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**THE EUROPEANIZATION OF BRITISH
FOREIGN POLICY**

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THE EUROPEANIZATION OF BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY

David Allen ¹

Introduction

This paper examines the impact of EU membership on both the procedures and the substance of British foreign policy since Britain joined the EU in 1973. It examines the changing role of the British Foreign Ministry (the FCO) in relations to other government departments as the boundaries between the domestic and the foreign become increasingly 'blurred' partly (but certainly not entirely) as a result of EU membership. The paper examines the changing relationship between the FCO and the office of the UK prime minister contrasting the activism of Thatcher and Blair with the relative passivity of Wilson, Callaghan, Major and ? Brown.

The second part of the paper examines the impact of EU membership on the UK's most significant foreign policy relationships including with other EU members as well as the impact on the UK's role on other international organizations such as the UN and NATO. The paper also examines EPC, the CFSP and ESDP to determine the extent to which the UK has been successful in uploading to the EU level its procedural and substantive policy preferences.

The Europeanization of the British Foreign Ministry

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has been dealing with European integration for over fifty years and has, like the British government in general, demonstrated a mix of enthusiasm and suspicion regarding its evolution. Such a long and close involvement has inevitably had an impact upon the way the FCO operates, the way it sees the world, and how others perceive and work with it but it is important to

¹ This paper draws heavily on two chapters (on the FCO and on British Foreign Policy) published by David Allen and Tim Oliver in *The Europeanization of British Politics*, Ian Bache and Andrew Jordan (eds), Palgrave, 2006 (paperback edition 2008)

recognize that this has been only one of a number of key challenges for the FCO in recent years. The paper examines the organization of the FCO and compares the situation today with the period when Britain first joined the EEC. The current structure of the FCO reflects a cumulative adjustment to change over a considerable period of time, although the pace of this change has quickened since Britain became a member of the EU in 1973. The FCO's position within British central government has been both enhanced and challenged by European integration.

The paper explores several arguments. First, that the FCO has experienced a relative decline in control over Britain's policy making towards the EU. Second, that the patterns of adaptation shown by the FCO have been in line with the wider patterns of adaptation shown throughout Whitehall i.e. major change has been kept to a minimum with an emphasis on adaptation of existing procedures (Bulmer and Burch, 2006). Third, that the FCO has been subject to a wide variety of pressures for change, of which Europeanization is only one. Fourth, that the development of European Political Cooperation (EPC) and now the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) has given the FCO a particular area of competence over which it alone has expertise, and that this has compensated to some extent for the loss of influence over general domestic and European issues. The FCO has had to face the challenge of sharing its previously exclusive control of Britain's external relations with sub-national authorities and domestic departments, as well as supranational organizations such as the EU; a change which reflects the 'blurring of the boundaries' between the domestic and the foreign (see (Hocking 1999; Hocking and Spence 2005).

The history and role of the FCO in the making and implementation of British foreign policy has been told in a number of places and warrants only a brief reprise here (see Wallace 1975; Clarke 1992; Allen in Hocking, 1999). The Foreign Service can be traced back to 1479 and the Foreign Office to 1782. Until the mid-1960s the UK chose to handle its imperial and post-imperial relationships separately from its dealings with the rest of the world. The Colonial Office, the India Office, the Dominions Office and the Commonwealth Relations Office all slowly merged over time to form the

Commonwealth Office and, in 1968, the Foreign and Commonwealth offices themselves merged to form the present FCO. The present Diplomatic Service was established in 1965 amalgamating the Foreign Service, the Commonwealth Service and the Trade Commission Service (Clarke 1992: 77).

The Foreign Office and now the FCO have always held a central role in the management of Britain's external policies. This role has been challenged by the relative decline of Britain's position in the international system and by the changing nature of international relations which has seen a shifting agenda, the growth of interdependence and multilateral attempts to manage that interdependence. Despite these trends, which have blurred the distinction between the foreign and domestic, the FCO has managed to retain a central role in the shaping and management of Britain's external relations. The most significant example today of Britain's involvement in multilateralism is, of course, its membership of the European Union. Faced with the contradictory pressures of rising demands and diminishing resources, the FCO has firmly resisted 'external' attempts to reform it, whilst demonstrating an effective willingness and ability to make the necessary internal adaptations. It is a measure of the FCO's adaptive ability that the Diplomatic Service has successfully retained its separate and unique status within the structure of British government and that successive Foreign Secretaries have preserved their senior position within the British Cabinet hierarchy. The position of Foreign Secretary remains one of the most important posts in the British government although the particular importance of the relationship between Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary has been modified in recent years by the growing power of the Prime Minister's office in Downing Street which is itself partly a consequence of Britain's involvement with the EU (see Owen 2003).

The general expansion in the number of states in the international system has been a particular challenge to the FCO's determination to preserve Britain's international status through retention of a global representation. The FCO managed this in response to the proliferation of states from decolonization in the 1960s and 1970s; the new challenges

posed by the emergence of new states in the post-Soviet world of the 1990s has proved more testing and the FCO has struggled to keep up with its major European rivals.

The FCO has been the subject of a number of formal inquiries and reviews. The Plowden (1964), Duncan (1969), and Berrill (1977) reports respectively all made recommendations which the FCO initially resisted but eventually accepted to a degree. More recently, the 1992 Structural Review, the 1995 Fundamental Expenditure Review, the 1996 Senior Management Review, and the work that led to the FCO Strategy Document (FCO 2003) were all conducted 'in house', albeit with the participation of outside consultants, and produced recommendations that the FCO has seemed more inclined to adopt..

The FCO continues to be led by a Permanent Under-Secretary (PUS), who is responsible both for the administration of the FCO and the work of overseas posts through a Board of Management and for strategic policy advice to ministers through a Policy Advisory Board. In recent years, the work of the PUS has become increasingly focussed on the management of the FCO and its diplomatic offices around the world. The post of Political Director, which was initially created so that Britain could play its part in the EU's system of European Political Cooperation, is now effectively the top policy advisory post. Whereas twenty years ago the PUS would accompany the Foreign Secretary or Prime Minister on his travels overseas, it is now usually the Political Director who clocks up the air miles whilst the PUS stays at home to look after the shop. The specific position of Political Director can be explained in terms of Europeanization in that the FCO willingly adapted its management structure so as to effectively participate in the EPC. This adaptation has led to spillover whereby the Political Director now plays a larger role than perhaps originally intended. However, the different roles played by the PUS and Political Director are the result of both EU membership and other factors, especially the need for improved management within the FCO.

The basic FCO unit remains the geographical desk within a geographical Department and Command. This has come under pressure due to the considerable growth in functional

departments in response to the 'internationalization' and 'Europeanization' of a number of traditional domestic issues and to the growth of multilateral fora. Despite this, the FCO has resisted suggestions that, as a multi-functional organisation, it should reorganize itself around its functions, although in the case of EU membership this is now changing. The Fundamental Expenditure Review of 1995 argued for the preservation of a structure based on regional and multilateral organisation partly because of the high estimated cost of restructuring the FCO and partly because of the continuing logic of geographical specialization. The FCO believes that its knowledge of specific countries and its development of bilateral relationships that span across a number of specific functions, adds significant value to the advancement and coordination of British interests. If the FCO were to be reorganized along functional lines then the fear would be that a number of functions could then be 'hived off' to domestic ministries along the lines suggested by the 1977 CPRS Report. Peter Hain (2001), when a Foreign Office Minister, published a pamphlet in which he advocated the scrapping of Departments based on geographical divisions in favour of 'issues' departments dealing with subjects such as human rights, the environment and conflict prevention. To the extent that the 'desks' for other EU member states have been removed from a geographical command and placed within functional (EU) departments then Hain's proposals seem to be gaining acceptance, at least as far as the management of European multilateral and bilateral policies are concerned.

Within the FCO, the problems raised by the proliferation of functional and multilateral commands cutting across the geographical divisions is best illustrated by reference to arrangements for dealing with the countries of Western Europe and the EU. Across Whitehall, the coordination of British foreign policy is not in the exclusive control of the FCO. Long gone are the days when all contacts with the outside world were handled by the FCO acting as some form of 'gatekeeper'. Today, just as the FCO has sprouted a number of functional departments that in many ways 'shadow' the work of Home Departments, so, in turn, most Home Departments have developed their own international and European sections (see Bulmer and Burch, 2006) The FCO continues to play a major role in the coordination of all these different aspects of Britain's external policy but the

system also recognises that, with reference to a number of cross-cutting issues, the FCO is not the unchallenged sole determinant of the overall British interest but merely an 'interested' department amongst many others. In these cases, the Cabinet system and the work of the Cabinet Office provide consistency and coherence. At the very top of the decision-making process, the British Cabinet is meant to be collegial and the doctrine of collective responsibility pertains, although this idea has been regularly challenged (Owen 2003). In practice many decisions are delegated down to Cabinet Committees of which the Committee on Defence and Overseas Policy (DOP) and the Committee on the Intelligence Services both chaired by the Prime Minister and the Sub-Committee on European Questions ((E) DOP), chaired by the Foreign Secretary, are the most important in relation to foreign policy (see Blair, A. 2001).

As well as reemphasizing, reinforcing and, where appropriate in Europe and South Asia, reorganizing, its geographic Commands, the FCO has also sought to implement a policy of devolving both financial and management responsibility down through Commands to departments and to overseas posts in line with similar developments elsewhere in the government service. Attempts have been made to improve the role of policy planning in the FCO (partly in association with other EU foreign ministries), to better associate the work of the Research Analysts with their customer departments and to reorganize the management structure so that those responsible for policy planning and advice and those responsible for the management of resources are more closely associated with each others work. This latter objective has been partly achieved by devolution and partly by unifying the Policy Advisory Board and the Board of Management and strengthening their links with the Commands as well as their 'visibility' to the rest of the FCO. A number of these reforms can be tracked around the Foreign Ministries of the other EU member states but whether this can be described as Europeanization is a debatable point

The FCO has also been forced to take into account the growing interest of the wider public in foreign policy both in the UK and abroad. The FCO has been criticised for being slow to react to public opinion especially with regard to EU issues. Similarly the FCO has been heavily criticised for attempts to cut the budget and restrict the activities of

both the BBC World Service and the British Council at a time when the importance of this type of 'public diplomacy' was becoming more rather than less significant. However, the FCO now appears to be paying more attention to Parliament, the wider British public and the public opinions of those countries which Britain seeks to influence. The Fundamental Expenditure Review devoted a whole section to the growing importance of public diplomacy and to the need for the FCO to develop a public diplomacy strategy statement as well as individual country strategies. Indeed, the FCO now has a Public Diplomacy Dept and, in EUD (I), a Public Diplomacy Section. At a seminar of all the UK's present and former ambassadors to the EU, the present incumbent and his immediate predecessor both commented on their changing roles, with much less time being spent in the Council of Ministers and much more time being spent on more traditional ambassadorial work with interest groups and members of the European Parliament (Menon 2004).

It is easy to forget that overseas diplomatic missions also cater to the needs of national citizens residing or visiting overseas, a situation that with the growing number of tourists and ease of working abroad (especially within the EU) has placed considerable pressures on the FCO and overseas missions. Such pressures have already led some EU Member States, including the UK, to share diplomatic assets and support. However for the UK and the FCO, the experience of handling the crisis of the 9/11 terrorist attacks was almost entirely British in outlook and learning. This mainly stemmed from New York being the one city in the world where every state has at least some form of diplomatic representation and therefore some means of dealing with its nationals in that city when an emergency occurred. The experiences of the British Consulate in New York essentially helped to write the guidelines on how to deal with any future such atrocities. Dealing with incidents such as Bali, Istanbul, the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and Hurricane Katrina have brought into the equation the opportunities for help and assistance from the EU and Member States but in each case the UK response has been essentially British rather than collectively European.

Some of the changes noted above are the result of Thatcherite management reforms. Indeed during Mrs Thatcher's period in office, the FCO was subjected to a continuous level of criticism by a dominant Prime Minister who became increasingly interested, as all long-serving prime ministers tend to, in playing a major role in foreign affairs (Hill 1996: 71-77; Craddock 1997). Supported by Charles Powell, her Private Secretary for Overseas Affairs and former FCO career official, Mrs Thatcher's problems with Europe, which she associated with the pro-European leanings of the FCO, led her to contemplate, but in fact never to seriously implement, the possibility of building up Downing Street's foreign policy capabilities as a counter to the central role played by the FCO. This would, especially from the FCO's viewpoint, create something akin to a US-style National Security Council.

John Major showed no real inclination to side-step either the Foreign Secretary or the FCO in the handling of foreign policy in general or in relation to the EU specifically. In April 1998 Mr Blair rejected proposals put forward by some of his colleagues for creating a powerful Prime Minister's Department based upon a reconstructed Cabinet Office (Preston and Parker 1998). However, there was a small controversy over the revelation that the Prime Minister had appointed several overseas personal envoys (Lords Levy, Paul and Ahmed). Press comment saw these appointments as indicative of 'an American style of foreign policy' (Watt 2000) and noted the fact that these envoys were unaccountable to Parliament and could be seen to be part of a process that by-passed the FCO. When Mr Blair was returned to office in 2001, however, he did take significant steps to enhance the role of Downing Street over both EU policy and foreign policy towards the rest of the world. He chose to move two of the Cabinet Office Secretariats (dealing with Overseas and Security policy and with the EU) into Downing Street under the control of his two foreign policy advisors – Sir Stephen Wall² (ex head of UKREP) and Sir David Manning (ex head of the UK Delegation to NATO).

² Stephan Wall has written an account of his experiences as a senior FCO official working on EU matters under Thatcher, Major and Blair in *A Stranger in Europe: Britain and the EU from Thatcher to Blair*, Oxford University Press, 2008

The movement of the European Union and Overseas and Defence Secretariats from the Cabinet Office to Downing Street has ratcheted up the role played by the PM. This in part reflected the interest shown by Blair in foreign affairs as well as his 'presidential style'. At the same time it also stems from much longer term patterns such as the growing number and importance of EU summits in giving direction to the Union, the growing political links between European political parties, and the need to address European issues at a national and party level. For the FCO this has brought mixed results. There have been repeated complaints of the FCO being sidelined from policy making on issues such as the Iraq war, the EU Constitution, relations with Washington and the general overall strategy and justifications behind British foreign policy. The perceived need for overall strategy from Downing Street has provided an impetus to give direction but has usually failed to provide follow up with the necessary detail.

As we have seen the FCO has been under continual pressure to adapt to external changes. The extent to which the influence of the EU can be disentangled from the other pressures requires careful analysis. This section attempts to map in more detail some of the areas where the EU has had the most profound effect upon the FCO.

As noted above, participation in the EU has focused attention on the blurring of the boundaries between the domestic and the foreign. A considerable amount of EU business is conducted by officials from the Home Civil Service working in domestic ministries such as the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department for the Environment, Food and Agriculture (DEFRA) (but also others such as the Home Office or HM Treasury). Here most dealings with European and foreign governments were once conducted through the FCO and Britain's embassies, now there are direct dealings between domestic ministries and their opposite numbers in the other EU member states (Smith 1999: 234-235). This has highlighted a number of issues of both coordination and control that have challenged the FCO's dominant role in the identification and pursuit of British interests overseas, or at least within the EU (Spence 1993; Bender 1991; Wall, 2008)).

This growing domestic-European interface and the challenges it poses to the FCO is best understood by recalling that proposals have been regularly put forward for a separate European Ministry. The FCO has always resisted such proposals. Indeed, successive Foreign Secretaries have shown little enthusiasm for suggestions that the present Minister of State for Europe be elevated to Cabinet rank. The FCO has argued that a Foreign Secretary stripped of his EU responsibilities and prerogatives would suffer an enormous loss of political stature on the world stage. Furthermore, removing the EU from the UK department of state responsible for external affairs would also represent a major political and symbolic change that would touch the nerve of national sovereignty and the Westminster model of British central government. Nevertheless the idea has been raised several times (Macintyre 1999) and was also discussed within the Convention on the Future of Europe, with the suggestion that senior cabinet ministers reporting directly to Prime Ministers might be permanently based in Brussels and charged with sustaining the authority of the European Council. Proposals to transfer the management (as opposed to the coordination and strategic consideration) of EU business to the Cabinet Office or to Downing Street produce a similarly negative response from the FCO.

While such developments have challenged the FCO, it has also gained a little from the centralising tendencies that EU membership has encouraged: namely the rise of ‘an informal, yet powerful elite comprising Number 10, the FCO, the Cabinet Office and the UK permanent representation (UKREP)’ (Smith 1999: 233). However the British system of coordination, whilst giving the FCO a major role, is also designed to ensure that where necessary the FCO is treated as just another interested department and not as the sole determinant of the UK national interest. The role of the European Secretariat, which arranges, chairs and records the results of interdepartmental discussions at all levels, ensures that the FCO cannot claim sole ownership or authorship of EU policy. The Cabinet Office is also responsible for the process whereby Parliament is informed and consulted about EU legislation. The FCO is usually represented in the European Secretariat, but only with one official in a team of about seven – the rest coming from the home civil service. Until Stephan Wall was appointed to the post by Blair, the Head of the European Secretariat always came from the Home Civil Service

However, one has to be careful about making too much of the restraints on the FCO's role in EU policy-making and coordination. The European Secretariat remains quite small, although large by Cabinet Office standards, and it relies to some extent on FCO support. Similarly whilst UKREP is indeed an unusual embassy, with more than 50% of its staff being drawn from the home civil service, the head of UKREP, the Permanent Representative, has always been an ambassador from the FCO and the FCO retains the right to oversee its instructions. The position of Permanent Representative is an extremely powerful one with the incumbent responsible for the day to day management of EU business in Brussels as well as usually playing a pivotal role in Treaty negotiations within the Intergovernmental Conference framework (Menon 2004). The very style of EU negotiations and policy making places the Permanent Representative and UKREP at the heart of an intensive and ever changing dialogue with London. The Permanent Representative additionally gets to return to London each Friday to participate in EU policy-making meetings both within the FCO and the Cabinet Office – an opportunity resented by some home based officials and envied by some other ambassadors.

Thus, despite the constraints mentioned above, the FCO has succeeded in retaining a significant role within the UK's system for managing relations with the EU. Because of its competent handling of EU business, the FCO has earned the respect of, and worked smoothly with, other government departments. It has been quite relaxed about allowing other departments to get on with EU business that clearly sit within their exclusive competence. The FCO has considered and rejected the idea of charging other departments for the work that its overseas posts carry out for them; it has instructed those of its departments, such as European Union Department (Internal) who 'face' domestic ministries, to consult with them about their requirements vis-à-vis FCO posts overseas and it has sought to maintain its position, if not of supremacy, then at least of *primus inter pares* in the overall direction of British foreign policy. Although Smith (1999: 234) argues that 'as EU business increases, the FCO and the Cabinet Office are losing control and departments are increasingly conducting business with the Commission and other

member states directly' on important EU matters, the FCO retains a significant degree of influence.

The recent reorganisations have seen EU matters and bilateral relations with individual EU member states pioneer a movement away from a geographical structure to one where they are handled within the same Directorate the European and Globalisation Directorate which contains the EU Department and the European Political Affairs Department. The CFSP currently comes under the European Political Affairs Department, but it still provides a secretariat for the FCO Political Director, who has chief operational responsibility for the UK's input into the CFSP process. The European and Globalisation Directorate brings together all the departments and desks dealing with Europe, EU member states and non-members. As a result, most elements of European policy have now been brought within the same arrangements inside the FCO: a change reflected more widely across the FCO's structure.

Another significant change has been the increasing number of FCO staff working or having some contact with EU issues as a result of the impact of CFSP, the growing scale of European coordination at overseas diplomatic missions and the increased scope of European policy. In particular, the European Fast Stream programme within Whitehall has provided the FCO with a constant supply of diplomats with an excellent working knowledge of the EU. This has not, however, been confined to just the FCO: a large number of civil servants in other departments have also gained valuable European experience through this route. Such is the scale of the 'Europeanists' in the FCO that they have been seen to supplant the 'Arabists', traditionally seen as holding the dominant position in the FCO. This has created something, as one UKREP diplomat noted, of a 'creative tension' within the FCO, and has not gone unnoticed by those who regard the FCO as too pro-European.

However, it is not just Euro-sceptics who voice their concerns about the growing imbalance within the FCO towards the EU. Some diplomats from posts outside the EU point to the continuing high number of resources allocated to European posts in

comparison to those allocated to missions outside the EU. This in part reflects the growth of ‘mini-Whitehall’ style British diplomatic postings in EU member states where domestic, European and international affairs merge more so than beyond the EU and require a larger allocation of resources. This is not to say that overseas missions beyond the EU have been immune from such a process or indeed from Europeanization. The continuing progress in CFSP has resulted in overseas posts holding regular coordination meetings with the representations of other Member States. However, there exist differing levels of enthusiasm for such meetings, with one senior British diplomat arguing that they were akin to a social gathering of most Western allies that was only notable because of the absence of the Americans. Some also question the value of holding such EU coordination meetings (over 2,000 a year between diplomats of the EU Missions at the United Nations) when this time could be better spent lobbying and completing other essential diplomatic work. Others argue that the real work is completed by the larger member states such as the UK, France and Germany, and cannot be considered as truly representing the whole EU given the limited representations of many smaller EU Members combined with the circumscribed role of the European Commission’s external offices. However, the momentum within the FCO and other Member States diplomatic services towards a coherent EU diplomatic effort is aimed at inculcating a natural reflex to work with one another and the EU representations. The challenge for the FCO lies in ensuring that this does not result in pressure to merge representations. In particular, ideas to create an EU Permanent Seat on the UN Security Council have been fiercely resisted by the UK and the FCO. The FCO was also not too distressed to see the demise of both the Constitutional Treaty and the Lisbon Treaty, both of which proposed a European External Action Service (EEAS).

Europeanization might therefore be seen as having catalyzed a situation in which the changing nature of foreign policy combined with budgetary and management changes to force the FCO to adopt a more functional structure rather than one based on geography. At the same time, the FCO has sought to retain some aspects of its geographical structure, and in turn ward off other government departments attempting to coordinate these functional areas, by preserving the pivotal role of the ambassador in overseas posts. Thus,

in the name of coherence and consistency, the FCO has successfully defended some form of 'gatekeeper' role both at home and abroad, even though the participants in the foreign policy process are increasingly drawn from a number of non-FCO sources. Again, this is most clearly seen in the key roles that the FCO UKREP plays in the overall management of British policy towards the EU .

The FCO 'Strategy Document (FCO, 2003) was an attempt to better deploy the FCO's resources. On the one hand it demonstrated how the UK has shown due significance to the role of the EU by committing key resources to it, but it also showed how the UK has sought to retain the capability to operate as an independent actor in the wider international system. The strategy document suggests that whilst the FCO may well have experienced Europeanization, it is not necessarily either integrating or converging with the foreign ministries of the other EU member states. The same might also be said of the relationship with Washington, to which the document also attaches great significance. At the same time, the Strategy Report - while discussing the operation of the FCO - does explore the main foreign policy concerns of the United Kingdom, and in this the document shares many similarities with the European Union's own strategy document, 'A Secure Europe in a Better World: The European Security Strategy'. Both emphasize the importance of effective multilateralism for tackling problems ranging from international terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) through to environmental crises and human rights abuses. The two documents share a great many similarities and while they share some areas in common with the National Security Strategy of the United States the UK and EU documents seem to have more in common. This in part stems from the strong British input to the EU document and again returns us to the idea of Europeanization being a circular process. Indeed, the very emergence of the FCO's Strategy Document at about the same time as the EU's Security Strategy report might indicate a move away from the pragmatism that has been seen to characterize UK foreign policy-making to a more strategic approach.

Indeed, one area of possible adaptation, which previous governments have resisted, concerns developments in the EU and the institutional consequences of pursuing CFSP.

The British government, despite finding it increasingly difficult to devote the necessary resources to its foreign policy machine, has not been tempted by the European option of pooling resources - particularly those overseas - although Britain and France (outside the EU framework) announced plans in 1999 to work more closely together in Africa (Peel 1999). Proposals to establish joint EU embassies and eventually to establish a full-blown European diplomatic service (Allen 2004) have been viewed with suspicion by Britain. In March 1999, the Foreign Secretary proposed the establishment of a permanent committee of deputy political directors in Brussels to steer and reinforce the CFSP. The idea of this committee was clearly to keep control of the CFSP firmly in the hands of national foreign ministries by boosting the Council of Ministers and the Council Secretariat rather than enhancing the Commission's external powers. This British proposal led in time to the creation of the Political and Security Committee (COPS) which is a good example of what has been described as the 'Brusselsization' of the CFSP process (Allen 1998). This is also a good example of the circular nature of Europeanization as, having advocated the establishment in Brussels of something like the COPS, the FCO now has to adjust to its existence!

Conclusions

The key problem when examining the Europeanization of the FCO is that it operates simultaneously at the national, European and international levels. It is not easy to discern the process of Europeanization against such a background.

That said, there are areas where Europeanization is manifest. These include: the structure of the FCO in terms of both the Political Director and the PUS; the management of desks for EU member states and the growing importance of the European and Globalization Directorate; the growth in the role of UKREP (although this may now have peaked - see Wall, 2008) and other 'mini-Whitehalls' in Brussels; the increased prominence of 'Europeanists' in the FCO; the EU coordination work in overseas posts; the more prominent role played by the PM and Downing Street; and the FCO's involvement in the development of the CFSP.

Such developments have not occurred overnight but rather over decades. Indeed, it is essential to recall that the FCO has played a central role in how the UK has approached European integration since before the signing of the Treaty of Rome. The FCO has generally developed responses that resemble ‘fine-tuning’ rather than radical reform. In turn, these have enabled the FCO to retain a central position in the making and implementation of British foreign policy. Indeed it has been argued that EU membership has provided opportunities for the FCO, along with the DTI and MAFF/DEFRA to ‘increase their role and autonomy’ (Smith 1999: 235).

The FCO has in turn responded reasonably well to change, regardless of whether the stimulus has come from within the UK, from Europe or from the wider international system. As we noted above, its basic tactic has been to strongly resist all attempts to impose reform from outside, whilst quietly making some fairly radical adjustments to the way that it organizes itself and carries out its work. The changes in the substance of foreign policy and the blurring of boundaries between foreign and domestic policy have forced the FCO to work much more closely with other government departments, both within Britain and abroad, and to organize itself for the demands of multilateral (of which the EU is the most significant) as well as bilateral diplomacy and negotiation. In this sense Europeanization has been the most obvious sign of the end of any idea that the FCO can play a traditional role of gatekeeper through which all contact with the outside world must flow; in turn undermining also the idea that the FCO is the only institution that understands the outside world. Such roles are now impossible. Indeed the FCO (and the rest of Whitehall) now accept that such a role is no longer plausible. However, the FCO remains the central department for monitoring, managing and, with Downing St and the Cabinet Office, coordinating the direction of British foreign and to a lesser extent European policy. In this sense, the EU has redefined the role of the FCO as a ‘gatekeeper’.

All in all, the FCO has been neither a winner nor a loser from Europeanization. For the FCO has been given a greater field in which to engage while at the same time facing

burgeoning pressures in terms of financial limits, global problems, and domestic shifts, which are in part also fed by European pressures. Europeanization has both strengthened and weakened the foreign policy of the UK (see the next section of this paper), and at the same time strengthened and weakened the role played by the FCO. If there is an element of decline in the role of the FCO in relations with EU member states then this should be understood as a relative decline given the emergence of the intensive multilateralism, bilateralism and transnationalism that is the politics of the European Union and increasingly international relations in general.

As if to reflect the diverse levels at which the FCO operates and its wide variety of offices and outlooks, there is no single process by which Europeanization has occurred. Top-down Europeanization can apply to the position of the Political Director or the demand that Member States overseas diplomatic representations increase co-ordination. Indeed, the proposal in the defunct European Constitution Treaty and the equally defunct Lisbon Treaty to create a European Foreign Minister (a title that the UK insisted be dropped from the Lisbon Treaty preferring to stick to the idea of a High Representative) could bring considerable top-down pressures for greater co-operation. At the same time, the UK and the FCO have been involved in EPC and now CFSP from their inception (unlike Britain's relationship with the EU more generally) and have succeeded in uploading British concerns at the EU level. That the recent EU Security Strategy Document reflected British concerns was in part a result of it being written by a British diplomat (and former advisor to the PM) Robert Cooper - someone who could well be described as a Europeanised former British diplomat. Indeed, British attempts to shape EU external relations have been a key element of British membership and of transatlantic relations. Here, though, we again see the limits to Europeanization as we must also account for the role of NATO and the United States. Indeed, the role of the United States (easily overlooked as a major military, economic and political power in Europe) has been central to British – and in turn FCO – approaches to CFSP and the EU; perhaps in turn diminishing the extent to which Europeanization of the FCO has been 'voluntary'.

There is one final impact of Europeanization which deserves mention. This paper has raised some questions about the ability and willingness of the FCO to adjust to the general challenge of a transformed world and the specific challenge of EU membership. Our conclusion is that whilst the FCO has undoubtedly proved itself to be a foreign ministry capable of both responsiveness and flexibility (although Peter Hain, when an FCO Minister talked of his 'frustration that the FCO machine is geared to responding to new circumstances mostly by incremental shifts in emphasis' (Watt 2001)), it has yet to be fully tested by, or called upon to serve, a government willing to adopt a consistently proactive EU policy. This in itself brings us to face one of the key questions about Europeanization: that it only takes place when the issues are not sufficiently important. If the Labour administration were to actively pursue the objectives as laid out in Robin Cook's 1997 mission statement or in many of the former Prime Minister's speeches on Europe of 'exercising leadership in the European Union, protecting the world's environment, countering the menace of drugs, terrorism and crime, spreading the values of human rights, civil liberties and democracy and using its status at the UN to secure more effective international action to keep the peace of the world and to combat poverty', then for some the FCO might find its organisation and working practices more fundamentally tested than it has to date, with Europeanization being much more evident.

The FCO is often described as being akin to a 'Rolls Royce' of government machinery. Indeed, it remains a traditional, debonair and highly effective instrument and symbol of the British state and of British power. In part, this stems from European cooperation and the changes the FCO has adopted in part as a response to the EU. Indeed, like Rolls Royce, now owned by the German producer BMW, the FCO looks set to rely heavily for future success on a continuing investment in European cooperation.

The Europeanization of British Foreign Policy

Britain's geographical position has meant that British foreign policy has always taken a close interest in, sought to influence and been influenced by developments on the European mainland. In recent years this has meant that British foreign policy has engaged

in many European frameworks from WEU and NATO to EFTA, the Council of Europe and the OSCE. However this section of the paper will concentrate on the growing role of the European Union in British foreign policy. It argues that since the end of the Cold War the UK has, to a limited but growing extent, engaged more closely with the EU and that this has been built on the relations developed in the previous decades. During this time the UK took an active lead in the area of European Political Cooperation (Nuttall 1991, Allen 2005) and in doing so has shaped EU foreign policy as well as been shaped by it. Nevertheless the UK retains a high degree of ambivalence about the European dimension to its foreign policy with ongoing worries concerning sovereignty, relations with the United States, independent capabilities and the national policies of the UK's EU partners especially France. Thus while the UK has actively engaged with both European Political Cooperation (EPC) and now the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) an element of ambiguity with regard to wholehearted commitment remains.

This section is divided into two parts The first part gives a brief chronological analysis of the UK's fifty year engagement with European integration and the impact this has had on UK foreign policy; in this section the major focus is on the post 1973 period of UK membership of the EU with a particular focus on the period since 1997. The second part concentrates upon some key questions about Europeanization.. Although this is not the place for a detailed discussion of the nature of foreign policy, this chapter recognises that Britain continues to pursue something unilaterally which it thinks of as foreign policy and that Britain is also a key member of the European Union which itself claims to have established a common foreign and security policy There is therefore a possibility that Europeanization (See Wong, 2005 and Luddecke, 2004) for excellent general discussions of the Europeanization of foreign policy) is taking place whether this is conceived of as the EU impacting on British foreign policy or the Britain impacting on European foreign policy. However most analysts of foreign policy (in particular see Webber et al 2002 and Hill 2003) would also argue that foreign policy in general has been transformed in recent years and so it remains difficult to isolate the impact of Europeanization on British foreign policy from the impact of other factors such as

interdependence, globalization or the ‘blurring of boundaries’ between the foreign and the domestic.

From three circles to two.

As a victorious world power with imperial and global interests and an economy to match it is easy to understand why in the immediate post-war era the general feeling within the UK was that it could stand aloof from European integration. The idea of pooling Britain’s defence and key industries of coal and steel with European allies so soon after so narrowly surviving the Second World War and at a time of a growing Soviet threat seemed a mistake. Whilst welcoming such moves on the mainland of Western Europe, the UK itself was not prepared to engage with Europe alone, preferring to also look to the Commonwealth and the United States. As Churchill told it the UK stood at the heart of these three overlapping circles but in retrospect perhaps British policy-makers were attempting the impossible - keeping all three balls in the air.

The US seemed to offer everything that a war-torn Europe could not; it had emerged from the war victorious with its political, economic and military power enhanced and, as the Soviet threat developed, appeared to be an essential ally for Britain in an increasingly dangerous European and international system. A habit of cooperation between the UK and the US had grown up during the war that was of a different quality to that enjoyed by Britain and its other allies.

It was with the decline of the Empire that Britain faced its starkest choice. The independence of India saw the disappearance of the British Indian Army, the Korean War showed the limits of British military strength, Australia, New Zealand and Canada began to look to the US for leadership, economic growth and links were slow and the entire structure, despite attempts to transform it into a Commonwealth, came under challenge from within and without.

It was the key imperial issue of Suez that so dramatically challenged the idea three circles. US anger at the Franco-British intervention against Egypt’s nationalisation of the canal, led to massive US economic pressure upon the UK and France forcing them to withdraw. The relative decline in British (and French) power could not have been more

clearly demonstrated but, whilst this probably helped to convince France of the imperatives of European integration, it made the British all the more determined to rebuild relations with the USA. Suez persuaded France that continued global influence would only follow if France, in association with West Germany embraced the European concept. The British seemed to believe that preserving a special relationship with the United States required a firm rejection of such Europeanization and so refused all invitations to be positively associated with the European Economic Community when it was established in 1958.

Suez effectively indicated the end of the Commonwealth circle as a viable basis for British foreign policy. Prime Minister Harold Macmillan's 'winds of change' blew not just across Africa but the entire former Empire from which Britain beat an orderly retreat. It had failed to provide the platform for the UK in the post-war world but left Britain with an international outlook and many global commitments. The UK remained eager to fulfill these and develop her international role, but, ironically given the initial stern rejection of the EEC, it was to Europe that the UK now began to turn. The relative economic success of the EEC suggested that Britain had been mistaken in her rejection and it was thus the economic potential of membership of the largest trading bloc in the world that led the UK to move towards Europe in the early 1960s. However the eventual application to join the EEC did not represent a British conversion to the French idea that a united Europe would provide a counter or balance to US and Soviet power; for Britain the attraction of the EEC was the opportunity it provided to make Britain economically strong enough to maintain (alone?) its status as a global power. Britain wanted to join the EEC but it did not at that time accept that this would or should entail the Europeanization of its foreign policy.

This late conversion to the European project aroused suspicion amongst European allies, most notably the French, with fears that Britain would prove to be an American 'Trojan Horse' and likely to challenge French leadership. Thus it was not until the 1973 that Britain was admitted and appeared, under Heath's leadership, to commit itself both to European economic integration and to foreign policy co-operation under the newly established European Political Co-operation (EPC) procedures. EPC complemented both European and UK aims; Britain as a key international player was central to making the

process work and provide for a larger role for Europe in the world. For the UK this was an area in which it could naturally lead and in doing so face key UK-US problems such as Vietnam. Furthermore, the determinedly intergovernmental nature of the agreed EPC procedures seemed to offer the opportunity for a less painful Europeanization than that suggested by the supranational procedures of the European Community proper. Britain liked the idea of foreign policy cooperation precisely because it could be presented to a domestic audience as designed to preserve rather than challenge British sovereignty. EPC represented the acceptable face of European integration to both the British government and the British public both because it seemed to offer the advantages of foreign policy cooperation without the attendant dangers (including Europeanization?) of supranationality.

Heath as Prime Minister was more prepared than all his predecessors (and successors?) to advocate both the supranational (EC) and intergovernmental (EPC) strands of integration and to prioritise European over American foreign policy positions where these were perceived to clash. Both Wilson, Callaghan and, most spectacularly, Thatcher both preferred the intergovernmental over the supranational and saw continued support for the special relationship with the US as a choice that clashed with wholehearted support for European foreign policy co-operation. It should be noted however that the necessity for the UK to choose between the EU and the US was never seriously accepted in Washington (Allen 2005,122). The US has usually expressed a preference for a Britain influential within the EU rather than resistant to it

This special personal relationship that Mrs Thatcher cultivated with President Reagan however could not disguise the significant differences that existed with the USA and the large areas of agreement that were emerging with the Europeans within the EPC process. Although Mrs Thatcher engaged in Cold War diplomacy without any real reference to EPC, and dealt with the future of Hong Kong on a strictly Sino-British basis, the UK did opt for a European approach in a growing number of areas. Before Mrs Thatcher came to power, EPC had provided the framework for Britain to take the lead in a distinctly 'European' response to political change in Greece, Spain and Portugal. After 1979 as the EC struggled in the doldrums, EPC flourished partly because of pragmatic British reforms and partly because the British were prepared to develop their foreign

policy within a European framework. In the Middle East the EU position, as developed in the 1980 Venice Declaration, reflected British concerns that the US-led Camp David process was too restrictive and failed to properly recognise the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. Relations with South Africa were dealt with on a European as opposed to Commonwealth basis, EPC proved helpful not only with the Falklands (where EU diplomatic support was instantaneous in comparison to America's initial indecision), but also when seeking to avoid uncomfortable situations with the Americans in central America or as with the US invasion of the Commonwealth island of Grenada (Hill 1996). The issues of the Iranian fatwa on Salmon Rushdie and the Tiananmen Square massacre were similarly dealt with through European channels. Whilst Britain in the mid-1980s only reluctantly accepted that the EU single market could only be achieved with accompanying procedural reforms (the use of QMV and increased powers for the European Parliament) Mrs Thatcher's government enthusiastically both proposed and embraced attempts to improve the EPC procedures. The fact that foreign policy cooperation was developing along transgovernmental rather than intergovernmental lines did not seem to inhibit the British who remained transfixed by the dangers of supranationality (see Wallace, H. 2005, 87-89 for an elaboration of transgovernmentalism as one of five EU policy modes)

It was the events of 1989 and the collapse of Communism that provided the stimulus for a further key change in European foreign policy cooperation and British engagement. The developments of the previous two decades had left EPC ripe for further development. The procedural framework now drew in many diplomats, ministers and institutions in a network of meetings, discussions and reports all together representing a highly advanced form of cooperation based on pragmatic and informal discussions which suited and was shaped by the UK. As these procedures became transgovernmental the potential for Europeanization became much greater but because EPC and subsequently the CFSP were still perceived as intergovernmental they did not stimulate the sort of resistance in the UK that the supranational procedures experienced.

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of Germany and of West and Eastern Europe propelled foreign, security and defence policy to the heart of EU

discussions. German reunification, monetary union and CFSP were all intertwined as part of a package drawn up for the 1991 IGC. The UK in particular resisted moves to bring the intergovernmental framework of EPC under the Community method. British hostility to any integration of foreign and defence policy into the Community proper led to the creation of the Pillar model with CFSP, and JHA, outside the EU framework. Britain, however, found itself at odds with France over the future of the WEU which France, and to some extent Germany, hoped would acquire an operational capacity and in turn develop into an alternative European defence organisation to NATO rather than the institutional bridge the British hoped would link the two. In response to these various tensions Britain succeeded in ensuring that the 1992 Maastricht Treaty provided more a modification of existing foreign policy arrangements than a fundamental change although the possibility that foreign policy cooperation might eventually extend into defence cooperation was accepted. by Britain – a development which could be interpreted as the consequence of Europeanization.

The collapse of Yugoslavia thus came at a time of institutional change and growing expectations of what Europe might achieve in foreign policy (Hill 1993). US indifference did not provide a stimulus for collective EU action but it did point to significant differences between the UK and the US which suggested that Britain would be more likely to meet its Balkan interests within a European rather than transatlantic framework. Over time it developed into a painful learning process for the UK, the US, and the rest of the EU. While all were frustrated at the failure and incoherence of the EU, the UN, the OSCE and, in the long run, even NATO offered no better chance of success. That said, the experiences of the former Yugoslavia did shape UK attitudes towards working with France and vice versa with the result that a confidential but active Franco-British defence dialogue began in 1993. At the same time in Brussels the CFSP institutional machinery was expanding as the member states' foreign ministries becoming increasingly adept at working together (see chapter on the FCO) and more willing to do this in Brussels rather than national capitals (see Allen 1998 for a discussion of this process of *Brusselsization*).

Throughout the 1990s the UK's key partners in the CFSP remained Germany and France. With Germany undergoing a gradual normalisation in its approach to foreign policy, the UK and France appeared to be converging in their attitudes towards the European versus Atlantic frameworks based on similar military capabilities and frustrations over the US attitude to Yugoslavia. Thus in the negotiations for the Amsterdam Treaty (1997) the UK and France agreed on the creation of a High Representative for CFSP, a measure the UK viewed as practical and safely based within the intergovernmental structure of the Council.. Such convergence however registered little in the domestic debate where the continuing problems within the Conservative party and the British media's hostility to Europe obscured any real progress or discussion. Indeed even the new Blair government that accepted so much that its predecessors would have not in Amsterdam felt the need to publicly deny that any progress had been made on the defence issue.

The election of Tony Blair in 1997 brought a government more committed to Europe, and more secure in office but lacking any real experience or discussion of foreign policy (see Kampfner, 2003; Seldon, 2004). However, the government was from the beginning constrained by a vehemently Euro-sceptical media and a politically frustrated but ambitious Chancellor who blocked moves towards the euro and thus a more whole-hearted British participation in the EU. The New Labour government was also committed to ensuring Britain would pursue a stronger role in the world beyond Europe (as had been the Major government) and the Atlantic Alliance; indeed, the 1997 Manifesto said more about engagement with the Commonwealth than the USA. Robin Cook's announcement in the first few days of the Labour government of an 'ethical dimension' to foreign policy and the establishment of the Department for International Development signalled a determination that the UK would be seen as a force for good in the world, and one which in turn would shape European and US approaches. Blair found it personally easy to be at home on both sides of the Atlantic, with close relationships with both President Clinton and Chancellor Schroeder, underpinned up by a series of Third Way discussions on both sides of the Atlantic.

In comparison to the Conservatives, New Labour seemed far more committed to the EU in general but initially had shown no greater specific or substantive interest in the

CFSP than the Major government. With time a growing interest in European foreign and defence cooperation emerged and this is illustrated by the change from the Labour government's first Strategic Defence Review, which almost entirely ignored the European dimension, to Blair's December 1998 commitment to the Franco-British St Malo Declaration (Howarth 2005,185.) For the UK and Blair this was in part a commitment in compensation for lack of progress on the euro and reflective of a desire to be seen to be 'leading' in Europe nevertheless.. The UK now accepted the EU should provide the framework for a European pillar in the Atlantic Alliance combined with a French acceptance that this should complement and not replace or duplicate NATO structures. St Malo led to the development of a 'Rapid Reaction Force' within the framework of a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) and was intended to overcome the capabilities-expectations gap identified by the Yugoslav experience. The Helsinki European Council in December 1999 set targets for the Rapid Reaction Force and established an EU Military Committee as well as a Political and Security Committee - the latest in a long line of British-inspired institutional innovations in the foreign policy area.

Despite Britain's continued commitment to operating with the Americans in the Gulf (where she participated in 'Operation Desert Fox' in 1998) and to pursuing a wider global role, relations with the US were strained by the experiences of Kosovo where American reluctance to commit ground forces drove forward UK and European desires for more substance in EU foreign and defence policy capabilities. Kosovo also saw Blair set out his own - and some would argue very personal - approach to foreign policy in his Chicago speech entitled 'The Doctrine of the International Community' (see Seldon, 2004; Kampfner, 2003; Riddell, 2004; Oliver, 2004). It encapsulated the tensions inherent in Britain's approaches to Europe, America and the rest of the world. The doctrine was a foreign policy programme that encouraged and supported American military engagement in support of ambitions that were beyond Britain's reach. It expressed renewed confidence that British foreign policy could bring together Europe and America, that there was a continuing community of values across the Atlantic and that Britain could hold the two sides together (Wallace and Oliver, 2005). Reconciling these ambitions was never going to be easy, even when Clinton was in the White House,

with the Prime Minister often relying on his own rhetorical skills and approach to carry cabinet, Parliament, the Labour Party and British people with him.

On a range of issues the UK and the EU continued to develop close relations. One such area has been Zimbabwe where Britain's approach to sanctions has required and has been based on the support of the EU (Williams 2002). At the same time the UK has continued to pursue its own bilateral and multilateral initiatives in other forums such as the Commonwealth and the UN. Policy towards Africa has for most of the post-war era been characterised by competition with France but in recent years attempts have been made to work with France although not necessarily towards the development of a European policy.

It might have been expected that the victory of George W. Bush would have given a further stimulus to a greater European dimension to British foreign policy. However, the easy relationship that developed between Bush and Blair reaffirmed the belief that London could continue to play the role of a transatlantic 'bridge' despite indications that American foreign policy under Bush junior would take a more unilateralist turn.

British, American and European foreign policy was transformed by the events of September 11. The UK undertook a role supporting the US that was militarily, diplomatically and politically substantial. At the same time the attacks provoked an unprecedented reaction by the EU with all the main EU institutions adopting a joint declaration on 14 September leading to movement on such things as a European arrest warrant and measures to combat terrorism (see Blair, 2004). However the EU was not formally present in the Afghanistan conflict rather it was the member states such as the UK or Germany that contributed. In a sign of things to come it was the leaders of the EU Big Three (Britain, Germany and France) that were to sit down to an informal dinner in Downing Street on 4 November, organised by Britain despite London not holding the EU Presidency. Although the dinner rapidly expanded to include the Dutch, Italian and Spanish Prime Ministers and the High Representative for CFSP its original conception suggested that for the British in the EU, like the Americans in NATO, not all member states were regarded as of equal importance. For Britain, and Blair, it was a pragmatic means of reaching agreement and coherent action in an enlarged EU (see Kampfnr,

2004; Riddell, 2004). But it suggested a greater partiality for 'uploading' rather than 'downloading'.

The approach to the war in Iraq appeared to further fuel feelings that Britain's commitment was to the United States and not Europe.. Yet the logic by which the UK went to war in Iraq was significantly different to that presented by the United States, with an emphasis upon international law for both domestic and European purposes. The UK was also not as isolated within the EU as might have appeared but the support of Italy, Spain and the applicant states from Eastern Europe only served to deepen the divide within the EU. The UK decision to follow the Bush Administration in attacking Iraq was as much a result of the Prime Minister's own personal convictions that the action was morally correct and necessary as it was the continuation of a policy that would always see the US privileged over the UK's European partners (see Wallace and Oliver, 2005) but this was not how it was seen by France and Germany in particular during the first half of 2003.

However the April 2003 mini-summit involving just France, Germany Belgium and Luxembourg showed how hollow EU foreign, security and defence policy would be without the UK and significant efforts were made during the latter part of 2003 to repair relations both between the two sides within the EU and between the EU and the US.. Indeed, throughout the crisis Britain, France and Germany continued to engage in a trilateral relationship over defence and foreign policy issues. Transatlantic trade and economic links continued to show considerable growth and appeared largely unaffected (Commission, 2004). The publication of the EU's Security Strategy Document (ESS) (EU, 2003), written in large part by Robert Cooper, a former FCO adviser to Blair, was based in large part upon British and French thinking. It's positive reception in Washington, delighted London, again demonstrating the British desire for Europe to support and not counter the US. Yet when compared with the American National Security Document the ESS in many regards symbolised the differences of European and British approaches to security related questions (Kissack 2004,19). The 'ease' with which tensions between the UK and France over Iraq were overcome symbolised the very strength and commitment of the UK to European foreign policy cooperation. At the same

time as the EU published its strategy documents the FCO and MoD published their own national strategy documents and, although not forming a coherent UK version of a national security strategy, they might be seen as symbolising a movement away from a purely pragmatic approach to a foreign policy based more on national strategic concerns within a European context.

The European Constitutional Treaty was also being drafted during the Iraq crisis and contained significant implications for EU and UK foreign policy. The proposal to create a European Foreign Minister and a European External Action Service was accepted by the UK as the logical next step in developing the position of the High Representative and the external capability of the EU, albeit one based firmly within the Council of Ministers.. Nevertheless the suspicion remains (particularly in light of the demise of the Constitutional and Lisbon Treaties) that the transgovernmental procedures of the CFSP and ESDP will become increasingly problematic in an enlarged Union. Foreign and security policy is an area where Britain has little to fear from moves either towards ‘enhanced cooperation’ multi-speed Europe or a *directoire* of the major states as no serious development in this issue area is worth contemplating without British participation

Indeed it is within the *directoire* of Britain, France and Germany that EU policy is largely forged on issues such as Iran, North Korea, China or defence policy. Britain has made it clear that she will retain (as has France) a Permanent Seat in the UN Security Council. The emergence of a EU Foreign Minister or an External Action Service poses as much of a challenge to the Commission’s view of how foreign policy should be managed at the European level as it does to the UK all of which suggests that whilst Britain under Blair has moved towards the EU on foreign policy matters (?downloading) the EU is also changing so as to become more agreeable to the UK in this policy area.

For instance both Britain and the EU have developed an increasing interest in state intervention in the face of failing states in what Robert Cooper refers to as the ‘pre-modern world’ (Cooper, 2003). The UK’s engagement in Sierra Leone matches similar French led interventions in the Great Lakes region of Africa and Ivory Coast (Baddie 2004). Ongoing plans to operate EU battle groups in Northern Africa not only signal the EU’s progression from the situation in the early 1990s as exemplified by the

Yugoslavian fiasco, but suggest a coming together with Britain's own interests in Africa and Blair's own personal approach to foreign affairs. They also reflect the growing military capability of the EU. In December 2003 the member states of the EU achieved, almost unnoticed, their 1999 aim to make ESDP operational (see Giegerich and Wallace, 2004) with forces today operating in Bosnia, Macedonia and Central Africa. As Giegerich and Wallace point out, rhetorical declarations followed by unease and inadequate implementation has long been part of European integration, yet the European forces have increased their scale, distance and diversity of external operations over the period 1999-2004. As Giegerich and Wallace further note, it is remarkable that European governments have been able to collectively double the number of troops deployed abroad within the past decade, with so little national or Europe-wide debate. Britain is a major participant in these military developments suggesting that the Europeanization of British foreign and security policy, to an extent as yet unappreciated by the British electorate, has taken place during the Blair years.

Like so many other British Prime Ministers in the post war era, Tony Blair has become increasingly preoccupied with trying to knit together close relations with the US and Europe, a commitment to a multilateral international order and a determination to play a more positive role in the European and international order whilst still trying to preserve the illusion of an independent major power. Blair's approach has not shaken this approach, nor has it undermined the gradual evolution of Britain's relationship with its European partners, although both the European and American dimensions of British foreign policy currently lack domestic support.

Evaluation: the incremental Europeanising of British Foreign Policy

From the above account we can see how the norms, rules, procedures and outlooks of British foreign policy have experienced varying degrees of Europeanization. When accounting for the degree of Europeanization we must appreciate that British foreign policy has been shaped in large part by a number of aims which have the potential to be both contradictory and complementary. On the one hand Britain has sought to support the USA and ensure the future of the 'special' transatlantic relationship. On the other Britain

has actively encouraged and engaged in the construction of a European foreign policy provided it remains based on the consensual coordination of the national foreign policies of the EU member states. Although British positions on numerous foreign policy issues show evidence of adaptation to a European norm, Britain has, on a number of occasions, refused to be bound by European positions whilst nevertheless doing its utmost to maintain European solidarity over issue areas, such as the Middle East, where it judges that British influence can be enhanced by collective European action.

That said the process has only been possible and taken forward in large part by the active engagement of the UK. Despite bitter arguments with its European partners, the result of an active engagement in EPC/CFSP for over thirty years has been the evolution of a reflex towards sharing foreign policy concerns with its European partners in international relations. That said the degree of loyalty or reflex varies. In key areas, such as intelligence, Europeanization is strained by the perceived benefits of working closely with the US. Similarly the British remain reluctant to work closely with their European partners in the area of diplomatic representation. The problem, of course is that the nature of the CFSP and ESDP makes it quite possible for national foreign policies to show signs of both accepting and rejecting Europeanization

The increasing numbers of staff dealing with CFSP, discussed earlier in this paper, increased sharing of information through the COREU network, regular meetings of Political Directors in Brussels and the development of the Permanent Political and Security Committee (PSC) all make for a certain Europeanization in the organising and implementation of policy. The experience of working closely with EU partners (especially in regard to Former Yugoslavia) in recent years, and the recent problems posed by the US are all reflected in the shared international outlook to be found in the European Security Strategy. It is this shared European perception of the current state of international society that has led the British to make their commitments such as that to further defence cooperation or to working with France and Germany to try and find an agreeable alternative to US policy on Iran.

Despite these changes the imagery of British involvement in CFSP has not changed, with the UK continuing to resist the principle of Europeanization by preserving the intergovernmental framework whilst at the same time being prepared to accept a

degree of Europeanization in practice by accepting the realities of transgovernmentalism, actively promoting institutional change (such as the creation of High Representative) and 'Brusselsization' .

Because EPC existed as a consensual process outside the constitutional framework and then the CFSP was handled within a separate pillar European foreign policy has evolved only very slowly and without recording any dramatic or symbolic integration advances. Europeanization in this areas has been, as Ginsberg notes, the 'process by which CFSP, and EPC before it, moved closer to EC norms, policies and habits without EPC/CFSP becoming supranationalised' (Ginsberg, 2001: 37). Such advances as have been made have essentially been at the behest of the major players (in particular) Britain, France and Germany) who have been able to control the extent and pace of Europeanization. The Anglo-French St Malo declaration was an example of this, and it represented an 'uploading' of UK and French foreign policy concerns. One of its key aims was to further engage Germany foreign and defence issues by using the EU framework to effectively 'cross load' foreign policy concerns.

Co-operation at the EU level has not however simply resulted in output that might be described as non-Europeanized because it reflected the lowest common denominator. (Luddecke,2004) has shown that number of processes have been at work, such as socialisation of officials and ministers, which have led to significant changes in national positions including those held by Britain. Not only has there been a centralising (Brusselsizing?) effect within the EU international pressures have also played a key role in bringing about Europeanization, in particular pressures from the USA, the Commonwealth, the UN and other external third parties who increasingly look first to the European Union rather than a member state - even an important one like the UK. Finally internal battles for the control of British European and foreign policy between Downing Street and the FCO have themselves given rise to a degree of Europeanization that the FO alone might have been able to resist.

The UK as a significant power amongst the EU member states has been able to upload to the EU level some of its extra-EU foreign policy commitments, such as those that arise from its particular role in the UN, its close relationship with the USA, its links with the Commonwealth and its global military and diplomatic interests. At the same

time the UK's diminishing capabilities at a time of increasing global demands and expectations make it susceptible to the attractions of sharing responsibility with EU partners . It is worth noting that Europeanization and foreign policy often seem to coincide during periods of crisis. While the examples of Iraq, Bosnia or 9/11 do not immediately engender images of a united European foreign policy or UK commitment to it, these crises have tended to stimulate further action at the EU level which has been both initiated and supported by the UK. The drafting of the European Security Strategy document at the time of the crisis over Iraq is an example of crisis sponsored Europeanization willingly initiated by the UK

In general the Europeanization of British foreign policy has progressed through the slow acceptance of changes to the institutional dimension, of an increasing in European capabilities in the foreign and military spheres and in an evolving shared outlook with regard to strategic concerns and foreign policy priorities.

In 1983 Christopher Hill identified Britain's contradictory aims in EPC as being to exercise leadership and extract benefit from European foreign policy without making a serious commitment to carrying it forward (Hill, 1996: 77). It has proved difficult for Britain to resist Europeanization in this manner and exercising leadership and extracting benefit has only been possible to the extent that a serious commitment to the development of European foreign policy has been demonstrated. The result is that most areas of British foreign policy are now subject to some degree of European influence. Indeed, a high degree of coordination with the EU has become part of the organisational and cultural outlook of British foreign policy with many key issues being referred to the European level. For some years now the EU has been Britain's point of departure when considering its dealings with the rest of the world rather than the neighbour that Britain encountered first when considering its external environment.. This does not mean that the UK is limited to working through the European option; in many respects the EU has enhanced the opportunities and mechanisms through which the UK pursues its foreign policy aims and the CFSP is anything but a 'zero sum game' (Forster, 2000). Indeed, many prime ministers have found that EPC/CFSP can be made to work to Britain's advantage (see Hill, 1996). In doing so British foreign policy concerns have not been

replaced by European ones, rather they have been adapted to, shaped by and influential on collective EU foreign policy concerns

Conclusions

The evolution of the EU in recent years has increased the 'blurring' of the distinction between European and national foreign policy making it all the more difficult to assess the degree of Europeanization at any one point of time. In Britain, 'theological' resistance to and lack of public sympathy for the further advancement of European integration, has made successive governments reluctant to publicly acknowledge, or even semi-privately take stock of, the degree to which British foreign policy has been Europeanized. Thus Britain continues to pursue a foreign policy through the EU that is characterized by both schizophrenia and ambiguity seeking on the one hand to use the EU as a foreign policy platform, but unwilling to accept any limits this might impose upon Britain's other multilateral and bilateral relations. However, with time the constraints of participation in collective foreign policy making and activity have been more willingly accepted and adopted, a process made easier by the successful uploading of UK concerns to the EU level. As Paul Williams (2002, p.1) has noted, 'a distinctly British and European foreign policy should not be thought of in mutually exclusive terms. Rather, although there are significant areas of overlap, European foreign policy does not exhaust British options on the international stage'. However what may well limit British options in the future is a perception in the outside world that British foreign policy is more Europeanized than British foreign policy makers are willing to recognise. It is now ten years since Dr Henry Kissinger was invited to make the keynote address at an FCO conference entitled 'Britain and the World'. He perhaps more accurately reflected the true extent of UK foreign policy Europeanization when he failed, throughout his forty minute speech, to distinguish between Britain and the European Union.

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