

# CONTRACTORS OVERSEAS

From Brussels and  
Closer to Home

**Dr Lee Rotherham**







# Controversies

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With a foreword by

Lord Lamont



## Controversies

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Dr Lee Rotherham** (he has two research degrees on French Canadian history) is a leading expert on the European Union, having witnessed its work from a variety of peculiar angles. From a starting role as researcher to Sir Richard Body MP and the eurorebel “Westminster Group of Eight” in John Major’s day, the 1997 election so thoroughly liquidated Conservative staffers that he was taken on as an adviser by three successive Shadow Foreign Secretaries. He also assumed a formal and informal role working with a variety of other Conservative front benchers, not least in formulating fisheries policy. In part this was based in Dan Hannan’s office at the European Parliament, where he formed an early appreciation of the opportunities offered outside of the old EPP alliance and working with eurosceptics from across the continent. Subsequently, during the Convention on the Future of Europe, he played a central part alongside delegate MP David Heathcoat-Amory at the heart of the international opposition to the EU Constitution.

Beyond Parliament, he has worked in publishing, teaching, heritage, and consultancy, and has served with the Territorial Army in both Iraq and Afghanistan. He has been widely published, perhaps most familiarly with his best selling *Bumper Books of Government Waste*, and the hit book on life after the EU, *Ten Years On*.

The foreword has been written by **Rt Hon Lord Lamont of Lerwick**, the former MP for Harrogate whose distinguished ministerial career led to 11 Downing Street as Chancellor. Since leaving that post he has maintained a strong interest in opposing European political integration, not least as Vice-President and subsequently Co-Chair of the Bruges Group.





## FOREWORD

*Controversies* is a pretty apt description of this collection of short essays. As I know from my time as a Government minister, so much of what happens within the EU does not come under the spotlight of the media, or the attention of the public. There is as a result a lot that can emerge to surprise.

It was as much as revelation to myself, as it will be to you the reader, to learn about the barely-explored archives at Georgetown University. These catalogue the secret US connection with the early progress of European integration, yet it exists in pure and irrefutable black and white. Two Conservative leaders also separately come under the spotlight, with both Churchill and Ted Heath coming under critical but fair appraisal. Both have been ranked alongside the Fathers of Europe, but their backstories have been misappropriated and maligned. The truth for both is considerably more nuanced and more revealing.

Then there is the piece looking at the Alternative Vote. At first sight this may sit a little uncomfortably in the company of stories on the EU. Yet given the pending referendum it may prove in its own way a development that is as damaging to British democracy as much as anything that Brussels can produce, and as such what emerges from the archives is as surprising and revealing as anything else in the book.

The other essays explore some of the practicalities of Britain's EU membership, including what is one of the few attempts to quantify whether any country gets a good deal from membership. I have my own views on the issue of EU membership, and have my reservations about some of the costs that a blunderbuss withdrawal that some advocate might bring. But as analyses go they are certainly extremely thought-provoking and challenging of longstanding assumptions.

Perhaps what is most controversial about this well-researched book is that it has taken so long for this material to come into the public domain. I strongly recommend it for anyone interested in the European debate, and indeed in the history of British democracy.

Lord Lamont of Lerwick, PC



## The Secret War over Europe

*The difference between party politics and Whitehall was becoming almost erased. The Foreign Office was running a black propaganda campaign to promote a 'Yes' answer in the referendum. Christopher Soames was one of the two British Commissioners in Brussels. He was therefore meant to have nothing to do with domestic politics. But he was very actively organising another, less secret, propaganda campaign. Very, very little of this got written down in documents, official documents, for obvious reasons. Historians will find it very difficult to get right. And that is where people's diaries and so on are going to be very important when they finally emerge. But it was a fascinating and possibly unique period in our history.*

Sir Roderick Braithwaite<sup>i</sup>

Declan Ganley for a short moment played a significant role in briefly stalling the EU's lurch towards undemocratic federalism. As a result, he was astonishingly vilified as a CIA operative, in thrall to the US military complex. Irish politics, and the destiny of the EU, were accused of playing a bit part in the machinations of Washington DC's global schemes.

Such accusations are as nonsensical as they are extraordinary. But what is all the more remarkable is that, historically, the United States has indeed demonstrably had a covert interest in support one side of the European integration campaign. But that has not been the side of those opposing it.

Strange and alien as it may seem, Britain's great democracy has witnessed the state security apparatus become involved in domestic political debate, indeed in direct propaganda activity to win the argument over Brussels. This was using methods that the protagonists recognised were skewed, and mechanisms that they knew that could only be carried out in a covert manner.

Forty years ago, the United Kingdom faced political debate on whether or not to accede to the EEC. Thirty five years ago, the United Kingdom was facing a referendum on whether or not to remain within it. The opinion polls suggested that what the government of the time believed to be the national interest would be defeated by the popular vote. Consequently, propaganda was used to shift that vote.

The context, of course, was one of the Cold War, and of both sides using hidden forms of propaganda in an attempt to either bolster or weaken the will of nations. Policy on the EEC was just another element in this war, so it was only natural that the secret hand of Government should be used to manipulate. Today, it serves us well to remember that what Government is known to have done in the past could so easily be repeated today, if the will exists.

Prior to accession, for instance, the material that the Government was producing was clearly of a propagandist nature. The 1960s had seen a number of government *Factsheets* produced. Since both main parties were in favour of accession on the right terms, there had been no objections raised. By March 1971, these were now being

produced at a rate of one a week, and distributed free at post office counters, through mailing lists, and on request.<sup>ii</sup> These were well advertised in the press and through posters. There was also what one contemporary academic called “a pocket-size glossy sixteen-page brochure distributed free, gratis and for nothing”, with a cover illustrated to show a vast tree symbolising infra-EEC exports and a puny sapling showing British exports to them. This came on top of a White Paper high on rhetoric in favour of joining and the calumnies of staying out.

Both these publications were challenged by anti-Marketeers, who claimed that potentially some £2 million had been spent on party propaganda material without parliamentary approval. It was certainly an effective product, with some six million copies of the White Paper moved at rates of up to 100,000 a day. Their very initial success indeed led to criticisms from pro-Marketeers when the high water mark passed, as when in September the *Mail* noted, “The great propaganda crusade to join the Common Market has stalled badly with the public”.<sup>iii</sup>

In their book, *Britain's Secret Propaganda War 1948-1977*, Paul Lashmar and James Oliver dedicate a short chapter to the role of the state in supplying illicit support for the pro-EEC campaigners.<sup>iv</sup> One aspect of their study relates to the “discreet and high-powered pro-Europe lobby organization” called the European League for Economic Cooperation, or ELEC. In fact, this was a revitalised organisation that was brought in to legitimise earlier activity by the IRD – the Information Research Department.

Students of Information Warfare will recall IRD as the secret propaganda arm of Cold War British governments.

Their activity is described as follows;

This unit had been funding invitation-only meetings between senior media figures and pro-European politicians, diplomats and businessmen. These were regular, expensive and well-attended breakfasts at the plush Connaught Hotel.

Pro-Europeans from all parties were present, as were industrialists. Journalists were particularly welcome, as it provided an opportunity to plant lines in newspapers and news programmes, from people dealing with the negotiations straight from the horse's mouth. It is, perhaps, no coincidence that the BBC *Today* programme was apparently represented in the audience. Other sources point to the editor-in-chief of ITN too, leading to a whole month's worth of news items dedicated to Common Market storylines.<sup>v</sup>

The attendance of civil servants at these highly politicised events was particularly dubious. When the head of the Civil Service found out about it, he demanded of the Prime Minister that the IRD cease this activity, which is why ELEC had to be brought in to take over.

By 1970, the authors explain, the IRD had been tasked with supporting the Government's position on the merits of joining the EEC. As this period coincided with increasing détente, this provided a handy new role for the IRD just as its *raison d'être* was becoming more questioned. The IRD is said to have closely collaborated with a number of pro-European politicians, drafting letters and articles for them to

publish in newspapers, and writing briefings that “diligently avoided the difficult questions of federalism and whether Brussels bureaucrats would be able to impose laws on the British people”. It also ran an early rebuttal unit, placing counter stories within hours of the original appearing in the media. Well-sourced articles in the press also forced recalcitrant members of the BBC to cover the arguments of the pro- side. Such activity continued into the early 1970’s, seemingly fizzling out with the success in the Referendum, shortly after which in any case the IRD was disbanded (coincidentally about the same time that the CIA was being brought to book over its own propaganda involvement). The claim is also made that the IRD was directly involved in planning meetings of the European Movement over this crucial period.

The authors further refer to the role the CIA historically played in backing the European Movement, an organisation they claim was supported when it was being firmed up between 1949 and 1953, via the American Committee on United Europe. Nor was it a coincidence that a new London Head of Station was brought in during the period of the referendum campaign.

This latter detail emerged only because of a leak. Two CIA officers approached a leading member of the No Committee, stating their concerns about this intrusion into the democratic process of an ally by a new Station head who was clearly in the federalist camp, and who had been provided with US funds to assist the Yes side in the referendum. They brought with them documents showing the links. The background to these papers was subsequently published in *Time Out* (as no newspapers were prepared to take them).<sup>vi</sup>

The station head was named as Cord Meyer, a propaganda and front groups specialist, who also had a track record as a world federalist.

Many background documents connected to the CIA agents’ concerns can be consulted in Georgetown University today. Comprising two boxes of material, these relate to the American Committee on United Europe (ACUE), a body that for a decade from its launch in 1949 provided support and sustenance to the early integrationists. This was a matter of global politics. Europe lay prostrate, unable to support itself militarily and even economically, while Soviet tanks and aspirations lay across the border. As potential supporters were urged in a reverse-Kitchener advert of 1953, “Don’t let Georgi do it! Europe must unite, quickly – or risk being united under Malenkov’s tyranny. You, you *personally*, can help to build the union of free Europe.”<sup>vii</sup>

To counter these threats, the group was very active in the United States. ACUE organised speaking tours and public appearances, which in return produced money for aid (especially through the dinners). It helped colleges and community groups organise model assemblies based on the Council of Europe. It sponsored scholarships to the College of Europe by starry-eyed youth. It distributed publications to members, libraries, schools, private organisations, and interested individuals. Crucially, such propagandising did not rest on one side of the Atlantic.

Early hopes lay with the Council of Europe, an organisation indeed which initially attracted a number of idealists with whom ACUE corresponded. However, since the British Government had insisted that the European Consultative Assembly was

subject to a veto by the Committee of Ministers, attention turned rather to what promise lay in other, stronger, mechanisms.

Within a few years, the Committee had come to view such British government opposition to European integration as an obstacle, and openly consider to what extent the United Kingdom could profit from heavier participation. Opinion polls and surveys, in part conducted through the research staff at the *Economist Intelligence Unit*, turned more to Britain's future and the role of integrationists there.

The key indicator of ACUE's affiliation with covert US activity stems from its membership. The list of the Executive attending the committee's second meeting in July 1949 is already a trifle suspicious. Its chairman was General William J. Donovan, the erstwhile head of the OSS, the organisation that preceded the CIA. Also present were Allen W. Dulles, Donovan's former New York OSS deputy, and future CIA Director, who reportedly oversaw the "Op Mockingbird" campaign to manipulate the media. This latter's motivation and interest in postwar Europe is perhaps more easily understood when one considers his role in Switzerland liaising with the likes of Hans Bernd Gisevius, and the Hitler assassination plotters.

George S. Franklin Jr was another participant, understood to be the same who later became prominent in the US element of the Trilateral Commission, and who had close Rockefeller links (a body which also would support ACUE); Herbert H. Lehman, a New York politician who lost a son in the Air Force and who ran war relief; Jay Lovestone, a controversial left wing insider whose CIA links have come under scrutiny; Robert P. Patterson, former Secretary of War; Charles M. Spofford, who would shortly be sent as Deputy US Representative to NATO during the controversy of raising a new German army; and Francis Adams Truslow, a major Wall Street figure. Other names would include General Walter Bedell Smith, another CIA Director; Thomas Braden, who would emerge as a further important CIA figure; and Paul Hoffman, reportedly ex-OSS, who administered the Marshall Plan and was linked to the Ford Foundation (another ACUE funder). Bill Foster ended up running the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. Their interest is genuine and understandable; their involvement personal; the contacts they brought invaluable. The nature of their attendance is more disputable. Perhaps we might in our most generous interpretation consider them allowed to be professionally involved after-hours by an understanding head office.

The documented meeting above referenced that they attended is a gem, coming as it does at a key formative moment. It is the instant at which the European Movement reveals, in particular, what it needs from the Americans, namely "moral support and money". The US ambassadors in France and Britain had both urged ACUE's man on the ground to "encourage it in any way possible". Donovan distributed a letter of 24<sup>th</sup> July from Duncan Sandys, founder of the European Movement in Britain, who the previous year had accompanied the Secretary General of the EM's previous incarnation in a trip to the United States to encourage the formation of what would become ACUE. Sandys spelled out that the European Movement was now a serious political force, with real opportunities that could exploit the new Council of Europe, a third of whose members were active EM members and who were opposed by no alternative organised bloc. What they needed was solid research to give bones to their speeches on economic integration, culture, jurisprudence, and the rest, providing draft

proposals for future action. Assistance was also imputed from plans to organise offices at Strasbourg, and “a public mass meeting of many thousands of people to demonstrate to the delegates the popular support which exists for the idea of European unity”. Further large public meetings, “popular education” and “parliamentary pressure” throughout Western Europe would follow “in order to secure the adoption by the governments of all the Recommendations made by the Assembly, of which the European Movement approves”. The campaign would be launched that October.

Then came the letter’s direct appeal; “We have our plans, as well as capable men of high standing to execute them. We are, however, at this very moment of our greatest opportunity, in danger of being paralysed by lack of money. ” It had been Britain which had supplied to date the prime share of the finances for the whole of the European campaign, but that was now almost run out. Sandys concludes,

I cannot too strongly emphasise the difference which a really large contribution from America at this moment would make to the success of our campaign. If only we are able to seize and use to the full the enormous opportunities which our own past work has opened up for us, we may be able at Strasbourg and in the months which follow, to play a decisive part in shaping the policy of governments on this question. If on the other hand we are embarrassed for funds, we shall have to devote a large part of our energies to collecting money, with the result that our immediate striking power will be terribly reduced, and the opportunities which present themselves will, to a large extent, be thrown away.

Six months of campaign bills were set out. These included £17,000 for the Headquarters of International Secretariat, London and Paris; £9,000 for research; £2,000 for International activities of Parliamentary Groups; and £4,500 for “Organisation, propaganda, etc. for Popular Campaign”. About £20,000 of the £47,500 for these activities could be raised in Europe. About two thirds of the £30,000 needed for national expenses would also be raised there, and this covered “National campaigns of propaganda meetings, etc. in all Western European countries”. The “Balance which cannot be obtained in Europe without a large-scale funding campaign, which would require almost all of the energies of the Movement and would correspondingly retard progress in all other directions”, could only come from ACUE.

Correspondingly, while a sum was retained by ACUE for activities in the United States, \$25,000 was voted for immediate despatch to the EM.

The most astonishing detail emerges from one paragraph of the minutes in particular. It runs as follows;

Mr. Franklin stated that Mr. Duncan Sandy [sic] was very anxious that American financial support for the European Movement should not be known, even to the International Council of the Movement. Mr. Sandys believed that if this were known, many on the Council might fear American intervention and that others would slacken their efforts at fund raising and rely entirely on the United States.



The committee rejected this obfuscation unanimously, to a point: the source and amount of any help should be made known “at least to the principal officers and directors of the Movement”. But this appeal stands as an enduring indictment.

The meeting concluded by authorising George Nebolsine to act on its behalf on a trip to Europe. Nebolsine had noted that,

It seems doubtful to some of us that it [integration] can succeed without grassroots support from the peoples in the various countries concerned, as may be exemplified by the “Mouvement Européen” and by an active push on the part of organized labor and industry.

Accordingly, it would seem entirely appropriate for the American Committee on United Europe to activate both grassroots movements in support of all measures of European unification and the necessary and highly technical activities of labor and industry organizations.

ACUE committee members were nevertheless very conscious not to be viewed as propagandists. In April 1955, one wrote to Donovan warning that money had to be sent over via the European Movement alone. Some alternative recipients might be little more than paper organisations, while “one or two have so limited and partisan a political viewpoint that direct assistance to them would give enemies the opportunity to charge us with supporting special propaganda on behalf of particular social ideas.”<sup>viii</sup> He added that, “although we are a private organization, we are also clearly representative of an extra-European nation which has a chance to gain diplomatic advantages in European integration.”

It may perhaps be particularly apposite to note that between 1954 and 1958, the Washington DC bureau of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), that would subsequently become the accredited quasi-embassy of the EEC and today the EU, was staffed entirely by Americans “who work tirelessly for the cause of European and transatlantic unity.”<sup>ix</sup>

What was the level of the support they provided? At the time, it was crucial. In 1950, ACUE was supplying one quarter of the European Movement’s budget. By the following year, a report noted that “It seems fair to conclude that in Europe, the groups working for Union would appear to be no longer dependent upon American funds for their normal operations.”<sup>x</sup> This by no means meant that aid was ended. Even as late as 1960, Jeune Europe was being described in one document as the successor to the European Youth Campaign “and as such is heir to an American Committee grant of \$22 000 that is expected to represent this year about a third of its total expenditure”. Other aid came in kind, such as by mass purchase and distribution of a glossy book called *Notre Europe*. There were also bursaries for attending Bruges: the reasoning here was that “The College of Europe was founded with the aim of training young men and women for the staff of the new inter-European organizations”.<sup>xi</sup>

One organisation in which ACUE clearly took an interest was the European Cultural Centre in Geneva, whose task was “to prepare the union of Europe in the minds of men”.<sup>xii</sup> The Villa Moynier emerged from the first European Conference on Culture as a base for Denis de Rougemont, progenitor of the European Foundation for Culture

in Amsterdam, the Campaign for European Civic Education, and a mover of both CERN and the Europe of Regions. Geneva worked to “recreate the ‘cultural unity’ which Europeans had nearly forgotten during their internecine wars of the past 150 years”. Its works in progress in 1954 included building up the Association of Institutes for European Studies (established in 1951); the European Association of Music Festivals; the Rome International Conference of Composers, Interpreters and Critics; and the European Bureau for Adult Education (one of whose aims was “to foster amongst them a European spirit” which had been leading to “gathering an unprecedented audience for a deeper penetration of the European ideal”).<sup>xiii</sup>

But such generosity was not to last. In part, this may have been due to the death of Bill Donovan in 1959. This itself followed a groundbreaking new development: the signing of the Treaty of Rome. Circumstances had changed. Reading between the lines, there may also have been some concerns about the protectionist stripes that the EEC clearly bore. In any event, with a European entity in place and old friends running it, these could now sell the project themselves. In 1958, ACUE’s annual grants came to \$200,000 – a significant sum for grassroots campaigners, but only coming to half the information funding now available through the coffers of the ECSC itself.<sup>xiv</sup> Still, as was noted at the time, ACUE’s remained a key contribution even now;

Although ACUE’s annual grant total was small in absolute terms, it was large in relation to the aggregate of European information-education activities and was therefore of considerable importance to Mr Schuman and the other leaders of the unification movement.

Examples of activity even at this point included a French Press project, believed to reach an audience of a million and a half on a small budget; a Britain and Europe study that turned into a best seller and spawned a political campaign; and a European Schools Day essay competition that reached 200,000 schoolchildren, that was by now 2/3 European funded.

But the decision was made. The announcement, made by letter and which was notably copied in to US embassies, came as a surprise to many. Spaak wrote, “I read your letter with a feeling of melancholy for it puts an end to an activity which has been extraordinarily useful and productive. We never could have done what we did in Europe if we had not been supported so powerfully and so intelligently by the American Committee on United Europe”. Etienne Hirsch at Euratom confirmed this: “I know that the positive attitude of public opinion in the United States towards European integration is to a great extent due to your endeavours for the understanding of our cause.”

British MP Martin Maddan, Treasurer of Britain in Europe, wrote back, “I would like to take this opportunity of setting on record my very great appreciation of all you have done for the cause of European unity and the understanding you have shown of the difficulties facing those propagating the cause in their own countries.” The Managing Editor of the *Economist Intelligence Unit* also lent his voice in appreciation: “It is hard to estimate how much effect you have had in helping the Britain in Europe Committee to get off the ground, but I think it was very great. Apart from the European aspect, these [ACUE-supported studies] did, I think, forward the cause of

economic research as a guide to business very greatly indeed, both in the UK and in the rest of Europe.”<sup>xv</sup>

Conspiracy theorists in particular will be in rapture at the letter from the Prince of the Netherlands. His Highness reminds Bill Foster that they will shortly in any event be meeting in Switzerland at the Bilderberg Conference.<sup>xvi</sup>

Clearly individual contacts continued, even if the official structure did not.

What were in turn the consequences for the propaganda message that emerged from all this re-emerging support and advice later in the 1970s?

One employee at a major food company today recalls a threatening letter circulated to all 25,000 employees, with threats of job losses outside of the EEC. British Leyland (a state company) ran adverts in newspapers in support of the cause. In confidential CBI dinners, pro-EEC Conservative MPs gave speeches warning of the Soviet threat and playing upon the fears of trade union power, before businessmen were approached for cheques of two or three thousand pounds. A simple read through of the declared payments to the Yes side after the Referendum vote provides shocking evidence of just how efficiently major business leaders were picked off through such targeted messaging to fund the one side and not the other.

Today’s Obama administration, were it to review the lessons of ACUE, must surely conclude that the experiment has been a mixed success. Support for the federalist forces within the weak dominos of Europe did provide some counterbalance to communist ideology. However, the model that emerged was syncretic rather than wholly sympathetic; a system riddled with protectionism, psychologically more of a rival than a partner for the United States. While the State Department might still yearn for a single phone number for Europe, the Department for Defense amongst other ministries will be more wary of how unhelpful the person on the other end of the line is going to be on Afghanistan, or farm subsidies, or steel imports. The CIA would be well advised to steer clear of the quagmire of EU politics today.

In a lesson about history, we are hesitant to make too much of covert activity from an ear of Cold War menace, starvation in occupied Germany, openly Marxist trades union leaders, and fears of pending economic catastrophe.

But in an era of modern dodgy dossiers, it is worth at least recognising the faults of the past, if we are to expect to maintain the neutrality of the apparatus of the State in the future.

## Costing the EU

*Over 20 years' experience of membership of the European Community is long enough to allow an objective assessment to be made of the UK's gains and losses.*

Business foreword to the Minford Report

Britain, like several other predominantly North European states, is a net contributor to the EU budget. To put it bluntly, the UK pays in more than it gets back in grants. But that is not the whole story.

On the one hand there is the trade benefits that membership was always intended to bring. Belonging to the club meant being inside of the trade walls. It meant being able to adapt existing rules and more particularly modify new ones, to best suit the specifications of your manufacturers. It was also about cutting red tape burdens to help exporters more easily get their goods from one country to another.

But increasingly, regulating business opportunities led to regulations for them. With time, the statist solution came to carry an ever more ponderous burden. Government from the 1970s onwards became increasingly more *dirigiste* in protecting a variety of rights, from gender equality to health and safety; and regardless of the merits of even the most noble causes, each carried a financial cost that would have to be passed on to business, charities, individuals, and the consumer.

Those costs would also in many cases be avoided by countries outside of the EU. True, specifications would have to be met as a product might have to be made to a certain form or out of a given compound. But workforce costs would not have to be passed on because the EU could not legislate for workers' hours or conditions where its own remit did not run.

The burden discrepancy was exacerbated by the trade it covered. Smaller countries more centrally placed on the continent have a high proportion of their exports to other EU countries, forming a high proportion of their overall trade. The Czech situation is one example, physically at the core of the continent. Larger countries more on the periphery, of which the UK is an exemplar, have different trade needs. So while a ballpark one quarter of the Czech economy is dependent on exports to Germany alone, in Britain's case roughly one tenth of the nation's trade is with the EU, and another one tenth is with the rest of the world. That means that to regulate *ten per cent* of the UK economy, *one hundred per cent* of its economy has to endure the regulations coming out of Brussels. As we shall see, we are now at the stage where the cost of red tape is probably higher than the entire value of the trade those regulations are intended to regulate – an absurd position.

Before we get ahead of ourselves, we need to look back fifteen years. During the latter years of the John Major government, there were a handful of studies that costed what was Britain's bill at that point. As well they might; reports in the press suggested that Treasury officials had started an audit under Ken Clark, who promptly squashed the exercise (an event incidentally mirrored under his successor Gordon Brown).

Early costings of the impact of the EU on the British economy therefore relied heavily on limited data undertaken by people outside of officialdom. Foremost amongst these included a critical study by academics from the University of Bradford (Burkitt, Bainbridge and Whyman).

Our own recollection is drawn, however, to Professor Patrick Minford's work, on which this author was fortunate to play a small editorial role. Professor Minford was at that time (1996) one of the Chancellor's 'Wise Men', on the Treasury's Panel of Forecasters, and that detail alone makes the report the nearest to one ever produced from Government and worthy of its ascribed footnotes in Margaret Thatcher's memoirs. The document further carried a conclusion from a prominent Japanese economist that looked at reasons for continuing foreign direct investment into Britain, scotching pro-Euro calls that were coming from the manager of a major Japanese car firm. The company was at that time having a hard time of it thanks to moves to shut down one continental plant and open another one, and the suspicion (naturally enough) was that the management were playing to the Commission over the benefits of Eurozone membership in order to get the deal greased up. In the event, the claim proved a knock-about entrée into British politics for the company in question, never to be repeated by it or any of its compatriots.

Meanwhile, the report *also* contained a foreword by ten leading British business figures. This was almost certainly the first time business had been collectively brought into the Europe debate on the Eurosceptic side since the 1970s (1992 had been a very different affair), and the event would see several of the signatories later re-emerge as leading figures behind *Business for Sterling* and its successor organisations. The pivotal role of then-MP Sir Richard Body in instigating all this has not received due historical recognition.

But what of the report itself? The intention was always to produce a balanced and fair assessment. It looked at the CAP. It reviewed the impact of EMU. It considered the Social Chapter. It analysed non-agricultural trade and investment. To cut a long story short, it found the costs and the benefits approximately the same at around £10 billion a year; but that the balance would tip massively if either the Social Chapter or the Eurozone were entered into. This gained it some criticism from commentators who believed the administrative burdens should have been explored, though this was partly offset within the report by a lengthy section recognising that economic viability even under the existing opt-out terms would only work by liberalising the markets. Later evaluations would also develop this aspect. In the event, Minford's work did underline that there was a genuine cost to the Community that also had to be recognised, and a very real future economic deficit was looming with future EU integration.

The fine balance observed in the Minford Report would be overtaken by successive treaties. First Amsterdam, then Nice, and latterly the EU Constitution/Lisbon have added new competences to the Commission and extra powers to the European Parliament, this latter particularly fond of making use of them to amend business regulations.

Ian Milne's *A Cost Too Far?*, produced for Civitas in 2004, takes us to the point where the new legislative burden was starting to obviously bite. It is notable in the

first instance for having an introduction by a former Speaker of the Commons – Lord Weatherill today being one of three former postholders who have spoken out in differing degrees against the EU’s legislative bulldozer.<sup>xvii</sup>

From our perspective, however, the real interest lies in the evaluation, which contains both “most likely” and “worst case” evaluations. In short, the annual net cost was most likely in the order of £40 billion per annum, or about the same as raised by Excise duties. Half of that was the annual net cost of EU regulation: £15 billion the CAP cost; £5 billion the net budgetary deficit. The net economic cost would at best remain at the current rate, and could get worse, perhaps dramatically. Opportunity cost – lost opportunities in world trade – could make the EU net membership cost indirectly higher.

By 2008, £40 billion was not the only figure in town. More details had now emerged on the bureaucratic deficit hitting business, particularly in the form of Gunther Verheugen, the EU Commissioner best placed to assess it. His claim was that EU red tape across the continent was costing member states a total of €600 billion a year.

It was an astronomical sum, and one that triggered an increasingly personalised attack on the Commissioner from opponents within the Eurocracy who were opposed to his reforming attempts to tackle it. As such, while it did not have the electrifying impact it should have had in the Commission, the statement did reinvigorate analysis of the red tape aspect. The *acquis communautaire* was now growing at such a rate that Eurosceptic MEP Jens-Peter Bonde was starting to get into the regular habit of asking for a new count of the total volume every couple of years, as it would go up by 5,000 pages each time. Sceptics of the anecdote might choose to review the list of documents that never got properly analysed by Parliament’s EU Scrutiny Committee, because they came through the system during the period of the 2010 General Election. They came to 91 pages of summary headlines – and those were just the texts deemed ‘important’.

Understandably then, red tape featured as a key component of the costings in the book *The Great European Rip-Off* (which as its title suggests, was less than equivocal about the costs involved). If this is not further discussed here, it is because the statistics were overtaken by more detailed studies with a direct UK bearing, and by the release of new official data also directly linked to the UK rather than across the whole of the EU. The TaxPayers’ Alliance research *The Price of Fish* was not (nor ever claimed to be) the first study of how awful the CFP was; but it was the first attempt at a detailed costing. It concluded that cost to the UK (through direct wastage, economic decline, state subsidy and in particular the surrender of traditional fishing grounds) came to £2.81 billion a year. Meanwhile, an analysis costing the CAP and its many follies was calculated at £10.3 billion a year for the British taxpayer. Before it was even launched, the central premise of the *Rip-Off* was already both endorsed and revealed to be out of date. Initial findings that had seemed elevated were now backed up through newly confirmed burdens. Costings were updated and transferred to a new and popularised publication, *Ten Years On*, in the summer; a reasonable upper bracket for costs versus benefits was running in the order of £100 billion a year, with even conservative estimates reaching half that.

Red tape analysis still remained difficult to confirm across the board. A detailed French analysis of costs of membership undertaken by Christophe Beaudouin in 2008, included an estimate of Gallic red tape that contributed around two thirds of the estimated range of €52 billion to €63 billion net costs of EU membership as far as France was concerned.<sup>xviii</sup> But the methodology remained based on limited data. Governments declined to properly include red tape costings, preferring to focus on costs accruing to departments rather than to the consumer. The Commission, where obligated to carry out such an analysis, tended to take the tick-box approach. It made perfect sense; after all, with ever-closer union and a centralising bureaucracy, who wants to point out the flaws in a particular proposal? Nevertheless, such data as was emerging still confirmed Verheugen's ball park figure – or *worse*.

Today it seems that the 'Verheugen-Plus' analysis is being increasingly proven correct. In the course of 2010-11, it has now been revealed thanks to a Parliamentary Question from Philip Davies MP that the EU will be responsible for 31 per cent of new red tape. The total red tape bill for the country will run at between £27.8 billion and £30.3 billion. 31 per cent of that – i.e. between £8.6 billion and £9.4 billion – is the fault of Brussels. Frankly, both sets of figures are inexcusable, and the complicity of Whitehall in Gold Plating is proven beyond a doubt.

What this detail shows above all, however, is that with EU red tape in Britain now going up by £9 billion a year, Verheugen's estimate of €600 billion across the EU (or around £50 billion in the UK) looks both optimistic and wildly out of date. Ball park costs of EU membership in the order of £100 billion, previously the stratospheric end of the scale, now top the central range. To return to an earlier observation, that means the cost of red tape to manage Britain's exports to the EU could easily be higher than the value of the exports themselves – an obscene proposition.

A nation which joined an economic community to bolster its trade is now finding its prime reason for joining has become redundant, because trade is increasingly being stifled within the EU, but international trade beyond it remains protected by the WTO.

Questions still remain as to what the exact cost is for Britain of belonging to the EU club. What is clear, however, that the price is unquestionably too high. That imbalance one way or the other needs a radical fix. The first step is to end Whitehall's state of denial, and for a **full, frank and fair** official cost-benefit analysis to take place.

A lot of questions and ambiguity remain over precisely how much the EU costs its members. The very least government can do is show us the bill.

## Churchill: The Reticent Father of Europe?

*However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results.*

Winston Churchill (attr.)

The ambiguities of great men, especially politicians, can sometimes make them difficult to read for historians. Even an abundance of archive and evidence can form a marshy basis for exploring the aspirations of a Caesar or the drive of a Washington. So perhaps it should not prove so surprising that such ambiguity should equally cloak Winston Churchill, a man whose career spanned many decades of imperial vicissitudes, and more than just the one political party.

Churchill is remembered as a patriot, the man who embodied British national independence in its finest hour. But his silhouette in prop form has also graced the stage of events held by pro-European campaigners recollecting his role as a godfather to European integration, and who suggest some ambiguity in his later years. He was one of the Honorary Presidents of the European Movement when it was founded. So where exactly does the truth lie?

Let's cast aside the politics from before the Second World War. Churchill was of course an imperial figure who had himself taken part in colonial adventures on the frontline, in the Sudan, South Africa, and the Raj. The morning and noon of his career is firmly planted under the glittering dazzle of the unsetting sun. Our attention must therefore focus on the period of decline, where European integration became a physical reality rather than a metaphor.<sup>xix</sup>

By using as our guide a study of his speeches on Europe, this naturally means we focus on the period covering his years as Opposition Leader. Key factors uncoincidentally coincided with his emergence as perhaps the most celebrated advocate of European 'unity': the development of early European institutions supporting intergovernmental cooperation; a period where he was removed from the practical elements of imperial concerns; European statesmen still mindful of his personal part in their recent salvation inviting him to speak abroad; the freedom in Opposition to be at his most outspoken. Put these elements together and it is no surprise that the period 1945-1951 encapsulates all of Churchill's most important forays into European integration.

We begin in the aftermath of victory in war and defeat at the polls.<sup>xx</sup> On 12 November 1945, Churchill addressed the French Institute at Paris (in a speech known as *A New Europe*);

My hope, as you know, is that a new and happier Europe may one day raise its glory from the ruins we now see about us. And in this noble effort the genius, the culture and especially the power of France should play its true and incontestable role.

The context was principally France's resurgence. Four days later, addressing the combined Senate and Chamber of Brussels (*The Future of Europe*), the context has been broadened;



I see no reason why, under the guardianship of a world organisation, there should not arise the United States of Europe, which will unify this Continent in a manner never known since the fall of the Roman Empire, and within which all its peoples may dwell together in prosperity, in justice, and in peace.

This was a more ambitious programme. And yet from the entirety of the speech we can see other dominating considerations. Such a Europe had to be created under the primary focus, which was a world based on the UN system. The United States was interwoven with this cooperation. Britain was mindful of a twenty year treaty lately signed with the USSR which also coloured developments. The priority where Britain lay was in developing Europe through a series of bilateral or multilateral treaties between states.

On 9 May 1946, before the States General of The Hague (*The United States of Europe*), Churchill reflected upon nationalism. To him, it was a vice where it included a craze for supreme domination, and lust for pride and power. But it also had its positive sides. A love of country, tradition, and culture had built up over the centuries into a “social entity dignified by nationhood”, the first of virtues. So already it was clear that Churchill is not arguing for a dissolution of the cultures and identities of Europe. Moreover, we now gain a greater understanding of how he saw the European entity globally. The UN would be made up of “special circles” within it to strengthen it. The British Empire and Commonwealth would form one; the associated states of the Americas another; the United States of Europe would provide another example. This latter would include both eastern and western Europe. As circles go, putting a “United States of Europe” into the same bracket as Britain’s status with the Dominions on the one hand, and America’s pre-eminent role within what would develop into the OAS, demonstrates something short of a vision for a unitary continent.

Had he mused some more on the parallel, he might have pre-empted ambiguities on the separate pulls on Britain by these various and morphing circles, by reflecting on Canada’s parallel position within them. But that consideration would never surface.

14 July 1946 would see Churchill at Metz, developing the theme of *France and Europe*. The geographical location was significant, and the context of the discourse dwelled on the disastrous wars of the past. Churchill identified a need to achieve a “finality” to avoid “a third and possibly a fatal holocaust”. The comment is revealing. In coming years, he would become increasingly driven by the prospect of nuclear war, and indeed this would prove a crucial motive – or possibly excuse - for his clinging on to Number 10 despite the aspirations and admonitions of Eden. Churchill’s support for a united Europe is perfectly logical coming from someone who had both fought two world wars (even to the point of finding himself briefly in the trenches) and who had been in on the Manhattan Project.

Churchill returned to the place of the new Europe in the new world order;

We victors have set up together the United Nations Organisation to which we give our loyalty and in which we found our hopes. At the head of this stands the United States of America in all her power and virtue. But without the aid

of a united Europe the great new world organisation may easily be rent asunder or evaporate in futility because of explosions which originate in Europe and may once again bring all mankind into strife and misery.

Remember in terms of context that this is still a year ahead of France and Britain signing a bilateral treaty at Dunkirk with the object of allying against any future resurgent and belligerent Germany.

Churchill's keynote speech on European cooperation was the one he pronounced at Zurich University on 19 September 1946 (*The Tragedy of Europe*). It is one of his most famous. The framework was again one of reviewing a shared heritage;

If Europe were once united in the sharing of its common inheritance, there would be no limit to the happiness, to the prosperity and glory which its three or four hundred million people would enjoy.

He put forward what he styled a sovereign-remedy which would establish a Switzerland-style level of happiness: "We must build a kind of United States of Europe", complete with an end to retributive international politics.

Even here we see the caveats though. The precedent he chooses to remind us of is that of the (intergovernmental) League of Nations, rather than some unitary authority. He uses the Commonwealth and the British sphere as the argument to suggest that Europe should have one of its own too.

The first step was a partnership between France and Germany. It was a shocking proposal given very recent history – Churchill perhaps underestimated the extent to which it was so at the time, to the point of being proud of it after the event. But the threat of the atom bomb was so overbearing such a process had to be driven forward.

There is little on the possible form this might take in the speech. He refers to the next step being the building of a Council of Europe, but nothing specifically beyond this. A remarkable idea that is today forgotten is his suggestion that the federal states of Germany might even take part in the new structure on an individual basis. This is less of an endorsement of federalism or a foreshadowing of subsidiarity than a mooted that perhaps a broken up Germany, Holy Roman Empire style, might make a happier partner under the new framework. The idea did not gain traction, though it may have slightly softened the shock of impact in France. But once again, Britain's role was not to participate fully;

In this urgent work, France and Germany must take the lead together. Great Britain, the British Commonwealth of Nations, mighty America, and I trust Soviet Russia – for then indeed all would be well – must be the friends and sponsors of the new Europe and must champion its right to live and shine.

The next two years would drive new problems and issues to the fore. India, Palaestine, rationing, and National Service needed to be resolved. 1948 would even see the reduction of the Royal Navy encouraging Chile and Argentina to occupy certain overseas territories near the Falklands Islands (just as HMS Ajax was in the process of being sold off to the former), and the developing Berlin crisis. Yet despite

and possibly because of this, the Conservative Leader of the Opposition continued to speak out on the European issue.

An important meeting came in 14 May 1947 at the Albert Hall (*United Europe*). Europe was more than an issue of geography, he opined; it was a civilisation.

But where is Europe now? It is a rubble heap, a charnel-house, a breeding-ground of pestilence and hate.

Nationalism, ideologies and vengeance had laid it low. From the great Marlboroughian, it does seem a trifle off key. But then just as he includes his country in the equation with a discursive “We Europeans”, the caveats again flow. The United States, the Soviet Union, the British Empire and Commonwealth would be separate’, alongside Europe as “the four main pillars of the World Temple of Peace.” Some lack of clarity does remain on Britain’s position: “and then there is Europe, with which Britain is perfectly blended.”

Such a trove of ambiguities blending partnership with alliance and shared civilisation portrays an uncertainty recognised by the speaker. He preferred to focus on the foundation work rather than on the various federal models on offer, and to avoid the issue of who should be in or out. Another restriction applied;

It is necessary that any policy this island may adopt towards Europe and in Europe should enjoy the full sympathy and approval of the peoples of the Dominions.

On the other hand, they too felt culturally a part of Europe and had been engaged in its wars. Churchill seems to have had one eye on the domestic issues already. These he addressed at that year’s party conference in Brighton. At his main speech on 4 October, he began to develop his thoughts on the mechanisms rather than the idealisms involved.

I am also an earnest advocate of a United Europe and of the important part which Britain must play in its achievement. Unless we were tied down to the alternative of a choice between two rigid customs unions in the full technical sense of the word, there is nothing incompatible in these aims, even in the purely economic field.

This is a crucial reservation in the light of the EEC as it would develop, and the form of the over-regulating EU we have today. The issue of Commonwealth Preferences suggests Churchill would have had serious reservations during the 1972 Accession Debate, where it proved the preeminent political objection to joining.

I am convinced [...] that it is possible to reconcile our position at the centre of the British Empire with full development of close economic relations with all the friendly countries of Europe.

It implies Churchill would have been more of an enduring EFTA man. But we shall never know for sure.

Churchill continued to speak on Europe through much of 1948. On 7 May once more at The Hague (*The Congress of Europe*), Churchill self-effacingly looked back to Henry IV of France and Navarre as progenitors of European cooperation. The scheme (perhaps the Duke of Sully's invention) had been for a standing committee of the leading states of Europe to settle differences through common arbitration. The principle of the "Grand Design" Churchill evokes is evidence of an interest in a formal association involving supranational authority, but it is not of itself conclusive given Churchill's historical pedigree and the many questions surrounding the project (including its veracity). It is more of interest as a contextual counterpoise, since it shares a coincidence of historical backdrop, given that Sully's France had just emerged from a crippling period of war, and the settlement was proposed to eject a foreign power from the continent (the Porte) while suppressing a German one. In any event, Churchill's speech reiterated his belief that the emerging Council of Europe itself should be subordinate to the UN, a belief he indicates he had stated during the War.

Two days later, in a large square in Amsterdam (*United Europe*), he added a comment on the principle of shared identity. An underlying concept should be a sense of European citizenship and identity, on top of the national one. It suggests he would have enjoyed receiving what would become the burgundy passport as much as he did his honorary US citizenship – at least until reflecting upon the text printed upon it.

On 16 July 1948 came a short speech at Cardiff (*Building a New Europe*). This rather than adding to his European credentials, subtracts, for he concludes with

We should not hesitate to accept with the greatest cordiality ever closer ties of unity with the United States.

The ebb rather than the flow of integrationist zeal continued on 17 November in London's Dorland Hall (*United Europe*). Here he reviewed the constitutional form Europe should take. He concludes that a political federation and a customs union was unrealistic at that time, but left it open ended about future possibilities. Explaining such pragmatism in the context of his open support for the Council of Europe model, he observed,

The creation of a deliberative European Assembly naturally involves no transfer of sovereignty and raises no constitutional problems whatsoever.

It was possible, he observes, that in time a European public opinion would form, and a sense of solidarity emerge. But Churchill was focusing on the present rather than committing to the future. Come the foreign affairs debate in the Commons on 10 December, he would add,

We ask for a European assembly without executive power. We hope that sentiment and culture, the forgetting of old feuds, the lowering and melting down of barriers of all kinds between countries, the growing sense of being "a good European" – we hope that all these will be the final, eventual and irresistible solvents of the difficulties which now condemn Europe to misery.

His criticisms now begin to focus on party politics, defining his support for broad brush European cooperation contrasted with those opposed to formal European integration (like Bevan, included on the first delegation to Strasbourg), and to those especially in the Labour ranks who saw European engagement as something only done in terms of cooperation with fellow Socialists. One suspects that he would not have enjoyed watching the PES and EPP at work.

On 26 February 1949, he was again in Brussels (*European Unity*), underlining how just as brigades contributed to divisions, regional organisations contributed to the UN. They repaired defects in the structure. As such, the European Court on Human Rights should be seen as a corollary to any world court, allowing for the unity of all Europe. In this he had the recent example of the show trial of a Hungarian cardinal in mind.

He also indicated that people needed to be aware of the particularities of European states, such as Switzerland, Sweden or Germany. The UK for its part needed to develop a form of association “without in the slightest degree weakening the sacred ties which unite Britain with her daughter States across the oceans.” The Europe she would associate with would be independent but not isolationist, harmoniously fitted into the system of world government.

Taken out of context, Churchill might be seen to be arguing for formalised global governance. The next speech, on 20 April 1949 at the Economic Conference of the European Movement in London, would correct that (*The Three Circles*). Britain was reliant on wheat and meat from the Commonwealth; this provided a mutual advantage that neither side could afford to give up. Churchill still imagined that there would no doubt be possibilities all the same of Britain drawing closer to the continent (though this was before the CAP was designed, of course).

Britain’s role is now set out in terms of the famous overlapping circles. There was the British Empire and Commonwealth; there was the English-speaking world; and there was the united Europe. The objective would be for the latter to be “linked together in faithful comradeship”.

These provided rousing words, but still left bare bones. On 12 August, at the Place Kleber in central Strasbourg, he chanced his French on the occasion of the creation of the Assembly of the Council of Europe. Here his context was again one of the United Nations (specifically, its Declaration on the Rights of Man), and of the support offered from Britain’s Empire and Commonwealth. Then on 17 August in the building itself, a bombshell. Underlining yet again its role as a pillar to the UN, a subordinate and not a rival, he turned to future developments;

I am not myself committed to a federal or any other particular solution at this stage.

After four years of Opposition speeches endorsing closer European integration, Churchill, who had been so vocal in terms of encouraging Franco-German association was still talking of the United Kingdom as an outside party. As he was standing in the site embodying the new Europe, he was still expressing uncertainty as to whether the Council of Europe should be the end model, or more was desirable. That would be the last of his big overseas public speeches on Europe for several years.

A debate on *European Unity* would take place on 28 March 1950 in the Commons. No further commitments emerged here either;

Once the foundation of common interest and solidarity of sentiment has been laid it may well be that formal agreements would take the form, not of hard bargains or weak compromises, but of setting down on paper the living basic truths and thoughts which were in all minds. The difficulties at present insuperable might well become irrelevant.

That doesn't take us much further. Far more significant to us is his speech on 27 June 1950 in the Commons, during the debate on the Schuman Plan. Here, after all, was the actual solid structure frame of how the EEC would develop, as a supranational entity rather than a bald aspiration of cooperative ventures.

He begins with a rough appraisal of how the Plan had been bounced on the British Government, boding ill for the remainder of his analysis;

I did not like the attitude of the French Government in springing this large question upon us so suddenly, or in making pedantic stipulations before sitting in council with their wartime comrades. I admit I was nettled by it.

As is standard in these circumstances, he posed a number of questions of the Government. Since UK participation in SHAEF had never granted the headquarters the power to disband British units, why wasn't a similar guarantee sought by the British for the ESCS? Why had the negotiators not recognised in writing the huge scale of the UK's coal and steel industries?

His line on the negotiations was that Britain should have attended, but exercising the veto rights of a Parliamentary Reserve. Britain's absence meant that the coal and steel pool would now be dominated by Germany. But regret at not being at the table did not amount to endorsing the ambitions associated with it. The federal union of Europe was not an issue for "us" to decide, but primarily an issue for the peoples of Europe. He explains,

In our European Movement we have worked with federalists, and we have always made it clear that, though we are moving along the same road, we are not committed to their conclusions.

It is a telling comment (as informative in its own way as his freely here admitting private US funding was going to support the European Movement). But he went on,

What association would Britain have with the Federal Union of Europe if such a thing should come to pass in the course of time?

It has not got to be decided today, but I shall give, with all humility, a plain answer. I cannot conceive that Britain would be an ordinary member of a Federal Union linked to Europe in any period which can at present be foreseen.

Churchill's approach was one of intimate association short of full membership;

With our position as the centre of the British Empire and Commonwealth and with our fraternal association with the United States in the English-speaking world, we could not accept full membership of a federal system of Europe.

The UK's destiny was bigger; to play a decisive part in all three UN pillars involving Western democracies.

That in many ways was that. The interests of Britain with its Commonwealth, the American link, and Churchill's return to power as Prime Minister would refocus his energies and efforts (with Eden less supportive than he of European integration). The physical example of the ECSC also removed some of the magic of European integration by replacing a phantom with a walking skeleton.

He was still prepared on 23 July 1951 as Leader of the Opposition to speak at Mansion House on *United Europe*. But here the proposal of the European Army fell heavily into the context of the Cold War, a mechanism to avoid raising a German national army.<sup>xxi</sup> Once in Government, the global issues of the day prevailed – Korea, NATO, running an Empire, the H Bomb, and matters of world disarmament rather than regional peacemaking.

It would be five more years until the swansong speeches on Europe. On 10 May 1956 (a couple of months before the Suez Crisis got under way), the now-former PM went to Aachen to collect the Charlemagne Prize. There (in *Grand Alliance of European Powers*), he reviewed NATO, post-Stalinism, and German rehabilitation.

No one can doubt the usefulness of the Western European Union, the Economic Committee, the Coal and Steel Community and the Council of Europe at Strasbourg, with all of which many of you have been so closely concerned. But I believe that our main theme of salvation should be the Grand Alliance of the European Powers, linked with Canada and the United States.

Again short on detail, we see a big picture for Europe - one that embraces the Atlantic. The last speech was an address to the United Europe movement at Westminster Central Hall on 9 July 1957 (*Europe – Unite!*). Churchill underlines that Britain had a special relationship with the Commonwealth and nothing would make us sever those bonds. He also stressed there was no inconsistency between Commonwealth membership and Britain participating in the European Free Trade Area;

We genuinely wish to join a European free trade area, and if our continental friends wish to reach agreement, I am quite sure that a way can be found and that reasonable adjustments can be made to meet the essential interests of all.

Piqued years earlier by the European Coal and Steel Community, Churchill's last speech on the future of the continent underlined Britain's commitments to the old Dominions and looked forward to the model offered by EFTA three years later.

How can we be sure that these speeches provide us with a snapshot of the true Churchill? Could he have been advocating a different approach in private? Well, fortunately there exists a speech that sets out his views in a more private setting, coincidentally tying in with our earlier analysis.<sup>xxii</sup> On 29 March 1949 – that is to say, a month before his *Three Circles* speech but a full year before being piqued by French handling of the Schuman Plan – he was invited to address an ACUE event at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel (on Madison Avenue and 46<sup>th</sup> Street). In point of fact, it was not just “an” event – it was a crucial initial fundraiser just as the organisation was getting off the ground.

This speech has apparently not seen public print. The venue was not a tiny gathering – there were 242 people gathered in the audience. But as this was a fundraiser, designed to rouse support and raise money for the activities of ACUE, and as far as one can tell delivered behind closed doors with no intent to broadcast the message through the media or ever publish the speech (though both journalists and publishers were in fact present), we can reasonably take this to be a fair representation of the orator’s personal opinions.

To begin with, the list of attendees is extremely useful in understanding a little of who was associated with ACUE, why a big fish like Churchill was chosen for the event, and who were some of the organisation’s earlier target audience and indeed supporters.<sup>xxiii</sup> On the dais were big trades unionists and even bigger businessmen, senior diplomats, politicians and political fixers, presidential advisers past and future, former presidential candidates, publishers, a number of figures associated with the *Council on Foreign Relations*, and John Foster Dulles and William J. Donovan.<sup>xxiv</sup> The audience was heavily made up of magnates – it reads like a *Who’s Who* of East Coast big business and philanthropy. It counted people like Harry F. Guggenheim; William A. M. Burden (who married into the Vanderbilts); several Rockefeller associates; ‘the’ W. H. Hoover; Fred Lazarus Jr., the shopping magnate; Walter Maguire, the outspokenly pro-integrationist US Observer at the Hague Congress in 1948; Arthur W. Page, the doyen of PR; Walter Sachs (of Goldman Sachs); and also several very prominent academics such as Arnold Wolfers. Film maker J. Arthur Rank was not the only cineaste in the audience.

Since we have explored the subject earlier, we can here also observe how the intelligence connection is suspiciously prevalent amongst the attendees, not just in terms of the past but also intriguingly of future recruits.<sup>xxv</sup> Scattered around the room, there is Sir William Wiseman (previously a senior British intelligence operative in New York); William S. Coffin (understood to be the future political campaigner, like several others in the room previously of military intelligence and who would tellingly in a few months join the CIA); George S. Leisure, US Navy and lawyer and also shortly to join the Agency; Herbert S. Little, who may have been the namesake Major in OSS who had been involved in devising psychological warfare against Japan; John Whitney, a publisher reportedly with wartime links to Donovan and supposedly in later years with CIA associations; Jay Lovestone, apostate Communist Party leader who in later life was accused of CIA activity within the unions movement (his communist-battling colleague Matthew Woll was also present at a different table); Edward J. Lumbard Jr., presumably the J. Edward Lumbard Jr. who had worked with Donovan as a young lawyer; Whitney Shepardson, wartime head of Strategic Intelligence for the OSS (and also one of the founders of the Council on Foreign



Relations who spent 45 years on its board, and involved in the 1950s along with other diners in the anti-communist Free Europe Committee). The widow of MacArthur's Intelligence Officer was also apparently present. Allen W. Dulles, the future CIA Director, as one of the organisers was of course sat alongside Churchill.

There is a twist. Cord Meyer, also on the cusp if not already within the intelligence service, and later to be openly honoured by the CIA as one of its "trailblazers" and pre-eminent operatives, was another in the audience. He was the station head we encountered during the dirty tricks allegations in London in 1975 - and so we turn full circle with ACUE's beginnings and the end throws of its CIA legacy.

Churchill begins by saying that he is very glad to commend the cause of United Europe that day. He asks for their aid in supporting not just the work of the movement in England and on the Continent, but in mobilising friendly opinion in the United States – to which it would not be a rival. He revisits the precedent of Henry IV of France he had referred to the year before, and puts himself into what he sees as a more accurate context; one not of originality, but as the person who revived the idea and noted to his associates at the time that "If the idea is vital, it will live. If the spark burns fiercely, the fire will spread." It did, "And I was most gratefully delighted to see how we have moved on and familiarized hundreds of millions of people with the phrase, 'United Europe', which so many had championed in bygone days, but had been then forgotten in all the struggles and torments through which we have had part."

The closed environment surrounding the luncheon does allow us more a small extra insight. Churchill seems to recognise that he is ahead of many fellow Conservatives in his enthusiasm. It's a comment that predates more recent lessons on integrationist tactics;

We ---- the United Europe Movement ---- we create the atmosphere, gather the forces and pave the way and then making certain concessions to party peace follow us up [sic] and make the ground, good.

Churchill underlines once again the new Europe's subservience to the UN and "complete subordination to the World Institute," sensing that the League of Nations in its first four years had made more headway than the UN had to date. It is here that the first main thrust of the speech explores the speaker's interpretation of European unity.

Now, I must make it clear that I consider from the outset the San Francisco Organization of the United Nations omitted a very important stage in the structure. They built the top story without putting in the intermediate floor which can be done with modern steel skyscraper constructions, but on the whole, it may have considerable inconvenience.

The UN could only work if it is founded on regional structures. Pre-empting something of the *Three Circles* speech that was to prove so significant in explaining his philosophy, and returning to his architectural theme, he says,

The regional organization is not a temple which alone can uphold the roof of the temple of peace. [...] I am bound to say I think that with these large groups

--- regional groups, the bigger problem will be taken away from the World Organization. They will consume their own sloth. They will deal with all kinds of matters which need never come up. And at the top, whereas all is cool and calm, there will be a representation not of all the nations that are members of the body, but of those who are chosen after much consideration to represent the regional groups.

Such an approach would reduce the ‘talking shop’ nature of the UN. It would be going too far to suggest however that it endorsed QMV, or of a single voice for the Europeans. Indeed, he continues by returning to Britain’s ‘otherness’, mirrored by the United States’ place in an Americas entity;

[...] but there are three combinations of Democratic peoples sharing democratic common ideas. The United States and the Pan-American Union --- the Western Hemisphere, in fact, as one paramount and group-conscious body. There is the British Commonwealth and their Empire spreading all over and firmly united and within itself in its own elastic and unprecise manner. There is the British Commonwealth, however, which is already forged and Europe -- - United Europe as we hope it will become.

These three pillars – with Britain and Europe apart – is Churchill’s vision;

These three groups I have mentioned: The United States, the British Commonwealth and Europe, joined together, will be the foundation of an international association --- a great body of military strength and economic potentiality and a more united and positive moral purpose than any combination ever set up in the world. That is the case for United Europe and for our efforts to breathe into existence.

Such a “union of the democracies” he suggests might even have its own sobriquet: “Free World”.

A novel line is his vision on former colonies, which seems to pre-empt ASEAN. A fourth pillar was possible, but not just now;

Southeast Asia is in confusion at this present time. There is nothing that can be presented there now. [...] We cannot wait for Southeastern Asia to reach harmony and accord. That may take some time.

This is distinct from his position on “Asia”, which he sees as a threat to the West.

Europe was the issue of the day, however. There were practical reasons Churchill expresses for that; the Commonwealth already existed, and the OAS had made some progress. But Europe lay in rubble still riven with hatred. United Europe would remove the threats that lay with that situation. Allowed to combine, “their productive potential might well be after the passage of years as great as that of the United States and generally, enough to bear their own burden --- enough not to cast them upon you.”

Churchill then briefly turns to the concrete fact of the new European Assembly, and to ongoing disputes on how this would function. Once again, Churchill avoids declaring for a preferred system in favour of the general concept of building a shared (rather than common) general identity;

There are still disputes as to how the different delegations from the different countries are to be chosen, but they will not at all hamper or impede the establishment of the European Assembly. They must be made Continent conscious. They must begin to feel they are Europeans --- not perhaps in the full sense that you consider yourselves Americans, but at any time this idea must grow if the old hatreds that have wrecked the world and afflicted such misery and damage upon us all are to be effaced.

Perhaps it is the next section which is the most important, as it provides us with evidence that Churchill's pique with the Schuman Plan did not force him into a corner. He was not a federal idealist but a pragmatist;

I wish to make it clear at this point. We are not committed to Federal --- to a strict Federal system --- to a rigid Federal system. It would be a great mistake at the present time to attempt to make blueprints of constitutions and endeavor [sic] to solve along rigid symmetrical or logical lines all difficulties that exist. Every one of these sixteen States has a long history of its own. The European States and all their quarrels and hatreds and prejudices are there. Their children and descendents were sent out to the New World. They cannot be regimented. It must grow. They cannot be enforced from the summit by paper constitutions, but out of it will come the forces which happily used and well used will create an entity strong enough to survive --strong enough to be of great aid to World Organization and to world survival. The entity will grow and the divergencies [sic] may all be recognized and even differences contributed to that variety which is to my mind an essential part of an agreeable life of our own. Therefore, I say, let us not bind ourselves down by attempting to create strict Federal constitutions at the present time.

Again, on Britain's formal part in this, in addition to imperial obligations

[...] we have also a duty to Europe and an interest in Europe just as in the same way we also have our part to play in the fraternal association of the English speaking world. We seek no undue pre-eminence in the matter, but we think we can reconcile the problems of the British Empire--- the Commonwealth, which is now our life and duty, with active and fruitful association with the nations of United Europe.

Germany and Eastern Europe are key components to settling peace on the continent.<sup>xxvi</sup> A more imminent step was setting up the European Court for Human Rights, which Churchill admires, strongly positioned in the context of the work of the UN and as a tool for reaching beyond the Iron Curtain: "It's all followed by this conception of the regional unity first and then the building up of the world higher control", meaning once again (as per his February speech) a mechanism to stop the oppression of dissidents. He predicted the ECHR would foster a UN equivalent within a year.

The conclusion is one of a global context, and America's part in it,

to bring into effective organization a Europe which will look back on its past only to draw inspiration from its romance and great tradition and will look forward to the future unracked [sic] by hatred and revenge. You are playing a worthy part in World Organization which I am glad and even proud to think the United States will ever be the strongest force.

In sum, even addressing a private gathering of the future supporters of a pro-integrationist body such as ACUE, Churchill does not deviate from the lines he has been pursuing on more public platforms. He wants "United Europe" as a mechanism to stop future war. He sees Europe as a pillar of the UN, alongside the British Commonwealth, the Americas, and in the more distant future the democratic countries of Asia. He is not endorsing a federal Europe, but leaves that for future resolution: building a common sense of purpose and shared concerns was more important and urgent than issues of machinery.

So now we have a more rounded picture. While it may indeed be true that Churchill was a founding father of European integration, he was a surrogate. The celebrated artist was working with the astonishingly broadest of brushes. There was no master plan; only a desire for the warring states of the Rhine to avoid a conflagration in an A-bomb age. Once that seemed to have advanced, reconciliation should reach out beyond the Elbe.

If federalists were fellow travellers, they shared the journey but not the end destination. If Churchill was ambivalent about what he wanted, he was certain about what was achievable, and recognised without criticism the hostility to measures that surpassed that. If he was pro-European, it was as one pillar to the United Nations, in which Britain and its Commonwealth would buttress more than just the single wall. If he saw threats to business of being outside of the Franco-German Community, he saw better opportunities in other free trade models.

Two years after his last major Europe speech, he even was still talking at the White House of the need to support the union of English-speaking peoples "in close and increasing friendship"<sup>xxvii</sup>.

Yes, European federalists can thank him for his part reconciling France and Germany. But the truth of the matter is that Churchill was always bigger than Europe.

## AV: The Great Debate - Revisited

*The Bill is half-baked, and the part of it that is baked, so to speak, does not give nourishment to the people or help with their democratic rights.*

Phil Wilson MP (2010)

A Conservative Prime Minister. A coalition government. Liberals in Whitehall ministries. A debate over changing the political system towards the Alternative Vote. No, this isn't 2010, but wartime Britain.

In 1944, a Speaker's Conference was established to review changes in the electoral system. These were the redistribution of seats; the reform of the national and local franchise; the conduct, cost, and expenses of both candidates and MPs; and the method of election itself. Surprisingly for those who think that AV is a modern controversy, the motion was also debated "That the Conference recommend that any election in a single-member constituency where there are more than two candidates (other than University constituencies) the election be held on the method of voting known as the Alternative Vote."

How did this debate, seemingly curious today, come about?

In 1940, with the Second World War underway, MPs debated the Prolongation of Parliament Bill. In the course of it, the Home Secretary gave an undertaking that, when a General Election became practicable, there would be an opportunity for the House to consider if it so desired issues of electoral reform. This offer was repeated in subsequent Bills in 1941 and 1942.

In 1942, a Departmental Committee on Electoral Machinery reported to the Home Secretary.

On 14 July 1943, the Prime Minister responded to an oral PQ by rejecting a 'Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry' into electoral reform. But precisely three months later, there was something of a reversal of policy as he then announced pending legislation on constituency redistribution, adding that he would invite the Speaker to preside over a Conference.

The Bill for temporary local election provisions saw Third Reading in December, and a promised two day debate in February ended with a motion passed endorsing the establishment of a Speaker's Conference. That colloquium submitted an initial report after 14 meetings on 24 May, including the matter of the election system itself; the final report was submitted on 20 July 1944 after another 6 meetings.

The list of participants was of course a determiner of its outcome. Seventeen Conservatives and Unionists participated, along with ten 'Socialists'.<sup>xxviii</sup> At this stage, there were two Liberal Parties, with a split having occurred over the formation of the previous National Government. Top of the Liberal Whips' list was Megan Lloyd George, MP for Anglesey. The family connections are obvious, but the Liberal Whip rather noted in endorsing her candidacy, "She has the qualifications of being a

Welsh Member, a woman, and was a member of the Ullswater Committee on Electoral Reform.” The Liberal Nationals’ Whip’s note was topped by J. Stanley Holmes for Harwich, a former London County Councillor. J. Henderson Stewart had put his name forward but had subsequently arranged to go on a deputation to the West Indies (an early example of a ‘jolly’?). Stephen N. Furness was another possible, but he had time constraints as he was chairman of a shipbuilding company. In the event, Thomas Maguay was to be appointed, a prominent non-conformist representing a large industrial seat (Gateshead). The peers would present more of a problem. With Lord Rea selected for the Liberals, the Liberal Nationals agitated without success for an extra seat for themselves on the grounds that they had a bigger Commons representation “than the followers of Sir Archibald Sinclair”.

Two independents were also on the announcement list. These were T.E. Harvey, who was an Independent Progressive and a former Liberal representing a universities seat (hence his relevance); and D.N. Pritt, an Independent Labour Member somewhat of the more Soviet line who was later replaced by another gritty independent Socialist, James Maxton.

The archives of the meetings are held in Victoria Tower, in Parliament.<sup>xxix</sup> They reveal the principle concerns of the investigation: local charity donations by politicians; voting on school premises; the voting age (Parliament after a Speaker’s Conference over 1916-7 had lowered it from 21 as a one-off to enable ex-servicemen to vote); political advantage gained from motor cars (a limit on restricting the number to be used for ferrying voters was rejected by a margin of one); absent voting; deposits; possible limits on donations by politicians to their political parties; and so on. Constituency boundaries, or rather the principles to be followed by the Boundary Commission, were foremost. The Committee also looked at the voting paper itself, the total number of seats (which should remain unchanged), and even including the form of address of a woman voter on the electoral register. Intriguingly, we also see a controversial idea lately associated with Speaker Bercow. Sir Richard Acland had written to the Conference suggesting that it should consider the creation of a special “St Stephen’s Constituency” for the Speaker. The panel however assessed that this lay outside their remit, adding, “it was undesirable that this matter should be reopened so soon after the subject had been exhaustively considered by the Select Committee on Parliamentary Elections (Mr Speaker’s Seat), which reported in 1939.”

Proportional Representation was discussed on 29 March. The debate itself is highly interesting, particularly in the context of subsequent developments over the electoral system when applied to MEPs (where the negatives today proven were already here predicted). As PR was rejected (by a vote of 24:5), our interest is drawn more to the AV debate proper which took place in the following meeting.<sup>xxx</sup>

Miss Lloyd George’s arguments centred on the following points;

- Most of the objections made in the past session to PR did not apply to AV. There was no issue of enlarging the constituencies associated.
- It would only apply where there were more than two candidates standing in a seat.
- “It had the considerable advantage of ensuring that the candidate with the greatest number of votes against him was not elected”.

- It had been unanimously recommended by the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform.
- It had originally been included in the Representation of the People Act 1918, and in Labour's 1931 Government Bill (until removed in the Lords).

A general discussion ensued. Now came the countervailing arguments;

- The danger that undue power would be given to localised minorities, the need for whose second preference votes "opened the way to corrupt and secret bargaining."
- "Several members of the Conference expressed their apprehension as to the psychological effect which the adoption of the Alternative Vote would be likely to have on candidates. A dominant consideration, both in selecting the candidate and in conducting the election campaign [sic], would be how an arrangement could be made to obtain the second preferences of the supporters of a rival candidate."
- The three main parties represented three distinct approaches. None represented a compromise position. In seats that did not already elect by an outright majority, "no amount of adjustment of votes and preferences would secure the return of a person truly supported by a majority of the electorate. A successful candidate did not cease to be representative of a minority merely because he obtained the support of voters who liked him less than one of the other unsuccessful candidates, but happened to dislike him less than a third candidate" (a somewhat salient point).
- Examples used in illustrating the AV system showed that only second preferences of the group which commanded the smallest support were transferred: "Was not this factor of itself enough to condemn the system?"
- AV did not represent a form of Second Ballot, as supporters claimed. Votes were shifted without the initial results being known.
- The pro-AV argument of increasing interest in politics amongst the electorate did not stack up, given their favoured candidate would still not be returned.

A vote was taken. The Liberals, Liberal Nationals and Independents called Aye; Labour, the Conservatives and Unionists No. The motion was rejected 20 to 5. If there were any abstainers, the minutes would not have recorded them under the committee's rules, though it seems unlikely any were.

There the matter lay until this year. Reviewing the files however does reveal some intriguing insight into the philosophies underlying AV. One key submission came from Eliot Crawshay-Williams, a long-past former Liberal politician (prior to standing down in some acrimony in 1913, he had pursued a cause first put forward in a bill introduced in 1906 by prominent Liberal thinker and politician J. M. Robertson: the papers went to the Government Whips). Touchingly, he apologises that his house was destroyed by bombing in 1940 and he excuses his inability to append key paperwork. Intriguingly he cites Churchill's support for the principle of the Second Ballot from 1906 (a model such as we can see today, for instance, in how the French elect their President), but rejects it in favour of AV on the basis of there being only one poll. Newspaper readers who see pro-AV supporters citing Churchill as a sponsor of their argument should correspondingly discard it, as the great man endorsed a different system.

There was also a peculiar paper provided by John H Humphreys. This supported a form of inverted AV through the transfer of ‘surplus votes’, based on a system first explored by the Tasmanian Government in 1913. A candidate who had crossed an electoral threshold saw his surplus ballot papers picked randomly (or at least through the “Gregorian fractional method”) and distributed according to the second choices. While being in one sense correctly described as more fair than AV – since ‘winning votes’ are not wasted in this model – the point-based system for measuring thresholds is complicated, and the selection of surplus ballots utterly arbitrary. In other circumstances it would read like a spoof or a hoax.

Then there is the proposal to be found in the Liberals’ policy submission to the Panel.<sup>xxxii</sup> This chafes at the current iniquities to the point of astonishing excess. Citing the example of Asquith’s defeat at Paisley in 1924, it argues that the current system was leading to the loss of too many good MPs, asserting that after an election,

there is no assurance that the survivors will be the most distinguished among its members or the most capable parliamentarians.

In Asquith’s case, it declares that he had lost his seat despite gaining some millions of the popular vote amongst the country, and had been defeated “purely through local circumstances”;

There is nothing democratic about results of this kind, which indeed represent the frustration of the wishes of the electors.

This hubristic reproach utterly tarnishes the party’s arguments set out in those paragraphs about the need for AV. The electoral system, it declares, had worked tolerably well during the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century (ie when the Party had been in power!), but then circumstances had changed;

In the first place the electorate has enormously increased and has shown a far greater tendency to violent swings. The most cursory study of the poll book will reveal that the proportion of voters who have settled political convictions is very much smaller than it was before the last war.

Given such outrageous comments, it might now become clear why the subject of AV reform fits into a small book about controversies mainly dealing with the European Union. People have a beef with Brussels because of the way it has been developing in an undemocratic, distant manner, pushed by politicians (including a number though not all of today’s front bench Liberal Democrats) who are contemptuous of popular democracy.

One other remark needs to be made on the Liberal submission, and it is perhaps the pivotal one. The document called for AV to be established within the context of a structural change to constituencies. Larger seats would be formed, comprising three, four or five MPs. To make this work, the report explains, the only satisfactory approach was to develop a new voting system. In turn, what that means is that today’s Liberal Democrat proponents of AV who are arguing for it are missing the point of



their predecessors. It was meant to be a small part of a broader package of electoral change. It was not really an issue for isolated consideration.

But 1944 was not the only instance of a Speaker's Convention reviewing AV. Readers may be surprised to learn that it became something of a generational perennial.

Though the geological evidence is even harder to find than for 1944, there are traces of the debate from 1917. In that year, what may well have been the first ever Speaker's Conference was called to examine electoral reform, though it seems that very few working documents have survived.

Some mythology has arisen as a result, suggesting that this was AV's lost opportunity.

Now, that Conference did make a series of recommendations, and many (but not all) of these were indeed unanimous. But they were put forward as a package and there were a large number of them bundled together.

These were certainly not minor reforms, and changes to the electoral system formed a tiny element of them. They included the issues of women's voting rights; the voting age; and the possibility of federal devolution.

Nevertheless, the Speaker's Conference was so far from unanimous from the very outset that it was boycotted by key opponents, most particularly over proposals for Ireland. Carson informed Selborne for instance that he refused to serve on it as, "I do not believe in this House having any right or power to make these changes."<sup>xxxii</sup>

The myth is also one of Lords obstructionism. But by the time the Bill reached Second Reading on 22 May 1917, a solid opposition had formed even in the Commons. The hostility of the Lords to parts of the package emboldened them to separate voting system reform from other elements.

It is not difficult to see why the Lords did feel able to ditch the proposed change to the ballot. Whereas Universal Suffrage and Irish Parliamentary reform were viewed as repaying debts arising from mass mobilisation and the war effort (from women and lower class servicemen non-voters, and the Irish Divisions at the Somme), in comparison changes to the voting system must have been considered as modalities owed to none. The context was also one of the emerging changes in the status of the Dominions, the Irish question, updating the electoral system, and (without expressly defining it) moves to recognise new technologies and shifts in society. These were massive reforms and these were indeed in many cases adapted in part or whole.<sup>xxxiii</sup> Changing *the way* people voted was not as radical as changing *who* voted.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Or as Asquith had stated in his Prime Ministerial speech for the debate setting up the Speaker's Commission,

it is eminently desirable that you should provide an electoral basis which will make that Parliament reflective and representative of the general opinion of the country, and give to its decisions a moral authority which you cannot obtain from what I may call a scratch, improvised, and makeshift electorate.

It is also worth recalling the reticence even in certain Liberal quarters about installing their preferred system, STV. This was their swansong in power, and some Liberal politicians were highly critical of the prospect of reforming an electoral mechanism that was yet to maim the party in the emerging Labour heartlands.

Here then is a crucial point; AV was **not** what was on offer in 1917. The Speaker's Conference proposed reductions in the registration period for electors; opening up of the franchise; changes to candidates' expenses (though not properly speaking part of its remit); and registration of soldiers and sailors. "Some measure of woman suffrage" was agreed, but not unanimously, and sending mixed messages by approving the ages of either 30 or 35.

Conditionally, the report recommended an extension of existing multiple member constituencies in Great Britain (such as the City of London, Oxford and Cambridge which each had two seats) to generate more borough seats, segregating rural and industrial areas within counties, with an optimal size of 3-5 members. More university seats would also be formed by combining the other major seats of learning in England and in Scotland. But these constituency areas were dependent on changes to the voting system.

This is where the confusion has crept in. The Conference states at the end that "at any election in a single member constituency where there are more than two candidates, the election shall be held on the system of voting known as the alternative vote." Crucially, however, that expression at that period could be used loosely to generically cover forms of voting other than FPTP. Aside from the obvious observation that AV is a single seat system and the reforms supported multi-member seats, STV is clearly spelled out as the recommended reform earlier in the text. Explaining that constituency changes were conditional on the adoption of the recommended voting change, the report states;

(This resolution would only become applicable in the event of a system of Proportional Representation being adopted, as recommended in a subsequent resolution.)

The bill that subsequently brought the voting change forward was not called the AV Bill – it was the Proportional Representation Bill. The group of MPs who opposed it was not called the anti-AV Committee – it was the House of Commons Anti-PR Committee. This was furthermore a campaign involving no fewer than 182 fully signed up MPs, presumably all backbenchers. While predominantly Conservatives, its Honorary Secretary for instance was Liberal (later Labour) MP George Croydon Marks.

So in summary, 1916-17 did indeed bring in a broad package of radical reforms to British and Irish democracy. But it was STV, and not AV, that was floated among them; and far from being blocked simply by a recalcitrant House of Lords as the myth now runs, voting system reform did not have overwhelming support amongst MPs. It's understandable that misunderstanding has emerged today, but it's an error all the same.

A forgotten corollary to the above debate was the Proportional Representation (Local Election Bill), which seems to have been on the cards in 1920. We have little data on this other than the memorandum of a discussion involving representatives from local government.<sup>xxxvi</sup> Leeds Aldermen from both the Liberals and Conservatives came to meet a number of MPs (perhaps involved with committee stage of the bill) to set out their stall. The aldermen explained that the council had passed a resolution supporting the bill without dissent, with larger wards to be represented by five members each. “Unless the Bill was passed this session,” they complained, “they would have to fall back on the present system of yearly elections with a large number of Wards and the chance to adopt P.R. would be lost as the extension scheme owing to local circumstances could not be delayed.”

From our viewpoint, we point to the salient fact that the proposed change in the law for local electoral reform, as endorsed *nihil obstands* at Leeds, was not for AV but for PR.

Finally, the archives take us to a proposal for electoral reform from 1965-6. This was the third known Speaker’s Conference looking at the topic of AV as part of a broader reform of voting changes.<sup>xxxvii</sup> As such, it received input from a variety of bewildering organisations whose interest in AV is as peripheral as some of the charities supposedly supporting it today; the National Campaign for the Abolition of the Intensive Rearing of Farm Animals supported STV on the basis that individual candidates could be ranked based on their declared position on compassion in animal husbandry, an argument that luckily for them and any charitable status they may have held that did not come under scrutiny.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

The Electoral Reform Society (ERS) submitted a document calling for PR, alongside the Communist Party, several local Liberal Associations, and several individuals.

The panel took some time to get to AV. Not for the first time, AV was considered the poor man’s relation to STV; MPs preferred to debate about the latter and saw the former as a default secondary option. The Joint Secretaries supplied this note as a starting point;

#### The Alternative Vote

This system achieves the purpose of a second ballot without having recourse to a separate election. If, however, many candidates stand, their successive elimination may entail considerable labour. The system is open to the criticism (especially if there are three candidates all nearly on a level) that the candidate excluded would perhaps beat either of the other candidates if he stood alone against him.<sup>xxxix</sup>

Electoral reform was debated in several sessions, whose formerly-confidential deliberations can today be found in the Parliamentary archive.<sup>xl</sup> An initial debate took place on 9 November 1966; an extensive debate on STV took place on 16 November; and more debate on STV and some on AV occurred on 23 November.<sup>xli</sup>

The 2 November session that precedes the internal debates is among the more interesting records, however, as it introduced representatives from the ERS to expand

on the material they had already submitted.<sup>xliii</sup> Its chairman, Lt Col Brightley, began by explaining that,

the system we advocate, having studied the election systems throughout the world, both those used practically and during elections, is one which we term preferential voting with quota [hand-corrected from 'vote'] counting, or the single transferrable vote, because we think it does provide a real choice between persons of the party, because each constituency would return three or more members and would also make the elector himself more politically conscious and, and of course, more election conscious. We feel that the system we advocate also gives reasonable security of tenure to all Members of Parliament who serve their communities well, and it follows that it ensures reasonable correspondence between the political complexion of the House of Commons and that of the electorate as a whole.<sup>xliiii</sup>

This was reinforced in some depth by the ERS's researcher, Miss Lakeman. While recognising there were several models, STV ("preferential voting with quota counting") was the priority and AV was casually dismissed;

As I have said, election of one person at a time is essentially unsatisfactory

The remainder of the debate focused on the mechanics of STV representation. AV was not something on the ERS's agenda in 1966, though it did briefly appear in the commentary in a reference to Australia's AV system in passing, with the unhelpful observation, "It is very difficult to find valid comparisons because usually conditions are different. If you compare two countries, conditions are very different. If you compare one country at different times, other things may have changed." But more interesting is the ERS's own commentary on tactical voting in that country;

The Australian parties do, unfortunately, try to impose on their voters a particular order of voting and, in general, they are only too successful.

So much for the claim that AV ends tactical voting!<sup>xliiv</sup> Their spokesman continues,

In a single-member constituency if you have three parties polling nearly the same number of votes and you have one party that is the second choice of the other two, then it is perfectly possible for the second choice party to win all the seats for one third of the first preferences, provided that the party's candidates are at least in second place to start with.

STV in contrast carried the added bonus of electing representatives from the elector's choice of party by transferring in most cases votes within parties rather than from one party to another. This meant that the "centre party" would not be the one that benefited unduly from the system.

The ERS did not contribute further to the debate, which now turned on matters of intellectual interest but with fleeting relevance to us here. Sir David Renton, a longstanding Liberal electoral campaigner and reformer, for instance warned that these reforms,

Would lead to an injustice because I really do believe that the centre party or parties would always have a built-in advantage. I think that is inevitable, however much one tries to argue the mathematics of the matter. The second choice of the left is going to be to vote for the centre. The second choice of people of the right is going to be to vote for the centre and not for the party on the left. We would never get away from that, so it does give a built-in advantage to a centre party.

He also added a further dash of cynicism. The Liberals had been the dominant party in government between 1933 and 1918, twice as long as the Conservatives, culminating in the 1906 landslide. But,

During all those years they did not introduce proportional representation or the alternative vote or any other system of electoral reform, although they did in those times think a great deal about the franchise and greatly extended it in various ways. Now, I say this, that if the Labour Party could rise to the strength which it has attained by 1945 in 50 years within the present system, then, surely, it is fair to suggest to the Liberal Party that they might be able to revive their fortunes within the present system, too.

Right at its close and without enthusiasm, the debate moved onto AV proper. Turton assigns Churchill here to the supporting side of AV as an enduring partisan of that method, but he does so in defining AV as a mechanism where “either the second preferences would be counted or you would have a second ballot”, which as we have seen are two separate mechanisms. It seems the current confusion on Churchill’s views on AV stretch back almost to his lifetime.

Turton then assails the pro-AV argument;

But the drawbacks to the alternative vote are that you are not electing the candidate most voters want but the candidate who the least voters dislike, and that seems to me to be the weakness of that. Again, as with this single transferable vote, the delay in the declaration of the poll is, in my view, a distinct disadvantage.

Another MP warned that AV alongside STV would increase the number of political parties in circulation, especially the smaller ones, though this was contested. The argument of contentious single issue politics – here, abortion, compulsory purchase orders or railway closures – were raised as major examples of how single issue lobbying by interest groups could increasingly feature.

Finally, in the dying five minutes of the debate, Eric Lubbock at last turned to defend AV. He did so by endorsing the principles of the fairness of the multi-member STV system while acknowledging that STV did not maintain the constituency link; his argument rests on the peculiar and time-rushed non-sequitur that AV bridged both gaps. It reads like a throw-away line by someone who had lost the debate he really wanted to fight, and by now had run out of time.

STV was rejected by a vote of 19 to 1. A follow on vote on AV was then lost by the same margin. The debate then moved onto broadcasting. Once again by an

overwhelming margin MPs had rejected both STV and, in its wake, its half-hearted cousin AV.

The Speaker's Panel was ambivalent about AV in 1917, and voted overwhelmingly against it in 1944 and 1965. There in each case it fell for a generation. The debate has today been rekindled thanks to the arrival of a new coalition in Whitehall.

Perhaps we should round off with a word from a position paper from the National Labour Organisation;

The success of institutions is intimately connected to the character of the people they serve and the fact that an electoral system has worked well or badly elsewhere provides little evidence that Britons will work it well or badly. Only actual trial is likely to reveal the superiority of one system over another in this country.

Some will understandably argue: why risk it? Why endure a permanent state of coalition in Government? The deeper point is perhaps this: has Britain changed so much that its once-solid political system is no longer relevant, and that society has become so changed that we are become a people of fraction and barter rather than inspired leadership and vision? It is a depressing thought.

## “The Blatant Lies of Edward Heath”?

*When we joined, we were told we were joining a Common Market. Sir Edward Heath now says he wanted a federal Europe all along. But that is not what he said at the time.*

Norman Lamont MP, Daily Telegraph, 20 December 1996

The Ted Heath years are often viewed in retrospective as a lost opportunity, particularly with regard to economic reform and to Ulster. However, that Prime Minister did succeed in one of his central objectives: getting the UK into the Common Market. But did he go to dishonest attempts to achieve it?

The debate reheated thanks to an interview Heath agreed to in 1996, for a documentary. *The Poisoned Chalice* explored Britain's relationship with the Community. Questioned directly as to whether he had known the extent of future economic integration at stake, Heath bluntly – too bluntly – responded in the affirmative. Yet others who had been involved in the debate at the time had different recollections as to the arguments being openly espoused.

Heath's wartime record was exemplary. He ended it as a half colonel, and his portrait hangs down today from the main dining room at the Honourable Artillery Company. He witnessed fascism (in Spain and indeed at a Nuremberg Rally), and he fought against it. We can give him credit for his motivation.

But that still leaves his approach to seeking an enduring peace in question.

Take, for instance, the issue of fisheries. Heath sent a personal letter to Norwegian Prime Minister Trygve Bratteli indicating the desirability of settling the issue “in a manner that will appear satisfactory to our fishing interests.” The emphasis, however, lay in the appearance, and the matter of honour led to the Norwegian fisheries' minister's resignation. In that series of events lies proof that deception was involved towards the British fishing community at least. Territorial waters was the price of Britain's accession; the Heath Government accepted this; yet an attempt was made to persuade MPs and the public that fishermen's rights were going to be protected, by ministers who knew full well that they had already been sold out.

But what of a broader sense of deception? We should start with the letter from the then Lord Chancellor to Heath dated 14 December 1960, at a time when the latter had recently begun as Lord Privy Seal with Foreign Office responsibilities to handle the first set of negotiations. That missive explains, “I must emphasise that in my view the surrenders of sovereignty are serious ones,” adding “these objections ought to be brought out into the open.” Heath's governmental role being relatively minor, we might yet not underscore too much this episode.

What then of the publication during the 1975 referendum pamphlet *Why You Should Vote Yes*, which stated that “English Common Law is not affected. For a few commercial and industrial purposes there is need for Community Law. But our criminal law, trial by jury, presumption of innocence remain unaltered. So do our civil rights.” The booklet makes a fascinating read of pre-revisionism, particularly given

more recent JHA developments. But again this is not Heath's fault, being the work of *Britain in Europe*, one of the two accredited sides in the debate. All this shows is that if there was dissimulation at work, it was more widespread.

This is confirmed if we look at the FCO position.<sup>xlv</sup> In a policy discussion paper from 1970 entitled *What Sort of Western Europe Do We Want?*, the Head of FCO Planning Staff, Sir Percy Cradock, remarked,

The main theme of the paper is that our long-term objective should be a Community of Ten with complete economic, military and political integration. This should be our compass bearing.

Reviewing the future of the EEC forwards to 1985, the paper foresaw the end of Sterling as a Reserve Currency and therefore postulated that the only options were the country belonging to a single currency or dollar domination. The paper's basic thesis was around the objective of a federal Europe. One commentator cautioned that such an end would not occur by 1985;

Our attitude over the next two decades should therefore be, I suggest, to bear the federal objective in mind as a distant aim and in the meanwhile to work towards it in a piecemeal and pragmatic way in various fields as opportunity offers and public opinion develops.

This context, subsequently revealed, now puts a different light on a comment made by Geoffrey Ripon in 1970.<sup>xlvi</sup> Asked whether the Government shared the European Movement's views of seeking a United States of Europe, Ripon elliptically replied,

It is important that my hon. Friend should understand this. It will not arise for this, or, probably, the next Government to determine. But if views of other Community Governments change once we are members of the Community, then the British Government will express their own view at that time.

Similarly on 29 October 1970, on the integrationist Werner Report, the Hansard reads,

They are not directly matters for negotiation as such but certainly there will be discussions, and I would imagine discussions in depth, about the implications for the future. The matters which we raise in relation to economic and monetary integration are not for tomorrow, they are matters which will arise when we are members of the Community – [HON. MEMBERS: "No."] – and therefore in a position to express a view.

We have said, and I should make this clear, that we have no objection to the long term objectives which the Community has in mind. In these matters we are prepared to go as far and as fast as they are. All this will take a very long time and there may be great disagreements about the ultimate form and the steps by which we proceed to those objectives.

This peregrination of thought was immediately challenged by an MP, who observed that at that day's PMQs the PM had said that there were no political and constitutional issues involved in the accession negotiations because they were not being negotiated at that moment in time.



It would seem therefore that Whitehall was a place of *deferred guilt*. Future policy might turn federalist, and might even be preferred that way, but that would be in the future, and assuming the UK was part of the EEC that would be one topic of discussion. Thus a future mainstay of policy making was assured remarkably early - the derogation of blame.

These examples have increasingly been shown to fit a broader departmental pattern. A declassified Confidential report dated 21<sup>st</sup> June 1971 has obtained some small measure of notoriety.<sup>xlviii</sup> This text, *Legal and Constitutional Implications of Entry of UK into EEC*” and again intended for Geoffrey Ripon’s desk, explored long term consequences that the minister would publicly avoid;

It will be in British interests after entry that the Community should develop toward an effectively harmonised fiscal and monetary system together with a fairly coordinated foreign and defence policy. This would mean in the very long term major changes in the way in which British national relations with the rest of the world are managed and important implications for external sovereignty. It could only take place if there were a strengthening of the institutions of the Community with consequential weakening of national institutions including Parliament.

The strategic objective from at least one important FCO desk was one of integration;

That the Community within its present limitations should present little challenge to national sovereignty is perhaps inevitable; but it will be in the national interest after accession to encourage the development of the Community towards an effectively harmonised economic, fiscal and monetary system and a fairly closely coordinated and consistent foreign and defence policy. This sort of grouping would bring major politico/economic advantages but would take many years to develop and to win political acceptance. If it came to do so then essential aspects of sovereignty both internal and external would increasingly be transferred to the Community itself.

We can begin to more properly connect Sir Edward with this process through the Government’s White Paper from July 1971, *The United Kingdom and the European Communities*. Notably, it caveats the context of integration. In the first place, the UK had been less immediately conscious of the need to become part of the “unity in Europe”. Furthermore, it remained preoccupied by the threatened change in its relationship with Commonwealth countries.

For these among other reasons we were not ready to go as far and as fast as the other countries of Western Europe in the move for a more integrated European economy, though at this time we should have been welcomed as partners by all the Six countries.

So much for past policy. But what was the EEC about?

The Community is no federation of provinces or counties. It constitutes a Community of great and established nations, each with its own personality and traditions. The practical working of the Community accordingly reflects the reality that sovereign governments are represented round the table. On a

question where a Government considers that vital national interests are involved, it is established that the decision should be unanimous.

The theme of a veto over “vital issues” would often reappear, though it would remain ill-defined, other than a bald statement that it was a guarantee of the national interest;

the commitment represents the voluntary undertaking of a sovereign state to observe policies which it has helped to form. There is no question of any erosion of essential national sovereignty; what is proposed is a sharing and an enlargement of individual national sovereignties in the general interest.

That, of course, is not *exactly* what we ended up with today. The problem lies in the terminology being interpretable in contradictory ways. Ambiguity equally entered into the text of the enabling Act. Section 2 (4), on the supremacy of Community law over national law, was expressed with such lack of clarity that it is possible to speculate that this was done on purpose for political advantage.

If so, the intent was to soften the vote during the EEC accession debate. An estimated two million words were spoken during thirty days on the Floor covering the Bill, 43 days if you included the debate on the principle, and with 94 Divisions on amendments.

The issues were of course varied, and some pre-empted later debates (one pro-integrationist speaker, for instance, commented on how, “It is vital to have members of the European Parliament who are members of this House”).<sup>xlviii</sup> But in the main, the key issues were those of sugar, New Zealand butter, fisheries limits, and the costs – or rather, the benefits – of accession.

On the last day of the Committee proceedings (5 July 1972), the sovereignty issue was more properly explored thanks to Sir Elwyn Jones. New Clause 11 reaffirmed the sovereignty of Parliament in the face of the Accession Bill, confirmed in effect the right to leave, and asserted Parliamentary sovereignty over the European Court of Justice. The Government’s line of defence was to attempt to associate sovereignty and omnipotence, though as Enoch Powell observed on the day,

Every country, sovereign or not, is limited in what it can do. But sovereignty is concerned with whether there is another human political authority which can, not by force but legally, override the resolutions of a national authority. That is what is meant by countries which aspire to be free. The emerging countries of Africa know that their power is limited in an infinite number of ways. But they are determined to be sovereign and they will defend their sovereignty.<sup>xlix</sup>

The clause was even supported by a federalist in the Chamber, Alexander Lyon.

Speaking in support of the Government, Selwyn Gummer in turn criticised the amendment;

I believe that in a very profound sense that would write down the whole nature of the Bill, diminish its whole concept, and diminish the concept of our entry into the Community.

This was, of course, a backhanded agreement of the principals at stake. Other Government lines were that the amendment was “short-sighted and nationalistic”, “timid, fearful, backward-looking”, and an exaggeration. This was not about a loss of sovereignty, but entering into a partnership.

The debate was concluded by the Solicitor-General (who with Geoffrey Ripon drove this bill through). Sir Geoffrey Howe, on behalf of the Government, explained,

the ultimate supremacy of Parliament will not be affected, and it will not be affected because it cannot be affected.

But he also admitted to the supremacy of a new uniform Community law. In response, Ronald King Murray rebutted this approach;

We on this side believe that we should face fairly and squarely the possibility of such conflict between sovereignty and the Community’s writ – indeed, that we owe it to our future partners in Europe to declare ourselves openly and frankly on this matter.

Come the Third Reading, Howe’s position had shifted somewhat:

There is no purpose served by pretending there is no constitutional innovation. But, above all, no purpose is served by suggesting that direct applicability does not mean what it says.<sup>1</sup>

The position was then explicitly set out that there was no loss of sovereignty involved, as Parliament would by its actions be accepting the loss of sovereignty! This induced astonished laughter. Howe tried to develop the argument more firmly;

A decision to share power to the common advantage is an enhancement rather than a loss of sovereignty; and for so long as we remain a member of the Communities, pooling decisions in the interests of Europe as a whole rather than looking to the narrow interests of a single State, that, too, will be a deliberate and continuing exercise of national sovereignty.

This was, needless to say, met with incredulity.

Yet we see in all these debates nothing of Heath. We can pin opprobrium by association for cabinet’s muddle. We have to turn to his speeches over the accession period for direct association with any developed “lie”.

On 5 May 1971, Heath provided a Europe Day message for European television. The height of this vague speech, intended for a foreign audience, lay in a near-throwaway line;

If our negotiations are successful, then Europe too could find a single voice which would once again be powerful in the world.

On 21 June 1971, at Wilton Park, he provided a more important analysis in which he didn’t so much review Churchill’s idea of the three sets of concentric circles of interest, as destroy it. As he does, he immediately rebuts the sovereignty argument;

What does this mean for us? There are some in this country who fear that in going into Europe we shall in some way sacrifice independence and

sovereignty; even that we shall begin to lose our national identity. These fears I need hardly say are completely unjustified and have been greatly exaggerated.

Britain would accept EEC procedures, but these would not be a threat. In his broadcast on 8 July 1971, he rehearses the arguments for accession;

We have got the Community to agree that their rules for fishing must be changed to safeguard our fishermen.

Meanwhile, he admits that butter, cheese and beef will cost more, other items would stay the same price, and “fruit and vegetables could well come down”. Nul points, then, for the CFP, and only half right on the CAP.

Less than a week later, on 14 July 1971, he was addressing the Central Council, at Westminster’s Central Hall. Here he explored more on the debate to come, particularly issues relating to economics. But he also took the opportunity to throw in a message about how the sovereignty debate had been misunderstood;

members of the Community reach their major conclusions by discussion and agreement, not by imposing a majority vote.

On issues of vital national interest (again, left ambiguous), the matter would be decided unanimously. Heath’s line on pooling sovereignty sank to an absurd metaphor:

Sovereignty is the power which a nation has to make decisions for the benefit of its citizens. It is a power to be used, not kept locked away in a cupboard.

The next Europe-relevant speech, on 10 September 1971 to Scottish Conservatives at Glasgow, is notable only for its defence of the absence of any referendum. It is the following event that is perhaps the most significant of all.

In Zurich, on 17 September 1971, Heath found himself in the same square as where Churchill spoke his own key European speech. Now the inner Heath emerges;

Those of us who have worked for that cause over many years may sometimes be tempted to feel impatient at the slow rate of progress which we have been able to achieve.

He rejects the Commonwealth model for Britain’s future, and implicitly with it, Churchill.

The concept held by some of a cohesive political, defensive and economic Commonwealth bloc centred on Britain has never become a reality. But the Commonwealth does provide a bridge between races and continents, a bridge which I believe, can prove as useful to Europe as it is to Britain.

The EEC’s objectives should include a common foreign policy. This was especially encouraged in relation to Eastern Europe, and the USSR.

I see no reason why the enlarged Community should not work out a common West European policy, and decide together upon the means for carrying that policy into effect.

It seems to me inevitable that progress towards a common foreign policy will be accompanied by increasing cooperation on defence.

And again, on other areas of integration;

As a member of the enlarged Community, we in Britain will welcome progress towards economic and monetary union, which will enable Europe to speak with a single, independent and powerful voice in international counsels on these matters.

Heath's vision is now finally spelled out in black and white;

Let us even dare to hope that a united Europe may be the means of bringing about that still wider unity among mankind which must be our ultimate goal.

The problem, of course, is that it was not explained to a British audience. On his return to the UK, Heath's speech three days later on 20 September 1971 to the Atlantic Treaty Association at Church House downplays any threat to NATO commitments, though it does briefly toy with the "I word", even if ambiguity remains;

In Europe the process has already gone beyond co-operation. It has moved on to common action and integration.

The following day (a busy schedule indeed for the Prime Minister!), the EEC briefly features in another speech, this time back in the constituency at the Bexley Rotary Club. Here, he explained that it was "natural and right" that much of the debate in the UK has been about the standard of living. So Ted is back from the excursion to the clouds of idealism and dealing with the economy. There is still some aspiration in there, though shorn of the politically controversial;

I look forward to the day when, in the main fields of advanced technology, there will be truly European companies able to compete on an equal basis with companies of a similar size in the United States.

Meanwhile, of the CAP he declares that "this is not a static policy designed to subsidise inefficient farmers on the Continent from here to eternity." The central theme is returning to an established theme of initial costs measured against long-term economic benefits.

On 15 November 1971 came that year's Lord Mayor's Banquet. The EEC is back to becoming an ill-defined abstract goal, with remarks such as, "I am one of those who have for over twenty years had before them a vision of a Britain in a united Europe. I have visualised Britain as a member of a Europe united economically," and, "I have believed in Britain as a member of a Europe united politically."

This is candy floss integrationism. His speech on 22 January 1972 in Brussels, on signing the accession treaty, is remarkable for being utterly unremarkable. The Panorama Interview, on 24 January 1972 (which included two foreign journalists on the interview panel), also was quite pedestrian.

I've always said that the argument about – on the political side – whether we now, all of us are going to have a political federation or confederation is a sterile argument, and surely everything is showing that all the members of the

community are moving towards a closer relationship, for example in the monetary questions.

The CAP was not, he explained, grossly inefficient – it's just that there were very great misunderstandings in Britain about it. For a moment, however, we do get to see some inner aspirations emerge with the comment that the growth of China provided an opportunity for post bipolar world for Europe, and the remark that he had long term expectations, given that the EEC had already taken so long to get to its current position. So it's a vision of an EEC developing over time, and in independent counterpoise to the superpowers.

On 7 February 1972, it was time for another Guildhall speech (a couple of weeks after the accession treaty had been signed), and this further underlined that aspiration. The US Dollar and the American economy was the focus of the speech. European unity was about providing a mechanism to create an alternative to US policy. The theme was repeated on 16 March, speaking to the Foreign Press Association at the Savoy Hotel. Increased economic cooperation was one area of activity, meaning joint European measures to counter outside economic interests. So too was increased cooperation over the next ten years to develop effective foreign policy coordination

There is after this a gap in European references in his speeches – which coincidentally also covers the time that MPs were digging into what the treaties meant. On 19 October 1972, out of the country at a Paris Summit of EEC plus accession countries, Heath was more disposed to return to the vision thing; “the Community is not – it must not be – simply a mercantile arrangement designed to profit its individual members.” He continued, “We are seeking not to submerge our national personalities, but to combine them together into a European personality that will make its weight felt, that will speak for peace and moderation, that will serve and protect the values we share.”

“What we are discussing is no less than a political commitment to manage the economic and monetary affairs of a Europe in harmony, and ultimately in unison, a union which, if we can achieve it, can provide the main driving force towards European integration.” Real progress was needed towards monetary integration. He also called for a regional policy and social funds to accompany EMU, while highlighting the need to work towards a common foreign policy.

Again, the audience receiving such insight lay beyond Britain's shores.

What are we to make of it all? Reading all his speeches over this period, it does seem that Sir Edward was very open about the broad brush chapter headings of what European integration would mean.

The problem is that he rarely said it to a British audience. To foreign listeners, he develops aspirations for a Europe that would emerge as the counterpart to Russia and America, alongside China (another of Heath's obsessions). Domestically, it is instead about the necessities of trade in the context of a thirty-year review of the Commonwealth system. At home, in particular, he never spells out that he expected the Pound would be ditched. This sets his speeches very much apart from those of Churchill. Style apart, Churchill's consistency of message continues regardless of the audience. He was vague in the detail but always speaking to point to the direction. Heath had a clearer conception of both, but must have made a conscious choice not to

more explicitly set out the lines he knew if told would see the project fail. It was the sin of omission; benevolent in his eyes perhaps, irrelevant even, as it was the subject matter of controversies to emerge for future ministers to debate and explore, in a project he saw as very long term. But wilful omission is no defence in law; nor is it here.

Our review carries a more unsavoury taste when we reflect upon what has been styled the *Pompidou Incident*. Britain's application to join the EEC remained uncertain, until Heath's meeting with Pompidou in June 1971. Pompidou afterwards gave a television interview in which said he had asked four questions requiring an affirmative reply from the British Prime Minister, otherwise there would be another French veto. Heath's answers were a straightforward Yes.

Those questions were reportedly on whether the British Government was willing to turn its back on the Commonwealth; whether Heath understood the supranational nature of EEC institutions; whether Britain was willing to "tie herself to Europe"; and whether he would agree to participating in "what we are trying to achieve, the creation of a European monetary union". Heath was later challenged by Roland Moyle, MP for East Lewisham, as to whether the TV account was accurate; Sir Edward replied that talks between heads of government were held in confidence.

At least one element of this discussion we can now see was directly confirmed in his 14 July 1971 speech. In this, he states of the Community Method,

When I went to Paris in May the French President confirmed that this was the understanding on which the Community operated, and we made it clear together at the end of our talks that the same principle would apply in the future.

Perhaps therefore in our assessment of Heath's political position, and deciphering his speeches, we might even assess that there may be an element of his making a virtue of a necessity, and not entirely seeming being even honest with himself as to how he had achieved his negotiating victory – or what it entailed, namely agreeing to a French ultimatum rather than lose his cherished prize. Perhaps Heath was only lying to himself.

Heath's view clearly at any rate was that sovereignty meant something different. For him, the postwar world and its myriad of international organizations meant that a loss of sovereignty was characteristic of the age, with the IMF, NATO, and GATT. The important thing was that the UK would culturally survive – Heath cites the examples of the Church of England, the Monarchy, and the courts (VAT for church roofing, Parliamentary supremacy, and Factortame would presumably later be viewed as mere detail). "Sovereignty is not something to be locked up and put in the bottom drawer," he said at a Lancaster House Press Conference on 12 July 1971, "it is something you use for your own purpose."

So we can hardly be surprised given all these ambiguities and influences that Heath came to be so bitterly challenged when *The Poisoned Chalice* came to be aired on television. This takes us to a barely known footnote in the whole affair. It so happened that not long after the programme, Lincolnshire fisherman Ray Maltby wrote to his local newspaper reviewing the decline in the fishing fleet, laying into Sir Edward Heath in the process.<sup>li</sup> Addressing the whole issue of how political parties had

misinformed the voter over the bigger European picture, and how a dangerous democratic deficit had now formed, Mr Maltby made a passing reference to the events prior to Maastricht;

There is now a growing majority in this country who are having second thoughts about membership of the E.C., so many controversial things happening today which are totally alien to the promises and assurances the British people were given in 1972 by the blatant lies of Edward Heath, they now realise we were totally misled and deceived.

Astonishingly, the former Prime Minister would take the highly unusual step of writing a response to a letter in a town paper.<sup>liii</sup> On 14 November 1996, the *Boston Standard* published an extensive reply from Sir Edward Heath. Half of it defends the country's membership of the EU, but it is the opening half which deserves citing here.

Sir,

I have seen the offensive and inaccurate letter by Mr Ray Maltby in a recent issue of your newspaper. It is interesting that Mr Maltby in his letter does not list any of these "blatant lies" which he claims I uttered in 1972.

Of course, this is because his wild allegations are totally untrue. I am happy to provide evidence to support this.

The Community never was just a free trade area; the Treaty of Rome, signed in 1957, commits all member states to the goal of an "ever closer union", to creating a single market, adopting common policies and respecting the powers of supranational institutions and I made this quite clear to the British people in my government's White Paper of July 1971, which stated: ["] The Six have made clear that they reject the concept that European unity should be limited to the formation of a free trade area."

The White Paper went on to state that "if the political implications of joining Europe are at present clearest in the economic field, it is because the Community is primarily concerned with economic policy.

"But it is inevitable that the scope of the Community's external policies should broaden as member countries' interests become harmonised ... if we were not to join, this would not stop the Community of Six moving forward in both the economic and political fields."

My views on Europe have remained consistent since I made my maiden speech in the House of Commons on June 26, 1950. Perhaps Mr Maltby is too young to remember this.

In a speech to the Ministerial Council of Western European Union in London on April 10 1962 I said: "You yourselves have decided that those who want to join the Economic Communities as full members must also join the Political Union. I am sure that this was the right decision.

"If the European Union is going to achieve the great things which we confidently expect of it then, in our view, it must be political as well as



economic. As members we should want to strengthen its political development.”

What is markedly curious is that Sir Edward did not defend himself by turning to his Zurich speech, in which he was his most open. But then he had not made that with a British audience in mind – which is the point. Heath had been speaking to posterity, and not his fellow citizens and voters.

The observant will have noted an elision (...) in Heath’s letter. In quoting from the White Paper (and he quotes a section just before an explicit denial of its federal intent, cited earlier), the former Prime Minister dropped a key section. Expanding on the future direction of the EEC, the White Paper in the omitted lines downplays key future commitments that by 1996 were becoming painfully evident and have indeed become vastly more so over the past few years;

That is the Community’s clear intention. As regards the co-ordination of foreign policy, the practical obligations which the United Kingdom will assume if we join now will involve no more than we have already assumed in WEU. But we will be joining at a moment when we shall be able to influence the process of development. This will also be true of progress towards economic and monetary union. No firm timetable has yet been agreed for this in the longer term; the immediate steps agreed so far will not involve practical difficulties for us.

In the excised paragraph, the Government admits to the prospect, but downplays the likelihood and consequence. This guilty passage Heath excises to aid his defence. Even in the dusk of his Parliamentary career, the full and frank story was *still* not being told.

Boston’s fishermen heroically considered suing Sir Edward on the back of his letter: as was observed at the time, “It may well have felt offensive to him but certainly not untrue”.<sup>liii</sup>

The legal advice was telling: “one can have a genuine disagreement about some of the basic concepts and their significance,” the consulted lawyer observed.<sup>liv</sup> What was “vital” and what was “essential” in terms of the national interest, or of sovereignty surrendered, was a matter for personal interpretation.

Where even a lawyer cannot ascertain the meaning in a politician’s words, what hope have the rest of us?

## Government by Fax

*In its 2006 Report on Europe, the Swiss Federal Council noted that Switzerland's objectives and interests with regard to Europe can be best achieved through the further development of the bilateral contractual framework.*

Federal Swiss Government website, September 2010

European integration has not led to a monolithic structure, at least not yet. Not all nations of the continent have subscribed to the EU-is-best model. Despite the defection of several of its members, EFTA still exists.<sup>1</sup> European cooperation remains a multi-pillared hall.

Since 1994, when the European Economic Area Agreement came into force, EFTA members (less Switzerland) and the EU have reached an accommodation. The agreement covers the Four Freedoms (of goods, services, people and capital) and closely associated policies such as areas of consumer protection. But it does not create a customs union, or cover trade, the CFSP, EMU, JHA, or for that matter the CAP and CFP (except in some areas of traded product). It does provide participation rights and allows for representation in EU agencies.

As a result, some campaigners support the EFTA model for states not wishing to participate in full integration.<sup>iv</sup> Opponents have tried to rebut that by claiming that EEA countries are obliged to assume all the responsibilities of EU countries without being able to influence the damaging legislation. This argument has been challenged in part by a useful past paper written by MEP Dan Hannan for the Bruges Group, but as it has not completely faded deserves a few additional lines of explanation here.<sup>lvi</sup>

For countries operating under the EEA terms, there is no common supreme court, in which a single national judge can be outvoted. There is no common universal enforcement system obliging a recalcitrant state's own judges to obey outside direction. ECJ rulings only apply where a decision has *already* been reached prior to the EU-EEA agreement having been signed – in other words, judges cannot subvert the intent of an agreement over time. Nor has the Commission any power to fine EEA states. So the model is more of a partnership and a matter of moral treaty obligations, rather than an executive and a judiciary imposing their will.

We do not here intend to submerge the reader in the mechanics, which would require some time as the system is fairly complex. The key elements however are the EEA Joint Committee, which reviews which legislation to incorporate; the Joint Parliamentary Committee (comprising EFTA MPs, and MEPs); the EEA Consultative Committee; and the input provided by the Commission and the EFTA Secretariat.

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<sup>1</sup> The author would like to greatly thank Hjörtur J. Guðmundsson, Director of the think tank Civis in Iceland, for his key cooperation in this section. Journalists seeking to learn more about lessons from Norway may care to contact Nei til EU at [neitileu@neitileu.no](mailto:neitileu@neitileu.no), and Iceland's background can be explored via the Heimssyn movement at [heimssyn@heimssyn.is](mailto:heimssyn@heimssyn.is).

The system is fluid all the same. The content of the Agreement is updated very regularly, but – and it is a huge ‘but’ – it can be blocked if either side does not want to include any single element of the *acquis*. Each individual EFTA state has a veto on the entire agreement, since it is shared between the EEA and the EU acting as two parties. This also means that national parliaments have a veto too.

Suffice it to say that individual governments do not have to worry about QMV, while MPs do not have to worry about competence creep. But how does this work in practice? Let’s take the case of Iceland.

Firstly, according to a report by the EFTA Secretariat in Brussels for the Icelandic Foreign Ministry that was published in May 2005, only some 6.5% of EU regulations, directives and decisions had fallen under the EEA Agreement over the first eleven years of its existence, a total of 2,527 pieces of legislation. Of those only 101 required a change to Icelandic laws already in place. Of course, this does not explore the relative importance of each of these laws.<sup>lvii</sup>

The EFTA report is also featured in another report by a special all-party Committee on Europe, appointed by the Icelandic Prime Minister, and published in March 2007. The Al\_ingi (Parliament) study concluded that from 1992 to 2006 the parliament had issued 1,656 laws and of those 285 (17.2%) were directly because of Iceland's membership of the EEA. If those more generally ascribed to membership were also counted, the percentage rose to 21.6%. This demonstrated locally what we already know from the UK example with Statutory Instruments; that most of the EU legislation that falls under the EEA Agreement has been passed in Iceland in the form of regulations.<sup>lviii</sup>

But according to this same report, Iceland (and therefore other EFTA countries which are members of the EEA) does indeed possess significant opportunities to influence new EU legislation in areas covered by the EEA Agreement. Moreover, this takes place at every stage except the final voting (which as the then Prime Minister of Iceland, Daví\_ Oddsson, put it in a speech to the parliament in May 2005, is usually seen as more of a formality). However if there was a flaw, according to Björn Bjarnason, the then Minister of Justice and the chairman of the special Committee on Europe, speaking in the key parliament debate, it was that Iceland was not making use of all these opportunities.<sup>lix</sup>

So Iceland is benefiting from trade access, without a great deal of the costs and red tape. Given the current background, it is not then so surprising then that all but one of Iceland’s political parties oppose changing the arrangement by acceding fully to the EU.

Then there is the Norwegian example. There was a similar question raised in the Norwegian parliament in 2004 about how much EU legislation had been implemented under EEA terms. The then-government replied that over the period 1997-2003 there had been 11,511 pieces of legislation adopted by the EU. Of those 2,129 fell under the EEA Agreement, or about 18.5 percent.<sup>lx</sup> As recently as August 2010, Norwegian sovereignty campaigners *Nei til EU* released their own research covering the years 2000-2009, and according to their statistical analysis the national share ran at a rate of merely 8.9 percent.<sup>lxi</sup>

So the image of EEA members meekly incorporating EU edicts as they roll off the fax machine from Brussels is a straightforward fallacy.

The EEA model is not even the only alternative. Switzerland is a natural candidate for reaching a trading agreement with the EU, to which 60% of its exports go. No other third country has concluded as many EU agreements – 120 to date. There are no fewer than 27 Joint Committees covering them making technical decisions, mostly meeting once or twice a year. And yet Berne has rejected even adopting the EEA model.

A Swiss Integration Office was established in 1961 to monitor EEC activity and impact on Switzerland, and plays the role of coordinator and interlocutor. It also reviews Swiss legislation to see if it is compatible with parallel EU law. Swiss legislation however does not *have* to be compatible, except where there is an existing bilateral sectoral agreement. The drive to mimic where it does exist is in no small part driven by occasional ministerial aspirations to closer European integration, a view far from unanimous across the political spectrum.

A solid appreciation of this can best be viewed from the Federal Government's *Europe Report 2006*.<sup>lxiii</sup> From its cost-benefit analysis, Berne assessed that the cost of continuing bilaterally with the EU would run at 557 million Swiss Francs; gaining EEA terms would cost 737 million CHF; and joining the EU would come with a net Annual bill of 3.4 billion CHF, and a gross bill of 4.94 billion Francs. Far more significant and concerning an appraisal came with the large number of areas where there would be a loss of power for the government where it ceded sovereignty.

What are the key lessons from this?

In the first instance, it's that the image of the "fax democracy" is far from the reality. The claim by supporters of full EU membership (who strangely tend to come from EU countries themselves) that EEA countries have to endure rules just faxed through from Brussels to their parliaments is far from the reality. If there is such a thing as a fax democracy, it applies rather to the full member of the EU, and particularly where an issue is now being decided by QMV. Reflect for a moment on when the Commons last rejected an EU law.

Secondly, the EEA proves that there is no uniform model of EU association. Countries already can and do pick and choose what form of association they want with the EU. Provided no politician rises to power seeking closer cooperation (at which point ratchet principles apply), association countries can retain their status for as long as they like. This is before we even reflect on the differing levels of cooperation contained in EU treaties with countries spread even more distantly across the world, for which Canada provides just one more potential trading model.

Thirdly, the comparative cost for associated members is clearly far lower than for full members, and definite 'pick n mix' principles apply. More damaging regulations can be avoided, while like goods are still treated with trading parity. Meanwhile, domestic business does not have to face the same burdens; more of the economy can escape red tape; less *acquis* is required since issues beyond trade are exempted; and democratic accountability continues for decisions reached through the EEA, and continues unabated in the majority of areas across the board.

So there is a lot to be said for both EEA and Swiss terms.

Might they be appropriate for another former EFTA nation like Britain? In one sense the question is irrelevant. Thanks to the Treaty of Lisbon, a Good Neighbour Clause now exists (inserted via Article 7a);

*1. The Union shall develop a special relationship with neighbouring countries, aiming to establish an area of prosperity and good neighbourliness, founded on the values of the Union and characterised by close and peaceful relations based on cooperation.*

*2. For the purposes of paragraph 1, the Union may conclude specific agreements with the countries concerned. These agreements may contain reciprocal rights and obligations as well as the possibility of undertaking activities jointly. Their implementation shall be the subject of periodic consultation.*

As this text was the brainchild of Giscard d'Estaing during the drafting Convention, it was likely intended to accommodate Turkey, and possibly certain other geographically peripheral European states such as the Ukraine.

But in the process, it expanded the scope for a multi-polar Europe, and increased the chances of existing EU members one day leaving to take advantage of the 'relationship less the mother-in-law'.

The EEA, rather than playing out as the dregs of EFTA, may very well prove to be the frothy salvation of several current member states of the Union.

## Better Off Out?

*I conclude by saying that if the Government hope to impose federalism on this country by stealth, step by step, without full and adequate parliamentary and popular consideration, they will not get away with it. Neither this Parliament, nor the Labour Party, nor, in the last resort, the British people will allow such a thing.*

Eric Deakins MP, Hansard 14 June 1972 col 1638

*Britain already pays a heavy financial price for its membership and the benefits bestowed by belonging are increasingly hard to identify. So an awkward question that none of the so-called "mainstream" parties wishes to address is raised: wouldn't it be better to leave?*

*Daily Express* editorial, 27 March 2010

Earlier on, we looked a little at the physical cost of EU membership. But the problem with the debate is that the arguments used are not solely about Pounds and Pence (or Euros and Cents).

On several occasions, backbenchers in both the Commons and the Lords have commendably proposed that Government investigates the costs and benefits of EU membership. How might this work in practice?

In the simplest of terms, we might put forward the subject to be studied in the context of the following equation;

$$x = y - z$$

Where  $x$  is the simple advantage (or level of disadvantage) attached to EU membership;  $y$  is the sum expression of the benefits to be gained; while from this is deducted  $z$ , referring to the costs of membership.

Consequently, if  $x$  is rated to be a positive end figure, then the incentive is to remain within the existing terms and boundaries of membership. Even a figure of parity, or near negative, may be incentive not to incur the costs of change.

So far, so good. But how would any review assess the broader implications? Even if British accession was predominantly one of economic advantage in access – the middle 'E' in the EEC – the world has changed and the form and costs of the EU have too.

Well, here's one model we might use as a starting point;

$$5a = \begin{pmatrix} f_1+f_2+f_3 \\ - \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} s_1 \\ - \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} w \\ - \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} p_1 \\ - \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} f_8 \\ - \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\begin{pmatrix} f_4+f_5+f_6 \\ - \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} s_2 \\ - \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} d+f_7 \\ - \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} p_2+t \\ - \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} l \\ - \end{pmatrix}$$

Let's deal with each of these elements in turn. Unlike our initial equation, as this is a measurement of pluses (on the top row) directly contrasted with negatives (on the bottom), top heavy arithmetic means an arrangement that is benefit heavy.

With one a proportion of the other, our neutral baseline for  $a$  will be 1. An end figure higher than this means a positive return for EU membership. Conversely, a figure under that integer means only a partial return for the costs.

As there are five sections, our end figure is properly speaking a compound of five different questions and would need final disaggregation by averaging the sum total out (hence  $5a$ ).

The first question, which contains six different variables, is one we have already reviewed: **the financial**.

$f_1$  represents the increased trade stimulated by membership of the trading bloc;  $f_2$  the production advantages gained due to standardisation;  $f_3$  the administrative benefits accruing from decreased red tape. However, against these have to be set  $f_4$ , the net 'membership' cost of the UK-EU budget deficit;  $f_5$  or the combined red tape costs as well as the incidental costs of running individual policies, such as the damage inflicted upon coastal communities as well as the consumer by the CFP; and  $f_6$ , or the benefits that would accrue in trade terms anyway from the WTO, GATT, and other instruments that would make the EU gains redundant.

Our previous assessment earlier in this publication has already identified this as a very significant deficit area.

The second element relates to the more abstract concept of **sovereignty**. This sets  $s_1$  or the beneficial impact of 'pooled sovereignty in a globalised world' against  $s_2$ , the negative impact of the sovereignty lost. Perhaps we can look at this another way;

$$\frac{e}{i_1 + i_2}$$

Here,  $e$  represents the historical conundrum of Dean Acheson's comment on Britain having lost an Empire without having found a role, or in more practical terms, the value added by the United Kingdom having surrendered its current amount of power to QMV. This is set against  $i_1 + i_2$ , representing in turn the continuing *desire* to maintain an independent set of policies with the veto, and the continuing *need* so to do.

These are obviously much more difficult to review in a short paper. We postulate that the advantages gained by increasing use of QMV have not been superseded by obvious benefits, to the extent that they have indeed increased negative popular perceptions of the EU. Consequently, we view this element of the equation as also unfavourable to EU membership on its current terms.

The third element is one of the big picture.  $w$  (more properly ‘omega’) represents the **aspirational end status** of the EU. Though we may perhaps temper this by underlining the end objective is not universally seen as a federal superstate, the salami slicing process progressively nevertheless still leads to less of the whole sausage. While this does carry with it substantial positives, there are also major negatives, represented as  $d$  and  $f_7$ .

The former is the very real loss of both proximity and sense of democratic accountability that arises inherently from the process. A sudden leap to federalism in 1947-1950 by the continental states may have obviated this, but if it was not possible then how much greater is the accompanying negativity now? The accompanying financial element,  $f_7$ , provides our shorthand for the physically real profligacy and especially fraud that is heightened by this distance.

Here, our assessment is that as far as the UK is concerned, the benefits are far from clear cut, not least as the national interest is much more divergent from that of Rhenish Europe – especially financially, but also clearly in terms of key constituencies including agriculture, international relations, and subsidised industry.

Next, since we must also look at the founding cause of the EEC, there is the element relating to ‘**Peace in Europe**’.  $p_1$  Represents the concept that the European ‘process’ has brought political and military stability to the continent, and adds value to a nation’s security today. Against this, we set  $p_2$  which postulates that peace has been achieved notwithstanding the EEC/EC/EU, but rather through NATO and historically by the very fact of the Cold War having fortified a nuclear-armed front line across a divided Germany.  $t$  meanwhile represents the reality that the passage of time reduces the power of this argument, because regardless of whether there is an EU or not, the habits of peace become gradually harder to throw away by democratic societies that are socially and culturally more interconnected (German pop music notwithstanding).

This was understandably a major motor to early integration. Nevertheless, our assessment is that while this proves a strong feature with ‘transitional societies’, such as immediate post-dictatorship Spain and Greece, and directly post-Soviet era Eastern Europe, this argument has been increasingly exaggerated by supporters of the Community since the 1960s.

Finally, there is the **alternative** element. Set against an underlying standard baseline of 1,  $f_8$  represents the assessed costs of leaving the EU for the departing member state. Our analysis is that some costs are inevitable, but these are comparatively marginally and outweighed by the figures in our first element above. Certainly, as the UK imports far more from the EU than it exports, it would not be in our competitors’ interests to see their politicians attempt to embark on a punitive trade war.

This then provides us with our five fractions: the financial; sovereignty; the strategic destination; peace and stability; and the alternative route.

Overall then, taken from a strategic vantage point, our analysis is that in Britain’s case the maths falls short of reaching the beneficial minimum margin by a large margin;



and that the UK's terms of membership of the EU do not provide value for money. A seismic shift is needed, meaning a totally different relationship with Brussels.

That is not to say of course that the equation will lead to a similar result or conclusion for every EU member state or applicant. It also means that the dynamics of the equation can and will change over time, requiring repeated assessment. Moreover, were a major net contributor such as the UK to withdraw its financial contributions (such as by leaving the EU), its decision would have further major consequences in the appeal of European integration for several other states.

Given the analysis of Professor Minford we referred to in an earlier chapter, when he concluded in 1996 that the terms of Britain's EU membership were finely balanced, it is even possible to date the period the scales tipped. Between 1996 and 2005, three successive EU treaties were signed. Between them, they resulted in the signing away over 100 vetoes. This means that Prime Minister Tony Blair was responsible for the surrender of more vetoes than all of his predecessors combined. The treaties also increased EU competences, generated new institutions, created new and increasingly important posts and presidencies, and augmented the role and authority of the European civil service. Also incidentally over this period, the number of EU regulations came to break the 100,000 pages barrier. The fulcrum moment came with the EU Constitution, which had originally been set up under the Laeken Mandate with the instructions to actually look at how to reduce power and hand it over to the people.<sup>lxiii</sup>

The European Convention concluded on 10 July 2003. The document advocated more powers, more posts, and fewer vetoes. A Minority Report also contained in the submission instead advocated what Laeken had asked delegates to do; a reformed, *souverainiste* approach. But it was set to one side. Our tipping point date arises with the dismissal of this last serious chance at widespread systemic reform.

The Constitution was bludgeoned through despite repeated lost referenda. The reform agenda was quashed. The integrationists won. History will show that as the date British withdrawal from the European Union became inevitable.



## Endnotes

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- <sup>i</sup> <http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Braithwaite.pdf>
- <sup>ii</sup> See Uwe Kitzinger, *Diplomacy and Persuasion*, Thames and Hudson, 1973, for more on this background.
- <sup>iii</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> September 1971, quoted in Kitzinger p.350
- <sup>iv</sup> Sutton, 1998
- <sup>v</sup> Kitzinger, p.335
- <sup>vi</sup> 23/5/75. Happily, a copy survives in the British Library.
- <sup>vii</sup> Advert, Box 1/48
- <sup>viii</sup> Arnold Zurcher, 11<sup>th</sup> April 1955, Box 2/91
- <sup>ix</sup> *Taking Europe to the World: 50 years of the European Commission's External Service* (European Commission)
- <sup>x</sup> Box 2/94
- <sup>xi</sup> *Report on the College of Europe*, Box 1/1
- <sup>xii</sup> April 1954 brochure, Box 1/49
- <sup>xiii</sup> De Rougemont was also engaged with the journal *Esprit*, a favourite read of Jacques Delors, and the subject of an MPhil by this author.
- <sup>xiv</sup> 1958 report, Box 2/92
- <sup>xv</sup> Box 2/104
- <sup>xvi</sup> Letter of 4<sup>th</sup> May 1960, 2/106
- <sup>xvii</sup> The present incumbent has also spoken out, as a backbencher prior to assuming his current role.
- <sup>xviii</sup> *Les Monographies des Contribuables Associés*, July 2008
- <sup>xix</sup> Were we however to extend the review, we would dissect a famous and early article supportive of the vision of Count Coudenhove-Kalergi – provided Britain were not included. Early Churchill was explicitly not in favour of Britain integrating with continental Europe.
- <sup>xx</sup> In 1940, despite the immediately preceding offer of union with France, the issue is entirely missing from the celebrated speech *The News from France is Very Bad*. Any opinion that may have been expressed elsewhere would have to be unravelled from the politics of the immediate crisis.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Even the wordcraft is more nuanced, with the issue of “a United Europe” now become “the cause of United Europe” – is it reading too much to note the subtle drop of the definite article, or the reduction in capitalisation of the ‘U’ in United over time?
- <sup>xxii</sup> ACUE files Box 1, Folder 2; University of Georgetown Archives.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> The list itself deserves proper analysis and a paper in its own right by a specialist in 1940s American society and politics. The presence of several people closely associated with museums was probably coincidental - references in the speech to European culture may have been tailored specifically to the philanthropists present: Churchill was a veteran of speaking engagements in the States and knew his audience. Ironically one listener had also been connected to a company that faced allegations of laundering German money during the war. Another attendee had a brother who had had an affair involving Churchill’s immediate family. Nevertheless, the audience seems to have been appreciative.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> If there was a formal conspiracy attached to an American campaign to support an integrated Europe, the honour for organising it might almost equally be ascribed to the CFR. Perhaps more archives might yet become available to explore this avenue.
- <sup>xxv</sup> As openly observed in their broadsheet obituaries.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Is the George M Dimitrov in the audience the Bulgarian exile, and was Churchill aware of his presence? Romanian exiled diplomat Grigore Gafencu, a local campaigner on European integration, was also present and at the same table.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> 6 May 1959
- <sup>xxviii</sup> HC/CL/CH/2/1/46.
- <sup>xxix</sup> They are co-located with certain other documents of similar (though distracting) interest. Minutes from 18 June 1964 for instance that review matters that would resurface as more recent controversy, comment how “Lord Tweedsmuir emphasised that the present opportunity was likely to be the last for a generation or more for settling the question of the remuneration of Members and Ministers on a lasting basis” (HC/CL/CH/2/1/41). His summation of “Some notes on the pay of parliamentarians from 1831 until the present day” is of interest, as MPs reviewed injury compensation for MPs, pensions and allowances at the axle-level of today’s juggernaut of controversy. Equally diverting is CT Carr’s scrawled note on a wartime committee set up to review legislation that was of concern as it was proving legally unchallengeable, used unexpected powers, or tapped into resources. Speaking of his need to cross examine departments to get to the key material, he notes how they “tend to wrap the

difficult and controversial passages round with a baffling jacket of innocent material till, to change the metaphor, you can't see the needle for the hay. That's democratic government." He also shares harsh words over the very principle of government by committee and "a mistaken belief that Parliament can govern the country by enlarging its share of the administration." Such papers are insightful, but for a very different debate.

<sup>xxx</sup> HC/CL/CH/2/1/47

<sup>xxx</sup> HC/CL/CH/2/1/51

<sup>xxxii</sup> BL/81/4/11

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Including ultimately changes in local government. The proposals for federalism ("Imperial ministers who might have no time for local matters, and local ministers who might have no time for imperial matters", GCA/6/16) would be dropped until New Labour, and provide us en route with another example of the longevity of political reform campaigns.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> The report further recommended that "the maintenance in any asylum for lunatics or idiots of any person for whose maintenance any other person is responsible shall not disqualify such other person for being registered as a Parliamentary elector". Those in receipt of "poor relief other than medical relief" for under thirty days in total over the qualifying period would also not be a disqualifier. This opened up providing the vote for those on the dole, whose huge electoral impact in the 1920s and 1930s has perhaps been underassessed, and remains so today.

<sup>xxxv</sup> Hansard vol 85 p.1906, 16 August 1916

<sup>xxxvi</sup> F/166/5/3

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Two MPs, Parker and Turton, had also sat on its 1944 predecessor.

<sup>xxxviii</sup> HC/50/4/6. The problem for such campaigners is that prioritisation for candidates who support a given cause is also achievable under the current electoral system, so their involvement looks party politically motivated (which sometimes it is).

<sup>xxxix</sup> HC/50/4/3

<sup>xl</sup> HC/50/4/17

<sup>xli</sup> Not all of the referenced documents appear to have been retained, however.

<sup>xlii</sup> This caused some confusion as the ERS had just rebranded, and one MP wondered why the PRS had not also been invited to contribute to proceedings!

<sup>xliii</sup> Also referenced is Lord Lochee of Dundee's Royal Commission on electoral systems.

<sup>xliv</sup> The Tasmanian example meanwhile consisted of a two party system in a multi-seat constituency format, which needed further reform when it was discovered it had been a mistake to make the constituencies all even numbered in seats. It was nevertheless considered by its establishers to be "superior to the single electorate system", ie AV.

<sup>xl</sup> Daily Telegraph 25 June 2001

<sup>xlvi</sup> Hansard 25 November 1970 col 441

<sup>xlvii</sup> FCO 30/1048 aka MWK 2/12 part B (with thanks to Stuart Delvin).

<sup>xlviii</sup> Hansard 16 Feb 1972, col 513

<sup>xlix</sup> Amendment 205 for the record meanwhile is also of interest in that it introduced a requirement for a referendum, 18 April 1972

<sup>l</sup> Hansard, 13 July 1972, col 1873

<sup>li</sup> Letter dated 21 October 1996

<sup>lii</sup> Sir Edward, still an MP, clearly had an eye on his posterity by this stage. The TV programme had sparked off a number of criticisms about his role as the Prime Minister who had gotten the country into the EEC, and his anticipating EMU even during accession, at a time (1996) when joining the Single Currency was a massive pre-election issue. The fact that the paper was in the constituency of Sir Richard Body would not likely have helped matters.

<sup>liii</sup> Correspondence, 25 November 1996

<sup>liv</sup> Letter of solicitor, 11 December 1996

<sup>lv</sup> A hat tip here to the campaigning of Hugo Van Randwick.

<sup>lvi</sup> *The Case for EFTA* (2005).

<sup>lvii</sup> Website of the Icelandic Al\_ingi, <http://www.althingi.is/altext/131/s/1373.html>

<sup>lviii</sup> The report of the Committee on Europe: <http://www.forsaetisraduneyti.is/utgefifid-efni/nr/2558>

<sup>lix</sup> Icelandic newspaper Morgunbla\_i\_: [http://www.mbl.is/mm/frettir/innlent/2005/05/09/upplýsingar\\_um\\_ad\\_island\\_innleidi\\_6\\_5\\_prosent\\_af\\_re/](http://www.mbl.is/mm/frettir/innlent/2005/05/09/upplýsingar_um_ad_island_innleidi_6_5_prosent_af_re/)

<sup>lx</sup> <http://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Sporsmal/Skriftlige-sporsmal-og-svar/Skriftlig-sporsmal/?qid=29219>

<sup>lxi</sup> [http://www.neitileu.no/index.php/aktuelt/presse/myter\\_og\\_fakta\\_om\\_eu\\_1](http://www.neitileu.no/index.php/aktuelt/presse/myter_og_fakta_om_eu_1)

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<sup>lxii</sup> Usefully summarised in *Global Britain Briefing Note 42*, although the text itself reviews far more than the financial costs.

<sup>lxiii</sup> Explored in more detail in our paper *Plan B for Europe*, published by the Bruges Group.





