" in the streets (*ibid.*).

While on the subject of defence, it should also be noted that the WEU, like NATO designed with the security of Western Europe in mind, was inactive throughout much of

the period in question, meaning its significance for members, including the UK, was negligible. This changed with the TEU, Article J.4, paragraph 2 of which “requests the Western European Union (WEU), which is an integral part of the development of the Union, to elaborate and implement decisions and actions of the Union which have defence implications” (quoted in Bloed and Wessel, 1994:xxiv). However, this change can be seen more as an adjustment of existing roles, rather than a new arrangement, and was partly inspired by the first Gulf conflict, during which European defence in terms of both coordination and capabilities, were found lacking (Feldman, 1994:152), in addition to a long-standing French and German desire to establish a “stronger European defence policy” (Geddes, 2004:153). Although at the time of the TEU it was stressed that the WEU and EU were separate bodies working in coordination within the scope of CFSP, ultimately with the evolution of CFSP, the WEU was incorporated into the EU.

While the second pillar of CFSP was a move affecting – by its very definition – all members of the EU, the “decisive initiative” behind it “emanated from two men: Mitterrand and Kohl” (Nuttall, 2000:4). As Nuttall goes on to suggest, this was not just a result of these two leaders’ security consciousness, but “almost a by-product of their drive towards a wider objective: political union to set alongside the economic and monetary Union of Western Europe” (*ibid.*). Despite this second pillar, Europe still found itself unprepared when trouble broke out in the former Yugoslavia in the early ’90s. Although the EU succeeded in brokering a short-lived cease-fire in 1991, ultimately it was overwhelmed by the course of events. As Geddes notes, the “chastening experience” of failing to be able to resolve what was essentially a neighbourhood conflict showed Europe that as much benefit as its economic weight might bring, it was of little use outside peacetime (2004:153). The resulting consolidation of European defence policy, naturally of significance to a major player in the European defence arena like Britain, and structures are considered in the following chapter.

2.2.2 Policy making processes, instruments and capabilities

The largest change for British foreign policy within the period considered was undoubtedly that introduced by Community membership (and subsequently the evolving nature of that relationship). Perhaps surprisingly, despite British efforts following the Second World War to make use of the ‘special relationship’ with America, it was the EPC framework that arguably added more to British capabilities in the international arena. For example, aid to Post Cold War Russia and Central and Eastern European countries in the ’90s would have been impossible to achieve bilaterally (White, 2001:131). Similarly, even an exercise so reminiscent of British tendencies to pursue the lost dream of Empire as the Falkland War benefitted from British Community membership. In April 1982 “EEC Foreign Ministers agreed to ban all exports of arms to Argentina and all imports into the EEC from Argentina” (Wall, 2008:12) in response to a British request for sanctions against the country that had invaded the islands, a British territory off the coast of South America.

Naturally, as touched upon in the preceding section, such benefits have come at the cost of “transformed” relations with international bodies as well as with member states and non-member states (White, 2001:132). One of the things this has meant is an increasing role of the European Commission in terms of the operational side of foreign policy, making it “a powerful actor on the world stage” (Spence, 1999:263), although, as also noted, much effort has been expended by the FCO to ensure that it maintains control over British foreign relations. Other policy areas (such as agricultural policy) have been more strongly Europeanised (given the already developed nature of CAP when Britain joined the community there was a certain inevitability about the Europeanisation of agricultural policy). Nonetheless, studies like that by Bulmer *et al* (1992) – the only assessment of the balance of the pros and cons of Community membership conducted during the period in question – suggest that the benefits of membership do indeed outweigh the costs. Their study concluded that membership had increased the UK’s “weight” as well as extending its “reach” in terms of foreign policy,

as well as adding to its “leverage” in terms of its trade interactions with other countries, both inside and outside Europe.

As discussed in chapter I, foreign (and defence) policy remains a key area of sensitivity for the nation-state in terms of sovereignty. This, when added to the informal nature of EPC and the absence of what might be regarded as a coordinated “European foreign policy” during much of the time period considered within this chapter meant that foreign policy went relatively (when compared with other policy areas) unchallenged during the early years of British membership in the Community. It should be noted that it is difficult to separate cause and effect in this matter: as much as the EPC’s informal nature allowed member states to retain firm control over their foreign policy it was itself an informal arrangement *because* of member states’ unwillingness to cede sovereignty in the sphere of foreign policy to a supranational institution.

But the Community goal of “ever closer union” could not be avoided indefinitely, and while for some years Britain successfully applied a “selective approach to European diplomacy, supporting many joint endeavours, ignoring others” (Hill, 1996:76) such a “pick and mix” (White, 2001:133) approach could not go on together. From the very beginning, the Community members had tended to form (or be formed into a bloc) in terms of external policy, though by informal means. This tendency was amply demonstrated within the UN framework, where “what distinguishes the EU is its communitarian will and its constant striving to bring together the positions of its members. In the [UN General] Assembly the EU spokesman often delivers a general statement on various items” (Marín-Bosch, 1998:136). Under the loose-knit EPC structure, however, and even in the early years of CFSP, there was still the possibility of dissent without repercussions, indeed – returning to the UN – some Community “members frequently feel the need to ‘complement’ the agreed EU position, since it tends to reflect the lowest common denominator” (*ibid.*).

Events caused the problem of British ambition to reach all of her goals at once in

terms of European diplomacy to come to the fore in the 1990s. The first of these was the persistent Euroscepticism of the Thatcher years (although the acceptance of the SEA during her tenure somewhat undermines this interpretation), returned to in the following section, and the second being the advent of the three pillars of the TEU. The opportunity presented by TEU and the final ousting of the obstructive Thatcher resulted in her successor John Major committing “Britain to political and economic union and even deeper integration” (White, 2001:136). A later resurgence in Euroscepticism was to impair Major’s personal vision of “Britain at the heart of Europe”; however with the commitment already made, the increasing consolidation of CFSP, including the ultimate incorporation of the WEU into the EU, was rendered inevitable.

By the end of the period under consideration in this section, Britain’s time as a “semi-detached” member of the European Community (Jenkins, 1983:147) that characterised relations during the ’70s – again, this concept of Britain as the “awkward partner” in the Community (George, 1990) is dealt with in the following section – was truly at an end. That said, contemporary studies support Britain’s decision to enter the Community as being an ultimately beneficial decision. A pragmatic response to a diminished status may not have helped Britain regain her former status, but it also prevented her sinking into obscurity.

2.2.3 Main approaches

Community membership of course represented a major turning point for Britain, after which nothing would ever be the same again. Nonetheless, there was something uniquely “British” about the UK interpretation of membership, a “distinctive” approach and European policy discourse shaped in part by the fact that both its legal and political institutions lie “outside the continental mainstream” (Armstrong and Bulmer, 2003:388). The second section looks at the main approaches in British foreign policy over the period 1961-1997, between the Macmillan and Major governments. The fact that three different and by no means complementary approaches can be identified within

what is a relatively short period of time (especially if one restricts the focus further to that commencing with Community membership in 1973) itself points to a significant shortcoming in British foreign policy within the European context: an absence of vision by successive British governments of what European integration should be, and indeed, on what exactly it is that Britain wants from European integration should take – although “there has been much greater clarity on what was not wanted from integration” (Armstrong and Bulmer, 2003:389). These same authors highlight another problem in this respect, but it can perhaps also be regarded as a contributing factor to British reluctance and indecisiveness: “[S]uccessive British governments have had to deal with an *acquis communautaire* that did not reflect British interests most notably the principles of the CAP and the EC budgetary arrangements” (*ibid.*).

The three approaches to be considered here are dealt with in approximately chronological order, although characteristics from each are by no means solely limited to a specific time frame. The attitudes illustrated here with respect to foreign policy in a European context are also relevant to the subsequent and final chapter, which examines New Labour foreign policy.

2.2.3.1 Ambitions and disappointments: the awkward partner

As stated at the very beginning of this chapter, Britain is the owner of a glorious past. This, combined with victory in the Second World War, was a major factor influencing its foreign policy in the immediate post-war years. While the very act of its application for Community membership was in itself an implicit acknowledgment of Britain’s reduced international status, it did not herald an end to British aspirations of greatness. The reluctance to relinquish sovereign control over policy while simultaneously facing up to the economic realities that were rapidly making membership of the Community a ‘necessary evil’ translated in practice to a Britain keen to part of Europe but not necessarily European.

Although not as common as the phrase ‘special relationship’, but certainly extremely

widespread in the literature, is the description of the resulting British relations with Europe as “awkward”. As Geddes notes, “[a]nalyzes of Britain’s role within the EU have tended to focus on ‘reluctance’, ‘awkwardness’ and ‘semi-detachment’” (2004:1). This section looks at this approach within a foreign policy context. First of all, attention should be given to what this “awkwardness” constituted and in what way it was manifested, before moving on to briefly consider the causes and impacts of such an approach. Geddes helpfully provides a “checklist of awkwardness” (2004:2), which includes the following foreign policy-related items. First and foremost, as noted above, is of course British reluctance to join the ECSC. By this standard Britain is not alone: the founding members number only six after all. However, when one looks at the power balance in Europe at the time, the UK is undeniably the most notable absence from the Community. Having missed this initial opportunity, Britain then further failed to grasp the significance of the subsequent negotiations in Messina that ultimately resulted in the Treaties of Rome. This was compounded further by subsequent British failures to enter the Community in 1963 and 1967.

Upon successful accession to the Community, one of the first acts of the subsequent Labour Party government was to attempt to renegotiate the terms of accession, even taking the matter to referendum in 1975. At the referendum the British people voted to remain in the Community by a significant margin, a decision motivated as much by disinterest in issues outside the domestic agenda during a period of relative economic hardship as anything else (Marr, 2007:151). Interestingly, while under Margaret Thatcher the perceived hostility towards Europe escalated, this distrust was largely centred on political and economic integration (as typified by her 1988 speech in Bruges). On matters such as defence cooperation (primarily within a NATO framework) she proved remarkably positive. But this too, is in some ways a further example of British awkwardness: the “pick and mix” approach (White, 2001:133) noted earlier hardly suited a committed member of the Community.

The likely causes of British ‘awkwardness’ in context of relations with Europe –

more specifically with the Community – are numerous. During the earliest years of the ECSC and subsequent Community-related developments there are two main factors to be borne in mind. The first is that, while with hindsight, the British politicians of that period seem failing and not very insightful to say the least, in their disdain for Europe. However it is worth noting, as Kaiser does, that this approach is based in part on “the normative assumption that the path taken by the Six in the 1950s was not only successful but natural, and also morally superior to the British preference for trade liberalization within intergovernmental institutional structures” (1996:xvi). As he says, the assumption is made that Britain somehow (wilfully almost) “missed the bus” (*ibid.*). Again, as he noted this view is a somewhat simplistic one, bearing in mind what Sanders describes as “the extensive and highly varied nature of London’s postwar diplomacy” (1990:6). This is an important fact: despite the fact that political rhetoric and the over-ambitiousness (financially at least) of British foreign policy may be considered remnants of a glorious imperial past, it is undeniable that Britain remained an exceptionally well-connected country following the Second World War. While time may have eroded this status somewhat, what George terms “the traditional British reluctance to see regional, as opposed to wider global solutions to international economic problems” was the result of the very real fact that British networks of international trade remained wider and more varied than many of its fellow Community members (George, 1990:135). This position had a significant impact on Britain’s ability willingness to Europeanise policy areas that would lead to this trading position’s being compromised.

Thus it can be seen, that British awkwardness, while ostensibly the result of its “island nation” or “fallen empire” identity, has practical roots as much as anything. As Gifford notes, sovereignty may well lie “at the core of the UK’s chronically contentious relationship with, and within, the European Union” (2009:1), but British reluctance to compromise its sovereignty, and the consequent “awkwardness” that emerged in its relationships with Europe, was by no means as simple as it might first appear.

Another interesting note raised by George (in his book “An Awkward Partner”) is the importance of separating prime ministerial rhetoric from real national policy (1990:209). This is a point to be borne in mind in the next section, which looks at that most awkward of prime ministers, Margaret Thatcher.

2.2.3.2 Thatcher: Europeanisation in the time of Euroscepticism?

Margaret Thatcher led consecutive Conservative British governments as prime minister between 1979 and 1990. Not for nothing referred to as the Iron Lady, she is remembered now for a number of traits as prime minister in terms of foreign policy: a fierce commitment to Britain’s special relationship with America and a deep mistrust of “Europe”¹¹. This former trait in many ways overshadowed the latter in the sense that “[t]he rhetoric of Thatcherite foreign policy was almost wholly to do with the importance of the Atlantic alliance, with the closeness of personal and historic ties between Britain and the USA, and with the need to master the threat of Soviet communism” (Hill, 1996:72). In this respect her approaches had much in common with those of her hero, Churchill. A further similarity between the two leaders developed over the course of her premiership, as she took an increasing interest in foreign policy “as all long-serving prime ministers tend to” (Allen, 2008:9).

However, it is less this focus on the special relationship and more her rather antagonistic tendency towards European integration that forms the subject of this section. This approach is of course more commonly known as Euroscepticism, and

¹¹ This stance was almost immediately expressed in her first years in power, when she untiringly pursued an increase in Britain’s EU rebate so as to reduce its net-contribution, successfully cutting it by two-thirds in 1981 via the Fontainebleau Agreement, although this fell short of the permanent solution she sought (Lindner, 2006:121). The determination with which Thatcher pursued this goal stretched EU-UK relations almost to breaking-point.

while by no means a new trait – Britain after all joined the Community after two decades – it was in Thatcher’s case coupled with distrust in her own FCO due to her suspicion of its “pro-European leanings” (*ibid.*). One way in which this suspicion of the FCO was demonstrated was by the constant reviews it was subject to during Thatcher’s time in office, indeed at one point the consolidation of foreign policy powers at Number 10 as a counterbalance to the FCO was even under consideration, although never implemented (Allen and Oliver, 2004:6).

Much as Thatcher viewed pro-integration moves with suspicion, she was not opposed to benefitting from Community support, should the opportunity arise, as was demonstrated early on in her premiership, during the Falklands war (Hill, 1996:72). Nonetheless, as dictated by the prevailing global conditions during the ’80s, the main focus of British foreign policy lay largely in East-West relations (White, 1988) or by what Hill terms “wrangles arising out of old imperial commitments” (1996:72). As Allen notes: “Thatcher engaged in Cold War diplomacy without any real reference to EPC, and dealt with the future of Hong Kong on a strictly Sino-British basis” (2008:23). The distinct defence elements such matters generally involved left little room for interaction on a Community level, since EPC did not extend to involvement in the military arena. In addition to this was also the need for the Community to take care not to violate the territory of other major states or intergovernmental bodies such as – and most significantly – NATO (*ibid.*).

It should also be stressed that Euroscepticism was not some sort of “Europhobia” or mild xenophobia; indeed, Thatcher remained keen to stress Britain’s European nature in her (now infamous) speech¹² delivered at the College of Europe in 1988: “We British are as much heirs to the legacy of Europe as any other nation. Our links to the rest of

¹² Source: <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/speeches/displaydocument.asp?docid=107332> (accessed 05 December 2009)

Europe, the continent of Europe, have been the dominant factor in our history.” This notwithstanding, it appeared that she was expecting a cautious reaction from her audience, as was reflected in her opening comments included the following phrase, “If you believe some of the things said and written about my views on Europe, it must seem rather like inviting Genghis Khan to speak on the virtues of peaceful coexistence!”

She was quick, however, to stress the difference between Community and continent: “Europe is not the creation of the Treaty of Rome. Nor is the European idea the property of any group or institution”. And it is also true that many of the ideas outlined in the Bruges speech are typical of the Eurosceptic stance: a rejectionist approach to a supranational European Community. As she firmly stated, “working more closely together does not require power to be centralised in Brussels or decisions to be taken by an appointed bureaucracy.” Furthermore, Thatcher, and to a lesser extent Wilson and Callaghan, saw fully committed support for European foreign policy as having a potential antagonistic, and certainly detrimental, effect on the ‘special relationship’ (Allen, 2008:23).

The irony is, of course, is that if one looks behind Thatcher’s rhetoric and her antipathy towards the FCO, then it can be seen that, when compared to her predecessors, she “took Britain further into Europe than anyone except Heath” (Young, 1998:306). While Thatcher’s focus was on the development of the Single European Market (SEM) and her positive views of Europe were largely limited to the extent that it could benefit Britain economically without compromise on the matter of British autonomy, there is also no doubt that during the ’80s Britain played a “leading role” in the developing EPC. Indeed “British policy on many issues had come to resemble those pursued collectively by her [Community] partners” (White, 2001:136). That is to say, many areas of British policy showed evidence of Europeanisation. Of course the supreme example of this is

the SEA, which held within it the introduction of QMV¹³, and thereby representing the single most significant step towards the abolition of national powers and borders witnessed in Britain's Community to date (Young, 1998:333). Although it falls outside the main scope of Europeanisation as defined in this paper, even Thatcher's ousting from office, in sufficient time to prevent the derailing of the imminent TEU, can be perceived as a further step by Britain towards Europe. The changes seen during Thatcher's time in power demonstrates, in addition, that rhetoric is one thing, and policy another. Whilst Thatcher may have seemed anti-European in her attitudes, the policy adopted during her premierships suggests otherwise. In the final chapter, when the Europeanisation of foreign policy under New Labour is considered, this is almost a mirror image of Blair's stance. Committed to Europe in rhetoric, Europeanisation of British foreign policy was limited under Blair, with the exception of uploading of preferences to the European agenda (which cannot be considered a reliable indication of Europeanisation in a relatively powerful member state such as Britain).

One last point to note on the subject of Euroscepticism, is that while the Thatcher years are the first to immediately come to mind when one thinks of the term, Euroscepticism itself is not limited to a single part or time period. For example, in the run-up to the referendum on Community membership in 1977, the "no" camp contained the (right wing) Enoch Powell and (left wing) Tony Benn. As Forster (2002:142-143) notes:

[Euroscepticism] is prone to schism with divisions that appear almost doctrinal. Indeed, opponents of European integration have always been deeply factionalised as a movement,

¹³ For the full text of the SEA, see: <http://www.eurotreaties.com/singleeuropeanact.pdf> Please note that the SEA covered provisions on EPC under "Title III – "Treaty Provisions on European Co-operation in the Sphere of Foreign Policy". The use of QMV was limited to the realm of the *acquis communautaire* in the SEA.

both between left and right, with party loyalties preventing unification of Labour and Conservative sceptics, and even within political families on the left and right.

2.2.3.3 Britain at the heart of Europe?

As noted in the previous section, one of the great ironies of Thatcher's period in office was that, supreme Eurosceptic though she may have been, it was during this period that a surprising level of Europeanisation of British policy was seen. However, it was not until her successor, John Major, came to office that Britain again had a leader willing to openly express a strong commitment to Europe like that stated by Heath.

Major arrived in power speaking of a "Britain at the heart of Europe", and while he was defeated in some respects in this by additional Eurosceptic problems (or perhaps post-Thatcher aftershocks), he certainly embraced the opportunities presented to him, where able. It was during his term in office that the TEU was ratified, with the "key structure" in its three pillar system being the Community, arranged such that:

[I]ntergovernmental co-operation in the adjacent pillars would strengthen the hands of national governments and their officials and effectively shield them from scrutiny and accountability at either national or European level. This kind of institutional architecture also matched a long-standing UK preference for intergovernmental cooperation, and it was heralded by [...] Major as a great victory for such a vision (Geddes, 2004:17).

As White notes, despite the opt-outs negotiated by Major, the TEU "committed Britain to political and economic union and even deeper integration as a result" (2001:136). When the TEU reached the implementation stage, perhaps inevitably, "institutional, procedural and substantive" shortcomings were discovered (Turnbull and Sandholtz, 2001:217), although these largely lay within the scope of the third pillar, Justice and Home Affairs. The Treaty of Amsterdam, signed during the first term of Tony Blair, went some way towards correcting these shortcomings. Major also continued in the Atlanticist tendencies of his predecessor by supporting the NATO operation in the Gulf War, despite significant shortcomings in British preparedness and

capabilities at the time.

In another intriguing reversal of policy and rhetoric, Major's vision of 'Britain at the heart of Europe' – with the unspoken caveat that this should be within an intergovernmental rather than supranational framework – did not truly bear fruit during his term. A noisy group of Eurosceptic MPs did much to disrupt and obstruct European policy towards the end of the Major government, meaning that beyond the TEU itself, little progress was made. As Gifford notes, "The virulence of Euroscepticism on the right of the Conservative Party in the context of a small parliamentary majority put paid to Major's guarded European policy" (2009:2).

Conclusion

Throughout the period considered in this chapter there has been a slow, but unstoppable alignment of Britain with the Community, initially as an essential element of pre-accession preparation and subsequently as part of obligatory communitarisation. From an institutional perspective, the first and largest changes took place as Britain prepared for accession. The structural changes made within the FCO to accommodate this, such as the short-lived European Integration Department however, were soon undone. From a foreign policy perspective, however, within the scope of the definition of Europeanisation considered within this thesis (the reorientation of member state policy to the degree that EU dynamics become part of the organisational logic of national policy-making), the level of Europeanisation remained relatively slight up until the SEA. This was due in part to a general British resistance to supranational structures and policies, reinforced on a structural level by the FCO and its fiercely guarded role as "gatekeeper" in terms of British overseas relations. Resistance such as this has prevented the formation of Community specific roles and structures outside the FCO that might otherwise have shaped British foreign policy in a more Community-like fashion.

Adding to this resistance has been an ongoing wish to maintain strong ties with the US (a commitment that almost prevented Britain's accession), above and beyond the level that might be expected of a country regarding it as only one of three "circles". Aside from Europe and the US, the last of these circles, Commonwealth, ceased to hold equal weight in British overseas considerations since the "wind of change" began to blow in the '60s. This was further assisted by the new opportunities for providing aid to former colonies through the Community (a topic considered in more detail in chapter III). Throughout the period considered in this chapter, Britain largely chose to coordinate its foreign policy within the NATO rather than the European framework. Even the WEU, comprising only European states, fell by the wayside in this respect.

Thanks largely to the SEA, however, there was a great deal of Europeanisation in the '80s in other policy areas (such as agriculture). This was partly due to the introduction of QMV on Community matters, which increased the weight of the Community's Council and Parliament considerably. However, EPC was ineffective in the spheres of defence, and to a lesser extent foreign, policy. It should be noted that with regards to uploading of positions in terms of foreign policy Britain gained some benefit as a Community member in this respect, for example in obtaining Community support for the banning of imports from Argentina during the Falklands conflict. But the pick and mix approach favoured by Britain, as the "awkward" partner in Europe, meant that as often as it benefitted from Community membership, it was also strongly inclined to opt out of when it found it appropriate. As mentioned previously, this included all matters of a more supranational than intergovernmental nature.

From a foreign policy perspective, by far the greater change came with two processes: the end of the Cold War (and the consequent reduced status of NATO) and the TEU with its new CFSP pillar. The enablement of common positions on foreign and defence matters was a massive step, and brought with it what can be regarded as greater Europeanisation of British foreign policy. However, the first real test of this new pillar showed it to be insufficient, as European forces lacked the coherence and the

capabilities necessary to deal with conflict when it broke out close to home: the Balkans. Nonetheless, the willingness to adopt a common position is in itself evidence of Europeanisation of foreign policy. The next chapter builds upon the policy approaches and context detailed in this chapter, looking at the British response to a further consolidation of the CFSP and European defence policy and the challenge presented by its ongoing efforts to maintain strong Transatlantic ties.

III BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY UNDER NEW LABOUR

This third and final chapter looks at British foreign policy during the New Labour governments (1997-2007) and examines the changes in approach during this time and the level of Europeanisation displayed. The changes within the Labour Party associated with its metamorphosis into – and evolution as – New Labour repositioned the party firmly in the centre of the political spectrum, far from its socialist roots (as exemplified by, for example, the numerous Private Finance Initiatives undertaken within the public sector during the period in question). This was not the only change the party had undergone in recent times, however: before the landslide victory in the 1997 election that represented the first Labour win in almost two decades, the party had undergone a substantial shift in its approach to Europe. As Featherstone noted in 1999, “[T]he Blair Government today is the most pro-European administration to be found in London since Heath first took Britain into the EC in 1973” (1999:1). It is useful, therefore, before examining British foreign policy under New Labour, to look briefly at the transformation in the Labour Party’s position on Europe.

One of the major players in the unrest that led to Britain’s referendum on membership in the EC in the ’70s were the Labour Party’s staunch and ultra leftwing members, such as Tony Benn. Although the referendum’s results meant Britain remained within the Community, the left’s suspicion of all matters European only strengthened, culminating in the 1983 party manifesto, reportedly described by Labour MP Sir Gerald Kaufman as the “longest suicide note in history”¹⁴. The strongly anti-Community manifesto promised that withdrawal from the community would be

¹⁴ Quoted in Featherstone, K. (1999). The British Labour Party from Kinnock to Blair: Europeanism and Europeanization. Paper presented at the European Communities Study Association’s Sixth Biennial International Conference, Pittsburgh, US. (p. 4).

“completed well within the lifetime of the parliament”¹⁵. This sentiment was reflected in the personal election manifesto of Tony Blair (ironically himself later a winner of the prestigious Charlemagne Prize for his Europeanism in 1998) for his Sedgefield constituency: “We’ll negotiate withdrawal from the EEC which has drained our natural resources and destroyed jobs”¹⁶. However, within the next decade the party abandoned this stance and became decidedly pro-European. This was a change made, no doubt, in response to repeated election defeats; as Featherstone notes, “[t]he most fundamental factor behind the policy change was electoral: the need to broaden the party’s appeal” (1999:6). This total reversal on Europe is well illustrated by Blair’s 1997 manifesto, which contained a commitment to building a new and constructive policy within the EU (Bulmer and Burch, 2003:2).

At this point it should also be noted that New Labour is synonymous with the prime minister of the period, Tony Blair. Again, Featherstone describes “Blair’s New Labour” as being “European to the core” (1999:7). Over the decade he would remain in power, Blair was increasingly criticised for what was seen as a “presidential” approach to the premiership, and with this came an associated interest in foreign policy as he and his party were in power longer. Phythian notes that Blair’s “presidential impulse” contributed to an “increased interest in foreign policy by the time of his second government [...] Moreover, the ‘special relationship’ with the US clearly enhanced Blair’s presidentialism” (2007:211).

The second point raised here is another key theme that emerges again and again in any assessment of New Labour’s foreign policy: the US. The resurgence in Atlanticism witnessed during the decade in question is all the more intriguing for its source being an

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Quoted in Burkitt B., Baimbridge M. and Whyman P. (2006). *Britain and the European Union: Alternative Futures*. Croydon: Campaign for an Independent Britain. (p. 21).

ostensibly pro-European party. For example, again with reference to the 1997 election manifesto, Allen notes that “The New Labour government was also committed to ensuring Britain would pursue a stronger role in the world beyond Europe (as had been the Major government) and the Atlantic Alliance” (2008:26).

This chapter therefore takes the context detailed in chapter II and uses it as a foundation upon which to examine the foreign policy of a party – and prime minister – that while frequently expressing commitment to Europe in terms of discourse, was nonetheless still strongly tied to America in reality (indeed, as seen in the previous chapter, this is a long-term trend). The decade in question began with the tragic events in Kosovo, and then, in the second year of the new millennium, saw the world’s most widely publicised act of terrorism in the form of the September 11 attacks. Subsequent to this came military engagements in both Afghanistan and Iraq, over which Britain proved deeply divided between its European and Atlantic commitments. The period also saw the Conference on the Future of Europe in 2002-3, a year ahead of the “big bang” enlargement of the EU to 25 member states. The decade also began with the devolution for Scotland and Wales in 1998 (following referenda in 1997). The following section examines the changes in the actors, and policy-making processes, instrument and capabilities from those outlined in the previous chapter, together with a more detailed assessment of the context in which these took place. Thereafter, the changing approaches in terms of foreign policy witnessed during the New Labour decade are assessed. Ultimately this chapter builds on the exploration of Europeanisation in Chapter I and British foreign policy in Chapter II in order to assess the Europeanisation of foreign policy under New Labour.

3.1 Context and actors

New Labour swept into power in the 1997 general election, , unseating a Tory government for the first time in more than 20 years and introducing a “government more committed to Europe, and more secure in office but lacking any real experience or

discussion of foreign policy” than its predecessor (Allen, 2008:26). Like his forerunner, Major, Blair’s discourse contained frequent references to “Britain at the heart of Europe”, however, where he differed from Major was in his approach to the US. From the very beginning of the New Labour government, as pro-Europe in rhetoric as it may have been, there was a strong commitment to transatlantic ties. While Britain was to be at Europe’s “heart”, according to Blair, it was also to be the “bridge” between Europe and the US (Gick *et al*, 2008a:3). This was despite the fact that, as claimed by some political analysts, the ‘special relationship’ “should have died with the end of the Cold War, when the main basis for Britain’s value to the US, as a trustworthy ally and host of American military bases in the context of the struggle against communism, expired” (Lunn *et al*, 2008:20). Added to this was the fact that “the absence of clearly definable threats emanating from one or two states” made defence policy “subject to greater complexity and uncertainty” (Gick *et al*, 2008a:10). The development of a European defence capability had been a major theme at NATO’s Berlin summit (1996) the year before New Labour’s ascent to power, and had seen the floating of a European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI). This “separable but not separate” contribution of forces by European states for a more coherent military capability, but within the NATO framework, “defined the UK’s general approach towards European defence over the Blair period” (Gick *et al*, 2008a:30). NATO itself continued to expand, modernise and redefine its role for the 21st century.

The first administrative change to the FCO was the removal of the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) and its establishment as the Department for International Development (DfID). Lunn *et al* suggest that this “reflected a view that agendas for development should not be subordinated to foreign policy priorities” (2008:74). Although the move went by relatively unquestioned, it did generate some issues in terms of communication and coordination between the two departments, whose mandates inevitably overlapped to some extent. Meanwhile, the long-defended “gatekeeper” role of the FCO continued to be undermined, as the expansion of British

interaction with fellow EU member states continued to expand and intensify, thus increasingly bringing a European dimension to the agenda of more ministries. In this way “the position of the FCO as the 'overseas' ministry has been eroded; doing business in Europe is now a task it shares with all others in Whitehall” (Bulmer and Burch, 2003:19). As departments became more adapted and better resourced they have relied less on Cabinet and FCO support, in this respect the role of coordinating mechanisms has subsided. Departments are conducting business with the European Commission and member states more directly as the volume of EU affairs has escalated significantly. Indeed, even current British Foreign Minister David Miliband appeared “to accept that the FCO had not always been at the heart of British foreign policy under Tony Blair” (Lunn *et al*, 2008:96).

In the place of the FCO’s exclusivity in foreign policy came the further consolidation of the powers of the “core executive”, that is, the inner core of the prime minister’s office and the Cabinet Office European Secretariat (COES), in addition to the relevant Cabinet committees – the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee and Sub-Committee on European Issues – and the FCO and UKREP. The resources and powers of direction granted to the “centre of the core” have been greatly increased, effectively “streamlining” effort at the highest level via a process of closer integration between the prime minister’s office and the COES (Bulmer and Burch, 2003:13). The COES has expanded in size and its head has included such high-profile names as Sir Stephen Wall (who also held the position of Permanent Secretary and the title of Prime Minister’s Adviser on Europe during his time in the role, 2000-2004). The net result of this “enhancement of the core has been to give a more executive thrust to policy making and to open up the opportunity for a more directive and strategic approach to European policy making at the very top”, greatly strengthening both the premier and his aides with regards to European policy making (*ibid.*). Added to this was the creation in June 2003 of a Cabinet committee on European Strategy, suggesting a further European focus on the government’s part as well as, again, bringing European matters under the close

watch of the premier.

The cosiness of this arrangement was not lost on observers, with one pair coining the phrase “sofa government” to describe how decisions were shaped and prepared in a private atmosphere in Downing Street¹⁷. As in the previous chapters, therefore, it can be seen that the prime minister remained a key figure in foreign policy making, and as noted in the introduction and dealt with in more detail in subsequent chapters, the willingness of Blair to exploit (or perhaps reinforce) this power led to accusations of presidentialist tendencies. As Bulmer and Burch note: “Blair’s more executive, almost presidential style has meant that the secretariat has been able to speak with more authority to departments. Again this is an addition of resource and clout to the already established position of Prime Minister as lead player in relation to European policy making” (2003:17).

It should also be noted that UKREP is not an extension of the FCO and is increasingly made up of officials from domestic ministries such as agricultural or trade. It is also the main lobbying and negotiating framework as well playing a coordinating role. In this process UKREP, like its French or German counterpart is becoming Brussellized, being a part of maybe not supra but at least transnational policy networking (White, 2001:131). That is not to say that the role of the FCO was altogether diminished, merely that it had lost exclusivity (and the prestige and power that came with it). Indeed, where possible it still held some form of influence over the other ministries’ contacts with those of other EU member states. The most important actors for the development of these relations were seen to be people, and it was with this aim in mind that the bi-lateral department of the European Union Division in the FCO was

¹⁷ Korte, K. and Hirscher G. (2000). *Darstellungspolitik oder Entscheidungspolitik? Über den Wandel von Politikstilen in westlichen Demokratien*. Munich: Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung. (p. 150) [quoted in Lüddecke, 2004:25].

established. This replaced the West European Department in terms of responsibility for all member state embassies and diplomatic posts. This development marked the beginning of European matters being brought “within the same command structure” (Bulmer and Burch, 2003:15).

The FCO has undergone a transformation process and its EU branch split into three sub-departments: external economic relations, EU business and common foreign and security. This last department is in contact with the CFSP Political Director. This latter development is an indicator of convergence with other member states at the level of organisational framework, if not in terms of policy itself. Convergence at an operational level, such as joint training, joint reporting and exchange of personnel, is also noteworthy. Of course, as Forster notes, Britain has continued to favour intergovernmental lines within a framework of informal cooperation (2000:45), hence these changes have stopped well short of being supranational.¹⁸

A major and fundamental change in the foreign policy of the majority of Western countries was triggered by the events that took place on 11 September 2001. “British, American and European foreign policy was transformed [...] At the same time the attacks provoked an unprecedented reaction by the EU with all the main EU institutions

¹⁸ It should be mentioned here that the changes in the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly, both of which came into being in 1998 following their devolution, or those in the Northern Ireland Assembly born the same year, the result of the Good Friday Agreement, are not considered within the scope of this thesis, since ultimately in terms of *British* foreign policy they remain subordinate. However, that is not to say that the same level of structural changes taking Europe into greater consideration have not taken place. Taking Scotland as an example: “At one level, elements of the Scottish Office and Scottish Executive experience clearly illustrate how the specifics of change could manifest themselves in practice. Thus, the creation of dedicated European units in the European Funds Division (EFD) and a European Central Support Unit (ECSU) were tangible examples of structural accommodation within the Scottish Office and likewise the Executive Secretariat (External) and later the External Affairs Division (EAD) within the Scottish Executive” (Smith, 2004:9).

adopting a joint declaration on 14 September leading to movement on such things as a European arrest warrant and measures to combat terrorism” (Allen, 2008:28). Perhaps one of the main reasons September 11 so galvanised countries of the EU into action in terms of agreeing a way forward on counterterrorism measures was that it had itself exposed a key weakness of European coordination. Scarcely two years after it had failed to stop violence erupting on its very doorstep, Kosovo, the EU was subjected to a second and “particularly brutal exposé of its weakness”, once again stressing the importance of the very thing it “does not command, that of organized violence” (Hill, 2004:144). As Gordon noted in the early years of the New Labour period, while on paper a European defence force had the potential to "easily challenge the United States' status as 'lone superpower'" (1997:75), any comparison with the US served “to highlight just how far the European Union is from possessing the sort of unity, credibility and security affairs” (*ibid.*).

While September 11 initially united Europe in terms of collective condemnation of the acts, difficulty soon emerged at the political level in achieving agreement between allies, as regards, for example, “different perceptions and analyses of the threat from international terrorism and how best to deal with it” (Gick *et al*, 2008b:19). While Europe promoted measures aimed at the cause of the problem, the US favoured “coercive action and the use of extraordinary powers” (*ibid.*). Such problems make the formation of coalitions politically difficult. The very nature of international terrorism necessitated a widening of the scope of the defence aspect of Britain’s foreign policy, and potentially introduced more players into the arena (foes in the form of the so-called Axis of Evil, and allies in various subsequent missions, such as Afghanistan and Iraq). The “War on Terror” as it soon became known, created almost instantly a new role for NATO, and of course the US, in European security – and arguably vice versa. As Gick *et al* noted, NATO’s summit in Prague in 2002 was viewed as a “defining moment for the Alliance as it attempted to define a new security role for itself in response to the events of 9/11” (2008a:29).

3.2 Policy making processes, instruments and capabilities

The introduction and subsequent development of CFSP potentially opened up new vistas for coordination and interaction among member states (Britain included, of course) in the arena of foreign and defence, going, as it did “beyond the confines of the EPC to include all aspects of security policy” (Duke, 1996:172). In terms of functionality and effectiveness, this system “proved highly successful as a source of declaratory statements deploring welcoming developments upon which member states were agreed but tended to remain silent on areas of disagreement” (Bretherton and Vogler, 1999:176). Thus while the CFSP potentially strengthens the hand of EU member states in terms of the instruments available to them in exercising their foreign and defence policy (be it military action, peacekeeping missions, or otherwise) these are more commonly exercised in instances of agreement (for example the African peacekeeping missions) than in times of discord, when countries act outside the European framework. A notable example of the latter case would be Britain’s involvement in Iraq. While the September 11 atrocities united the EU in condemnation, when the US chose a military route of reprisal, as Allen notes, “the EU was not formally present [...] rather it was the member states such as the UK or Germany that contributed” (2008:28).

As noted previously, the efficacy of aid as an instrument of foreign policy becomes diluted by a larger number of players entering the field and (from the contributing donor’s individual perspective) their consolidation. In terms of aid, while the EU and its member states donate over half the money spent to help poor countries, making it the “world's biggest aid donor”¹⁹. The distinct “bias” towards African countries in terms of aid (not undeserved, given their third-world status) also overlaps well with the foreign policy agenda of countries such as Britain (suggesting significant uploading of national

¹⁹ Source: http://europa.eu/pol/dev/index_en.htm (accessed 30 December 2009).

preferences), where post-imperial concerns continue, although at a much reduced level. For example, the amply funded (and increasingly so) British DfID, “effectively became the ‘Ministry for sub-Saharan Africa’, with the FCO surrendering a significant element of control over foreign policy on the continent” during the decade in question (Lunn *et al*, 2008:75). Again, while Britain (like France) may have succeeded in uploading preferences with regards to the destination of EU aid, this cannot be truly regarded as an indication of Europeanisation of British foreign policy, representing, as it does, the natural influence of a large and powerful member state with considerable decision-making rights.

The tendency towards relatively little top-down imposition of the use of foreign policy instruments by the EU, with coordinated action tending to only occur where a pre-existing consensus was present, is very much in accordance with the British preference for intergovernmentalism, rather than supranationalism. Returning to the CFSP, the British position has consistently been to support informal developments, preferring practical improvements to the machinery of CFSP rather than treaty amendments, especially those that would bring in Community method. This includes a certain hesitance to proposals for constructive abstentions, where states would not prevent others from deeper integration. However, the UK did accept the principle of enhanced cooperation on CFSP. Continuing within the European context, the St Malo summit in 1998, at which Blair seemed keen to take the lead in collective defence, resulted in Britain’s lifting relevant objections for prospects for collective European defence, such as the integration of WEU into the CFSP pillar and crisis management.

Of course, given that Britain is the EU’s biggest military power (Witney, 2008:23), a collective defence would be impossible to attain without Britain. The summit between France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg in April 2003 at which the idea of “defence organisation involving an ‘inner core’ of EU members, and a permanent military headquarters at Tervuren near Brussels” (Everts *et al*, 2004:64) demonstrated how “hollow EU foreign, security and defence policy would be without the UK” (Allen,

2008:29). Lacking support from other EU member states, the Tervuren plan, and the associated challenge to the ESDP framework, was quickly abandoned. Nonetheless, it was a sign of the decline in relations between Britain and its fellow member states that such a suggestion was ever tabled at all. In the wake of this low point in relations, interaction between the “big three” (Britain, France and Germany) thawed the following year, with Berlin and Paris throwing their support behind UK plans for EU battle groups (Everts *et al*, 2004:65). This latter development, ultimately realised in 2007, is a typical example of the relative ease with which Britain can use its military might to upload its own preferences to the EU agenda, and again demonstrates the fact that this uploading is a poor indicator of the actual level of Europeanisation of foreign (and defence) policy in the UK. Nonetheless this was a marked success by the UK relative to its influence in previous decades.

While the British role in CFSP decisions has been largely constructive, it should be remembered that most such decisions are taken on the basis of lowest common denominator. The practice of intergovernmentalism and unanimous decision making in CFSP affairs help to explain the large degree of convergence between the UK and its European Union partners. Labour displayed “considerable activism on the issue of defence and in pushing forward CFSP whilst holding the EU presidency between January and June 1998” (Gick *et al* 2008a:31). Similarly, at the Convention on the Future of the European Union, British concerns targeted the roles of EU foreign minister and European Council president. Regarding the first of these, the UK apparently feared a “possible 'backdoor communitarisation' of the CFSP via the proposed foreign minister's links to the Commission” and accordingly the government “increasingly stressed the distinction between a 'common' policy and a 'single' one” (Menon, 2003:975).

Naturally, particularly given its relative military might, Britain has often used the defence aspect as a foreign policy instrument, for example, during Blair’s time in office, the UK was involved in five high-profile conflicts that spanned almost the entirety of

the period: (1) Iraq: Operation Desert Fox, 1998, a UN mission relating to the destruction of weapons of mass destruction (WMD); (2) Kosovo: Operation Allied Force, 1999, NATO air strikes aimed at reducing ethnic tensions; (3) Sierra Leone, 2000, a UN mission to assist the government in quelling violent uprising; (4) Afghanistan: 2001-present, a NATO operation regarded as changing the role of the Alliance and a response to the events of September 11; (5) Iraq: 2003-present, participated in the US-led invasion of the country and subsequently maintained a peacekeeping presence. British armed forces contributed to a number of additional peacekeeping operations throughout the New Labour period, from long-running commitments, like the policing of the “green line” in Cyprus to responses to developments in other countries, such as the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) operation in Bosnia (later transferred to the EU in 2004). It should be noted that the UK contributed relatively fewer troops to UN-led peacekeeping missions than it did to US and NATO operations. In addition, excluding the former-SFOR operation in Bosnia, British commitments to CFSP/European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)-led operations were also minimal (Gick *et al*, 2008a:64). Thus the already observed tendency to use, or in some way benefit from, proximity to the US line in foreign (defence) policy – and relative reluctance regarding EU missions – can still be observed in British policy throughout this period.

While Britain’s international weight as a commercial presence from a trade perspective may have shrunk dramatically since imperial days, it remains a significant player in the arms market, and this provides considerable international leverage. For example, following the explosion of violence after controversial elections in Zimbabwe in 2000, the UK applied sanctions limiting the exportation of arms and military equipment to the country. This was followed by sanctions agreed among the EU-15 in 2002 in a typical example of Britain successfully uploading its foreign policy preferences to the EU agenda. As has been stressed in previous sections, the uploading of national preferences is not necessarily an indicator of Europeanisation when the

country in question is as large a state as Britain is, thus the significance of such developments should not be overstated.

3.3 Main approaches

Similarly to the related sections in the previous chapter, this section is broadly divided in chronological terms, although of course there are overlaps and continuities in the approaches considered. The following three sections deal, broadly speaking, with the period spanning the start of Blair's premiership to September 11; the second with the period spanning the aftermath of the World Trade Center attacks and the invasion of Iraq; and the third, which overlaps in terms of time period with the second, deals with the post-Iraq period.

As noted above, there are overlaps and commonalities between these periods and approaches: One such point of consistency – a constant in post-war British foreign policy, in fact – is the importance placed on relations with the US. Although this commitment has been described as a constant one, that is not to say that there have not been variations in its intensity. Indeed, towards the end of Major's premiership, his foreign policy was marked by an “increasingly strained relationship with the US, principally due to disagreements over Bosnia, nuclear testing, and Northern Ireland” (Gick *et al*, 2008a:15). This previous approach is in marked contrast to Blair's stance, stated right from his first major address on foreign policy, of the high value he placed on relations with the US. To return to Gick *et al*: “A major feature of Blair's foreign policy outlook was his desire for Britain to be a major player on the world stage, or as some have put it, to ‘punch above its weight.’ Blair saw the key route to such a global role in the strengthening of the UK's relationship with the US” (2008a:26). Thus while Britain's relations and approaches may have altered throughout the New Labour decade (1997-2007), its commitment to the “special relationship” remained unchanged, and if anything, only grew stronger.

3.3.1 European security and defence

Although the Blair government was inexperienced in matters of foreign (and defence) policy when it came to power – far from surprising given the 18 years the party had been in opposition – but this did little to reduce their enthusiasm. Added to New Labour’s already evident (according to their election manifesto, at least) pro-Europe stance, the natural assumption by many was that the forthcoming government’s foreign policy would have a distinctly “European” flavour. The newly elected Blair, speaking in front of Number 10 on 2 May 1997, “was precise about the central place Europe occupied in his strategy for modernising Britain” (Daddow, 2008:2). And as Baker and Sherrington note, it soon “appeared that the new administration was adopting a fresh, more positive view of European integration, and wished to be more constructive in negotiations with EU partners” (2004:3). Indeed, observers writing in the early years of the first New Labour government were quick to stress Britain’s new European ambitions. A typical example comes from Featherstone (1999:10):

The Blair project has been framed with the prevailing EU commitments in mind and the two are often difficult to distinguish. The European frame has affected the choice of particular policy options. The most prominent example here is the granting of *de facto* independence in the setting of monetary policy to the Bank of England in May 1997.

This particular example of European influence over domestic decisions does not relate to foreign policy, and it should be borne in mind that other policy areas had by this point already gone through a great deal of Europeanisation, with more to follow. Indeed, as Allen notes, while Britain was quick to stress the European dimension on a number of policy areas, initially, this excluded European foreign and defence cooperation. The change in this stance is illustrated by the evolution “from the Labour government’s first Strategic Defence Review, which almost entirely ignored the European dimension, to Blair’s December 1998 commitment to the Franco-British St Malo Declaration” (2008:27). The Strategic Defence Review, “a comprehensive review of defence policy”, was unusual in that it was foreign policy-led (as opposed to the

Treasury-led cuts more common under Conservative governments). Thus the FCO was “closely involved – particularly at the early stages of the process – and was tasked with producing a foreign policy baseline from which defence decisions could be derived” (Gick *et al*, 2008a:15-16). This increased integration between foreign and defence policy and the active role of the FCO in its determination was perhaps a sign of the government’s (and indeed the prime minister’s) future keen interest in this policy area.

The “considerable activism” displayed on the defence issue as well as the promotion of CFSP during Britain’s term of the EU presidency in early 1998 further suggested Britain’s interests in this area, but it was the St Malo summit in late 1998 that truly revealed the “first real signs of Blair’s policy line” (Gick *et al*, 2008a:31). As Rees notes, “[t]his initiative was of considerable significance for British attitudes towards Europe. It [...] demonstrated a willingness to begin to build a meaningful military capability within the framework of European integration” (2001:63). And so, towards the end of the ’90s moves such as the St Malo decisions and the development of the CFSP and integration of the WEU, appeared to signal that Britain was ready to welcome a more European aspect to its foreign and defence policy. The evolution of the CFSP and its moving “closer to EC norms, policies and habits” continued, although without CFSP becoming supranationalised (Ginsberg, 2001:37). This was in fact a key characteristic of CFSP: it was of an evolutionary rather than revolutionary nature, and while it is effectively in continuity from the past, it is also clear about the purposes of defence. Its intergovernmental nature was also key in its winning British support.

The other factor for British support for enhanced European cooperation was the likelihood of its alleviating the burden of Washington in European defence. Enhanced European military activity was also promoted by the United Kingdom as the most effective way of suppressing the isolationist quarter in the US. Initially this was framed in terms of European coordination and cooperation reducing US involvement, but gradually the Blair government came “to envisage a more equitably balanced defence arrangement in which transatlantic structures are matched by more capable European

ones” (Rees, 2001:50). Indeed, Blair repeatedly stressed the futility of making strategic choices between the Atlantic and European pairing. Thus, although Europe formed the focus of New Labour’s initial foreign policy, Blair also emphasised the “centrality of the US to British foreign policy, telling his audience at the 1997 Lord Mayor’s banquet: ‘When Britain and America work together on the international scene, there is little we can’t achieve’” (Phythian, 2007:213). This reiteration of Britain’s strong commitment to the “special relationship” did not necessarily appear to be at odds with Britain’s embracing an unconventional and at least modified policy for Europe. Later commentators observed that the New Labour government had come “to envisage a more equitably balanced defence arrangement in which transatlantic structures are matched by more capable European ones” (Rees, 2001:50)

However, while a sort of “division of labour between” NATO and the EU was envisioned, this would inevitably lead to increasing difficulty in the UK’s maintaining its image as the pivot between the two sides of the Atlantic (Müller, 2002:21). Indeed, such divided loyalties has been considered a “particular dilemma” for countries such as Britain, with the unique position that it has upheld historically, “with the cultivation of the special relationship with the US on the one hand and the need to demonstrate an allegiance to Europe on the other” (Gick *et al*, 2008b:19). Nonetheless, during the early years of the first New Labour government, Britain appeared to achieve a balance between its EU and US commitments. Historically, relations with the US had been prioritised, so developments such as the continuing close relations between the UK and the EU on a range of issues appeared to hold promise for the future development of EU-UK cooperation in the foreign policy arena. An example of this was (former British colony) Zimbabwe, where Britain’s approach to sanctions in 2002 both “required and [...] [was] based on the support of the EU” (Allen, 2008:28).

What should be stressed is cooperation such as that outlined above has frequently been the consequence of an “uploading” of British preferences to the European agenda. Britain was (and remains) particularly well-equipped to pursue and promote its foreign

policy at the EU level via this route due to the leverage afforded it by its military might. Similarly, as noted in the previous section, an EU defence effort that excludes the UK would be close to pointless. Thus the growing number of CFSP decisions and emergence of a CFSP network did not lead to a complete or even widespread dependence on CFSP: The United Kingdom routinely broke free of EU-level commitments (Müller, 2002:7). As can be seen, New Labour discourse in the first few years of its first government emphasised the importance of Europe for Britain (and vice versa) – for example the “idea that Britain has ‘always’ been at the centre of Europe became something of a Blairite mantra during his first term in office, appearing in speeches across the continent” (Daddow, 2008:11) – a marked departure compared to earlier Eurosceptic stances, and more enthusiastic still than the discourse of the Major government. However, in practice, in terms of foreign policy at least (another major exception being Britain’s failure to join the euro) Britain’s pro-European stance was only sustained to the extent that the cooperation mechanisms therein remained intergovernmental. During this period (as throughout much of the New Labour period) Britain did succeed in “uploading” its own positions onto the European agenda, but as already stressed, this is quite natural for a dominant member of the EU such as Britain, and is in itself not a significant indicator of Europeanisation.

3.3.2 From September 11 to Iraq

From the period of relative harmony and balance in terms of Britain’s EU and US commitments examined in the previous section, this section looks at the changes caused by what will remain one of the defining events of the early 21st century: September 11. This is not a description of a separate British approach to foreign policy in general, but rather it comprises an examination of the different reactions to the event among member states (and of course in the US) as well as their subsequent interactions.

Within a month of the attacks, the US launched Operation Enduring Freedom, ostensibly intended to find and or/destroy the Al-Qaeda leadership and topple the

Taliban government. As Pond notes, “[i]mmediately after 9/11 there was a groundswell of European sympathy for the United States” (2005:32) and America’s partners in NATO were keen to offer their support. The UN offensive went ahead, however, with minimal participation by the NATO allies, who were criticised by the US on the grounds of their inferior offensive capabilities. The EU also failed to establish channels of communication with the US collectively, instead having to try individually to meet with the US leadership, rather than “rallying to forge their much-vaunted” CFSP (*ibid.*). Not all EU leaders were treated equally of course: Blair received a personal invitation to meet President George W. Bush in Crawford, Texas, and UK forces played (and continue to play) a significant role in the conflict. As Allen notes, “the EU was not formally present in the Afghanistan conflict rather it was the member states such as the UK or Germany that contributed” (2008:28). These two factors: the EU’s disarray and failure to act collectively when it would have been most beneficial for them to do so, and the return of the Anglo-American “special relationship”, have characterised many of the subsequent developments discussed in this chapter.

These trends became more noticeable during the lead-up to the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 and were not limited to EU member states. As Gick *et al* (2008a:60) note, within a very short period following September 11, a “perceived unwillingness” was sensed among some NATO allies less keen to respond to (interventionist) US calls for action. This apparent reluctance to meet “force generation obligations” created political divisions within the Alliance as well raising concerns over the “possibility of a ‘two-tier’ NATO developing” (*ibid.*). This was in marked contrast to the past times, where the best that Britain could hope for was the status of “first among equals” with regards to its European counterparts in the Organisation. Support for US interventionist policies offered Britain a more privileged relationship with Washington that not every member state could achieve (or indeed, afford). These contrasts only intensified when the Iraq invasion came on to the agenda. Whilst some countries, such as France, were keen to exhaust the options for UN investigations of WMD, others, such as the UK and Spain,

were quick to support US plans for invasion and subsequent regime change. What was missing from the picture, once again, was a united European voice. Indeed, “[t]hroughout the Iraq crisis the CFSP was almost wholly silent. The EU collectively has had the capacity neither to support the United States position nor to stand up to it – this despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of European opinion increasingly showed itself to be opposed to an attack on Iraq” (Hill, 2004:152). Thus UK support for invasion undermined many gains made earlier in terms of EU diplomacy and coalition building (Bulmer and Burch, 2003:17). However, while European opinion may have run contrary to British convictions (and actions) over Iraq, it soon became clear that, while Britain might have been displaying a return to typically “awkward” form, it was nonetheless a key player in EU defence. As already noted, this was well demonstrated by the Tervuren affair. Thus, despite Britain’s not following the EU line on Iraq, and acting wholly outside CFSP, a trilateral Anglo-French-German relationship was maintained with regards to defence and foreign policy matters. Once again this was a clear demonstration of Britain’s marked preference for intergovernmental relations and coordination with other EU member states.

By contrast, however, during this same period, the UK was also deeply involved in the Convention on the Future of Europe (and the International Crisis Group, ICG, that followed). Despite Britain’s contrary actions on Iraq, it none the less proved extremely successful in terms of achieving its negotiating objectives (Kassim, 2004:277) both there and at the subsequent European Council. These concerns largely centred around the posts of EU foreign minister and president of the European Council. Regarding the post of EU foreign minister, “London increasingly came to fear what officials referred to as a possible 'backdoor communitarisation' of the CFSP via the proposed foreign minister's links to the Commission. The UK government increasingly stressed the distinction between a 'common' policy and a 'single' one” (Menon, 2003:975), again re-emphasising their own preference for a non-supranational approach on foreign policy and for strong ties with the US. The Presidency Conclusion of the European Council

Meeting from the time seems to strongly suggest the influence of uploated British preferences.

The transatlantic relationship is irreplaceable. The EU remains fully committed to a constructive, balanced and forward-looking partnership with our transatlantic partners. Shared values and common interests form the basis of our partnership with the US and Canada. This partnership is also rooted in our growing political and economic interdependence. Acting together, the EU and its transatlantic partners can be a formidable force for good in the world.²⁰

Speaking after the Council, Blair was again keen to stress his belief that “Britain’s place is at the centre of Europe, playing a leading role in Europe, not at the margins”²¹.

Despite these apparently positive developments on the European front, the damage dealt to relations with its fellow EU member states by Britain’s apparent and strengthening Atlanticist stance – beginning to eclipse even that of Margaret Thatcher – as well as the “Eurosceptic backlash back home” undid many of Britain’s accomplishments at the negotiating table, particularly after the subsequent reversal on the government’s pro-European stance suggested by its decision to submit to calls for a referendum on the Treaty (Kassim, 2004:277-278). Britain’s divided loyalties, torn between an essentially pro-European approach and a wish to benefit from stronger transatlantic relations, began to reassert themselves during this period. Leaving aside the Euroscepticism that characterised the British polity at the time (*ibid.*), the government’s apparently strong commitment to European coordination on defence and foreign policy matters was undermined by Britain’s insistence on this progressing no further than the intergovernmental level and taking no higher priority than relations with the US. The

²⁰ Source: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/78364.pdf (p. 25) (accessed 15 January 2010).

²¹ Source: <http://www.number10.gov.uk/Page5008> (accessed 15 January 2010).

last section of this chapter deals with the evolution of this dichotomy in British foreign policy during the final years of the New Labour governments.

3.3.3 A return to Atlanticism?

The invasion of Iraq marked a turning point in Britain's relations with both the EU and the US. As noted by Baker and Sherrington, "international diplomatic tensions over Iraq resulted in a high-profile split within the ranks of the European Union (2004:2). They further assert that "it is the UK, but more importantly New Labour and Blair, which pushed transatlantic diplomacy to its limits [...] resulting in a new period of strained and uncertain EU-US relations" (*ibid.*). That is to say, not only did a change take place in Britain's relations with the US and EU, but Blair's acceptance of a role as collocutor with the US outside the EU framework also put EU-US ties under tension. Not only that, but it also threatened to tear his own party apart, almost resulting in his removal from office in 2003. As Gamble (2003:230) noted at the time: "The American political style and American policies of New Labour have also been deeply unpopular and controversial within the party, but they have become distinguishing hallmarks of the Labour leadership reflecting the fact that a significant part of it is more Atlanticist than it is European, as so often in the past." Interestingly, while UK-US relations had frequently led to EU suspicions of the UK in the past, this was the first instance in which they had introduced disharmony into the EU-US relationship.

While it is certainly true that Blair was quick to offer support for unilateral US foreign policy actions, it should also be noted that these were not simply reflexive reactions made in the hope of future reward; New Labour was in fact already indebted to the US (or Blair to Clinton) after its repeated intervention to help secure the 1998 Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland (Phythian, 2007:213). That is not to say that Britain's actions were not part of a larger trend. As a Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies (RUSI) Whitehall Paper observed "For much of the past sixty years British security policy has been geared to encouraging the US in its

international role and influencing its conduct” (RUSI, 2000:3). This is borne out by the analysis of British foreign policy in the post-war period carried out in chapter II. An inevitable consequence of this, particularly after Britain’s membership in the Community, has been strained relations with its European counterparts at times when British loyalties in the foreign policy and defence spheres are divided.

The ongoing lack of full and efficient cooperation among EU members, despite the CFSP, did little to help matters. Faced with no viable alternative to joining forces (quite literally) with the US, it is far from surprising that Britain increasingly chose to pursue this line after September 11. This stance was further supported by the parallel interventionist approaches of Blair and Bush, which were highly complementary. This approach initially proved popular, in fact, and “Blair’s philosophy of active interventionism did receive significant support beyond Parliament, [and] [...] some accused critics of interventionism of overly downplaying the scale of the human rights abuses and the threat posed to Western and/or ‘universal values’ by the Taliban in Afghanistan and the Ba’athist regime in Iraq” (Lunn *et al*, 2008:18). Nonetheless, support for such measures was not long-lasting, particularly after increasing doubts of the veracity of the existence of WMDs in Saddam Hussein’s Iraq (ostensibly the justification for the invasion). This did much to damage the credibility of Blair and his government, both at home and in Europe.

Iraq had not been the only issue on which the CFSP was “tested and found wanting over time” (Crowe, 2003:535), and as noted, Britain could certainly name the lack of coordination at the European level as a cause of its prioritising transatlantic commitments. Korski *et al* (2008:2) suggest that some of the blame for a lack of European coherence could also be laid at the door of the US. While recent US administrations had consistently supported European integration, “American policy-makers cannot always resist the urge to ‘divide and rule’ the 27-member bloc” (*ibid.*). They cite the more recent example of the US decision to negotiate directly with a few European governments over transatlantic airline security, sidelining the European

Commission in a manner very reminiscent of the post-September 11 meetings between Bush and various world leaders. Again, Britain's presenting itself as a collocator, in a manner entirely outside the EU framework, was a significant development; it ran entirely counter to behaviour that could be considered to constitute Europeanisation. Such behaviour had been rare up until this point, in relative terms, and was perhaps as much due to increased acceptance and recognition of the UK in this role as it was British efforts to achieve such status.

Whatever mitigating factors there may have been, it remains the case that Blair's commitment to the US lay in distinct contrast to his earlier pro-European stance. Indeed, as Lunn *et al* (2008:20-22) note, the "bridge" metaphor so common in his early speeches, describing Britain's role between the EU and US, had all but disappeared from government discourse by the time of New Labour's third term. This was not a result of Britain's having become, as Gilbert suggested, "stranded between two receding shorelines" (2005:85) due to British foreign policy sharing the disapproving tone (with regards to Iraq in particular) of the British public. On the contrary, it was a product of the government's continuing Atlanticist stance. Indeed, the ties to the US consolidated through cooperation in Iraq (and to a lesser extent in Afghanistan) "undermined the very foreign policy principles Blair himself had set out in major speeches in 1999 and 2002" (Phythian, 2007:226).

By Blair's third premiership, however, there were some signs of progress towards the further development of CFSP. Successful agreement of a joint policy on Zimbabwe, as well as largely successful deployments in a variety of African countries, as well as the takeover of the mission in Bosnia from NATO, suggest a more coordinated approach. Again, the focus on African missions is also reflective of the priorities of Britain's DfID, and could be taken as representing successful British manipulation of the EU agenda. That said, UK commitments to these missions are far less in terms of both expense and manpower than those in Iraq or Afghanistan, and there is some justification for regarding them as a less clear statement of its policy position accordingly.

Nonetheless, as Allen notes: “While the examples of Iraq, Bosnia or 9/11 do not immediately engender images of a united European foreign policy or UK commitment to it, these crises have tended to stimulate further action at the EU level, which has been both initiated and supported by the UK” (2008:34). And, as has already been noted, Britain is very keen to support and contribute to European cooperation when its purposes most closely match its own agenda. Thus the New Labour period drew to a close with Blair’s departure from office, and a question mark remained hanging above the future of European foreign policy as the European “Constitution” went to referendum in a number of countries. There were certainly signs of an increased European *commitment* in terms of Britain’s foreign policy, but the defining foreign policy actions and cooperation of the decade begun with Blair’s election were distinctly Atlanticist, most noticeably after the September 11 attacks, with EU coordination often reserved only for the occasions where it matched (or could be made to match) Britain’s existing priorities.

Conclusion

As Northedge (1962:133) notes, Britain has sometimes appeared awkward and keen to avoid “hard and fast commitments in Europe”: This chapter has examined whether or not, more than 40 years later during what Baker and Sherrington term “an illuminating and significant period in the UK’s approach towards international relations” (2004:2), this still holds true, and whether and/or to what extent Europeanisation of foreign policy has taken place. The New Labour rule certainly fell within a period during which the pace of reform and change in the EU accelerated (Bulmer and Burch, 2003:3), and thus an increased level of Europeanisation might be expected. This might also be assumed, given the markedly pro-European stance of the first Blair government. However, as has been shown in this chapter, UK foreign policy has continued to be somewhat ambivalent, torn between using the EU as a foreign policy platform and unwillingness to pay the price for this in terms of limiting its other international relations.

Blair's foreign policy has shown some signs of Europeanisation in terms of coordination with EU member states (such as Bosnia and various African missions). However, cooperation at the EU level, thanks to the opt-outs permitted within CFSP, has often simply reflected the lowest common denominator, not so much providing evidence of Europeanisation, per se, but more simply that of common ground between member states. Added to this has been Britain's strong position in the defence sphere: it is such a key player in terms of European defence that no meaningful EU defence cooperation would be possible without it. This strengthens its hand considerably and is a significant contributing factor in its natural affinity and ability to upload its own preferences to the EU agenda on foreign and defence policy matters.

Meanwhile there have been consistent efforts to empower the British position through cooperation with the US, as well as a constant commitment to strengthening the longstanding 'special relationship' between the two countries. This approach was initially framed in terms of Britain's acting as a bridge between the US and Europe, but this discourse was ultimately abandoned. Blair did actively encourage the development of European military capability, but this was aimed as much at strengthening NATO's European partners as it was about Britain's commitment to and involvement in the EU. Nonetheless, this encouragement on Britain's part has done much to support the development of CFSP-ESDP and has leant it a great deal of momentum in the past decade. Again, while this greater participatory tendency in Britain's foreign policy may well be interpreted as being pro-European, it is not necessarily indicative of true Europeanisation on Britain's part, representing as it does the uploading of a powerful member state, rather than its own downloading of EU policy (a truer indication of Europeanisation in the case of a large and powerful state with extensive decision making rights such as Britain). In this respect Britain has also on occasion worked in coordination with other powerful member states to upload joint positions on foreign policy, such as St Malo, when Britain and France worked together to upload Anglo-French policy concerns to the European agenda.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has defined Europeanisation of foreign policy as being a process of the reorientation of member state policy to the degree that EU dynamics become part of the organisational logic of national policy-making. What is noteworthy about this policy area is that it has traditionally been viewed as a key area of national sovereignty, and hence might therefore be considered to be more resistant to the processes involved in Europeanisation. Studies of other member states suggest that Europeanisation of foreign policy does take place, but is often more limited than in other policy areas (such as agricultural or economic policy). This thesis has argued that despite an initial commitment to "Britain at the heart of Europe", the Europeanisation of foreign policy under New Labour was limited. When stating this, secondly, it is also argued that although there is a considerable degree of uploading in the British case, this does not suffice to prove Europeanisation. This is because downloading was limited and, in the case of such a prominent player, uploading is the expected outcome of interactions with member states and the EU and thus cannot be taken as a reliable/sufficient indicator of Europeanisation without adequate downloading accompanying it.

In the period spanning the end of World War II to the beginning of the New Labour period (1945-97) a slow, but inevitable alignment of Britain with the Community, initially as an essential element of pre-accession preparation and subsequently as part of obligatory communitarisation, took place. From a foreign policy perspective, however, within the scope of the definition of Europeanisation considered within this thesis and taking into account Britain's ability to exert influence on the EU agenda as a powerful member state, the level of Europeanisation of British foreign policy remained relatively slight up until the SEA. This was due in part to a general British resistance to supranational structures and policies, reinforced on a structural level by the FCO and its fiercely guarded "gatekeeper" role. Added to this has been an ongoing wish to maintain strong ties with the US in a "special relationship". Thus, throughout this period Britain largely chose to coordinate its foreign policy within the NATO rather than the European

framework. The SEA brought with it the increased Europeanisation of many policy areas, but lacked the coordination mechanisms or enforcement to be effective in the spheres of defence, and to a lesser extent foreign, policy, reducing pressure on Britain to become Europeanised in this policy area. While uploading of positions is part of Europeanisation, in Britain's case it is not a true indicator of adaptation to EU dynamics. However, it should be noted that in terms of foreign policy Britain gained some benefit as a Community member in this respect, for example in obtaining Community support for the banning of imports from Argentina during the Falklands conflict. Britain, nonetheless, continued to demonstrate a "pick and mix" approach, choosing to opt out of EU commitments where it did not feel they were to its benefit and remained wary of supranational powers on Europe's part. Following the introduction of the TEU and its CFSP pillar, member states were able to hold common positions on foreign and defence matters, greatly increasing the possibility and probability of Europeanisation of foreign policy, Britain included. However, these common positions initially remained at the theoretical level only, with the EU failing to act in coordination when the conflict in the Balkans broke out. It was against this background of developments that New Labour came to power in 1997.

During the New Labour period (1997-2007) witnessed rapid reform and change in the EU compared even to the preceding periods. This certainly resulted in a level of Europeanisation of foreign policy in the form of an increasing level of adopting common positions, as well as a number of small military and peacekeeping missions organised within the CFSP-ESDP framework. However, considering the definition of foreign policy used within this thesis, it can be seen that reorientation of British foreign policy also took place to take into account *transatlantic* dynamics within the organisational logic of policy making, and that it did so at a level unmatched in the past. That is to say, from the British preference to bilateral gatherings with the US, to actual campaigns in Afghanistan and, of course, Iraq, British foreign policy has remained torn between European and transatlantic considerations. Added to this is the fact that while

foreign policy under Blair did indeed show some Europeanisation (for example coordination with EU member states in missions such as Bosnia and Sierra Leone and common stances, such as that adopted on Zimbabwe) this was often more reflective of Britain's exerting its own influence to alter the EU agenda (that is, uploading) than vice versa. Britain's strong position as a key player in terms of European defence means that no meaningful EU defence cooperation would be possible without it. Thus a mission's going ahead is almost conditional on Britain's participation, making such coordinated action less about Britain's actual Europeanisation and more about its ability to upload its national priorities to the European agenda and subsequently participate in actions already in line with its existing policy, both natural consequences of its size, power and decision making rights.

Efforts to further raise Britain's transatlantic standing through cooperation with the US and maintenance of the "special relationship" between the two countries continued during the New Labour period, just as they had throughout the second half of the 20th century. Initially, British discourse suggested a Europeanised approach to this, in which Britain would act as "bridge" between the US and Europe, using enhanced relations with the US to the benefit of all parties. However, this discourse was ultimately abandoned and relations with the US seemed increasingly to relate to a strongly Atlanticist logic, with Britain frequently falling into line with the US foreign policy agenda, presumably with the aim of furthering its own.

During the New Labour period, while foreign policy underwent a degree of Europeanisation, Britain's main commitments in the international arena, and its most controversial policy decisions (principally Iraq), were all made outside the EU framework. Even within the EU, Britain consistently avoided the supranational in favour of the intergovernmental, and indeed the bi- or trilateral (with France and Germany). Significant success has been observed in Britain's uploading of its own foreign (and defence) policy preferences onto the EU agenda (this time with the notable exception of Iraq), but this does not represent significant Europeanisation of British foreign policy as

it is only to be expected that a large and powerful state with Britain's decision making rights would have success in such objectives. To conclude, the Atlanticist flavour of British foreign policy continued to obstruct its Europeanisation during the New Labour period, despite the party's pro-European stance and the developments that occurred within Europe during the period in question.

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